

Ebbfleet Development Corporation Board

PART I BOARD ITEM

Title of Paper: Chief Executive's Part One Update

Paper Number: EDC 026/001

Presented By: Ian Piper, CEO

Sub Committee: Not Applicable

Purpose of Paper and Executive Summary

To provide the Board with an update on a range of Part I strategic matters not covered in other papers. For this meeting the report covers items on Board Governance, an update on the Spending Review process and the impact on the process for Business Planning and preparing the next Corporate Plan, and our performance report up to the end of the second quarter of this business plan year.

EDC Business Plan & KPIs

The items covered contribute to the general running and strategic performance of the organisation.

Recommendation

FOR DECISION

Board is asked to **NOTE** the updates provided in this report and to **APPROVE** the updated EDC Data Retention and Disposal Policy at Annex B.

Annexes

Annex A – Quarter 3 2025/26 Performance Report

Annex B – Updated Data Retention and Disposal Policy

Delegation

Not Applicable.

Financial Impact

Not Applicable, unless specifically referenced in the relevant section.

Legal Impact

Not Applicable, unless specifically referenced in the relevant section.

Equalities Impact

There are no equalities impacts from the specific contents of this paper.

Stakeholders Impact

Some of the matters covered in this paper will impact on a range of stakeholders. Where this is the case, this is noted in the relevant section.

Sponsor Impact

Some of the matters covered in this paper will impact on the Corporation's relationship and/or dealings with our sponsor department, MHCLG. Where this is the case, it is noted in the relevant section.

1. Health, Safety and Wellbeing

- 1.1. There have been no health and safety incidents involving our staff since the last report.

2. Governance

- 2.1. Following ministerial approval, we welcome today Cllr Georgia Foster as the Kent County Council representative on the Board. Georgia has also been approved as the KCC representative on the Planning Committee on an interim basis, pending the formal approval of an alternative representative nominated now by the Council.
- 2.2. The recruitment process for the two vacant Board members is ongoing. The time for applications to be submitted has passed and between 30 and 35 applications were received. These are now being assessed within MHCLG to determine a shortlist for interview.
- 2.3. We are no longer expecting to have a new 'Boardroom Apprentice' join us this year under the government's programme.
- 2.4. As referred to in my last paper for the November meeting, in line with Cabinet Office guidance for ALBs, the Corporation is required to conduct an externally facilitated Board effectiveness review in 2026. An independent assessor has been appointed, Dr Malcolm Morley, and his review has already commenced. Malcolm will be observing the Board meeting as part of his review as well as interviewing board members, senior staff and some stakeholders. The review is expected to be completed by the end of February.

3. Spending Review, Business Plan and Corporate Plan

- 3.1. MHCLG are still in the business planning process to determine allocations for EDC, and other areas of spend, for 26/27 and beyond. As a result, we have not yet had formal confirmation of our allocations for 26/27 – 29/30, although we have received an informal indication of the likely settlement.
- 3.2. As previously discussed and agreed with the board and the Ministry, we will finalise the 2025-30 Corporate Plan once the financial allocations for the later years have been confirmed. Given the informal indication and expectation that the formal confirmation of budget is imminent, we have been revisiting the draft corporate plan that we had been developing, with board input, over the last 12 months. We are proposing to share an updated draft with the board at the Strategy Day on 3 March and use that as an opportunity for the board to provide any further comment and input.

- 3.3. We have also been working on the draft Annual Business Plan for 2026/27 in anticipation of budget confirmation. A draft of this plan will also be shared at the Strategy Day for board input and comment. All being well, we will then bring a final draft version for sign off to the meeting on the 18th March, ahead of seeking formal Ministerial approval.

4. Quarter 3 2025/26 Performance Report

- 4.1. So far, there has been good progress against both the business plan key actions and KPIs.
- 4.2. Attached at Annex A is a report on our overall performance against the key actions set out in our annual Business Plan for 2025/26, together with progress against the quantitative KPIs.
- 4.3. Highlights include:
- 152 homes were completed in Q3, taking the yearly total so far to 407 completions. 100 of these meet the definition of our diversification KPI.
 - Projects within the programme are progressing, with work continuing on the development of Business Cases for Ebbsfleet Central West and Health and Wellbeing Hub and early design work progressing on the Land at Northfleet Station project.
 - We are on target to meet the £18m of sustainable transport investment this year, particularly due to the Fastrack bus route from Whitecliffe to Bluewater completing in Summer 2025.
- 4.4. As highlighted at the November 2025 Board meeting, we are aware that some KPIs and corporate priorities will not be met this year, including our KPI on housing delivery. This is due primarily to a slow down in the housing market more generally causing developers to slow down production. For example, the developer at Cable Wharf has moved back completion of some units to summer 2026. As the number of housing completions is the basis for other KPI calculations, it is likely that other KPIs (e.g. Private Sector Investment) will also not be met.

5 Staffing

- 5.1 As Board are aware, we have offered the role of Director of Corporate Services to the preferred candidate following the recruitment process. They have accepted, and we expect them to start on 16 February.
- 5.2 As Board are aware, I have notified the Corporation of my retirement at the end of March 2026, after 8 and a half years as Chief Executive. The process to secure a new Chief Executive has progressed well and a preferred candidate has been identified following a rigorous recruitment process. Formal procedures are now in hand prior to any announcement being made.

6 Updated Data Retention and Disposal Policy

- 6.1 Late last year, as part of our rolling programme to review EDC policies to ensure they are up to date, EDC Directors reviewed our existing Data Retention and Disposal Policy. The Policy sets out the retention and disposal policy for all EDC records and defines how long records should be retained before they are destroyed.
- 6.2 The review found that a number of updates and clarifications were needed. The updated Policy is at **Annex B**. The Board is asked to approve the updated Policy.

7 Recommendation

- 7.1 Board is asked to **NOTE** the updates provided in this report and to **APPROVE** the updated EDC Data Retention and Disposal Policy at Annex B.

Annex A – Quarter 3 2025/26 Corporate Performance

2025/26 Corporate Performance Update – Quarter 3 (Progress to 31st December 2025)

The EDC's 2025/26 Business Plan set out a number of priority actions that the Corporation is seeking to deliver by the end of March 2026.

The table below reports on EDC's progress against each of these priorities as at 31st December 2025.

The table below provides a status update on each of these alongside a RAG rating as follows:

RAG Status	
GREEN	<i>We expect to meet/deliver the commitment by the end of the year.</i>
AMBER	<i>There is some slippage to delivery of the commitment and/or a risk that the annual target may not be achieved.</i>
RED	<i>We do not expect to meet/deliver the commitment by the end of the year.</i>

Commitment By the end of March 2026, we will have:	Comments (Progress up to 31st December 2025)	RAG STATUS
Subject to approval of the Outline Business Case for Ebbsfleet Central Phase 1, submitted reserved matters applications for the initial infrastructure works packages, progressed detailed design of the enabling and infrastructure works for the first phase through to RIBA Stage 3 (spatial co-ordination), completed the first of the two-stage contractor procurement process and initiated the Pre-Construction Services Agreement work programme with the appointed contractors.	<p>Following a review of anticipated funding availability and planning process timescales, in order to de-risk the pre-construction design and procurement work, a revised strategic programme for the project was approved by Project Board in September 2025.</p> <p>RIBA Stage 2 re-design work has been completed and was approved by the Ebbsfleet Central Project Board in December 2025. Work on RIBA Stage 2+ will commence in Q4 2025/26 ahead of RIBA Stage 3 which is anticipated to commence in Q2 2026/27 in accordance with the revised strategic programme.</p> <p>The first of the two stage contractor procurement process, the Invitation to Participate, will be issued in January 2026.</p>	GREEN

Annex A – Quarter 3 2025/26 Corporate Performance

Commitment By the end of March 2026, we will have:	Comments (Progress up to 31st December 2025)	RAG STATUS
<p>Established a robust remediation and de-risking strategy for the Northfleet Embankment East site and prepared and submitted an Outline Business Case for the project.</p>	<p>The remediation and de-risking strategy was completed by the end of Q3 2025/26. The output from this strategy is now being used to update the cost estimate for the scheme which will be brought together alongside a future design scope and programme for the next steps for the project in Q4 2025/26.</p>	<p>RED</p>
<p>Prepared and submitted a Strategic Outline Case for Ebbsfleet Central West and progressed work on the preferred way forward.</p>	<p>The Strategic Outline Case was reviewed by Project Board in December 2025 and endorsed following minor amendments. It will be presented to EDC Investment Panel in early Q4 2025/26.</p>	<p>GREEN</p>
<p>Prepared and submitted a Strategic Outline Case for the proposed Health and Wellbeing Hub.</p>	<p>The Strategic Outline Case for the Health and Wellbeing Hub is being finalised for consideration by Investment Panel in February before being submitted to the EDC Board.</p>	<p>GREEN</p>
<p>Completed the required legal agreements to facilitate a start on site of the Alkerden Community Hub works.</p>	<p>It is anticipated that completion of legal agreements for the Alkerden Hub will be delayed beyond March 2026. Work continues to progress legals and engage with all parties to achieve a start on site in Spring / Summer 2026.</p>	<p>AMBER</p>
<p>Achieved further progress on a number of community facilities including completing RIBA stage 2 (concept design) for the land and buildings adjacent to Northfleet Station and at Castle Hill Block D.</p>	<p>Northfleet Station: RIBA Stage 2 design is now complete. Resident engagement took place in Q3 2025/26 with further engagement planned in Q4 2025/26. The procurement of an Operator launched in Q3 2025/26 and is due to completed by the end of Q4 2025/26.</p> <p>Castle Hill Block D: A preferred operational model has now been identified and work is underway to test the preferred way forward and revise the client brief accordingly.</p>	<p>GREEN</p>
<p>Achieved further progress on a number of sustainable transport projects including submitting the Strategic Outline Case for Ebbsfleet Gardenway, commencing implementation of a new approach to 'wayfinding' and signage, and enabling the next phase of the Ebbsfleet Gateway planting scheme.</p>	<p>Grant funding agreement has been approved and signed which will enable KCC to procure further works for the Ebbsfleet Gateway project.</p> <p>The Ebbsfleet Gardenway project remains on hold, and the team will seek Project Board approval for an updated Wayfinding strategy before year end.</p>	<p>RED</p>

Annex A – Quarter 3 2025/26 Corporate Performance

Commitment By the end of March 2026, we will have:	Comments (Progress up to 31st December 2025)	RAG STATUS
<p>Concluded all works and agreements to facilitate KCC adoption of Springhead Bridge.</p>	<p>Inspection works of the underside of the bridge structure is close to completion with the final evaluation report due in February 2026. Following acceptance, KCC will issue the Certificate of Construction Compliance to EDC which will facilitate the Section 38 sign off and KCC adoption of the bridge.</p>	<p>GREEN</p>
<p>Reached agreement with Southern Water for the basis of investment by EDC to secure 'extra over' odour controls at the existing Northfleet Waste Water Treatment Works as part of their overall improvements works.</p>	<p>Discussions with Southern Water are continuing over the proposal for developing a new grant agreement for the design and cost certainty for extra over odour controls at the Northfleet site. Southern Water are currently reviewing the delivery timescales for their capacity upgrade works.</p>	<p>AMBER</p>
<p>Met our statutory planning performance targets across the year by continuing to provide a high-quality planning service which engages with developers in a positive and constructive way during the entire development lifecycle.</p>	<p>Planning performance is exceeding the statutory targets. Proactive engagement has taken place with developers across Ebbsfleet including those working on developments at Western Cross, Alkerden, Ebbsfleet Central and Harbour Village. These discussions cover the pre-application process all the way through to delivery and completion.</p>	<p>GREEN</p>
<p>Successfully delivered our annual programmes of activity in respect of Inclusive Growth, Community Development, Arts & Culture and Environmental Sustainability, achieving the stated project outputs.</p>	<p>All projects are progressing well and are on track to deliver their planned outputs by the end of the year. The work has included hosting or supporting various events including welcome events, drop-in sessions, heritage walks and the outdoor cinema. Work with the Place Partnership has continued along with the Young Persons Design Group. Education Outreach and Employability Programmes have taken place. The environmental sustainability work has included water saving initiatives, travel monitoring, a study of the River Ebbsfleet and exploring a materials re-use hub.</p>	<p>GREEN</p>
<p>Continued to strengthen the reputation of the Corporation as an effective delivery organisation through engagement with community and corporate stakeholders, including attending events, speaking engagements, and industry networking to demonstrate the successes and work achieved.</p>	<p>The Corporation continues to attend community events and drop-in sessions with local stakeholders and has engaged with opportunities to contribute to industry networking events and engagement, including UKREiF, MIPIM and the Academy of Urban Congress.</p>	<p>GREEN</p>
<p>Implemented and embedded the new requirements of the Procurement Act 2023.</p>	<p>Completed.</p>	<p>GREEN</p>

Annex A – Quarter 3 2025/26 Corporate Performance

Commitment By the end of March 2026, we will have:	Comments (Progress up to 31st December 2025)	RAG STATUS
Put into place arrangements that enable us to efficiently call off technical and other specialist services to support us in our project delivery.	The procurement process to appoint a single supplier for call-off comprehensive technical and professional design services was completed at the end of Q2 2025/26.	GREEN
Continued to develop our organisational effectiveness through implementing our organisational development action plan for 2025/26, and ensuring we have the right skills and capacity within our staff team to deliver our work programme.	<p>We agreed our organisational development plan for 2025/26 earlier in the year, including a range of actions on our readiness for the next SR/corporate plan period, our ways of working, staff engagement, learning & developing and staff health & wellbeing.</p> <p>Many of the actions have already completed. We conducted our annual staff survey in September 2025, signed up to the 'disability confident' employers scheme the same month, and completed the replacement of the Observatory viewing decking platform later in 2025. We have recruited to vacancies throughout the year, including recent campaigns for our new CEO and Director of Corporate Services.</p>	GREEN
Published a new corporate plan that sets out our medium-term commitments following the outcome of the Government's Spending Review process.	A Corporate Plan is substantially drafted and has been shared with the Board and MHCLG. As agreed, it will be finalised once the future years spending allocations are confirmed and will then be submitted for Ministerial approval.	AMBER

Annex A – Quarter 3 2025/26 Corporate Performance

Table 2: Key Performance Indicators		
Category	2025/26 Measure and Target	Performance Summary at end of Q3
Housing Delivery	During the year EDC will facilitate 565 new home completions.	<p>NOT ON TARGET</p> <p>407 homes have been completed so far this year within the Ebbsfleet Urban Development Area boundary at the following sites: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ebbsfleet Green/Weldon – 3 • Harbour Village - 96 • Ashmere/Western Cross – 91 • Alkerden 5A – 40 • Alkerden 5B – 87 • Alkerden South - 40 • Croxton & Garry - 50 <p>16 homes have also been completed at Gilbert Close which were funded from s106 funds paid to Dartford Borough Council from the Eastern Quarry development.</p> <p>During the year revised forecasts have been received from Keepmoat on their Cable Wharf site and development has started later than anticipated at the Bellway scheme at Alkerden Parcel 3. The forecasts on other sites have remained largely unchanged and so it is unlikely that the reduction in completions will be made up elsewhere.</p> <p>Overall completion is likely to be approximately 500 homes.</p>
Quality of Homes and Neighbourhoods	100% of the homes consented through reserved matters approval or full planning permission, percentage that have passed the Building for a Healthy Life assessment.	<p>ON TARGET</p> <p>100% of the residential development that has been granted so far this year under reserved matters approvals has passed Building for a Healthy Life.</p>

Annex A – Quarter 3 2025/26 Corporate Performance

Table 2: Key Performance Indicators		
Category	2025/26 Measure and Target	Performance Summary at end of Q3
Diversification of Housing	65 homes completed that contribute to a more diversified housing mix.	<p>MET</p> <p>100 Private Rented Sector homes have been completed at the following sites: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alkerden Phase 5B – 81 - Ashmere Phase 2 - 19 <p>Further completions are forecast during the remainder of the year.</p>
Affordable Homes	<p>20% of all new homes completed that meet the definition of 'Affordable' according to current planning regulations</p> <p>Note: the target for Ebbsfleet overall upon completion is 30%.</p>	<p>ON TARGET</p> <p>80 affordable homes have been completed so far this year at the following sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alkerden South – 36 • Alkerden 5B - 6 • Ashmere – 9 • Harbour Village – 29
Parks, Open Spaces and Recreation Areas	9.5 hectares of new or improved parks, open spaces and recreation areas completed during the year in the Ebbsfleet urban development area.	<p>NOT ON TARGET</p> <p>The recreation areas associated with the Alkerden Secondary School (temporary) which are dual use and therefore available to the community have been delivered. Other areas of open space being delivered as part of the community buildings at Ebbsfleet Green and allotment provision is also forecast for completion this year. However, some other areas of open space have been delayed from this year to next; this includes the playing pitches at Rosherville Primary School and Bevans Parks in Harbour Village. Currently we are forecasting c6.5ha to be delivered.</p>

