

## Hemel Garden Communities (HGC) Delivery Board

### MINUTES

Monday, 24 November 2025, 2pm - 4pm

Location: Conference Room 2, The Forum, Hemel Hempstead and Microsoft Teams

<b>Attendees:</b>	Bob Lane OBE (Chairman) (BL)	Hemel Garden Communities
	Councillor Sally Symington (SS)	Dacorum Borough Council
	Councillor Simy Dhyani (SD)	Dacorum Borough Council
	Councillor Adrian England (AE)	Dacorum Borough Council
	Darren Welsh (DW)	Dacorum Borough Council
	Diane Southam (DS)	Dacorum Borough Council
	Ross Whear (RW)	Dacorum Borough Council
	Ronan Leydon (RL)	Dacorum Borough Council
	Councillor Paul de Kort (PdK)	St Albans City & District Council
	Councillor Jacqui Taylor (JT)	St Albans City & District Council
	Amanda Foley (AF)	St Albans City & District Council
	Christine Traill (CT)	St Albans City & District Council
	Councillor Paul Zukowskyj (PZuk)	Hertfordshire County Council
	Colin Haigh (CH)	Hertfordshire County Council
	Sarah McLaughlin (SMc)	Hertfordshire County Council
	Robin Oliver (RO)	Homes England
	Phillipa Zieba (PZ)	Hemel Garden Communities
	Nathalie Bateman (NB)	Hemel Garden Communities
Vanessa Cooper (VC)	Hemel Garden Communities	
Issy Spence (IS)	Hemel Garden Communities	
Adam Wood (AW)	Hertfordshire Futures	
<b>Apologies:</b>	Mark Doran (HCC), Fionnuala Lennon (Homes England), Selma Hooley (Hemel Garden Communities), Julia Krause (Homes England), Jonathan Wellstead (Hemel Garden Communities)	

Item	
1.	<p><b>Welcome and apologies</b></p> <p>Apologies as above.</p>
2.	<p><b>Previous minutes – 3 October 2025</b></p> <p>The previous minutes were agreed.</p> <p>PZ and AW have discussed HIQ funding support. It was concluded, however, that non-capital projects, did not best meet HIQ's funding criteria.</p>

	<p>CH advised the UK Innovation Corridor meeting was postponed. CH will provide an update in due course.</p> <p>Other actions to be covered by the agenda.</p>
3.	<p><b>Local Government Reorganisation (LGR)</b></p> <p>PdK reported that Councils had been asked to confirm their preferred unitary option. HCC and SADC supported a two-unitary model.</p> <p>SS noted that at the DBC full Council meeting, the Lib Dem minority unanimously backed the two-unitary option, but the Council majority chose the four-unitary model, a recommendation which Cabinet subsequently upheld. All agreed the benefits of DBC and SADC being together, which the three-unitary option does not support.</p> <p>PZuk added that the Government is expected to consult in the Spring and announce its decision in the Summer.</p>
4.	<p><b>Programme Director's Update</b></p> <p>PZ reported significant progress since the last meeting.</p> <p><u>Local Plans and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)</u></p> <p>The joint examination of SADC/DBC Local Plans' strategic policies for HGC took place on 21 October, followed by SADC's Stage 2 site allocation hearing on 22 October. SADC hearings will conclude on 11 December 2025. DBC Stage 1 hearings have finished, with Stage 2 expected in Q1 2026.</p> <p>HGC is preparing two Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), the Framework &amp; Transformation (F&amp;T) SPD and the Stewardship &amp; Placemaking (S&amp;P) SPD, both developed through extensive consultation. Inspectors recommended Local Plan policies refer to "having regard to the emerging SPDs."</p> <p>The F&amp;T SPD is being restructured for clarity and is expected to go to public consultation in the New Year, subject to approvals. For the S&amp;P SPD, PZ presented an options evaluation and emerging recommendations. Next steps include procuring consultancy support to develop a business case, including financial analysis, with developer contributions expected to support setup costs.</p> <p>CH asked if developers would be mandated to transfer assets into the stewardship model. PZ noted the current wording provides criteria allowing for alternatives, but further work is needed on viability and critical mass.</p> <p>SS asked about management charges. PZ confirmed annual service charges would apply. BL stressed the need for a financially sustainable long-term solution.</p> <p>AF asked about learning from Harlow &amp; Gilston; PZ and SMC noted their high-level policy has resulted in individual arrangements for developments.</p>

## Transport

Transport workstreams have been a major focus but are now in a strong position. The Hemel Hempstead Transport Study is nearing completion, and the northern Strategic Transport Corridor route will be incorporated into the F&T SPD.

