

Report Purpose: Strategic Plan- Progress report

Author: Town Clerk

This Progress Report outlines the achievements and ongoing work delivered under the Macclesfield Town Council Strategic Plan 2023–2027. It demonstrates the Council's continued commitment to creating healthy communities, protecting and enhancing the environment, regenerating the town centre, celebrating heritage, and strengthening communication with residents.

Over the past three years, the Council has built on strong partnerships with local organisations, community groups and Cheshire East Council to deliver meaningful improvements across the town. The report highlights tangible outcomes, increased investment in key services, and measurable growth in participation, footfall and community engagement.

Key Highlights of Achievement

Healthy Communities

- Grants budget increased to £50,000, strengthening support for voluntary and community groups.
- Expansion of free activities including Street Sports (now up to 4 sessions per week in spring/summer) and new inclusive programmes such as Fitness for the future which includes walking football and pan-disability sessions.
- Summer school provision expanded, supporting more families during school holidays.
- Continued investment in parks, increasing annual funding to £110,000, delivering new accessible equipment in West Park, Tytherington and South Park.
- Free bus days introduced, successfully increasing public transport usage.

Environment & Public Realm

- Ongoing commitment to sustainable procurement and plastic-free events.
- Continued success in the Britain in Bloom campaign:
 - 2024: 5 Gold awards plus Best Art in the Community

- 2025: 4 Gold, 2 Silver Gilt, 1 Silver, and Best Overall
- Expansion of wildflower meadows to 9 sites across the town.

Town Centre Regeneration

- Delivery of an expanded annual events and trails programme, significantly increasing town centre footfall.
- The Elmer Trail attracted visitors from across the UK and boosted Christmas 2025 footfall.
- Launch and continued support of the Totally Locally campaign.
- Successful delivery of Glow Up Grants supporting shopfront improvements.
- Opening of new town centre toilets, including the town's first Changing Places facility.
- Undertook a comprehensive town-wide consultation to gather residents' views and priorities for the future of Macclesfield.
- Worked with CEC to help deliver a newly renovated Indoor Market.

Heritage & Tourism

- Successful Shared Prosperity Fund bids delivering "Museum on the Street" installations and Elmer town trails.
- Supporting the Museum has aided increased museum ticket sales (up 9% year-on-year).
- Town centre footfall bucking national trends, with continued growth into 2026.
- Progress toward a Town of Culture bid led by Macclesfield Culture Collective.

Council & Communications

- Installation of new town centre noticeboards improving access to information.
- Enhanced communications strategy using schools, radio, social media and community networks.
- Regional promotion of major events, attracting visitors from outside the area.

Macclesfield Town Council Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027 Progress Report

Healthy Communities

Aim	Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Progress
Healthy residents who understand the services available to them.	Healthy residents who understand the services available to them.	Promote and share information on services.e.g Social Prescribing.	As available.	Ongoing
		Get involved in campaigns to promote opportunities e.g Mental Health Week.	Campaigns are planned throughout the year in comms plan.	Planned - Mental Health Week, International Womens Day, White Ribbon day, reminders of free to access activities and sports from adults and children, advertising of free to attend events for families
		Support the voluntary sector and local groups to offer services through CVSCE funded support, and through the grants programme.	Grant applications appraised at every Finance committee meeting.	Continue to support CVSCE to support the sector. Grants budget increased to £50,000
		Voluntary sector event included in Heritage Day	Annually	Ongoing and growing in amount of Organisations involved.
		To provide and manage allotment plots on 3 sites in Macclesfield.	Ongoing	Plots are leased to a community group and

				also a mental health group.
Encourage residents to get involved with free activities designed to improve their health and wellbeing and lead happy lives.	Provide free sports and activities for residents	<p>Parkfit provided weekly in South Park.</p> <p>Supporters of parkrun.</p> <p>Seek to increase activities for different abilities and age ranges.</p> <p>Pilot new activities through micro grants.</p>	<p>Weekly</p> <p>Weekly</p> <p>Increase by at least 2 further activities by March 2024</p>	<p>Parkfit has taken a break as of October 2025 while we have taken time to evaluate the provision and survey attendees. The leader of the session stepped down which gave us opportunity to do this. We are now ready to seek a new leader for the sessions.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Fitness for the future added in January 2025 run by community trust for and incorporates walking football, pan disability sessions and sessions specifically for supported housing tenants.</p> <p>Micro grants given out to a range of groups/residents for new activities included Bee You providing craft and</p>