Annex A – Quarter 3 2025/26 Corporate Performance

Table 2: Key Performance Indicators		
Category	2025/26 Measure and Target	Performance Summary at end of Q3
Investment in Social and Community Infrastructure	£60m of investment in social and community infrastructure in the financial year.	<p>NOT ON TARGET</p> <p>Further investment has taken place at Alkerden Education Campus, the Ebbsfleet Green Community Buildings, the Henley Building and Rosherville Primary School. The level of investment during to the end of Q3 was £43m. There are delays to some projects which will reduce the level of investment in social and community infrastructure during the year, the most notable of these is Alkerden Hub. We are therefore now forecasting £56.8m investment during the year.</p>
Sustainable Transport Investment	£18m of sustainable transport investment.	<p>ON TARGET</p> <p>The Fastrack bus route through Whitecliffe to Bluewater via Hedge Place roundabout was completed and operational in Summer 2025.</p> <p>Based on this information and a review of the progress on the other elements which feed into this KPI, we are on target to reach £18m of investment this year.</p>
Private Sector Investment	£200m of private sector investment.	<p>NOT ON TARGET</p> <p>Based on the current calculations, we have delivered £159m of private sector investment so far this year.</p> <p>Due to the expected fall in the housing number for 2025/26, we will not meet the target of £200m of private sector investment.</p> <p><i>*Calculated as Gross Development Value (no. of homes completed x average sales price over each reporting year [from Dartford Borough and Gravesham Borough] using HPI data, less a developer margin of 20% + the private sector element of; the Investment in Commercial Development, Investment in Social and Community Infrastructure and Sustainable Transport KPIs.</i></p>

Annex A – Quarter 3 2025/26 Corporate Performance

Table 2: Key Performance Indicators		
Category	2025/26 Measure and Target	Performance Summary at end of Q3
Employment Creation	1,000 construction job opportunities enabled through investment in the Ebbsfleet urban development area.	<p>ON TARGET</p> <p>Based on the investment in commercial development, private sector homes, sustainable travel and social and community infrastructure up to Q3 in 2025/26; 811 construction jobs have been enabled.</p> <p>We are expecting to meet the target of 1,000 construction jobs.</p>
Community Participation	<p><u>Community Sentiment</u></p> <p>80% of residents of the new neighbourhoods within the urban development area responding to EDC's residents' satisfaction survey believe there is a strong sense of community feeling in their neighbourhoods</p> <p><u>Community Involvement</u></p> <p>25% of residents of the new neighbourhoods within the urban development area responding to EDC's residents' satisfaction survey say that they get involved in community activities</p>	<p>MET</p> <p>The annual Resident Satisfaction Survey was undertaken in Q3 with the following results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 84.5% of residents responding to the survey believe there is a strong sense of community feeling in their neighbourhoods. - 34% of residents responding to the survey say they get involved in community activities.

EDC 026/001 ANNEX B

Note for Board: *this Policy is an updated version of the existing policy and is presented to the Board for approval at the 4 February 2026 Meeting.*

Data Retention and Disposal Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document describes the retention and disposal policy for all “Records” (see definition below), regardless of format, held by Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC, also referred to as ‘the Corporation’ in this document)
- 1.2. This policy defines how long Records should be retained before they are either destroyed or transferred to a successor organisation.
- 1.3. This policy document will be reviewed annually and updated accordingly.
- 1.4. There are various pieces of legislation which outline data retention requirements. These include, but are not limited to:
 - Freedom of Information Act 2000 – including the Code of Practice Section 46 (FOIA)
 - The UK General Data Protection Regulations (the UK GDPR)
 - Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA)
 - Data Use and Access Act 2025 (DUAA)
 - Public Records Act 1958
 - Limitation Act 1980
 - Inquiries Act 2005

2. Definition and terminology

- 2.1. Terms used within this policy are defined as follows:
 - “Records” are defined as information/data created, received and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business;
 - “Retention” means the length of time for which records are to be kept. Thus, it represents and will be expressed as a disposal period;
 - “Disposal” in this context does not just mean destruction: it embraces any action taken [or yet to be taken] to determine the fate of records including transfer to a permanent archive.

- 2.2. Where it is not yet possible to determine the disposal of the records, they may be scheduled for “Review” at a later date. This type of review involves considering the records at a later date at which it is hoped to determine their final disposal

3. Good records and information management

- 3.1. The purpose of putting in place good records and information management procedures within the Corporation is to ensure that records are kept in such a way that:

- they can readily be retrieved when required (they do not just exist for immediate business use);
- it reduces the risks associated with litigation by making it easier to identify and retrieve relevant information;
- ensures clear accountability and provides an audit trail;
- allows records to be easily identified for historical and research purposes;
- protects information which is a valuable resource.

4. Benefits of having a retention and disposal policy

- 4.1. The benefits to the Corporation in having a retention and disposal policy are to:

- only keep records for as long as there is a business need;
- reduce the volumes and costs of both paper and electronic records storage;
- prevent duplicates of documents being maintained;
- make it easier to find and share information;
- improve the working environment by reducing storage space;
- comply with specific legal and regulatory requirements including the Freedom of Information Act the Data Protection Act) and the Public Records Acts;
- support accountability through the retention of records;(including the availability of archival records of genuine historical value);
- demonstrate that the disposal of information records has been carried out according to an agreed policy;
- avoid the costs and potential liabilities of retaining information EDC does not really need and which is likely to result in legal discovery actions and possible involvement in third party disputes.

5. EDC retention schedule

- 5.1. Records should only be kept for as long as there is a business and legislative need for them.
- 5.2. If there is no defined retention period for EDC Records (see full retention spreadsheet) it is the responsibility of the relevant Information Asset Owners (IAO) to determine an appropriate retention period based on 5.1.
- 5.3. IAOs have ownership of their Records and are therefore responsible for ensuring adherence to these retention rules. IAOs are responsible for ensuring the destruction of Records has been actioned as and when required.
- 5.4. The summary table at Annex A shows the retention periods used by the Corporation based on guidance on the subject by The National Archives (TNA). Ancillary to this Policy is a spreadsheet that sets out full details on specific retention timescales.

6. Paper records

- 6.1. All paper records at the end of their retention period will be either identified for destruction or for review of potential historical value.
- 6.2. Paper records that become due for destruction (which is dependent on their retention category) must be disposed of by an appropriate and secure process, to comply with the Data Protection regulations.
- 6.3. Paper records, of a confidential nature must be disposed of by using the confidential waste bins. The contents of the bins are collected regularly and shredded.
- 6.4. Paper records identified as being of potential historical value will be passed to the National Archive.

7. Electronic records

- 7.1. As part of a continual exercise, EDC staff will identify any electronic records that have reached the end of their retention period. These records will be reviewed to see if they are of historical value. Any that are of historical value will be transferred to The National Archive.
- 7.2. Those records that no longer need to be retained are to be “removed” in accordance with EDC’s retention policy.

- 7.3. Staff must note that with electronic records, standard file deletion or emptying the recycle bin only removes the pointers to the data, leaving the data itself recoverable with specialized tools. Therefore, with some electronic records e.g. those containing sensitive information, secure data destruction methods are necessary to prevent data breaches and ensure compliance with data protection regulations.
- 7.4. Expert advice will be required before disposing of any computers and computer media which have been used by EDC.

8. Deposited documents

- 8.1. Deposited Documents are legal documents such as:

- Compulsory Purchase Orders;
- Deeds;
- Leases;
- Transfer Schemes;
- Statutory Appointments and Instruments;
- Sealed Planning Orders.

- 8.2. Owing to their content and status, the Corporation (or its successor organisation) will keep such records in perpetuity.

9. Email accounts

- 9.1. Email accounts used by staff are not recognised as part of the official Corporation record keeping system. Therefore, it is the responsibility of staff to ensure that any emails relating to business activity are saved on the relevant section of the Corporation's record sharing system (currently SharePoint) such that the record is available to the wider organisation and are not kept solely within individual mailboxes.
- 9.2. It is the responsibility of the individual working in conjunction with their Line Manager / Director to ensure that all business-related Records / information within their email account are correctly stored on the Corporation's record sharing system or the relevant IT software system e.g. Idox (for planning application / decision related emails).

10. Personal Drives

- 10.1. Personal drives used by staff are also not recognised as part of the official Corporation record keeping system. Any business-related records, regardless of electronic format, should be saved by staff within the Corporation's record sharing system. This includes drafts where they are deemed by business areas as being required as formal records.

11. Record destruction

- 11.1. The Corporation's policy is to follow best practise guidance on the destruction of records.

12. Access to information records

- 12.1. A freedom of information (FOI) request allows individuals to access recorded information held by public authorities. This right is established by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
- 12.2. Environmental information can be requested under the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR).
- 12.3. Nb Any information considered as part of the process of answering a request (but not released) that has been made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Environmental Information Regulations 2004 or the Data Protection Act 1998, must be held for 6 months from the date of the last communication about the request, or related appeals.
- 12.4. This allows for the Information request appeal process to be exhausted. This will include internal reviews, any complaint made to the Information Commissioner, and any appeals from decision notices. After that date information can be destroyed or retained as a record if required for business purposes.

Annex A

Summary Record Retention Schedule

Note - See separate spreadsheet for full details

Record subject	Retention Period
Accounting	Varies between 1 year and 7 years depending on type
Board	Board minutes retain permanently
Building(s) related	Varies depending on type
Central Government Requests	Varies between 1 year and 6 years depending on type
Complaints	Varies depending on type / activity
Consultations – (including Central Government consultations involving EDC)	2 years
Corporate Information	Varies depending on type
Financial Information / reporting	Varies between 1 year and 6 years depending on type
Information (general)	Varies depending on type
Internal audit	Varies between 1 year and 6 years depending on type
Information Technology (IT)	Varies depending on type
Legal records	Deposited documents kept for perpetuity
Performance	1 year
Personnel / HR	Varies between 18 months (following maternity leave) or until employee's 100th birthday depending on type
Planning	Varies – most retained permanently
Press and Public Relations	Varies depending on type
Procurement (and contracts)	Contracts retained for 20 years
Project Information	Varies depending on type
Social Media	see EDC acceptable IT use policy
Surveys	2 years

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation Board

PART I BOARD ITEM

Title of Paper: Planning, Design and Delivery Report

Paper Number: EDC 026/002

Presented By: Mark Pullin, Director of Planning & Place

Sub Committee: Planning Committee

Purpose of Paper and Executive Summary

This paper provides Board with an update on the planning and design functions of EDC and the overall delivery of Ebbsfleet including housing numbers.

The paper summarises the progress seen on each of the strategic development areas. Planning casework is currently focussed on Harbour Village and Alkerden and a reserved matters application was submitted in December from Dandara for two parcels at Western Cross. 123 further housing completions are being reported this month with 35 starts. The annual housing completions has now reached 407 but the number of homes under construction has dropped to 423. Planning Committee approved the fourth phase of Ashmere in December. A successful pilot session of a Community Review Panel has taken place. The engagement on Swanscombe Peninsula is underway and will complete in mid-February.

EDC Business Plan & KPIs

The speed and quality of planning decisions, the quality of new development and delivery performance are all priority areas for the EDC in relation to the Business Plan and KPIs which align with National Performance requirements for the determination of planning applications.

Recommendation FOR INFORMATION

Board is asked to **NOTE** the update.

Annexes

Annex A – Ebbsfleet Delivery Dashboard

Delegation

Not Applicable

Financial Impact

This paper may contain information on developer contributions and obligations secured through S106 agreements.

Legal Impact

This paper may contain information on developer contributions and obligations secured through S106 agreements.

Equalities Impact

The public sector equality duty is considered in planning reports.

Stakeholders Impact

Stakeholder engagement takes place through the planning consultation process.

Sponsor Impact

Not Applicable

1. Development Sites Update

1.1 Outlined below are the key areas of work currently being undertaken on the development sites across Ebbsfleet. Overall there are positive signs that housebuilders are looking to future phases of development with various new applications or pre-application discussions taking place. However delivery of various phases of development and open spaces are delayed. We are seeking to increase our liaison with certain housebuilders to better understand these delays and ensure we are doing what we can to assist.

Ebbsfleet Central

- Discussions are ongoing regarding the s106 agreements required to enable the outline planning permission for Ebbsfleet Central East to be issued.
- Pre-application discussions are ongoing covering various future submissions including the Area Master Plan and Area Design Code for EC2, the multi-storey car park and the adjacent public open space.
- Further pre-application comments have been provided in respect of the UKPN primary substation proposed in Car Park D.

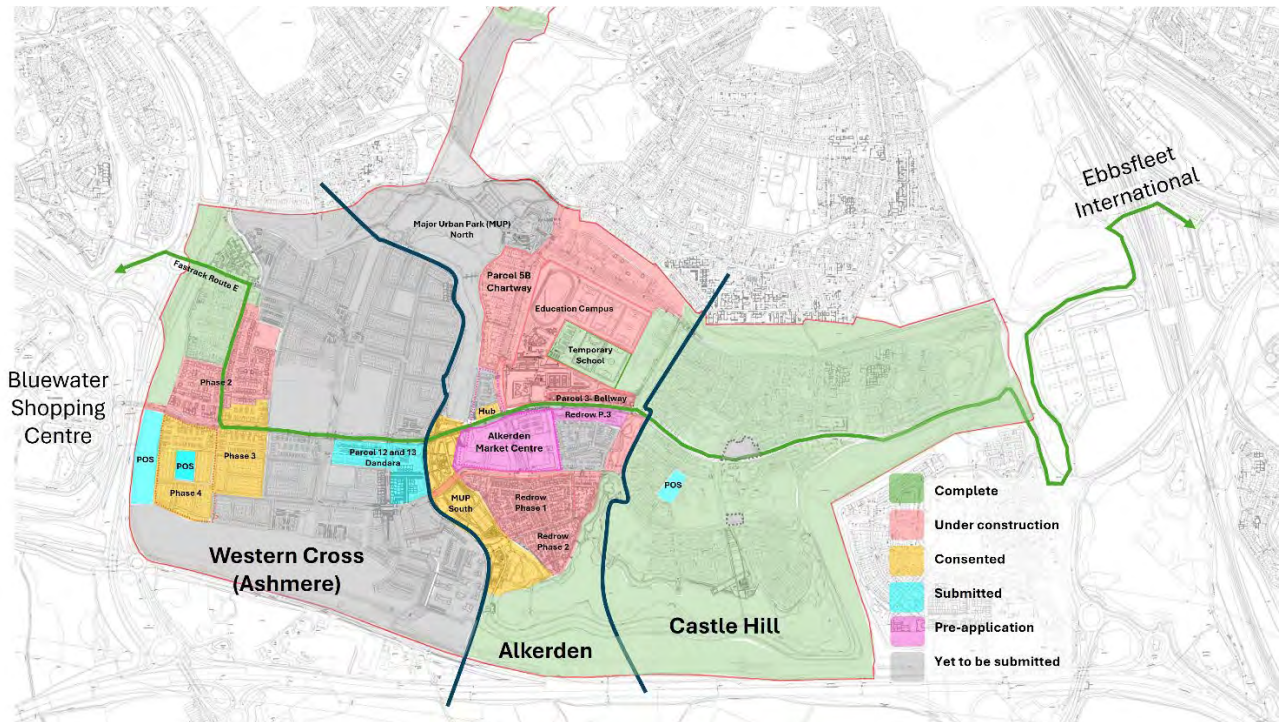
Ebbsfleet Green

- The final planning conditions for the Neighbourhood Hub (Weldon Heart) were approved in January ahead of imminent completion of that community building. We are continuing to work closely with the applicant to discharge all outstanding planning conditions and a non-material amendment application for the Community Hub (Weldon Wellbeing Pavillion).

Eastern Quarry

- Castle Hill: Second bridge across Castle Hill Lake has opened providing a circular leisure route.
- Alkerden Parcel 3: Bellway have commenced works onsite for this phase of 56 homes. Discharge of condition applications have been received and are under consideration.
- Alkerden Market Centre: Pre-application discussions are in progress with Henley Camland to review the Alkerden Area Master Plan and Area Design Code (AMP/ADC) and to make changes including the location of commercial uses, the types of residential development and approaches to centralised parking, to better reflect market demand.
- Alkerden South Phase 2: Redrow have commenced works onsite for their next phase for 88 dwellings and apartments. Discharge of condition applications have been received and under consideration.
- Alkerden South Phase 3: An initial pre-application meeting with Redrow has taken place for their next phase of Fastrack apartments and houses. With further pre-application meetings to be scheduled this year.
- Western Cross (Ashmere) 2: Vistry's apartment block C, comprising 19 Units has been transferred to a Private Sector Rental (PRS) investor. All the Housing Associated units have been handed over to Clarion and Vistry anticipate the remaining 57 units to be complete by mid-Summer this year.
- Western Cross (Ashmere) 4 – Approval of reserved matters for 228 dwellings granted by committee in December.

