

A Cooperative Manifesto for Chesterfield - a work in progress

Where do we want to be by 2030? How can poverty be eliminated, social cohesion and economic opportunity enhanced? How can we deal with the consequences of conflict abroad or the impacts climate change so that future generations can have a decent quality of life? How can we seize the opportunity of new technologies for the benefit of all? Chesterfield Coop Party is busy developing a vision for our future. Here is our work in progress.

Societies with strong plans reap the benefits of investor certainty as well as the long term coordination of things like public transport and carbon reduction. Planning society means thinking about people's health, education as well housing and transport, it means thinking about how society feels, about culture and history as well as economic development.

More than ever we need a politics of hope, a politics committed to sustainable development which benefits everyone; an economy with social justice at its heart, a strong more



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accountable more open democracy with a strong knowledge based economy using technology to enhance people's lives. It means a society of artistic endeavour, of cultural diversity of economic efficiency with access to parks and recreation that encourage walking and cycling and reduces health inequalities.

To achieve all this our society should be based on the following principles:

- **A more equal society** that enables people to fulfil their potential
- **A prosperous society** which is innovative, productive and low carbon
- **A resilient society** which maintains and enhances a bio-diverse natural environment with healthy ecosystems
- **A healthier society** in which people's physical and mental well-being is enhanced
- **A society of cohesive communities** which seeks to heal social and sectarian divisions, that promotes and protects culture and heritage and which encourages people to take part in the arts, and sports and recreation.

A walk through Chesterfield as a cooperative community in 2030

Your home will be warm and secure, powered by renewable energy from a local community Coop. Chesterfield will be 'carbon positive' as it exports more energy than it uses. Your home may have been built, or renovated, by a housing Coop that you may well belong to. If you live in new home you may have commissioned it yourself playing a role in its design. It will have decent sized rooms with space to eat your dinner at a table, somewhere for the kids to do their homework and enough storage for life's necessities.

Your home will have either its own garden or access to a shared garden, depending on your preference, and the building fabric will blend the best of new technology with traditional craft design. It will sit on a safe street surrounded by green space and trees for shade, it will have play space so that children and pedestrians will come before cars.

You will be able to walk to the local school and shop so buying a pint of milk will also keep you fit. It will be great place for bike riders who will enjoy safe cycle routes making it easier to take exercise and be healthy with less pollution. It will be rich with wildlife, with development enhancing nature not destroying it. You will be able to book a pool car via an App on your Coop phone whenever you need it or use the tram at the end of street and you won't need to leave the house until you know your tram is on its way with real-time travel information.

Transport will connect together and take you to high speed rail. There will be land available to grow food in allotments and community gardens. There will be a community café. There will be space to meet and space for solitude.

The neighbourhood you live in will be built to be resilient to a changing climate using sustainable drainage that creates even more space for wildlife. Communities can be made greener by growing plants on buildings to reduce summer temperatures, pollution and enhance bird life. Many neighbourhood assets will be held in trust for the community to help fund the maintenance of the street and community activity over the long term.

Your neighbourhood will be set within a society which has localised and mutualised a large part of the economy from energy services and transport to food and IT, harnessing the power of new technology to make life easier and more fulfilling for everyone. It will be a well organised, secure and open society in which the town is a shared space for vibrant arts and culture.

The cooperative movement is at the cutting edge of social revolution building a fairer mutualised society from the bottom up. The vision we offer is partly a political choice but it is increasingly a practical necessity if we are to move away from a future of greater poverty, inequality and uncontrolled climate change which we currently face.

Based on work by Hugh Ellis, edited by Ollie Pardo and Mark Grayling for Chesterfield Coop Party.