Modelling for future growth, beyond the plan period, has identified potential network constraints, meaning future cumulative assessments will be required. A Monitor and Manage approach has been added to the SADC Plan for key junctions (M25 and M1 J8).

HCC's 3-yearly Transport Survey, boosted by HGC, gathered data from 793 Hemel Hempstead households. Findings show 33% of trips to the town centre are walked, while cycling (1%) and bus use (4%) remain low — highlighting significant opportunities for early behaviour-change initiatives. Barriers to cycling were discussed; PdK noted SADC's introduction of 20mph zones, and PZuk highlighted a county-wide promotion for 20mph zones but noted these can often be contentious locally.

AF asked about transport data for SADC; CH confirmed data will also be available for the Redbourn area.

### **Action: PZ to raise with HCC transport colleagues.**

PZuk noted the STC requires ongoing work to ensure its effectiveness. HCC is exploring bus-priority measures at key locations and active travel funds will support work to identify current barriers.

BL asked whether any Councils currently provide bike rental. PZuk noted Beryl bikes operate in Watford, and AE confirmed a bike-hire scheme for Hemel is a key priority.

## Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs)

TCE's submission for Land East of Hemel Hempstead is expected on 25 November.

Pigeon and Bloor's submission for Land North of Redbourn Road is anticipated 26 November.

TCE will also submit a proposal for Westwick Row (outside the HGC Growth Area) in the week of 8 December. This pilot explores embedded and operational carbon reductions and alternative affordable housing models. Summary information has been shared with the HGC Councillor Review Group.

## Communications & Engagement Activities

TCE is holding public consultation events (w/c 22 November) to raise awareness ahead of its application submission.

	<p>HGC attended the Generation Dacorum Careers Fair in September. This year's survey focused on "schools of the future," with students emphasising tech-enabled learning, climate-controlled and inclusive spaces, and outdoor areas that support health, socialising, and community.</p> <p><u>Gap Funding</u></p> <p>PZ noted that the HGC IDP and its four priority categories, covering scheme-specific items and those needing external funding, were presented at the last Board meeting.</p> <p>PZ has met with Homes England to discuss potential funding, noting none is currently confirmed. Details of the National Housing Bank are awaited. The discussion focused on what might assist acceleration or expansion of housing numbers. Next steps include preparing a brief and commissioning consultancy support for any future funding opportunities.</p> <p>RO reported that the Affordable Homes Programme launched 10 days ago and that initial information on the National Housing Bank is expected before Christmas. BL suggested a meeting with Homes England in due course.</p> <p>JT and PdK highlighted a Government letter stating Councils will not have access to the new low-interest loan scheme, which is reserved for private registered providers. SADC raised concerns that this would restrict affordable housing delivery.</p> <p><b>Action: RO advised he was not aware of this letter and would pick this up with colleagues.</b></p> <p><u>Capital Projects</u></p> <p>PZ noted that MHCLG capital funding is being used to deliver two Parklets, at Leverstock Green and Grovehill, opening in early 2026, and to fund a Grand Union Canal resurfacing feasibility study.</p> <p><u>Risk Register</u></p> <p>Recent progress in the HGC Programme has reduced risks to seven green, with one red remaining: the risk of not meeting mode-share targets needed to support post-plan growth.</p> <p><u>Next steps</u></p> <p>PZ outlined upcoming HGC priorities.</p> <p>IS reported that determination of the two SADC applications is targeted for Summer 2026 and S106 discussions are underway for both.</p> <p><b>Action: IS to provide an update at the next Board meeting.</b></p>
5.	<b>AOB</b>

SS queried the difference in financial contributions in Appendix G (Procurement Plan). NB explained these relate to specific workstreams (IDP and HHTS) and are allocated based on each authority's proportion of homes in the programme area.

BL noted that TCE would like to meet with the Board in January.

**Action: BL will liaise with TCE on their availability and VC will liaise with Officers on availability.**

**Next meeting:**

Tuesday, 17 March, 10.30am - 12.30pm