- Western Cross (Ashmere) Parcel 12 and 13 – Dandara have submitted a reserved matters application for 143 dwellings and consultation is underway.
- Fastrack – Patronage on Route E which runs through the quarry has doubled since opening in September 2025.



Northfleet Riverside

- Rosherville Primary School: Ongoing discussions with the applicant with specific focus on the proposed community use strategy. Current forecast for completion remains April 2026.
- Cable Wharf: Works to convert and restore the WT Henley Building are progressing well but internal works are delayed due to moisture in the building. Completion of the riverfront promenade is pending license from Port of London Authority relating to safety requirements for installation of riparian life-saving equipment to the flood defence wall.
- Former Berkeley Modular Housing Factory: Pre-application discussions have taken place with the new owners (Axle Logistics) regarding proposals for minor physical changes to support the building's function and attractiveness to the market, ahead of the building being marketed later in the year.
- Harbour Village Phase 1B: Installation of play equipment at Chimney View Park is still outstanding and various other landscape compliance matters have been raised with Bellway following a detailed landscape audit of this phase.
- Harbour Village Phase 2: Some planning conditions remain in breach but progress is being made to address the outstanding matters with Bellway.
- Harbour Village Phase 3A: Pre-commencement conditions have been submitted ahead of imminent start of site by Bellway. Discussions continue with Gravesham Borough Council to take the affordable rented homes and a

s106 deed of variation is expected to replace the shared ownership homes with discounted market housing.

- Bevals Park: Delivery is delayed from the initial programme but work is progressing with earthworks and land forming now complete.
- Abacus Corner: Determination of this full planning application for 68 homes, a commercial unit and highway improvements to support the Fastrack bus route is delayed following confirmation from Bellway that they want to amend the scheme for viability reasons. We are awaiting updated plans to be submitted.
- Employment Land: Various pre-commencement conditions have been submitted and are being considered. We are seeking a meeting with the landowner in February to understand their delivery programme and priorities for this land.

2. Housing and Delivery

2.1 The Ebbsfleet Delivery Dashboard is attached in Annex A.

2.2 This month we are reporting 123 completions and 35 starts bringing the annual totals to 407 completions and 155 starts. There are 423 homes currently under construction. The total number of new homes in the Ebbsfleet urban development area boundary is 5,251.

2.3 The completed homes this month came from Ashmere, Harbour Village and multiple housebuilders developing in Alkerden. The starts were also from Alkerden. There are currently 7 active housebuilding sites.

2.4 The allotments at Springhead Park have been handed over from Vistry to the Ebbsfleet Garden City Trust. The transfer for the allotments at Ebbsfleet Green from Redrow is expected in March/April.

2.5 The image below is a photograph of Alkerden 5B where Chartway are developing 162 homes. Chartway are making good progress with this scheme which is forecast for completion in 2026. The homes are being marketed by Packaged Living under the Chalkwood brand (see website [Ebbsfleet Valley New Homes | Chalkwood](#)).



3. Planning Committee Update

3.1 Planning Committee members met in December and formally considered the reserved matters application for 228 Ashmere 4 (image below). Officers also presented a series of planning activity reports and a delegated items report.



3.2 The current live applications which we anticipate will be reported to a future Planning Committee include:

- Harbour Village Phase 3B
- Abacus Corner – Northfleet Embankment West
- Western Cross Parcels 12 + 13
- Manor Way Redevelopment

3.3 Kent County Council has nominated Cllr Ryan Waters as their representative on the Planning Committee. Appointments to the Planning Committee are made by the Secretary of State and this nomination is currently with MHCLG.

4. Community Review Panel

4.1 In December we held a pilot session for a Community Review Panel. The Panel consisted of representatives from the Ebbsfleet Community Board and the Young Persons Design Group. The Ebbsfleet Central Team and their consultants presented the current ideas for the raised gardens public open space at Ebbsfleet Central for the Panel to review and comment on. There were helpful comments from the Panel primarily concerning how the space would be used and by who. The Panel reflected on their own experiences of living locally and what can be learnt from existing spaces when designing new ones.

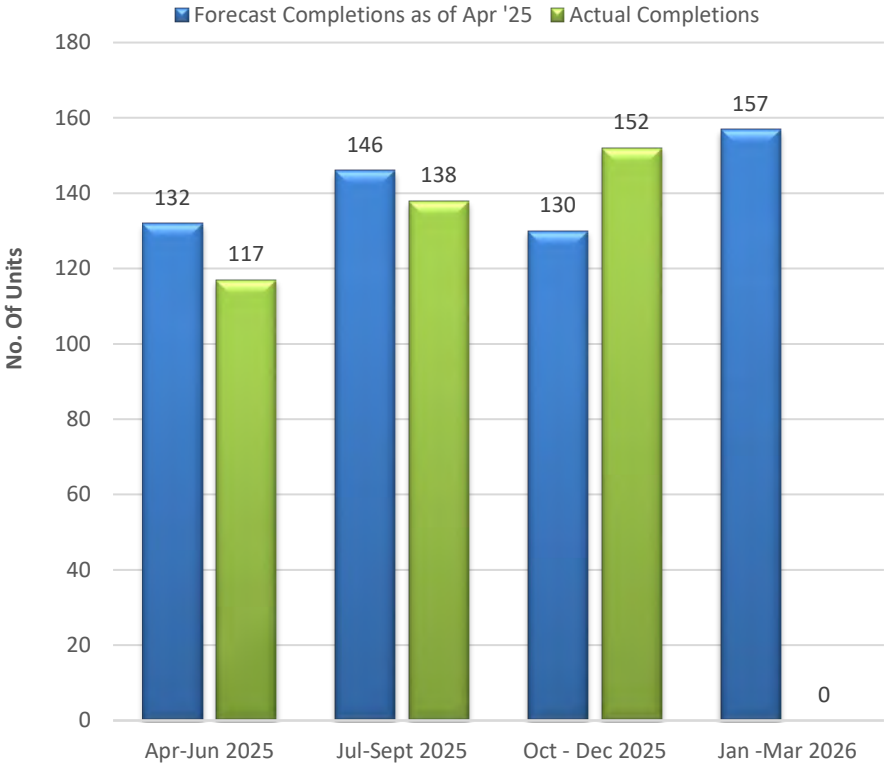
4.2 Following the session all attendees were invited to respond to a survey so we could gain feedback. The responses were positive and we are considering how we may take this work forward.

5. Swanscombe Peninsula Engagement

5.1 Following the discussion at the last board meeting the engagement work concerning the Swanscombe Peninsula has started. The stakeholder workshop took place on 21st January where landowners, statutory agencies, councilors, nature bodies and local authorities were invited. Community engagement will take place during the Winter Lights Festival on 6th February and at a dedicated event in Swanscombe on 7th February.

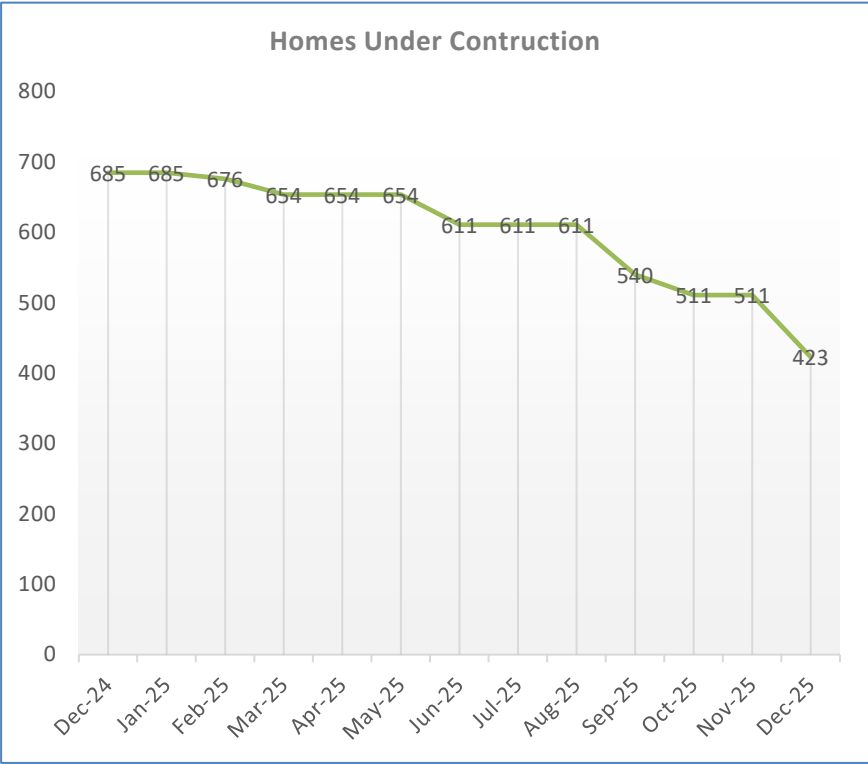
ANNEX A
EBBSFLEET DELIVERY
DASHBOARD – 04 FEBRUARY 2026

Housing Completions
Forecast V Actual 2025 - 2026



Completed Homes Per Site			
Location	Total No. of Homes	Completed homes as a % of overall likely quantum	Total No. of Affordable Homes
Weldon	911	100%	241
Castle Hill	1606	100%	425
Springhead Park	799	100%	288
Craylands Lane	100	100%	30
Croxton & Garry	232	100%	70
Cable Wharf	490	81%	193
Ashmere	459	13%	145
Alkerden	450	25%	137
Lawn Road	7	100%	0
Harbour Village	197	32%	74
Totals	5,251		1,603

Ebbsfleet Housing Numbers
Detailed Planning Consent
6,535
Housing Completions
5,251
Affordable Homes Completed
1,603
EDC 2025/26 Business Plan Target
Completions – 565



Top Risks to Delivery		
Risk	RAG Status	Current Trend
Maintain Design Quality during implementation	Amber	<div></div> (No Change)
Market Downturn	Red	(New Risk)
Supply Chains for Materials & Build Costs	Green	<div></div> (No Change)
Submission of Valid Applications and Revised Plans	Amber	<div></div> (Increasing Risk)
Delays in consultation responses	Amber	<div></div> (Decreasing Risk)
Supply of Labour on Site	Green	<div></div> (No Change)

HOUSING STARTS AND COMPLETIONS			
YEAR	STARTS	COMPLETIONS	BUSINESS PLAN TARGET
2014-2020	2588	2017	-----
2020-2021	282	347	300
2021-2022	657	533	525
2022-2023	817	619	630
2023-2024	559	680	580
2024-2025	567	648	620
2025-2026	155	407	565
Total	5,675	5,251	

Delivered/Improved Open Space	
Location	Hectares
Springhead Park	3.58
Weldon	3.71
Castle Hill	47.49
Ebbsfleet Cross	1.24

Community Space, Schools, Retail & Employment Space Completed	
Type of Space	Project
Primary Schools	Springhead Park (2FE) Cherry Orchard (2FE) Ebbsfleet Green (2FE)
Pub/Restaurants & Hotels	The Spring River PH Marstons Hotel - 104 Bed
Retail Units	Co-Op (Weldon) Co-Op (Castle Hill) Pharmacy (Castle Hill) Estate Agent (Castle Hill) Café’ (Castle Hill) Hair/Beauty Salon (Castle Hill)
Community Space	Eastgate Centre Castle Hill Community Centre
Office	Redrow Regional Office Building
Employment Space	Former Berkeley Modular Housing Factory

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation Board

PART I BOARD ITEM

Title of Paper: Ebbsfleet Living

Paper Number: EDC 026/003

Presented By: Kevin McGeough, Head of Strategy and Placemaking

Sub Committee: Not applicable.

Purpose of Paper and Executive Summary

To update the EDC Board on progress and activities related to community building in Ebbsfleet during the November 2025 to Mid-January 2026 period. Highlights over the period include the Japan Festival, Winter Fair and a wide range of activities and events to celebrate the Christmas holiday season, delivered by residents and community groups in the garden city. The Whitecliffe Lake parkrun builds on its successful launch with participation from Dame Kelly Holmes. A range of social value contributions from EDC partners make a significant impact to local priorities.

EDC Business Plan & KPIs

Matters covered in Ebbsfleet Living will impact on some of the priorities within EDC's Business Plan and associated KPIs, specifically KPI 12 'Sense of Community'.

Recommendation FOR INFORMATION

Board is asked to **NOTE** the Ebbsfleet Living report

Delegation

'Not Applicable'

Financial Impact

Activities funded by EDC are from within existing Placemaking and Community Building budgets.

Legal Impact

'Not Applicable'

Equalities Impact

EDC are committed to ensuring all events and activities which it supports are accessible to everyone. To achieve this, we work effectively with a wide range of community stakeholders, partners and with the local community, to ensure that equality and diversity are fully integrated into our assessment for funding.

Stakeholders Impact

Ebbsfleet Living highlights how the EDC delivers on our corporate objective to deliver a best practice example of healthy placemaking, where empowered residents are enabled to build the community and place of the garden city.

Sponsor Impact

Ebbsfleet Living highlights how the EDC supports MHCLG in delivering their ambitions to make ‘tangible improvements to the lives of local people.’

1. Introduction.

1.1. This paper sets out community building activity across the Ebbsfleet area including our neighbouring communities during the period from November 2025 to mid-January 2025.

1.2. This paper distinguishes as far as is possible, activities and events which have been:

- Delivered by the Ebbsfleet community, partners, or local stakeholders directly with or without EDC funding.
- Delivered through a partnership with EDC and stakeholders for the benefit of local communities with EDC and, or third-party funding.
- Delivered directly by EDC for the benefit of Ebbsfleet residents.

2. Community Building in Ebbsfleet.

2.1. The [Ebbsfleet Community Board](#) met on 13th January 2026 at the Observatory. The Board discussed highlights from events and activities over the holiday period and discussed lessons on how this might shape the calendar of events for the year ahead. The ‘Our Ebbsfleet’ sub-group shared progress on delivering the emerging portal, including a report on a training session held for other Community Board members the previous week to show them how to upload information. The new web platform will foster opportunities for information sharing, signposting, and fostering resident connectedness is due to be officially launched over the coming weeks. The city-wide events sub-group shared their ideas for a series of ‘seasonal trails’ to be developed across different neighbourhoods in the garden city, creating a calendar and library of walks. The group also reflected on the successes of the events that had been delivered over the past quarter, noting that the availability of new community venues at Weldon will be transformational for the community to deliver events and activities.

2.2. The [Ebbsfleet Garden City Trust](#) held a meeting of the [Ebbsfleet Community Fund](#) Panel on 3rd December to review bid for Round 3 of the fund. Four further applications were approved at the meeting. Furthermore, many of the activities delivered in the local area over the holiday period had secured previous approvals through the Round 2 process. The final bid round for the year is currently open for applications, with a closing date of February 27th, 2026. In anticipation of the forthcoming opening of the Weldon Heart community building, EGCT attended the Ebbsfleet Winter Fair in Castle Hill to promote both the Community Building and their plans for future community

buildings. EGCT were accompanied by Shanie, the future operator of Weldon Heart at the event to help explain how it would run and how residents can use the building, including how the booking process and pricing for the building will work.

- 2.3. Ebbsfleet's experience in Community Development through a New-Town-scale development continues to attract national interest, particularly in anticipation of the 12 future New Towns proposed by the New Towns Taskforce. Kevin McGeough presented evidence to 'The House of Lords Built Environment Committee' who have been undertaking an inquiry into [Creating Community in New Towns](#), to inform any future New Towns Act. The inquiry session on 18th November chaired by the Lord Gascoigne, specifically discussed whether 'community can be enabled in New Towns or does it grow organically'. Ebbsfleet was compared with the experiences of a community champion in Northstowe and an academic from the University of Liverpool. The lively session and EDC's contributions were televised live on Parliament TV and can be seen [here](#), whilst a transcript of the hearing can be read [here](#). Members of the Committee specifically requested a copy of EDC's recently published '[Space in the Place](#)' – [Community Infrastructure Model](#), as a good practice example of how to plan for community assets in a large-scale planned community. The Committee were also very interested to learn how EDC had enabled the setting up of Ebbsfleet Garden City Trust, and what lessons we could share from the process to inform future New Towns stewardship strategies.



Image of Kevin McGeough presenting evidence to the House of Lords Built Environment Committee.

- 2.4. EDC were also asked to present evidence to the Independent Commission for Neighbourhoods who are due to publish their conclusions 'Embedding social infrastructure as the defining element of 21st Century New Towns', over the forthcoming months.

