

# **HARLOW 2020 VISION**

## **2011 - 2020**



# INTRODUCTION

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Welcome to the new Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for Harlow, which we are still calling the Harlow 2020 Vision. There has been such a strategy for a number of years but things change over time, and we want to make sure that Harlow 2020's vision reflects what local people, businesses and community groups want and aspire for Harlow in the future.

Harlow's SCS sets out the long term priorities for Harlow and acts as a guide for all the other plans and strategies affecting the district. It also helps coordinate the resources and investments of all the service providers that have an interest in Harlow's future.

Despite the changes that we are all experiencing we still feel that the challenges facing Harlow remain the same. Therefore the vision and priorities listed in this document build on the successes of the last SCS as well as continuing to work on areas that need further investment.

Following a public consultation, this document sets out what are the current and future priorities for Harlow. All of the comments from the consultation were considered and the Vision was amended appropriately. Many of the priorities are aspirational and cannot begin to happen without securing major external investment, but we still feel that it is right to include these objectives as a sign that Harlow is still open for business. Perhaps the current economic climate makes it challenging to include aspirations as well as the work which must be done, but if Harlow is to have a real vision then we need to include objectives which can stretch what might be achieved by the year 2020.



## ABOUT HARLOW 2020

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Harlow 2020 is Harlow's Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). LSPs bring together public, private and voluntary sector organisations to improve the quality of life in a district.

Harlow 2020 has played a major role in shaping and influencing plans for the future of Harlow, acting as a channel for local views and representing local needs and aspirations to those making decisions about the area.

For more information about Harlow 2020, please go to:  
[www.harlow2020.org.uk](http://www.harlow2020.org.uk).

## LIVING AND WORKING IN HARLOW TODAY

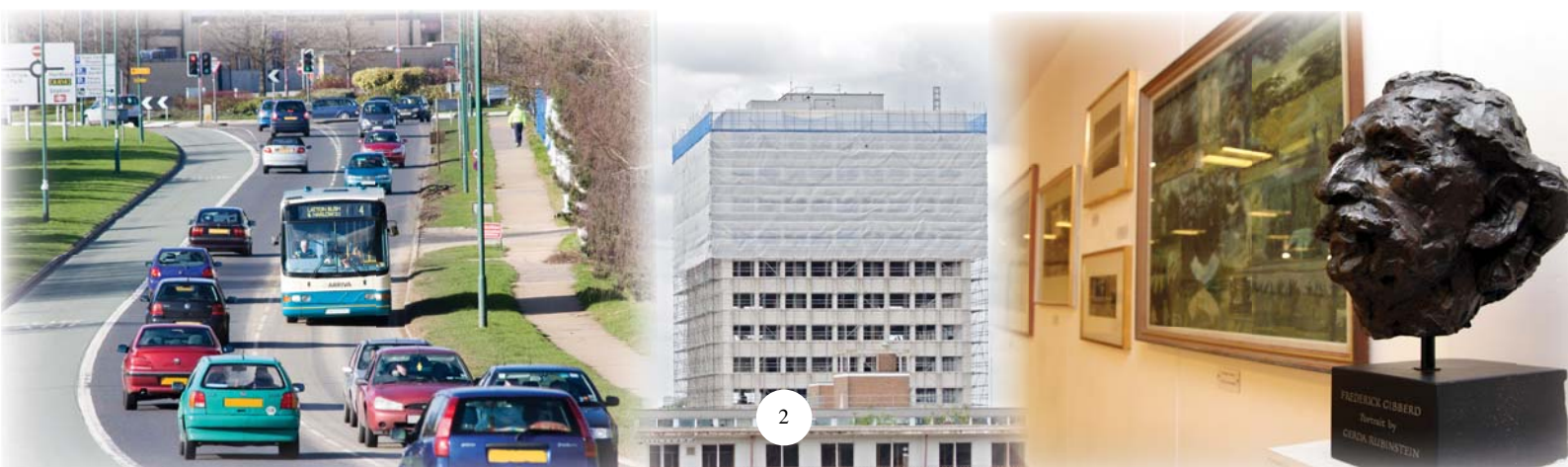
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Harlow was created as a New Town in the late 1940's and has a population of approximately 80,600. As a sub-regional centre it enjoys a superb strategic location between London and Cambridge, is close to the international Stansted Airport and benefits from its proximity to the M11.

The town's economy has diversified, with research and development emerging as a key focus for major employers. There are also many small and medium sized businesses within Harlow, with each neighbourhood designed to have its own retail, education and employment opportunities.

As a New Town much of the physical infrastructure of the town is reaching the end of its economic life at around the same time. Significant investment has been made in the regeneration of the town with on-going projects for the town centre, leisure facilities, transport infrastructure, neighbourhood regeneration and housing.

Harlow still retains a high proportion of social housing at 33%, although recent regeneration initiatives have led to a more varied mix of tenures. The private rented sector is increasing and the price of housing remains low compared to the East of England.