		Provide summer school funded places for children who wouldn't otherwise be able to attend summer sports clubs.		social opportunities and Baby Sing, a group for new parents to get together while their children enjoy musical activities. Summer schools budget increased and also offer now includes further offers e.g dance classes
Supporting economically challenged families with activities out of school times.	Offer free activities for children all throughout the year and in the summer holidays.	Street Sports provided 3 times per week for children. Basketball provided weekly in West Park. Summer school is provided	Weekly. Weekly.	We have increased street sports sessions to 4 times a week in spring/summer. We maintain the sessions twice a week in the winter and have listened to feedback from the children to keep Thursday as a football session. Session replaced with multisports.

		<p>for children in need which funds activities in the summer holidays working with Community Sport Trust and Sylk Dance.</p> <p>Calendar of free family friendly events throughout the year including 'Do Something Summer' activities through the summer holidays.</p>	<p>Summer holidays annually.</p> <p>Annual calendar.</p>	<p>Summer schools budget increased and offer now includes further activities e.g dance classes</p> <p>Do something summer goes from strength to strength and now includes free buses that day around town to aid families in the holidays.</p>
To encourage and facilitate safe Playing Out	To create playing out sessions where children can play out safely in Macclesfield	<p>Training Volunteers to carry out road closures to facilitate sessions.</p> <p>Street Sports provided 3 times per week for children of Macclesfield in 3 different wards.</p> <p>Basketball provided weekly in West Park.</p>	<p>No longer relevant for Council</p> <p>Weekly</p> <p>Weekly</p>	<p>Due to Health and safety requirements we now use a local company to manage road closures.</p> <p>Sessions continue to be popular.</p> <p>Basketball replaced by a multisports session.</p>
Ensure residents and visitors have excellent and accessible	Access to green spaces and nature is vital for happy	Budget £100,000 per year towards the towns parks and play areas.	<p>Every year increased to £110,000 in 2025.</p> <p>Meet every 6 weeks.</p>	2023-24 - West Park – new accessible roundabout and an accessible gate

<p>parks and play areas to enjoy.</p>	<p>healthy communities.</p>	<p>Work with CEC on plans for the parks.</p>		<p>entrance. - South Park – trim trail Little park on Moss estate new equipment. 2024-25 Tytherington Play areas – Sandwich Drive and Holcombe park new equipment. West Park Showstopper climbing frame (planning permission needed so will be in situ 2026 summer) New park equipment planned for South Park 2026</p>
<p>Hear and understand the voice of younger people</p>	<p>Listen and understand what the younger people of Macclesfield want for their town.</p>	<p>Engage with the younger people of Macclesfield to create a ‘youth forum’ that can feed into the Town Council.</p>	<p>Creation of the forum by end 2023.</p>	
<p>Provide a safe town centre</p>	<p>Residents coming into the town centre should feel safe</p>	<p>Contribute to CEC CCTV Festoon lighting provided to light up the town.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing and reporting reviewed and changed to give show results and impact better. Festoon lighting added to Chestergate by Macc</p>

		<p>PSPO (Public Space Protection Order) in place</p> <p>Approved to extend CCTV with 2 mobile cameras</p> <p>Programme of replacement festoons in place</p> <p>MTC working with all agencies to ensure it is enforced.</p>		<p>on foot project and maintained by CEC</p> <p>In place 2025</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>An audit was undertaken of the festoon lights and repairs took place as a result. We now have a log of all of the lights.</p>
<p>A resilient and adaptable voluntary sector who are valued</p>	<p>Many residents rely on the services provided by the voluntary sector and the Town Council aims to ensure that they have all the support they need for delivery of services.</p>	<p>Financially support CVSCE to provide infrastructure support for the local voluntary sector.</p> <p>Grants programme available to support projects and groups.</p> <p>Financially support the CAB to provide information and advice service to the people of Macclesfield. Plus CAB feed in the issues the people</p>	<p>Contracted until 2024.</p> <p>Every Finance Committee.</p> <p>Annually.</p>	<p>Contract renewed until 2027 showing commitment to capacity building.</p> <p>Ongoing and budget increased.</p> <p>CAB supported increased by 10% to ensure services as the need increases.</p>

		<p>of Macclesfield are presenting with.</p> <p>Comms and Social media campaigns to highlight issues and assistance available e.g mental health week.</p>	Planned annually in Comms Plan.	Ongoing.
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Environment and Public Realm