2.5. EDC have also been asked to share our experience of Community Engagement; Community Development and Social Impact to be considered as part of the process of developing 'Community Engagement and Social Impact guidance' for the New Towns. This work has been commissioned by Homes England on behalf of MHCLG and is being carried out by Kevin Murray Associates.

3. Events and activities delivered by the Ebbsfleet community, partners, or local stakeholders themselves with or without EDC funding.

3.1. The 6th annual Ebbsfleet, pop-up Community Carols were held this year on 7th Dec, visiting four neighbourhoods including, Cable Wharf, Ashmere, Weldon and Castle Hill. Over 500 residents attended the carols, culminating in the largest event at Castle Hill, where over 250 residents gathered. The carol service is led by the Ebbsfleet Baptist Church, however, brings together other religious groups and businesses, including Blue Bean Café, who offered a warm drink. The carol service has become one of the most popular events in the garden city annually and is a great example of reaching out across neighbourhoods. Part of the funding for the travelling video screen is supported through the EGCT Community Fund.



3.2. The Ebbsfleet Events Committee delivered the 5th annual Winter Fair on the weekend of the 14th and 15th December at Castle Hill Village Amphitheatre. The Fair was delivered in partnership with Dartford Borough Council, who brought their 'Santa on Tour' to the event, attracting many hundreds of children, making this one of the highlights of the annual Ebbsfleet calendar. The Winter Fair continues to demonstrate the growing strength and sustainability of locally led community activity, with the event now fully self-financing and no longer requiring grant funding. The fair attracted strong attendance across the weekend and featured a wide range of stalls, performances and festive activities. EDC attended on the Sunday to engage with residents, promote a forthcoming water-saving project and other initiatives launching in 2026, respond to questions about the local area, and raise funds for the local charity Mary's Child through the sale of hot drinks.



The EDC Team joining many hundreds of residents at the hugely successful Winter fair run by the Ebbsfleet Events committee, to coincide with DBC's 'Santa on Tour'.

3.3. Local primary schools in Ebbsfleet have delivered a range of festive events, including Christmas discos, Santa Dash fun runs and volunteer-led community celebrations, demonstrating the growing confidence and capacity within the community to plan and deliver activity independently. These school-led initiatives have attracted strong participation from pupils, families and volunteers, raised funds for school communities, and made effective use of local facilities such as school halls and outdoor spaces. Collectively, these events highlight a maturing community ecosystem, where schools and parent groups are increasingly able to lead inclusive, well-organised events that strengthen social connections and contribute to a vibrant sense of place across Ebbsfleet. The 'Springhead Ignites' event was a particular success, where the local school Parent and teachers Association delivered an amazing light show which can be seen [here](#), with support from the EGCT Community Fund.



Promotions for the Christmas events at Ebbsfleet delivered by local Parents and Teacher Association's at Ebbsfleet Green and Springhead schools.

3.4. Continuing the Christmas spirit the Ebbsfleet Baptist Church have produced a wonderful version of The Nativity, with a garden city backdrop and local children as the stars. Although the holiday season has now past, this video is a great example of the sense of community evolving in the garden city.

<https://ebbsfleetbaptistchurch.org.uk/special-events/>

3.5. The 'Ebbsfleet Voices', community choir continues to grow and reach, with a busy schedule over the holiday period including at the; the Pop-Up Carols; the Winter Fare and on 19th Dec, they performed for 2 hours in Bluewater to support the Salvation Army collection there.



Ebbsfleet
Voices Choir
singing at the
Ebbsfleet
Winter Fair

3.6. The Ebbsfleet Community Runners had a fun Christmas Run on 21st Dec, around the lakes at Platinum Jubilee Park, whilst also hosting a health walking group for those who were less able.



Participants from
the Ebbsfleet
Community
Runners and those
joining the
Christmas Health
Walk and Fun Run

3.7. The Ebbsfleet Salvation Army gave out over 100 angel key rings at the Ebbsfleet Winter Fair and teamed up with Blue Bean and Ebbsfleet Baptist Church to offer a quiet reflective space on 22nd Dec in the Blue Bean Cafe.

3.8. The Blue Bean Café was also the packed-out setting on 23rd Dec for a Coffee Shop Craft session where 50 children joined created a range of decorative items celebrating the Christmas spirit.



Outputs from the children's Christmas Craft Fair held at Blue Bean Café.

3.9. To culmination of Christmas celebrations in Ebbsfleet saw a full house of over 120 residents in Castle Hill Community Centre for the annual Carols and Christingle service on Christmas Eve.



Residents attending the Christingle event at Castle Hill Community Centre.

- 3.10. Alkerden Church of England Academy has started to work closely with community partners to deliver initiatives that support families and strengthen local connections. A recent example is the school's collaboration with The Salvation Army, which saw the delivery of a Christmas gift appeal through a specially organised giving tree. Staff, families and the wider school community were invited to select a tag and provide a gift or voucher for a child or young person, helping to support families referred by the Salvation Army during the festive period. Projects such as this demonstrate the school's commitment to partnership working, social responsibility and embedding community values within everyday school life, while making a meaningful difference to local families.
- 3.11. The third event in the development of the public art piece for Alkerden Hub was held on 30th November. This Walk and Draw Event run by the artist Jo Chapman, and open to all residents, both gives opportunities for residents to learn about the creative process and will inform the final piece – which will be situated in the entrance of the new building. This engagement and involvement of the community in the development of the work is in line with the principles in EDC's Public Art Strategy. It is encouraging to see Henley Camland and their consultants taking such a positive co-design approach to developing a public art approach for a building that will become a civic hub for Whitecliffe residents, and a major asset managed by Ebbsfleet Garden City Trust.



Promotion for the Alkerden Public Art Project to encourage residents to get involved in the production of future public art for the Alkerden Hub building.

- 3.12. The Ebbsfleet Dads: Football and Mental Fitness project began in November. This 12-week programme is designed to support the wellbeing, connection and mental health of fathers living in Ebbsfleet. Delivered at Alkerden Academy in partnership with Ebbsfleet Green Primary School and Head in the Game, the initiative combines informal football activity with structured mental fitness tools in a welcoming, non-competitive environment where all abilities are encouraged to take part. Led by dads for dads and supported by volunteer coaches, the programme aims to reduce isolation, strengthen peer support networks and promote positive mental health through regular physical activities.
- 3.13. Alkerden United Football Club, a new community football club based in Ebbsfleet Valley was announced in November. Young players have been invited to register their interest for the 2025/26 season. The club will run teams for under-7s, under-8s, under-9s and under-10s, with all training and matches delivered at state-of-the-art 4G facilities and led by UEFA-qualified coaches. Trials are planned for June and July, offering local children the opportunity to get involved in organised grassroots football from the club's first season.
- 3.14. A women's social netball league has started at Castle Hill Tennis Courts; the weekly sessions provide an inclusive and welcoming opportunity for women of all abilities to take part in regular physical activity. Running every Wednesday evening, the league encourages participation from both experienced players and those returning to sport after a long break, helping to reduce barriers to involvement. The sessions promote physical health, confidence and social connection, while making positive use of local sports facilities and strengthening informal community networks within Ebbsfleet.



An encouraging number of new sporting initiatives to encourage health and wellbeing in the garden city have emerged over the past 2 months

- 3.15. Ebbsfleet Park Tennis continues with sessions running, every Sunday at 10am at Castle Hill Tennis Courts. Sessions are provided free and are very popular with the local community and remain fully booked with a waiting list.

4. Events and activities delivered through a partnership with stakeholders and EDC for the benefit of local communities with EDC or third-party funding.

4.1. Run by Blueprint Arts and the Ebbsfleet Cultural Forum, the Japan Festival was held over two weekends and several locations across the garden city and surrounding communities during November 2025. The festival included, sushi making, calligraphy, manga, tea ceremonies, origami, Japanese drumming, storytelling, a music and cinema evening. The event was well attended, and all ticked elements were sold out. The Ebbsfleet Cultural Forum is a group of residents who have come together as part of the wider Creative Exchange Project supported by local arts organisation Blue Print Arts to increase the capacity of cultural event delivery in Ebbsfleet. The project is jointly funded by Arts Council England and EDC. The Japan Festival is the last in a series of events run by the Forum over the two-year programme. Promotion of the event was shared across Ebbsfleet Garden City socials and distributed within the seasonal Ebbsfleet Living magazine, with over 5,000 copies distributed across the neighbourhoods. The project is currently being evaluated, the results of which will inform the next stage of the project.

4.2. Blueprint Arts and the Ebbsfleet Culture Forum have produced a film of the [Japan Festival](#) which gives a great insight to the range of activities offered and how much Ebbsfleet resident enjoyed having an insight to another culture. The video has been viewed across Ebbsfleet's social media over 700 times.



A range of events and activities from the Japan Festival held in several venues across the garden city.

4.3. [Whitecliffe Lake parkrun](#) has continued to demonstrate strong and sustained success since its launch on 1st November, quickly establishing itself as a popular weekly community event. Attendance has remained consistently high, with several hundred participants and volunteers taking part each Saturday, reflecting growing confidence, regular participation and strong local ownership. The profile of the event was further boosted by a recent visit from Dame Kelly Holmes, whose attendance highlighted the positive impact of parkrun in promoting physical activity, mental wellbeing and social connection. The combination of high participation levels and national recognition underscores the value of Whitecliffe Lake parkrun as a key contributor to Ebbsfleet's health, wellbeing and community-building identity, reinforcing our role as a pilot Healthy New Town. Although the license for the parkrun was funded by EDC, the event is now run by up to 50 volunteers each week. Increasing volunteering rates in Ebbsfleet has been a challenging target which is why it is great to see the number of volunteers for parkrun growing, including some children who have been co-directors with their parents. The parkrun is still attracting a number of tourists, but this is reducing, and more local people seem to be taking part.



Images of participants including Dame Kelly Holmes at the Whitecliffe Park Run.

4.4. With funding from EDC, Construction Youth Trust delivered their ever-popular Building Future Skills 3-day programme at the Observatory on 12-14th November for 22, year-12 students from Wilmington Academy and St John's. The programme included a tour of Ebbsfleet and an on-site tour of Alkerden Academy with contractors, Graham. The students worked in groups to design a school of their own and present to their peers and professionals working on the project. Students also received CV writing advice, lessons on applying for apprenticeships and each had a mock interview with a professional from EDC and our partners. Staff from Graham, Orbit, Townsend & Turner and ARUP, as well as EDC supported the workshop. The partnership has been shared across LinkedIn [here](#)

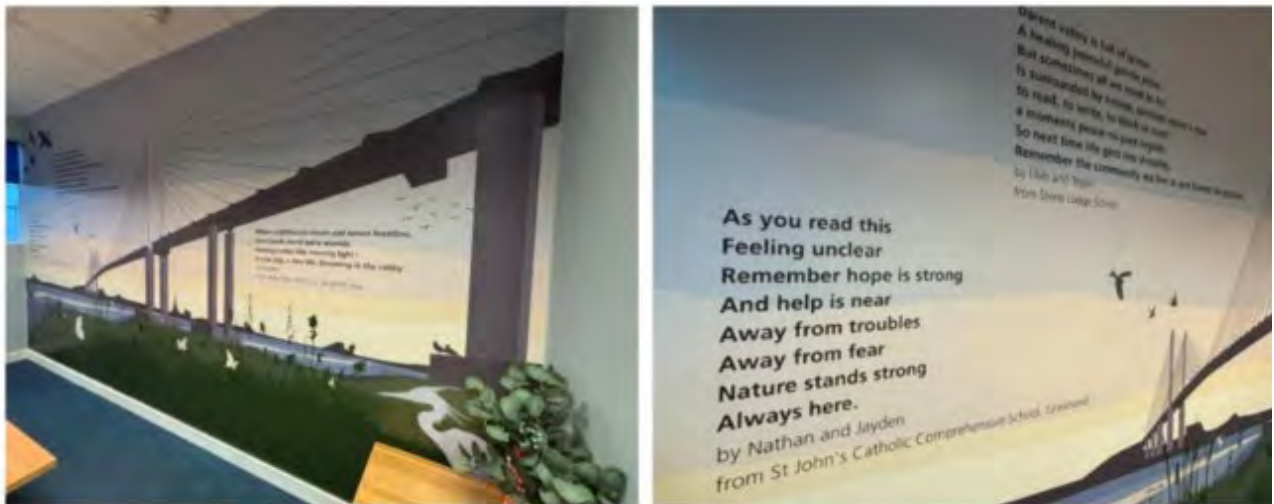


Images of participants at the EDC funded Building Future Skills programme, delivered by Construction Youth Trust

4.5. EDC and our Ebbsfleet Central supplier M3 attended the November 13th Ebbsfleet Business Forum where M3 represented the Ebbsfleet Central team offering free professional advice to SMEs, as part of their social value commitments.

4.6. The Young Mambos Careers Service, funded by EDC continued at full capacity over November offering 1-2-1 sessions for 36 local young people helping them gain access to future jobs. 6 further sessions will be available after Christmas, including group face-to-face, and individual on-line sessions.

4.7. EDC have used social value contributions from our consultants to support the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) at Darent Valley Hospital to transform their drab family room into a more comfortable space in which to hold private and often upsetting conversations with relatives of patients. EDC brought together a charity supporting women into work through painting and decoration training (OWE CIC), with Ebbsfleet Central architects, Allies & Morrison who then collaborated with our local schools to design a mural for the wall. Poems were picked from 3 local students to be incorporated into the mural. On 3rd December, students, EDC and Allies & Morrison were invited by the staff at the ICU to see mural in situ. It was a very moving afternoon, with proud students and parents admiring the touching words now on display for anyone using the ICU to see. A wonderful example of collaboration and social value activity in action for the benefit of the wider communities across Dartford and Gravesham. The press release for this project can be viewed [here](#).



Images from the refreshed ICU at Darent Valley Hospital where EDC co-ordinated social value input to transform the family room, including with poetry written by local students.

4.8. On 26th November, EDC staff joined staff from Gravesham Borough Council to assist with and judge the year 8 'Dragon's Den' activity at Northfleet School for Girls. The whole year group competed in groups to redesign and repurpose the former Debenhams building in Gravesend Town Centre. Some amazing ideas were proposed from retail and hospitality to some wellbeing, charitable purposes such as helping people with addiction and anxiety. There was even a cinema for cats and their owners suggested.

4.9. Lawn Primary School in Northfleet launched an appeal for support in the aftermath of the Portland Building fire, which forced the school to close for 2 weeks, having a knock-on effect for their ability to raise funds for Christmas celebrations for the pupils. EDC supported the school, by hosting the appeal on our Match My Project portal, and signposting to Ebbsfleet suppliers and housebuilders to our Match My Project. Bellway provided 5 hampers, for a raffle which raised £282, together with our Resident Satisfaction Survey contractor, Lake Communications who gave a £250 donation helping the children to celebrate Christmas at school.



Image of the donations generated through EDC's promotion of the Lawn Primary School Appeal

4.10. Consultants from the Ebbsfleet Central project delivered 2 further design workshops at Thamesview School on 19th November and Gravesend Grammar School on 15th December, as part of their social value contributions. Representatives from EDC, Allies & Morrison, Pell Frischman, LDA landscaping, M3, Hilson Moran and AECOM delivered the workshops to over 100 students. Working in groups they designed a part of the Ebbsfleet Central scheme from the point of view of a variety of specific personas. To date the workshops with Ebbsfleet Central consultants has reached almost 400 students in 4 schools, with another 5 workshops to be delivered before the end of this academic year.



Outputs from the design workshop held at Gravesend Grammar School

5. Events and activities delivered directly by EDC for the benefit of residents in Ebbsfleet and neighbouring communities.

5.1. During the reporting period, EDC supported a number of locally led events including through officer support, coordination, promotion and partnership working. EDC also continued to support resident engagement through digital promotion of volunteering opportunities, wellbeing programmes and community events, helping to broaden reach and participation. Examples included, monthly community drop-in sessions, providing residents with accessible opportunities to speak directly with the team, ask questions about the development programme and find out more about local activities. The November drop-in was held at Eastgate, followed by a December session at the Observatory. Across both sessions, residents raised queries about forthcoming commercial spaces, the delivery and use of new community buildings, and opportunities to get involved through volunteering. The sessions also provided a platform to promote upcoming local events and projects, helping to strengthen awareness, improve transparency and maintain regular, face-to-face engagement with the community.



Promotion for the monthly Ebbsfleet Drop-in sessions for residents.

5.2. Through the 'Get Active in Ebbsfleet' BetterPoints Christmas Gift Campaign, EDC encouraged residents to donate their BetterPoints to local charities. Residents earn Betterpoints by walking, running, cycling or wheeling in the local area, earning them points which they can convert into High Street vouchers. Through this campaign points were donated to 5 local charities instead, including, Mary's Child Kent, Ellenor Hospice, Hive Hope, and Dartford and Gravesham Foodbanks. Residents were also able to vote for their favourite charity which received an additional £100 from Betterpoints. This initiative aligned with EDC's sustainability and wellbeing objectives and supported a range of local charities at a critical time of year, while reinforcing positive behaviour change and community generosity.