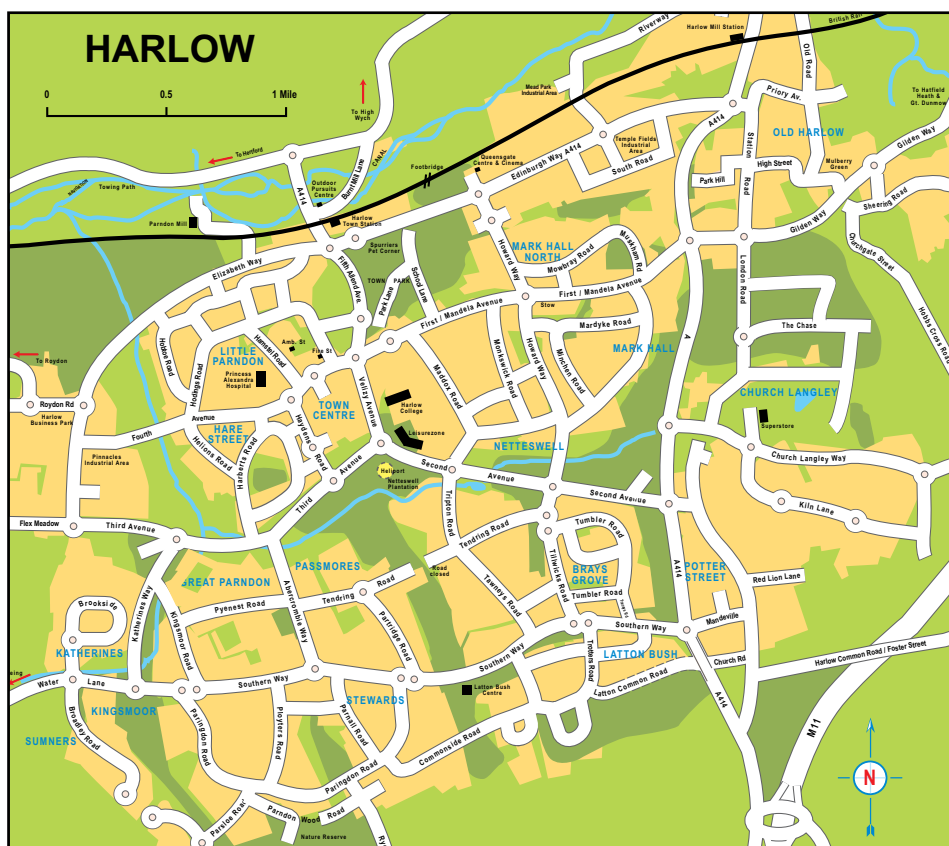
Harlow has a high percentage of people employed within manufacturing, retail, distribution, hotels and restaurants. A number of initiatives have been developed to increase the number of adults with qualifications and to support businesses and people affected by the recession. Harlow's long-term trend for academic attainment is a positive one, with steady improvements in GCSE and A level pass rates. Anglia Ruskin University started work on its new building during 2010 with courses starting in partnership with Harlow College from autumn 2011.

At 79 years, average life expectancy in Harlow is above the national average, although lower than the Essex average. Partnership working has led to a number of initiatives to address life-style related conditions such as obesity, smoking and the incidents of teenage pregnancy.

Partnership working has also seen an overall reduction in crime and disorder over the past five years and initiatives to improve the safety of the town centre are proving particularly effective.

The Harlow 2020 Partnership believes that to support a sustainable future, the built and natural environment needs to be valued and protected. The Harlow community is justly proud of its green spaces, wildlife, biodiversity, and award-winning Town Park. The amount of carbon consumed in industrial, commercial, road and domestic use as a rate of population in Harlow has also reduced over recent years.

Harlow is a vibrant and cohesive community with a real sense of place that has shown that it is able to embrace change and to evolve. This is illustrated by the success of the Harlow 2020 Partnership and provides a strong base for meeting the challenges of the future.



## THE VISION

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The Vision sets out what we want the town to achieve by 2020.

By 2020 Harlow will be:

- Growing as a town and benefiting from improvements to its buildings and infrastructure
- A university town meaning more local people have the opportunity to go on to higher education and better jobs
- A place where businesses wish to locate and people want to come to shop and visit
- A place where there is a wide choice of housing options, and where people wish to live and stay
- A place with excellent leisure facilities where people lead healthy and active lifestyles
- Widely known for its green spaces, local wildlife attractions, cultural activities and world class sculpture collection
- A town with reducing levels of child poverty and reducing health inequalities
- A town where people feel safe
- A town where people take pride in where they live, can volunteer and feel involved in decisions which affect them
- A town that is proud of its New Town heritage, and seen as an asset to its neighbours in Essex and Hertfordshire
- A place where development meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs and where all diverse communities are valued.



## THE PRIORITIES

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The priorities highlight what is most important to achieve the vision.

1. The physical regeneration of the town centre, renewed neighbourhoods and neighbourhood centres
2. Economic growth and investment in the town
3. Raising aspirations and improving attainment through lifelong learning
4. Raising awareness of, and improving access to, culture, art and leisure opportunities
5. Meeting the needs of Harlow's children, young people and families
6. Meeting the needs of older people and vulnerable people
7. Creating a safer Harlow and reducing the fear of crime
8. Empowering community and voluntary sector organisations to play a key role in delivering the vision
9. Provide a range of good quality housing across all tenures to meet current and future needs



## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

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The Vision and accompanying action plan will be regularly reviewed and updated with reports to the Harlow 2020 Board. Board meetings are open to the public and minutes of the meetings are also available on request or can be viewed on Harlow 2020's website at [www.harlow2020.org.uk](http://www.harlow2020.org.uk)

If you have any questions about the Vision or the Harlow 2020 Partnership, please contact:

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