Aim	Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Progress
To protect nature and the environment and encourage working in and respecting nature	<p>Declared a Climate emergency in 2019.</p> <p>As well as council operation and service delivery, all decisions must consider the impact they can have (+ve & -ve) on environmental sustainability.</p>	<p>Commitment to “Sustainable First” procurement.</p> <p>All events single use plastic-free</p> <p>Future “green” vehicle provision (if applicable).</p> <p>Work with CEC for better waste management / disposal including more recycling bins.</p> <p>Promote soft landscaping in Macclesfield where possible eg highways works and planning applications.</p>	<p>Approved and continuous.</p> <p>Approved and continuous.</p> <p>Meet CEC every 6 weeks. Included in Shared Prosperity funding bid to beautify Town Centre by 2025.</p>	<p>In situ, new events policy agreed July 2023, includes commitment to climate change.</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Macc on Foot project funded by UKSPF and delivered by CEC provided new feestoons on Chestergate,</p>

<p>A clean, attractive and tidy town.</p>	<p>To create a fantastic campaign to showcase the town, the work of the Rangers and the community and bring footfall into the town</p>	<p>Britain in Bloom campaign annually, Rangers and community groups and volunteers working together to beautify the town.</p> <p>MTC creating its own Britain in Bloom volunteers.</p> <p>Wildflower meadows and pollinators provided where possible around the town and are part of the Britain in Bloom campaign.</p>	<p>Annual campaign, work goes on throughout the year.</p> <p>By end 2023.</p> <p>Increase by 2 more meadows by 2024.</p>	<p>In 2024 – 5 x gold, plus best art in the community. In 2025 – 4 gold, 2 x silver gilt, 1 x silver, and 1 best overall</p> <p>Number of green volunteers is 13.</p> <p>Number of wildflower areas in 2025 is 9</p>
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Town Centre Regeneration

Aim	Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Progress
<p>A vibrant and prosperous town centre, accessible to all</p>	<p>Increase the footfall in the Town Centre</p>	<p>Provide free and creative events to bring people into town.</p> <p>Promote local businesses through comms channels working toward reviving 'Totally Locally'</p>	<p>Annual plan of events for MTC events.</p> <p>Promotion ongoing. Totally Locally by end of 2023.</p>	<p>Events and trails calendar is bigger than ever and includes quality events put on by local people. Elmer trail significantly increased footfall over the Christmas 25 period.</p> <p>Totally locally up and running.</p>

		<p>Improve signage in and around the town, £20000 in the budget with Indoor Market, the Station and Castle Quarter currently identified for signage.</p> <p>Provide a Town Centre Manager to support, liaise, distribute communications, bring together businesses.</p> <p>MTC has financed winter gritting to cover steep roads in the town and town centre.</p>	<p>Mid 2024.</p> <p>Ongoing.</p> <p>Ongoing until 2025.</p>	<p>Signage improved with 2 new notice boards in centre of the town. Further signage planned.</p> <p>Ongoing support and coordination from Town Centre manager.</p> <p>To be continued and grit boxes have been added.</p>
Improved facilities in town centre	To provide toilets for public use including a Changing Places facility.	<p>MTC have paid £110,000 towards toilets for the town centre. Joint project CEC and MTC, toilets will be situated in Indoor Market</p> <p>In the interim period MTC has paid St. Michael's Church to open theirs to the public.</p>	<p>Aiming for Sep/Oct 2023 for opening</p> <p>Currently investigating the possibilities, if terms are agreed by 2024.</p>	<p>Toilets opened, including the first Changing Places toilet in the town centre.</p> <p>ST Michaels continue to keep their facilities available for events and Treacle market funded by TC. Looking at opening new toilets for Treacle Market.</p>

		To work with CEC in the viability of MTC taking over the running of the Visitor Information Centre.		The extensive investigation led to the Visitor Information Centre being placed in the library and the funding given by the Town Council contributes to this and an extra Friday opening of the whole library.
Support for local businesses	To continue to support the recovery of the Town Centre for the good of businesses and the residents and visitors, through the Town Centre Recovery Working Group.	<p>MTC provides a Town Centre Manager to support and share information across the businesses in the town.</p> <p>Provide schemes that can support local businesses.</p> <p>Regular meetings to work together and share ideas e.g creating the outdoor eating spaces in town.</p> <p>Ongoing support and</p>	<p>Ongoing support.</p> <p>Totally Locally set up this year 2023 Glow Up grants opened June 23</p>	<p>Ongoing Support provided</p> <p>Totally locally set up. Glow Up grants were a success. 1261 grants for local businesses offered in 2025- great success and added to the event to show off the towns USPs.</p> <p>Town Centre Consultation took place in 2025, face to face and online. Currently planning a draft action plan.</p>