5.3. Across November, EDC continued to promote the 2025 Resident Satisfaction Survey, providing residents with an opportunity to share feedback on their experience of living in Ebbsfleet. Promotion across social media and community networks generated early engagement and reinforced the importance of resident voice in shaping future priorities. Almost 900 face-to-face or online completions were reached, against a target of 800. The responses are currently being analysed and will be presented to EDC Board at their March meeting before being shared via email to those who requested it and on the EDC website early in spring 2026.

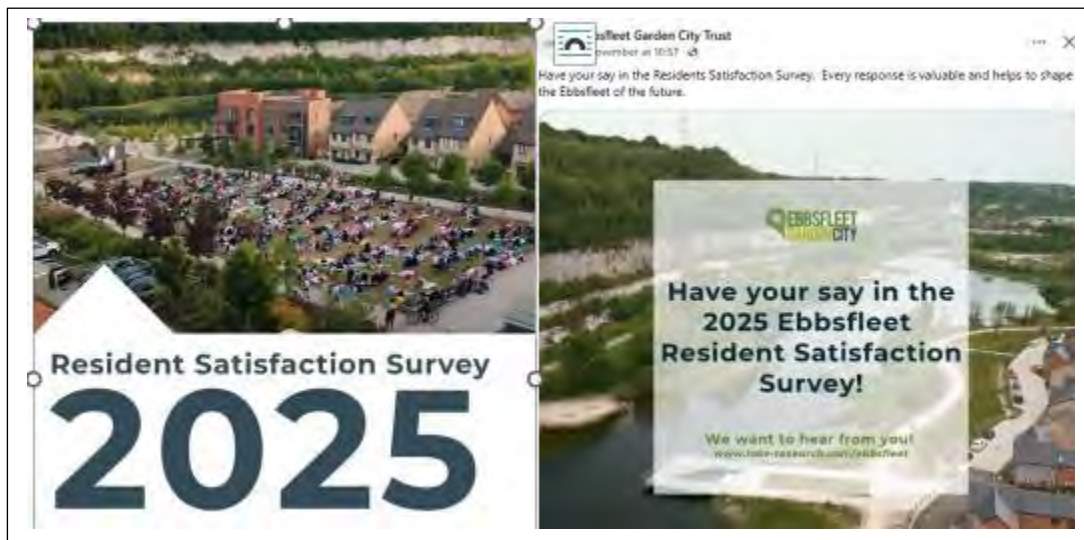


Image of promotions for the Ebbsfleet residents Satisfaction Survey.

5.4. Kevin McGeough joined colleagues from Homes England and Urban and Civic to discuss challenges and opportunities for community development in New Towns at the national Place Pizazz Conference in Chester on 12th November 2025. Delegates were very interested to learn about Ebbsfleet's Community Board, Community Infrastructure Model and stewardship approach.

5.5. EDC attended a further 2 careers fairs at Dartford Grammar School and St George's C of E School, during November and December.

5.6. EDC and Wilmington Academy hosted an employer breakfast for local employers assisting their students with placements and work experience. Representatives from all sectors were present, including Dartford's Mayor Peter Whapshott.

5.7. EDC hosted a re-launched Cornerstone Employers Group at The Observatory. This was the first meeting since EDC's Inclusive Growth manager, Lara Pool was appointed Co-Chair of the Kent & Medway Careers Hub Cornerstone Employers Group.

6. Forward Look

6.1. Now established as one of the highlights of the Ebbsfleet annual calendar, the Magical Winter lights event will be held on 6th February at Platinum Jubilee Park. The event is a good example of a city-scale celebration which we are developing in collaboration with a local arts organisation Cohesion Plus where EDC funding has levered in Arts Council funding to enable the event. In advance of the event itself, our funding supports Cohesion Plus to work with local schools through a series of workshops to develop lanterns and become part of the event itself. This year the event will start around 16.00 on 6th February, with the lantern parade from 16.30 at Cherry Orchard School, toward the display itself at Platinum Jubilee Park.



Promotion for the Magical Winter Lights event to be held at Platinum Jubilee Park on Friday 6th February.

6.2. The BetterPoints Fresh Air Fix initiative will launch in early 2026 to provide a simple and accessible way for residents to build physical activity into their everyday routines while supporting wellbeing and healthier lifestyles. The EDC funded scheme will encourage residents to get outdoors and take part in light physical activity, such as walking, in return for BetterPoints rewards. By focusing on achievable activity rather than formal exercise, the initiative will reduce barriers to participation and will support EDC's wider objectives around active travel, prevention and mental wellbeing, while encouraging regular use of Ebbsfleet's green spaces and neighbourhood routes.

- 6.3. The EDC funded Community Development Training Programme for Ebbsfleet residents will launch early in 2026, offering a series of free community engagement workshops delivered in partnership with our chosen deliver partners 'Community Organisers'. Running across February and March, the programme will support residents to develop practical skills, build confidence, and better understand how they can play an active role in shaping their neighbourhoods. The workshops are designed to encourage connection between residents, strengthen local leadership and increase capacity for community-led activity, supporting EDC's longer-term ambition to enable residents to take greater ownership of initiatives and build a resilient, connected community across Ebbsfleet.
- 6.4. The Writing for Wellbeing programme will begin in January 2026, delivered by Hope On Prescription CIC as an eight-week creative wellbeing initiative supporting adult mental health, emotional resilience and social connection. The EDC-funded project will introduce weekly, accessible writing and poetry workshops in two Ebbsfleet neighbourhood venues, providing a safe, non-clinical space for residents experiencing isolation, low confidence or emotional stress. Co-delivered by an experienced lead facilitator, the programme will both improve individual wellbeing and build long-term community capacity. Referrals will be supported through Social Prescribing networks and local partners, ensuring the programme reaches residents most in need while contributing to EDC's wider placemaking, health and community cohesion objectives.
- 6.5. The Cycling Skills, Confidence Building and Guided Ride Programme being delivered in partnership with Cyclopark, with the benefit of a grant from EDC will start in January 2026. The programme will provide a structured series of school-based and community cycling activities designed to improve confidence, skills and awareness of local cycling routes among children, families and residents. Delivery will include school assemblies, on-site coaching sessions, family confidence-building workshops, guided local rides and supported journeys to Cyclopark, complemented by access to Dr Bike maintenance support. The programme will focus on building long-term confidence in active travel, strengthening links between schools and local cycling infrastructure, and encouraging more residents to cycle safely and regularly as part of everyday life.
- 6.6. Benefitting from an EDC grant, the newly formed Ebbsfleet Health Alliance will deliver a programme of community wellbeing activity across January, February and March, beginning with a series of three introductory workshops and culminating in a full community wellness festival. All activity will take place at the new Weldon Heart community space and will form some of the first public-facing events to be delivered in the building. The programme is designed to promote physical, mental and emotional wellbeing, encourage inclusive participation, and establish Weldon Heart as a welcoming hub for community-led health and wellbeing activity in Ebbsfleet.

- 6.7. A new Mobile Community Space, delivered in partnership with The Salvation Army, will arrive in Ebbsfleet in January 2026 and will provide a flexible, high-quality community facility that can be deployed across neighbourhoods across Ebbsfleet and surrounding areas. Part-funded by EDC, the mobile unit will offer 21m² of fully equipped, accessible space, including seating, power supply, storage, a kitchenette and internal and external screens, enabling a wide range of activities to take place. The space will support community wellbeing, reduce isolation and strengthen social cohesion by hosting regular activities, larger community events and volunteering opportunities, helping to address gaps in permanent community infrastructure while building a strong sense of belonging across Ebbsfleet.
- 6.8. EDC are funding Locality and Northwest Kent CVS to deliver a targeted project to increase volunteering in Ebbsfleet and surrounding target postal districts. The Locality project lead is Jarina Choudhury, Community Development Officer over the period January to end March 2026. A Steering Group has been established which will have a role in championing volunteering via their social media channels, as will NW Kent CVS and Locality, through a content calendar with mutually agreed messages. Communications on how the project can benefit local groups and residents will be included in NW Kent CVS online newsletters.
- 6.9. Ebbsfleet Runners are launching a new couch to 5km course on 18th January which will run alongside the existing group, subject to confirming enough leaders. The successful participants will graduate at the Easter Whitecliffe Parkrun.
- 6.10. Working with Dartford Borough Council and SQW, a skills gap analysis of the Dartford, Ebbsfleet and Gravesham areas was conducted in 2025. The results, showing gaps in available labour and skills across the whole of the construction sector will be shared at an employer round table event in the new year, with a focus on how to address these challenges.
- 6.11. The 5th annual North Kent Apprentice Event has been confirmed and will be held on 12th February 2026. Created by EDC in partnership with The Education People (KCC) and the Careers Hub, this year's event is kindly being hosted by the Sir Geoffrey Leigh Academy in Dartford. Since its inception in 2022 the event has quickly become the largest careers event in the local area, so far 26 employers are signed up to attend already.

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation Board

PART I BOARD ITEM

Title of Paper: Biodiversity Duty Report 2024–2025

Paper Number: EDC 026/004

Presented By: Mark Pullin, Director of Planning & Place & Kelly Haynes, Environment and Sustainability Manager

Sub Committee: Not Applicable

Purpose of Paper and Executive Summary

The purpose of this paper is to present the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation's (EDC) statutory biodiversity duty report for the period 1 January 2024 – 31 December 2025, as required under Section 40 of the Environment Act 2021. The report outlines EDC's progress in conserving and enhancing biodiversity across Ebbsfleet Garden City, key achievements, and future priorities.

EDC Business Plan & KPIs

This paper supports EDC's Business Plan objectives on environmental sustainability and community development, as well as our statutory planning responsibilities.

The relevant KPIs are: - Parks, Open Spaces and Recreation Areas & Community Involvement.

Recommendation FOR INFORMATION

Board is asked to note the summary and refer to the full Biodiversity Duty Report (Annex A) for detailed findings and actions.

Annexes

Annex A - Biodiversity Duty Report 2024–2025

Delegation

Not Applicable

Financial Impact

The work carried out in the reporting period was delivered within programme and operational revenue budgets. Work to be undertaken in the next reporting period is subject to the financial settlement from MHCLG.

Legal Impact

This report complies with Section 40 of the Environment Act 2021. No additional legal risks have been identified.

Equalities Impact

There has been a positive impact by improving access to quality green spaces and promoting inclusive community engagement. No adverse impacts have been identified.

Stakeholders Impact

The work strengthens collaboration with residents, developers, Natural England, Kent Wildlife Trust, Bird Wise North Kent, and local authorities.

Sponsor Impact

The work outlined in the report aligns with Government priorities on nature recovery and climate resilience.

1. Statutory context

- 1.1 The public authority biodiversity duty arises from section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC Act), as amended by section 102 of the Environment Act 2021. The amendment strengthens the duty from a general “have regard” test to a proactive duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity, requiring authorities to periodically consider actions, set policies and objectives, and then act on them (“the general biodiversity objective”). Public authorities must also have regard to relevant Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS), and any species conservation or protected site strategies, when fulfilling the duty.
- 1.2 From 12 February 2024, Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) of 10% became mandatory for most planning permissions under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021), with transitional arrangements and staged application to small sites. While BNG is a planning mechanism distinct from the wider public authority duty, Local Planning Authorities (LPA) must report on BNG delivery in their biodiversity duty report.

2. What the duty requires of EDC

- 2.1 Under the duty EDC must do the following: -

Section 40 of the NERC Act: Duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity:

- (1) A public authority which has any functions exercisable in relation to England must from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective.
- (1A) After that consideration the authority must (unless it concludes there is no new action it can properly take):
- (a) determine such policies and specific objectives as it considers appropriate for taking action to further the general biodiversity objective; and
 - (b) take such action as it considers appropriate, in the light of those policies and objectives, to further that objective.
- (1B) The requirements of subsection (1A)(a) may be satisfied (to any extent) by revising any existing policies and specific objectives for taking action to further the general biodiversity objective.
- (1C) The first consideration required by subsection (1) must be completed by the authority within the period of one year beginning with the day on which section 102 of the Environment Act 2021 comes into force.
- (1D) Any subsequent consideration required by subsection (1) must be completed no more than five years after the completion of the authority's previous consideration.

(2A) In complying with subsections (1) and (1A) the authority must in particular have regard to:

- (a) any relevant local nature recovery strategy, and
- (b) any relevant species conservation strategy or protected site strategy prepared by Natural England.

Section 40A of the NERC Act: Biodiversity reports:

(1) This section applies to—

- (a) a local authority in England other than a parish council,
- (b) a local planning authority in England, and
- (c) a designated authority (see subsection (8)(a)).

(2) A public authority to which this section applies (“the authority”) must publish biodiversity reports in accordance with this section.

(3) A biodiversity report so published must contain—

- (a) a summary of the action which the authority has taken over the period covered by the report for the purpose of complying with its duties under section 40(1) and (1A),
- (b) a summary of the authority’s plans for complying with those duties over the period of five years following the period covered by the report,
- (c) any quantitative data required to be included in the report by regulations under subsection (8)(b), and
- (d) any other information that the authority considers it appropriate to include in the report.

(4) If the authority is a local planning authority, its biodiversity report must also contain—

- (a) a summary of the action taken by the authority in carrying out its functions under Schedule 7A to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (biodiversity gain as condition of planning permission) over the period covered by the report,
- (b) information about any biodiversity gains resulting or expected to result from biodiversity gain plans approved by the authority during that period, and

- (c) a summary of the authority's plans for carrying out those functions over the five year period following the period covered by the report.
 - (5) A biodiversity report—
 - (a) must specify the period covered by the report, and
 - (b) must be published within the period of 12 weeks following the last day of that period.
 - (6) The authority's first biodiversity report must cover a period chosen by the authority which—
 - (a) is no longer than three years, and
 - (b) begins with the day on which the authority first becomes subject to the duty under subsection (2).
 - (7) A subsequent biodiversity report made by the authority must cover a period chosen by the authority which—
 - (a) is no longer than five years, and
 - (b) begins with the day after the last day of the period covered by its most recent biodiversity report.
- 2.2 The first reporting period ends no later than 1 January 2026 with a requirement to publish the report within 12 weeks of that date (by 27 March 2026).

3. How we have complied with the requirements of the duty

- 3.1 We have outlined below how we have or how we intend to comply with the duty.

A public authority which has any functions exercisable in relation to England must from time to time consider what actions the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective (conserve and enhance) (s40(1))

- 3.2 We have undertaken a structured review of our functions and identified where we can have the greatest influence. We have completed a strategic BNG assessment and a comprehensive biodiversity audit covering over 80 hectares, enabling us to understand habitat conditions, ecological value, and the opportunities for enhancement across the urban development area.
- 3.3 We have also completed a baseline assessment of the River Ebbsfleet, identifying priority actions relating to water quality, invasive species and riparian habitat restoration.

- 3.4 Through these assessments, and by mapping how our planning, land management, and community engagement activities affect biodiversity, we have identified a clear set of actions that we can take within the scope of our functions.

Determine such policies and specific objectives as it considers appropriate for taking action to further the general biodiversity objective (s40(1A(a)))

- 3.5 The first set of formal biodiversity policies, outlined below, have now been established, setting a clear framework for delivering nature recovery across the urban development area including through our planning functions.

- Embed biodiversity considerations into all planning decisions.
- Support the development and implementation of the Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS).
- Promote the use of native species and habitat restoration in development proposals.
- Ensure compliance with Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements for all applicable planning applications.

Take such action as it considers appropriate, in the light of those policies and objectives, to further that objective. (s40(1A(b)))

- 3.6 We have worked closely with Natural England, Kent Wildlife Trust, Kent County Council and local authorities to align our work with the Kent & Medway LNRS and the wider Kent Nature Recovery Network, ensuring it contributes to landscape-scale nature recovery.

- 3.7 We have mapped our functions to identify where we can most effectively conserve and enhance biodiversity, reflecting the objectives set out in the Ebbsfleet Green Infrastructure Strategy. We have reviewed the Kent & Medway LNRS and relevant Natural England strategies, ensuring these are integrated into policy development and decision-making.

- 3.8 In our planning role, we have assessed how BNG is being delivered across planning applications, updated validation requirements, secured habitat management and monitoring plans, and established mechanisms to capture BNG outcomes for statutory reporting.

- 3.9 We completed an audit of biodiversity-related activity, linking ongoing and new projects to the biodiversity policies introduced during this period. Monitoring and reporting arrangements have also been established, ensuring compliance with Defra's reporting template and timescales.

3.10 We have progressed our strategic biodiversity work through a completed BNG assessment and a comprehensive biodiversity audit, surveying over 80 hectares across key sites including Eastern Quarry, Craylands Gorge and Springhead Park. These assessments identified priority habitats and clear opportunities for enhancement, helping shape targeted actions within the Ebbsfleet Green Infrastructure Strategy.

3.11 Work on the River Ebbsfleet has advanced with the completion of a baseline assessment, establishing priority actions such as water-quality monitoring, invasive species removal, and riparian habitat restoration to strengthen ecological connectivity along the river corridor.

3.12 Community engagement has been strengthened through the launch of the GREENmap, enabling residents to explore habitats and take part in nature-positive activities. Education initiatives, guided walks and school engagement have increased public involvement in conservation and responsible recreation.

Any subsequent consideration required by subsection (1) must be completed no more than five years after the completion of the authority's previous consideration (s40(1D)).

3.13 We will review our actions annually as part of our business planning work. We will publish a future Biodiversity Duty Report no later than end of 2030 (5 years from the end date of the last reporting period).

In complying with subsections (1) and (1A) the authority must in particular have regard to—

(a) any relevant local nature recovery strategy, and

(b) any relevant species conservation strategy or protected site strategy prepared by Natural England. (s40(2A))

3.14 All biodiversity policies and actions have been screened against the Kent & Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and relevant Natural England strategies to ensure alignment with county-level recovery priorities, species conservation requirements, and protected site guidance. This has informed the selection of priority habitats and the design of enhancement actions across the urban development area.

Compliance with s40A(2-4): Duty to publish and content requirements

3.15 The biodiversity report attached in Annex A complies with the statutory requirements in s40A(2–4) by providing:

- (i) A summary of the actions we have taken during the reporting period to meet our duties, including strategic biodiversity planning, habitat assessments, River Ebbsfleet baseline work, community engagement initiatives, and land-management improvements; and

- (ii) A summary of our plans for furthering those duties over the next five years, as set out in the 'Future Priorities' section of the report. The report incorporates all available quantitative data required to evidence delivery, such as biodiversity units recorded through audits, planning outcomes, and habitat condition data, and includes additional contextual information where appropriate.
- (iii) A summary of our actions in implementing BNG legislation under Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, including updates to validation requirements, BNG planning conditions, and monitoring arrangements; including the biodiversity gains expected from approved development proposals and sets out our plans for carrying out these functions over the next five years.

4. Future Priorities

4.1 In order to comply with section *s40A(3(b))* we will:

- Strengthen monitoring and reporting to improve transparency and accountability.
- Enhance developer support and compliance by providing clear guidance for BNG plans.
- Continue to closely monitor the delivery and implementation of planning permissions to ensure compliance with approved landscape, ecology and BNG requirements.
- Expand community engagement via GREENmap and schools' programme.
- Investigate strategic habitat projects identified by audits and River Ebbsfleet Management Plan.
- Integrate climate-resilient planting and habitat connectivity across green infrastructure.
- Deepen collaboration with Kent & Medway LNRS, and other partners to achieve landscape-scale recovery.

5. Recommendation

5.1 Board is asked to note the summary and refer to the full Biodiversity Duty Report (Annex A) for detailed findings and actions.

BIODIVERSITY DUTY REPORT

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation

January 2026



Ebbsfleet
DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation (EDC) is committed to fulfilling its statutory biodiversity duty under the Environment Act 2021, acting both as a public authority and as the Local Planning Authority (LPA) for the Ebbsfleet Urban Development Area. This report outlines the progress made during the reporting period to conserve and enhance biodiversity through both corporate functions and planning decisions and sets out future priorities.

EDC’s approach to biodiversity is delivered through the Ebbsfleet Green Infrastructure Strategy, which provides the framework for creating connected green and blue spaces that support nature recovery and climate resilience across the Garden City. This report introduces EDC’s first formal biodiversity policies, marking a new approach to statutory duty.

This duty shapes both EDC’s organisational decisions and its planning functions, requiring actions that protect and improve nature. For residents, this means more green spaces, trees, and wildlife-friendly areas to enjoy. For developers, it means new projects must deliver at least 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG) and include features to support nature recovery like green roofs, hedgerows, and sustainable drainage systems.

Ebbsfleet Garden City spans 2,500 acres within the North Kent Plain and Greater Thames Estuary, supporting habitats such as woodland, grassland, wetlands, and open mosaic sites. Across the landscape, there are several

Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and other non-designated areas that contribute significantly to biodiversity, including the Swanscombe Peninsula Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which remains an ecological asset within the area. Throughout 2025, EDC has advanced strategic biodiversity planning, including creating a BNG assessment and a comprehensive audit of green spaces, which recorded over 80 hectares of habitat and highlighted opportunities for improvement, such as enhancing habitat quality, strengthening green corridors, and restoring wetland areas. Work has also begun on the River Ebbsfleet Management Plan to restore riparian habitats and improve connectivity.

Community engagement has been enhanced through the launch of the Green Infrastructure Mapping System, providing residents with tools and guidance to support nature recovery independently and through everyday experiences. Education initiatives and resources have supported schools and local groups to champion biodiversity and climate resilience. EDC has also delivered a variety of community tree planting events, encouraging residents to take practical steps to enrich local habitats and improve ecological connectivity.

Looking ahead, EDC will align its actions with the Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy and contribute to the Kent Nature Recovery Network, ensuring Ebbsfleet Garden City plays a central role in landscape-scale nature recovery.

2. COMPLIANCE STATEMENT

This report demonstrates compliance with Section 40 of the Environment Act 2021, which places a statutory biodiversity duty on all public authorities. As EDC also exercises planning powers as the Local Planning Authority for the Ebbsfleet Urban Development Area, the actions described reflect both its organisational responsibilities and its regulatory role in securing biodiversity through development management.

The actions, policies, and initiatives outlined in this document demonstrate how EDC has embedded biodiversity considerations into its planning, land management, and community engagement activities during the reporting period. This report also sets out future priorities to ensure continued compliance and alignment with national and local nature recovery objectives.



3. INTRODUCTION

EDC is committed to fulfilling its statutory biodiversity duty, which requires public authorities to consider actions that further the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity. This report sets out how EDC has embedded biodiversity into its planning, land management, and community engagement activities during the reporting period.

Ebbsfleet Development Corporation was established in 2015 to facilitate the delivery of up to 15,000 homes and create a 21st-century garden city in Ebbsfleet, North Kent.

The Corporation has ambitions to:

- Facilitate the delivery of up to 15,000 new homes of all types and tenures
- Champion the creation of 50 new parks and open spaces, as well as a network of green corridors
- Drive forward a new public transport network, with major road infrastructure improvements made to support the growing community
- Provide a platform for thousands of new jobs and opportunities for the local workforce

- Deliver Ebbsfleet Central, the civic and commercial heart of Ebbsfleet Garden City

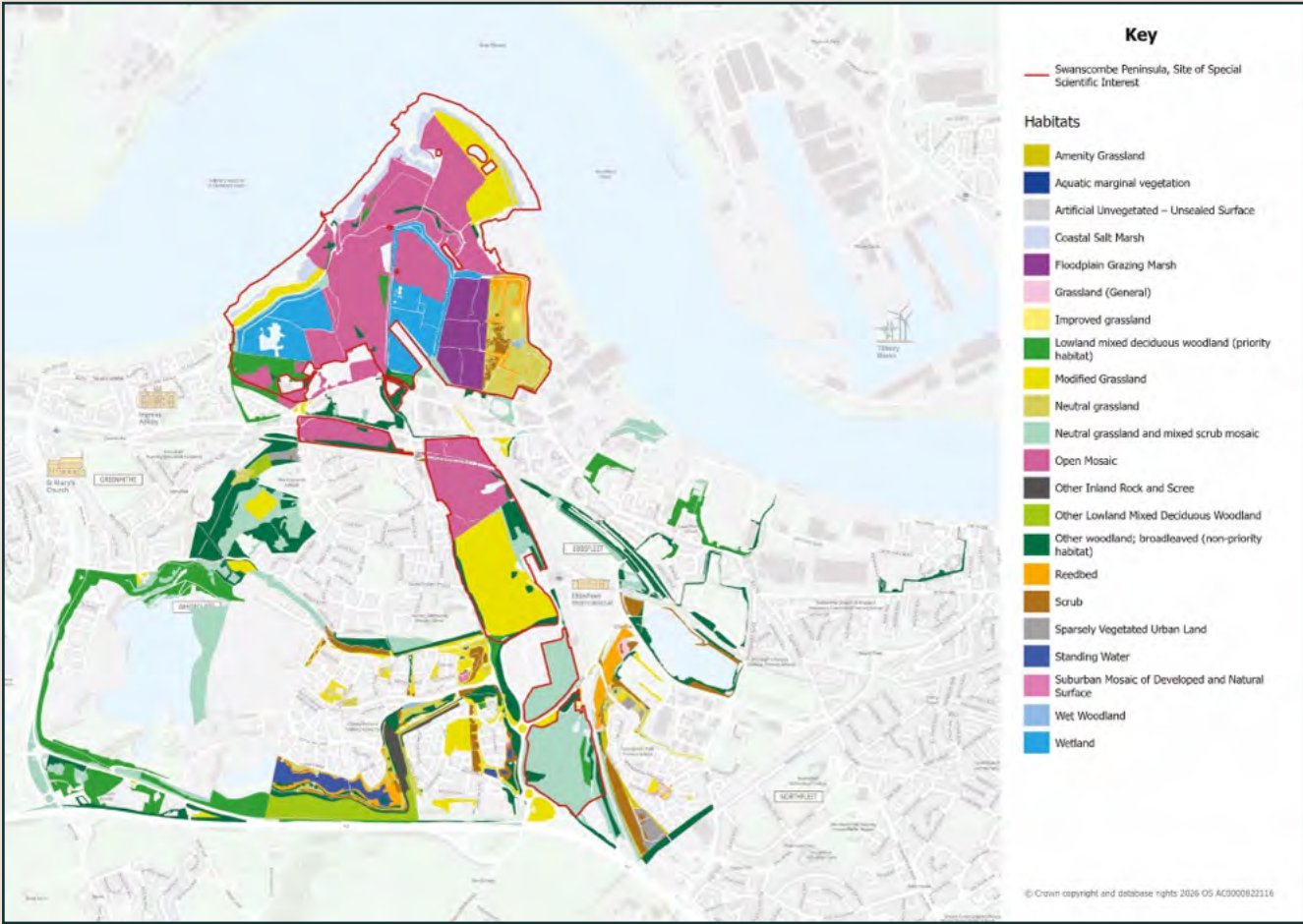
EDC is an executive, non-departmental public body sponsored by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. A dedicated Planning Committee is in place to determine major planning applications, ensuring transparency and accountability in decision-making.

There are many ways in which EDC has the opportunity to positively impact local wildlife and nature; through land management, planning decisions, and working collaboratively with the community. When EDC directly manages land, especially within protected areas, it can improve biodiversity by preserving habitats and creating green infrastructure. As the local planning authority, EDC can require developers to deliver BNG and encourage environmentally friendly design. Through communications and public engagement, EDC can further influence biodiversity by advising developers, raising awareness and educating the community, and encouraging local activation and conservation.

4. LANDSCAPE AND ECOLOGICAL CONTEXT

Set across 2,500 acres within North Kent, Ebbsfleet's landscape is shaped by chalk geology and a rich industrial heritage. Historically quarried for chalk and cement production, the area now offers unique opportunities for habitat creation and restoration. Two National Character Areas intersect the urban development area:

- **North Kent Plain (NCA 113):** an open, gently undulating agricultural landscape with pockets of ancient woodland and fertile soils
- **Greater Thames Estuary (NCA 81):** a mosaic of tidal saltmarsh, mudflats, grazing marsh, and estuarine habitats



This setting supports a diverse range of habitats, including lowland mixed deciduous woodland, neutral grasslands, reedbeds, open mosaic habitats on previously developed land, and wetlands. These habitats underpin the ecological network of the area and provide vital corridors for wildlife.

Swanscombe Peninsula SSSI and Other Key Areas

Within the centre and northern parts of the Urban Development Area lies the Swanscombe Peninsula SSSI, designated by Natural England as one of the most ecologically significant sites in the UK. Its complex mix of wetlands, grazing marsh, scrubland, mudflats, and saltmarsh

support rare invertebrates and bird species, provides important habitats for wildlife making it a unique and special place. The peninsula also acts as a critical ecological link between Ebbsfleet Valley and the wider estuarine landscape.

In addition to the Swanscombe Peninsula SSSI, Ebbsfleet Garden City is influenced by other important ecological assets, including Shorne and Ashenbank Woods, Bluewater's restored chalk habitats, and river corridors along the River Ebbsfleet. These areas provide additional biodiversity value and opportunities for habitat connectivity, reinforcing the landscape-scale approach to nature recovery.



5. POLICIES

The following policies set out the principles that guide EDC’s approach to biodiversity, ensuring that our planning decisions, land management, and community engagement consistently contribute to the conservation and enhancement of nature in line with our statutory biodiversity duty:

- Embed biodiversity considerations into all planning decisions
- Support the development and implementation of the Kent and Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)
- Promote the use of native species and habitat restoration in development proposals
- Ensure compliance with Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements for all applicable planning applications

6. STRATEGIC BIODIVERSITY PLANNING

Our biodiversity policies are underpinned by the Ebbsfleet Green Infrastructure Strategy, which sets out a comprehensive approach to embedding nature into the fabric of the Garden City. This alignment ensures that habitat creation, connectivity, and enhancement are integral to the delivery of high-quality green infrastructure.

In 2022 EDC undertook a strategic BNG assessment to guide development and habitat enhancement across Ebbsfleet Garden City. The assessment identified opportunities to achieve at least 10% biodiversity net gain, with potential to exceed the minimum requirement of 10%.

Priority areas for intervention include Craylands Gorge and Eastern Quarry, focusing on:

- Enhancing woodland and scrub mosaics
- Restoring wetland and reedbed habitats
- Creating resilient green corridors to support species movement

Recent Biodiversity Audit

A comprehensive biodiversity audit (2024–2025) surveyed green spaces at Eastern Quarry, Springhead Park, and Craylands Gorge, recording:

- 80.11 ha of habitats, equating to 617.58 biodiversity units
- Priority habitats such as lowland mixed deciduous woodland, reedbeds, inland outcrop and scree, and native hedgerows

- Condition scores: 32.5% good, 56.3% moderate, 10.4% poor, highlighting significant potential for habitat enhancement

Biodiversity units are a way of measuring the overall ecological value of habitats, considering their size, type, and condition. Condition scores indicate the health of these habitats, ranging from good to poor, based on factors such as species diversity and habitat quality.

These findings inform targeted management actions to improve habitat quality, increase biodiversity units, and balance ecological value with recreational use.

River Ebbsfleet Management Plan

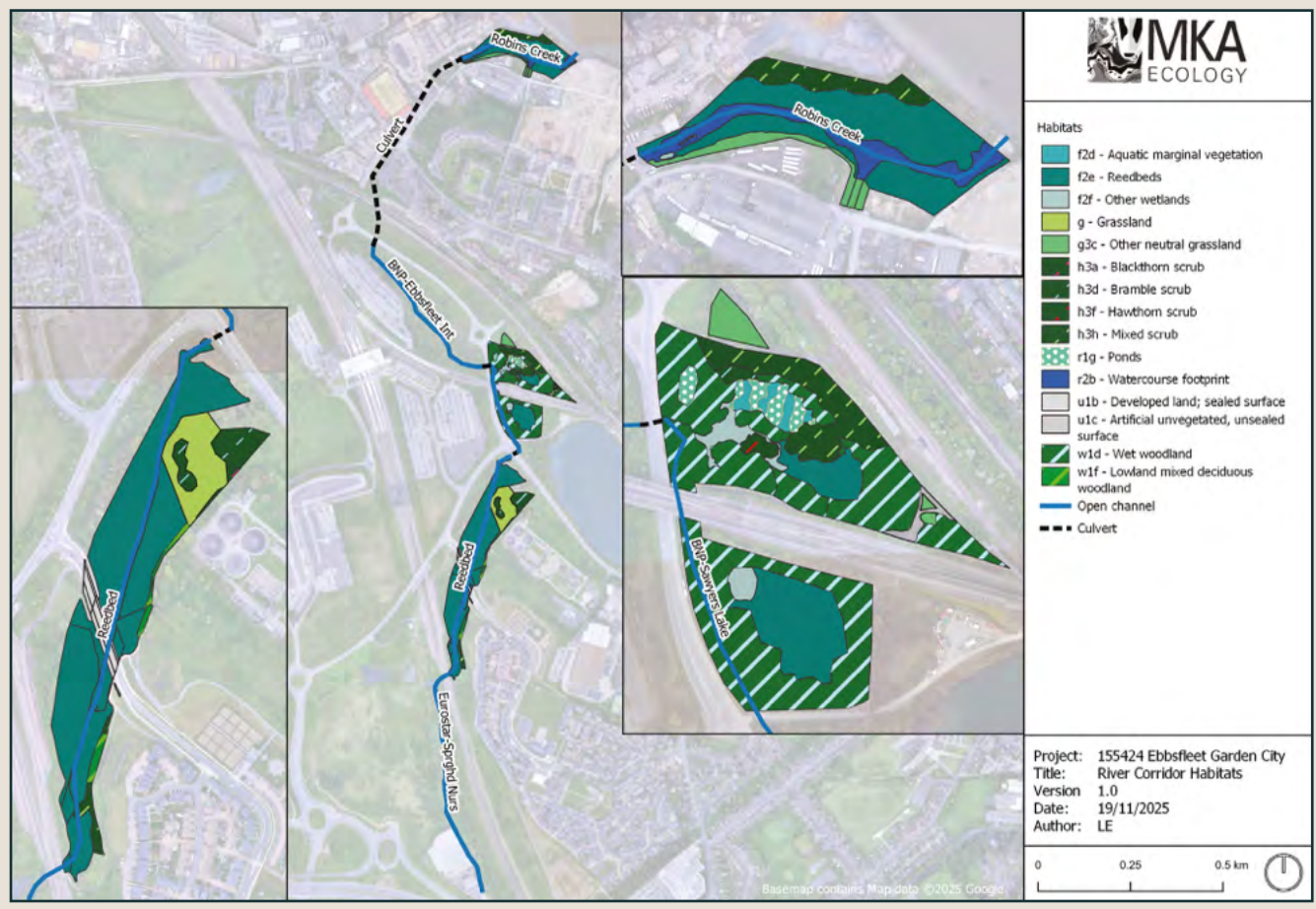
EDC is developing a River Ebbsfleet Management Plan to restore and enhance the

River Ebbsfleet corridor from its source to its confluence with the River Thames.