		<p>facilitating 'Totally Locally' group for Macclesfield.</p> <p>Introduction of 'Glow Up Grants' for local businesses to makeover their shop fronts.</p>		<p>Support of totally locally, with planters projects and support to host a fashion show of local shops.</p> <p>Glow Up grants were a success.</p>
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Community Transport and Active Travel

Aim	Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Progress
Promoting active travel and public transport to reduce reliance on cars.	We will enable residents to choose to reduce their reliance on cars by improving the desirability of walking, cycling and using public transport	<p>Promotion of existing bus routes</p> <p>Promotion of active travel routes, walks and cycling routes.</p> <p>Community Transport sub group set up – working on potential bike loan scheme and free bus use days to change behaviour.</p> <p>Lighting up the Middlewood Way</p>	<p>Sub group are working on free bus use day – hopefully for Nov 23.</p> <p>Started looking at bike loan scheme with local company ELOV.</p>	<p>Free bus days are established to encourage bus use. Have been a huge success as bus usage increases</p> <p>Bike loan scheme not set up</p> <p>Walking routes to be included in new Visitor guide for Macclesfield currently being devised.</p> <p>This is not currently viable due to price increase by CE</p>

				Highways since initial agreed quote.
Work with Cheshire East Council and Cheshire Police to reduce speeding	Safer roads for those walking and cycling, encouraging more activity.	Speed cameras provided to police from MTC and checks take place regularly. MTC continue to support '20's plenty' and have submitted roads to CEC.	Ongoing	Ongoing Support continues

Heritage and Tourism

Aim	Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Progress
Macclesfield 's heritage will be conserved, celebrated and promoted.	Preserve and promote heritage and history to increase the amount of visitors to ensure assets are kept open and enjoyed and to increase footfall.	MTC lead on Heritage Open Day on 9th September 2023. Funding bid put in for Shared Prosperity fund to create 'Museum on the street' and town trails. AUG 2023 Annual funding agreed for Silk Trust to support the museum and heritage of the town.	Annually Bids in 2024 and 2025 Ongoing	Including more organisations and growing in popularity. 2 successful bids – Museum on street boards in town centre locations with more to come. Elmer trail was 2 nd successful bid and trail over festive period 25/26. Significant footfall increase/ Reports received at every Full Council from museum. Ticket sales gone up 9% over the last year.

		Footfall counted and analysed	Weekly	Reported at every services committee and trends show that Macclesfield is bucking the national trend. Feb 26 shows up 7.7% so far in 2026 and was up 2.5% in 2025
		Town of Culture application for Macclesfield	Submission by Marc 31 st 2026	Macclesfield Culture Collective will lead with Bid. MTC will be accountable body/

Council and Comms

Aim	Objectives	Actions	Timeframe	Progress
To ensure residents, have access to information that helps them understand the role of the Town Council and the work it completes.	Aid residents to understand the work of the Town council and the difference of the local authority (Cheshire East Council and the previous Macclesfield Borough Council).	Provide clear information via website, social media, leaflets and local radio about the remit of the Town Council. Link to CEC website and services to aid residents.	Ongoing	Council information/events etc has been improved by the installation of 2 large notice boards in the Town centre.
To provide communications	Ensure as many residents	Use differing networks to reach different cohorts: e.g	Continually evolving.	Examples are all schools were sent Elmer trail info

<p>about the town and of services, businesses, events etc. going on in the town in wide and accessible formats.</p>	<p>as possible receive information from the Council.</p>	<p>disseminating information through schools, medical centres, care communities, shops, social media platforms, leaflets and posters.</p> <p>Council working on Comms Strategy and plan.</p>	<p>Starting 2023.</p>	<p>and do Something summer leaflets for book bags. More noticeboards in and around the town.</p> <p>Complete and evolving. Strategy to encourage visitors from further afield. The Elmer trail was advertised on Manchester radio and by Wild in Art attracting visitors from all over UK to the town.</p>
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