The river corridor refers to the river channel and its adjacent habitats, which provide ecological connectivity and support wildlife movement. The project aims to:

- Establish a baseline of habitat types and condition
- Identify limiting factors such as water quality and invasive species
- Engage stakeholders to implement collaborative habitat management

This initiative will strengthen riparian habitats, improve connectivity, and contribute to LNRS objectives.

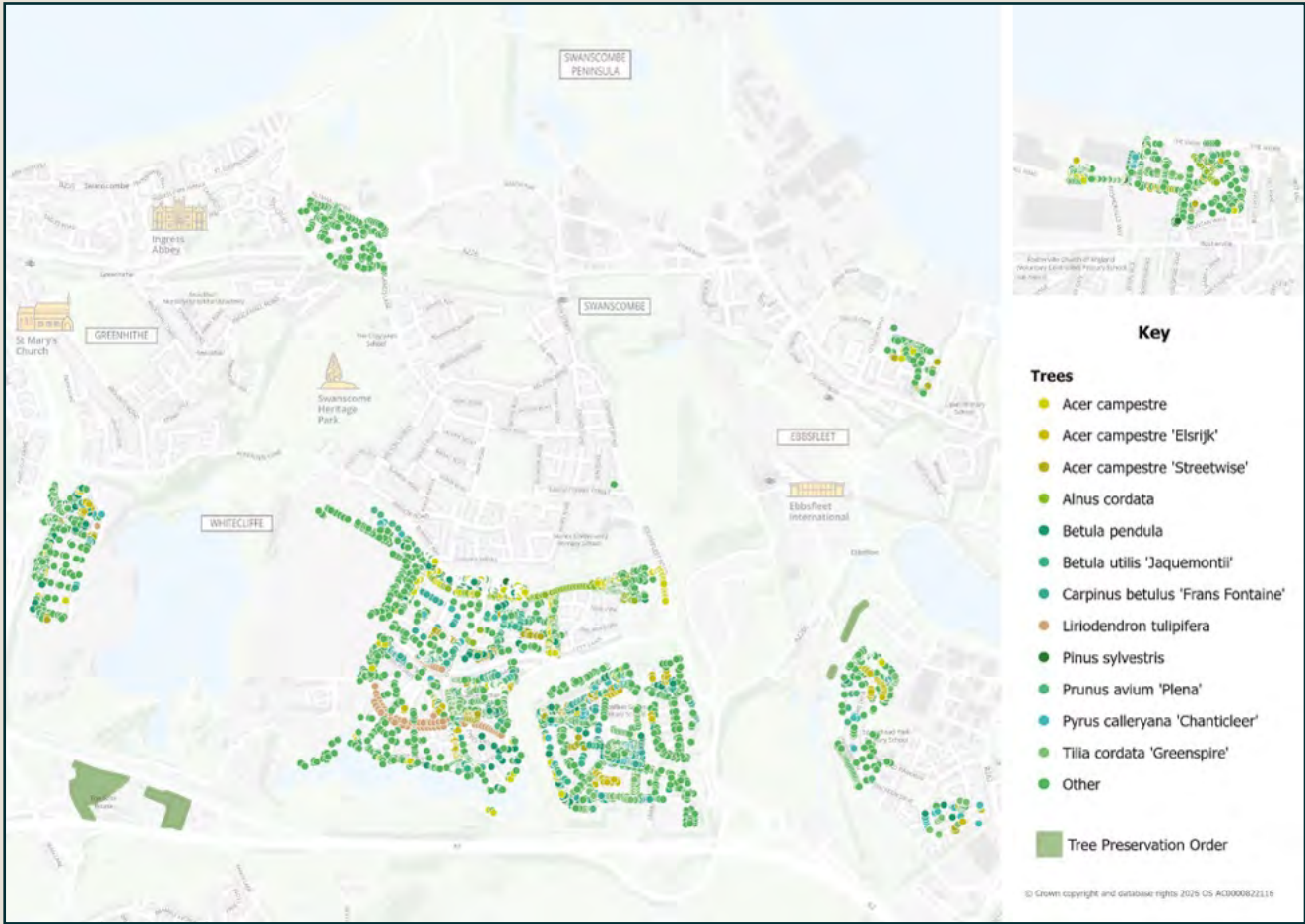


7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIPS

Engaging local communities is central to delivering biodiversity enhancements across Ebbsfleet Garden City. EDC recognises that creating and maintaining wildlife-rich spaces is most successful when residents and stakeholders are actively involved and empowered to enhance and protect nature on their doorsteps. The approach to engagement combines education, participation and stewardship to foster a shared sense of responsibility for nature.

Digital Tools and Awareness

EDS has launched a Green Infrastructure Mapping System (GREENmap), enabling residents to explore habitats, trees, and sustainable drainage features across Ebbsfleet Garden City. This interactive platform provides users with tools to learn about local biodiversity, report issues, and discover opportunities to get involved in habitat management.



Volunteer Initiatives

EDC encourages residents and stakeholders to take an active role in enhancing biodiversity by using the GREENmap which includes a dedicated volunteer page that provides:

- **Information on Activities:** Detailed guidance on practical actions individuals can take to improve local habitats, such as planting wildflowers, creating pollinator-friendly spaces, managing scrub, and installing wildlife features like bird boxes and log piles
- **Activity Cards:** Step-by-step instructions for habitat enhancement projects, tailored to different locations and habitat types
- **Location Guidance:** Advice on where these activities can be carried out to maximise ecological benefits and maintain connectivity across green corridors



The GREENmap empowers residents to undertake these activities independently or as part of community groups. This approach promotes local stewardship and supports biodiversity objectives by enabling people to contribute directly to nature recovery.

Education and Outreach

These activities aim to raise awareness and involve the community:

- Work with schools, local groups, and partners to deliver workshops and events that promote understanding of biodiversity and climate resilience
- Raise awareness of local habitats and species through local schools
- Guided nature walks and bat walks to engage residents with local wildlife
- Resident garden competitions supported by a garden guide on biodiversity and pollinator-friendly gardening



Bird Wise North Kent

EDC supports Bird Wise North Kent, a strategic partnership focused on mitigating the impacts of recreational disturbance to internationally important bird populations along the Thames, Medway, and Swale estuaries. The Corporation's Director of Planning and Place sits on the Bird Wise Board, ensuring Ebbsfleet's regeneration aligns with regional mitigation strategies. Developers within Ebbsfleet Garden City contribute to the Bird Wise mitigation fund, which finances visitor engagement, monitoring, and habitat protection measures. This partnership helps safeguard Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites while enabling sustainable growth.

Plans

Community engagement will remain a priority as EDC implements the River Ebbsfleet Management Plan and expands biodiversity

initiatives across the urban development area. By empowering residents and fostering collaboration, EDC aims to create a resilient ecological network that benefits both people and wildlife.



8. CLIMATE RESILIENCE AND ADAPTATION

EDC recognises the need to adapt habitats to the challenges posed by climate change. This approach includes:

- **Drought-tolerant planting:** Selecting resilient native species and diverse ground flora to withstand prolonged dry periods
- **Wetland restoration:** Enhancing reedbeds, ponds, and riparian zones to improve water retention and provide refuges for wildlife during extreme weather

- **Habitat connectivity:** Strengthening green corridors to allow species movement in response to changing conditions

These measures will help ensure Ebbsfleet Garden City's green infrastructure remains robust and continues to deliver ecosystem services under future climate scenarios.

9. KENT & MEDWAY LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY AND THE KENT NATURE RECOVERY NETWORK

EDC's biodiversity work is part of a wider, national effort to create a Nature Recovery Network – a connected system of wildlife-rich areas across England. The Kent & Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) is the county-level plan for delivering this network. By aligning with the LNRS, EDC can ensure that Ebbsfleet Garden City contributes to landscape-scale habitat restoration, connectivity, and climate resilience.

EDC's role will include:

- **Sharing Data and Local Knowledge:** Providing habitat and species data from Ebbsfleet Garden City to inform LNRS priorities and mapping
- **Targeted Habitat Creation:** Aligning biodiversity enhancements and Biodiversity Net Gain delivery with LNRS opportunity areas to strengthen ecological networks

- **Active Partnership:** Working with Kent County Council, Natural England, and other stakeholders to implement LNRS actions and support the Kent Nature Recovery Network
- **Delivering on LNRS Expectations:** Partners are asked to collaborate in governance and delivery, share expertise and resources, and embed nature recovery into planning and land management decisions

These actions will ensure Ebbsfleet Garden City is integrated into a wider landscape-scale approach to biodiversity and climate resilience.



10. CONSIDERATION OF OTHER STRATEGIES

Protected Site Strategies

EDC refers to Natural England’s protected site strategies when assessing planning applications near Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). In line with recent changes to consultation requirements, EDC, as a supporting authority for the LNRS, is also engaged in formal review processes. This includes a 28-day pre-publication consultation on strategic documents, giving us the opportunity to raise concerns about engagement or proposed measures before they are finalised. These steps ensure development proposals near designated sites align with conservation objectives and benefit from early input from statutory bodies.

Mitigation measures are incorporated into development proposals to reduce recreational

pressure and pollution impacts on protected sites. EDC collaborates with neighbouring authorities to support cross-boundary site management plans.

Species Conservation Strategies

- EDC uses species conservation strategies to inform planning conditions for developments affecting priority species such as great crested newts and bats
- Ecological consultants reference these strategies when preparing biodiversity gain plans
- Species-specific mitigation techniques are promoted, such as wildlife corridors and nesting boxes, in new developments



11. KEY ACHIEVEMENTS (2024–2025)

Planning Policy

- Collaborated with Dartford Borough Council and Kent County Council to integrate biodiversity objectives into local planning policy and development frameworks
- Engaged with Dartford Borough Council during the preparation of their Local Plan, and EDC planning officers subsequently attended joint officer level training with DBC officers following formal adoption of the Local Plan

Development Management

- Updated our local validation list to include Biodiversity Metric and Biodiversity Net Gain Plan requirements
- Incorporated biodiversity checklists into planning application assessments
- Expanded the scope of our existing Service Level Agreement with KCC Ecological Advice Service to include dedicated BNG support
- Promoted the use of green infrastructure, including green roofs, sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), and wildlife corridors

- Mandated ecological surveys and mitigation plans for relevant planning applications
- Imposed planning conditions to applicable planning permissions to secure long-term biodiversity enhancements
- Procured and implemented Mycelia IT software to assist with validation, determination, monitoring and reporting of applicable planning permissions
- Arranged and carried out biodiversity training for planning officers
- Partnered with local wildlife trusts to identify priority habitats and species

Land Management

- Managed EDC-owned land to enhance habitat quality, including hedgerow restoration at Blue Lake
- Completed a biodiversity audit to monitor and improve biodiversity on public open spaces
- Delivered habitat restoration projects on third party land in Springhead Park

Partnerships and Collaboration

- Supported Kent County Council in establishing and maintaining the county-wide BNG Site Register, contributing funding and collaboration to enable tracking of off-site biodiversity units and delivery outcomes.
- Worked with Natural England, Kent Wildlife Trust, and local authorities to align biodiversity goals
- Participated in the Thames Estuary Growth Board’s environmental working group

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Information

- In our role as the Local Planning Authority, we approved 2no. planning applications submitted with a biodiversity metric since 2024, summarised as follows:

- 1no. expected to deliver 0.51 biodiversity units of on-site BNG comprising enhanced habitats including bramble scrub, mixed scrub and lowland calcareous grassland, with a habitat management and monitoring plan and 30-year maintenance secured
- 1no. expected to deliver 1.53 biodiversity units (comprising a gain of 0.14 biodiversity units) of off-site BNG via a local habitat bank
- No biodiversity gain plans or habitat management and monitoring plans were submitted for developments subject to the statutory biodiversity gain condition, and no development has commenced on these sites
- Estimated net gain of 0.65 biodiversity units expected across approved developments



12. MONITORING, RISKS AND REPORTING

EDC will monitor biodiversity outcomes through:

- **Planning compliance checks:** ensuring BNG conditions are met on approved developments through compliance checks and site inspections
- **Site inspections and audits:** tracking habitat condition and progress against enhancement targets
- **Digital tools:** using GREENmap and the local BNG register to record and report biodiversity units delivered
- **Reporting:** publishing updates on biodiversity achievements and future priorities

Key risks include:

- **Delivery dependencies:** biodiversity enhancements rely on developer compliance and timely implementation

- **Ecological pressures:** recreational use, invasive species, and water quality issues may affect habitat condition
- **Climate change impacts:** extreme weather could undermine habitat resilience. Mitigation measures include robust planning conditions, collaborative management plans, and climate-adaptive design

Performance will be reported through:

- **Transparency:** Biodiversity Duty updates to the Board and public
- **Co-ordination:** Integration with EDC Business Plan, including open space delivery and community engagement metrics
- **Engagement:** Ongoing engagement with statutory bodies and partners to ensure alignment with the Kent & Medway Local Nature Recovery Strategy

13. FUTURE PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT REPORTING PERIOD (2026–2030)

To continue delivering on our biodiversity duty, EDC will focus on:

- **Strengthening Monitoring and Reporting:** improving transparency through public updates
- **Enhancing Developer Support and Compliance:** providing clear guidance and promoting best practice in biodiversity gain plans, to include publishing a dedicated BNG page within the Planning section of our website to provide advice to applicants and developers to cover all stages of the planning process
- **Monitoring Planning Compliance:** Continuing to closely monitor the delivery and implementation of applicable planning permissions (and consider enforcement action where necessary) to ensure compliance with approved landscape, ecology and statutory BNG requirements
- **Expanding Community Engagement:** creating more opportunities for residents and schools to participate in nature recovery
- **Delivering Strategic Habitat Projects:** restoring and enhancing habitats identified in audits
- **Building Climate Resilience:** integrating drought-tolerant planting and habitat connectivity into all green infrastructure
- **Deepening Partnerships and Policy Alignment:** working with Kent & Medway LNRS, Bird Wise North Kent, and other stakeholders to achieve landscape-scale recovery

CONTACT US

If you have questions about this report or biodiversity across Ebbsfleet Garden City, please get in touch:

Email: hello@ebbsfleetdc.org.uk
Phone: 0303 444 2586
Website: www.ebbsfleetgardencity.org.uk





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Ebbsfleet Development Corporation Board

PART I BOARD ITEM

Title of Paper: Development, Infrastructure & Enabling Update

Paper Number: EDC 026/005

Presented By: Paul Abrahams, Director of Infrastructure & Enabling Works;
Jennifer Hunt, Director of Development

Sub Committee: Investment Panel

Purpose of Paper and Executive Summary

To provide the Board with an update on the key development activities and key updates on the infrastructure and enabling projects across the Corporation. Of particular note from a development perspective is the completion of RIBA Stage 2 re-design for the Ebbsfleet Central Phase 1 enabling infrastructure and subsequent commencement of contractor procurement for those works and the continued good progress on the Weldon Community Buildings. Of particular note from an infrastructure and enabling perspective is the continued good progress on the Northfleet Embankment Primary Sub-Station.

EDC Business Plan & KPIs

The development, infrastructure and enabling projects referred to contribute to a range of corporate and business plan priorities, and all EDC KPIs.

**Recommendation
FOR INFORMATION**

Board is recommended to **NOTE** the progress being made on the projects covered in this report.

Delegation

Not Applicable.

Financial Impact

Capital: The investment programme reflects the capital requirements associated with the development, infrastructure and enabling projects detailed in this report and this has been fed into our SR work.

Revenue: The investment programme reflects the revenue requirements associated with the development, infrastructure and enabling projects and these are being fed into our SR work.

Legal Impact

Our retained legal advisors continue to remain engaged on the development, infrastructure and enabling projects.

Equalities Impact

All projects across development, infrastructure and enabling consider equalities impacts on a project by project basis.

Stakeholders Impact

We are engaging extensively with stakeholders involved in all development, infrastructure and enabling projects.

Sponsor Impact

We engage with MHCLG regarding our programme of projects across development, infrastructure and enabling and in more detail on a project by project basis as required.

1. Introduction

1.1. This report provides an update on the key development, infrastructure and enabling works activities across the Corporation. In particular it covers the following key projects / sites:

- Development Projects
 - Ebbsfleet Central
 - Northfleet Embankment East
 - Ebbsfleet Green Community Buildings
- Infrastructure and Enabling Works Projects
 - Springhead Bridge
 - Northfleet Waste-Water Treatment Works
 - Electricity Supply Infrastructure
 - Fastrack Bean Tunnel

2. Health, Safety and Wellbeing

2.1. There have been no health and safety incidents affecting the projects and matters covered in this paper in the period since the last Board in July 2025.

Development Projects

3. Ebbsfleet Central

3.1. The Outline Business Case (OBC) for the Phase 1 element of the project was approved by MHCLG in February 2025.

3.2. The master plan and associated infrastructure scope of works detailed within the OBC has been reviewed to ensure this can be delivered in phases and the RIBA Stage 2 re-design of the enabling infrastructure has been completed and was approved by the Project Board in December. Work on the Area Masterplan and Area Design Code is also progressing to enable these to be submitted to the LPA upon conclusion of S106 negotiations and granting of Outline Planning Consent.

- 3.3. Early stages of contractor procurement for the Phase 1 infrastructure works has commenced with the publishing of the Invitation to Participate (ITP) on 6 January 2026. This is the first of a two-stage procurement process with the submissions due mid-February 2026.
- 3.4. We continue to work with our commercial advisors to refine the disposal strategy and viability workstreams for the project.

4. Northfleet Embankment East

- 4.1. Our retained technical consultant, who was commissioned to undertake a detailed ground investigation at the NEE site, completed their study at the end of 2025. They delivered a set of conclusions, recommendations and strategies that provide a comprehensive understanding of the ground conditions at the site. In parallel, we have commissioned an updated cost plan and valuations in order to complete our revised assessment of value for money.

5. Ebbsfleet Green Community Buildings

- 5.1. At the Weldon Wellbeing Pavilion, adjacent to the Spring River pub, the external windows and cladding are nearing completion with surrounding external works underway to form the car park and cycle store. Inside, floors are being installed, walls tiled, lifts and kitchens fitted. The building is due to complete in late April 2026 with opening planned shortly thereafter. Please see Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Weldon Wellbeing Pavilion



- 5.2. The building at Weldon Heart is now complete and legal transfer of ownership to Ebbsfleet Garden City Trust is underway. Preparations are underway for opening and community use at the end of the month. Please see Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Weldon Heart Community Facility



Infrastructure and Enabling Projects

6. Springhead Bridge

- 6.1. Further to KCC Structures agreement that the remedial works highlighted within the Principal Inspection have been completed to their satisfaction, works have now commenced on the final inspection of the bridge structure. Following completion and acceptance of the outcome, KCC will issue the relevant Certificate of Construction Compliance to EDC, which will facilitate the S38 sign off and KCC adoption.

Electricity Supply Infrastructure

- 6.2. Construction and cold commissioning of the new Northfleet Embankment Primary Substation is now complete with the successful installation of the transformers and switchgear. Survey works are to be commissioned by UKPN to establish the structural integrity of the flint wall that is adjacent.



11kV switchboard wiring and cold commissioning

- 6.3. The 33kV and 11kV main cable route designs are complete with further collaborative design reviews in progress over the cables that utilise the existing St Pancras High Speed culvert crossing, and UKPN continue their assessment of archaeological implications associated with the location of the primary substation. Once this is fully understood UKPN will submit their planning application.

7. Fastrack - Bean Tunnel

- 7.1. KCC have announced the selection of a contractor to undertake the works and we continue work to finalise the revised tri-partite funding agreements. KCC expect some early enabling works to start on site in March 2026 with tunnel completion expected late summer 2027.

8. Recommendation

- 8.1. Board is recommended to note the progress being made on the projects covered in this report.

Ebbfleet Development Corporation Board

PART I BOARD ITEM

Title of Paper: Finance, Operations & Programme Report as at 31 December 2025

Paper Number: EDC 026/006

Presented By: Ian Piper CEO

Sub Committee: Not Applicable

Purpose of Paper and Executive Summary

To inform the Board of the 2025/26 budgetary position, particularly the latest forecast outturn for capital spend together with workforce and other operational issues, including progress on recruitment to senior officer roles.

EDC Business Plan & KPIs

The items covered contribute to the general running and strategic performance of the organisation.

Recommendation

FOR INFORMATION

Board is recommended to **NOTE** the report.

Annexes

Annex A – 2025/26 Revenue budget.

Delegation

As set out in the report.

Financial Impact

As outlined in the report.

Legal Impact

Not Applicable, unless specifically referenced in the relevant section.

Equalities Impact

There are no equalities impacts from the specific contents of this paper.

Stakeholders Impact

Some of the matters covered in this paper will impact on a range of stakeholders. Where this is the case, this is noted in the relevant section.

Sponsor Impact

Some of the matters covered in this paper will impact on the Corporation's relationship and/or dealings with our sponsor department, MHCLG. Where this is the case, it is noted in the relevant section.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This paper updates the Board on the 2025/26 year-to-date actual spend / budget activity and latest forecast outturns for the year together with workforce and other operational issues as at 31st December 2025.

2. 2025/26 Admin Expenditure - Revenue (RDEL)

- 2.1. EDC's RDEL revenue funding allocation from MHCLG for 2025/26 is £6.5m.
- 2.2. In addition to the £6.5m MHCLG RDEL grant, the Ministry also approved that EDC can utilise RDEL receipts (from both receipts generated in-year, and also from previous years unspent receipts 'rolled forward') up to the value of circa. £1m in 2025/26. Therefore, the gross RDEL budget for 2025/26 was set at £7.5m. Analysis of the RDEL budget can be found at Annex A.
- 2.3. Vacancies and unpaid parental leave have resulted in forecast full-year savings on Pay of £306k. This has been partially offset by additional expenditure requirements on the ICT, Internal & External Audit, and Recruitment Advertising budget lines as shown on the Annex.
- 2.4. The latest total forecast outturn for gross RDEL expenditure for the year is £7.3m funded by £6.5m MHCLG grant and £800k of EDC receipts.

3. 2025/26 Programme Expenditure – Capital (CDEL)

- 3.1 As part of the Spending Review (SR) process, the original Capital (CDEL) allocation from MHCLG for 2025/26 was confirmed at £37.49m. At the time, this allocation excluded utilisation of any CDEL receipts generated by EDC either in-year or rolled forward from previous years.
- 3.2 Our CDEL forecast heading into the 25/26 financial year was revised to £28.1m with MHCLG advised of same.
- 3.3 MHCLG subsequently agreed that EDC's CDEL spend for the year would be funded primarily by MHCLG grant but would also utilise £6.1m of CDEL receipts rolled forward from previous years.
- 3.4 An updated CDEL forecast of £18.3m (after incorporating a programme level adjustment for spend-at-risk/optimism bias and contingency) was submitted to MHCLG in December 2025 as part of the SUPs (Supplementary Estimates) process, to be funded by £12.2m of MHCLG grant and £6.1m of CDEL receipts.

- 3.5 With constant refinement and re-profiling of the capital programme continuing within the confines of the ongoing SR environment, as we head into the last quarter of the year the latest current forecast CDEL outturn for 2025/26 is £18.18m.
- 3.6 Actual CDEL spend for the year to date is £13.99m.
- 3.7 The overall CDEL programme is monitored under four activity headings. These are listed in Table 1 below along with the 2025/26 actual spend breakdown:

Table 1 – 2025/26 Capital Expenditure

Project Area	Actual Spend YTD 31 Dec 2025* (£m)	Forecast Outturn Full Year 2025/26 (£m)
Ebbfleet Central	3.69	5.22
Northfleet Riverside	0.60	0.89
Transport and Utilities	2.70	3.30
Civic	7.00	8.98
Total	13.99	18.39
Programme Level Adjustment		(0.16)
Adjusted 2025/26 Forecast		18.18

Funded by		
MHCLG Grant		12.08
EDC Capital Receipts		6.10

Overview		
Original 2025/26 Budget (excluding receipts)		37.49
Variance (excluding receipts) Over/(under)		(19.31)

- 3.8 The reduction in forecast CDEL spend from the £18.98m reported to Board in November 2025 is mainly due to:
- The £719k forecast grant funding to Kent County Council (KCC) for Green Corridors Phase 3 is unlikely to be paid as KCC has not made sufficient progress on the proposed schemes to meet the conditions within the grant funding agreement for payment.

- There has been a delay in the delivery programme for Leigh Academy Trust project (being led by the grant recipient), with the slippage now expected to go out in the next financial year (subject to budget availability).

4. 2025/26 Programme Expenditure – Revenue (RDEL)

- 4.1 The original programme revenue budget (included within the overall RDEL budget) for 2025/26 was £1.334m.
- 4.2 The current forecast outturn for the year is £1.362m.
- 4.3 Actual programme RDEL spend to date for the current financial year is £902k.
- 4.4 As with the capital programme, the programme RDEL spend is monitored under the same four activity headings. These are listed in Table 2 along with the 2025/26 actual spend breakdown:

Table 2 – 2025/26 Programme Revenue Expenditure

Project Area	Actual Spend YTD 31 Dec 2025 (£k)	Forecast Outturn Full Year 2025/26 (£k)
Ebbsfleet Central	22	27
Northfleet Riverside	-	-
Transport and Utilities	82	148
Civic	798	1,228
Total	902	1,403
Programme Level Adjustment		(41)
Adjusted 2025/26 Forecast		1,362

2025/26 Budget		1,334
Variance - Over/(underspend)		28

- 4.5 The increase in forecast from the £1.326m reported to Board in November 2025 is mainly due to:

- Additional legal fees required for Fastrack Tunnels project;
- Water Reuse project being brought forward.

5. Health and Safety

- 5.1. The information in Table 3 is a record for the last month(s) where Construction and Design Manual 2015 Regulations applied to EDC as the client with construction works.

Table 3: CDM Health and Safety Report

Health & Safety	Nr of RIDDOR	LTI's	Safety Observations	Near misses	Comments
No sites were active in this period	0	0	0	0	-

- 5.2. Table 4 provides a record of incidents across the EDC owned assets:

Table 4: Summary of incidents at EDC owned assets in the last reporting period

Area	LTI's	Near Misses	Incident Nature	Outcome
N/A	0	0	N/A	N/A

6. Staffing Structure and Recruitment

- 6.1. EDC manages its own headcount within its total budget allocation.
- 6.2. Interim arrangements are in place to provide cover for maternity leave for the Head of Property and Principal Design Advisor posts.
- 6.3. A part-time Senior Property Surveyor in the Ebbsfleet Central Team retired in December.
- 6.4. The Planning Team is back to full complement with no external/ interim cover of posts.
- 6.5. We have recently concluded two significant recruitment campaigns being the appointment of a new Director of Corporate Services and recruitment of the new CEO.
- 6.6. The headcount as at 31 December 2025 is 52.06 FTE.

Budget Heading	Full Year Budget	YTD Budget	YTD Actual	YTD Variance	Full Year Forecast Outturn	Full Year Forecast Variance	
	2025/26	Month 9 Dec	Month 9 Dec	Month 9 Dec	2025/26	2025/26	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Board Fees							
Chairman	28,000	21,000	23,498	2,498	28,900	900	
Other Board Members	84,000	63,000	41,908	(21,092)	65,860	(18,140)	
Independent Members (Planning Committee)	10,000	7,495	6,500	(995)	9,000	(1,000)	
Employer's Oncosts - Board Members	10,500	7,875	6,930	(945)	9,500	(1,000)	
	132,500	99,370	78,835	(20,535)	113,260	(19,240)	
Employee Salary Costs							
CEO Team	290,356	217,765	219,362	1,597	299,400	9,044	
Projects & Development Team	363,054	272,290	241,714	(30,576)	322,900	(40,154)	
Infrastructure & Enabling Team	315,883	236,915	203,766	(33,149)	265,500	(50,383)	
Planning & Place Team	1,214,110	910,585	874,716	(35,869)	1,173,000	(41,110)	
Corporate Services Team	648,813	486,610	442,024	(44,586)	593,000	(55,813)	
Employer's NICs	389,320	291,990	264,685	(27,305)	360,600	(28,720)	
Employer's Pension Contributions	620,255	465,190	436,175	(29,015)	581,182	(39,073)	
	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Performance Related Pay	68,000	-	-	-	68,000	-	
	3,909,791	2,881,345	2,682,442	(198,903)	3,663,582	(246,209)	
Interim/ Agency Staff Costs							
External HR and Payroll	26,000	19,500	5,369	(24,869)	5,000	(21,000)	
	176,000	132,000	109,212	(22,788)	135,000	(41,000)	
TOTAL PAY COSTS	4,218,291	3,112,715	2,870,489	(242,226)	3,911,842	(306,449)	
Premises Costs (Owned/Leased/Temp Usage)							
	302,000	226,505	165,876	(60,629)	302,000	-	
ICT	300,000	225,000	213,233	(11,767)	330,000	30,000	
Office Equip/ Consumables / Stationery / Postage	30,000	22,500	5,557	(16,943)	15,000	(15,000)	
Corporate Legal Support	20,000	15,005	7,812	(7,193)	20,000	-	
Other External Support to Corporate Services	55,000	12,275	19,671	7,396	88,000	33,000	
External Audit (National Audit Office)	65,000	48,750	63,750	15,000	85,000	20,000	
Internal Audit (Government Internal Audit Agency)	35,000	26,250	29,795	3,545	40,000	5,000	
Insurance	70,000	52,500	52,234	(266)	70,000	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Comms/ Business Engagement	60,000	45,000	49,581	4,581	60,000	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Travel & Subsistence	26,000	19,505	10,583	(8,922)	16,000	(10,000)	
Vehicle hire	10,000	7,495	3,617	(3,878)	7,000	(3,000)	
Recruitment Advertising	15,000	11,250	44,369	33,119	78,000	63,000	
Training	50,000	37,500	31,315	(6,186)	50,000	-	
Corporate memberships	20,000	15,000	7,361	(7,639)	12,000	(8,000)	
Other Staff Costs (Prof Subs/PPE etc)	20,000	15,005	7,275	(7,730)	12,000	(8,000)	
	-	-	-	-	-	-	
External support to Planning Service	290,000	217,500	184,624	(32,876)	250,000	(40,000)	
	-	-	-	-	-	-	
CSR/ Business Plan / KPI Monitoring	20,000	20,000	26,389	6,389	29,000	9,000	
	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Bank Charges	2,000	1,500	1,318	(182)	2,000	-	
	-	-	-	-	-	-	
TOTAL NON-PAY COSTS	1,390,000	1,018,540	924,358	(94,182)	1,466,000	76,000	
Programme Revenue	1,334,203	1,000,655	902,709	(97,946)	1,362,000	27,797	
Estate & Asset Management Costs	565,000	423,750	381,260	(42,490)	565,000	-	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	7,507,494	5,555,660	5,078,815	(476,845)	7,304,842	(202,652)	
Income from Central Area & Other Owned Sites	(265,000)	(198,750)	(363,235)	(164,485)	(477,000)	(212,000)	
Planning Fees income	(290,000)	(217,500)	(209,506)	7,994	(260,000)	30,000	
Other Income	-	-	(42,295)	(42,295)	(42,295)	(42,295)	
Use of Receipts Rolled Forward	(452,494)	(339,370)	-	339,370	(25,548)	426,946	
	-	-	-	-	-	-	
TOTAL INCOME	(1,007,494)	(755,620)	(615,036)	140,584	(804,843)	202,651	
Net Expenditure	6,500,000	4,800,040	4,463,779	-336,261	6,500,000	-0	