

Strategic Plan 2023- 2028

1. Introduction

This document updates the Vision, Value and Aims contained in the Strategic Business Plan in place for April 2021 and April 2023, and builds on the significant progress made in this period. It reflects upon and responds to issues and aspirations expressed by local people and frames Thornbury Town Council's strategic course for the next 5 years.

A thorough process has been undertaken between Autumn 2022- Spring 2023 in delivering the new Strategic Vision, Values and Aims, including the following key work areas:

- Theory of change workshops with Town Council Staff and Councillors
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Identification of local priorities

2. Thornbury Overview



Thornbury has undergone significant change in recent years with key issues being:

- Housing and population growth
- The challenges of the Covid period and cost of living crisis
- Increased pressure on local services, for example transport, medical and community facilities
- Changes to the function and layout of the Town Centre and key buildings/sites Whilst some of these issues have affected the wider area, others are particular to Thornbury.

There remains a strong sense of community spirit in the Town that was especially evident during the pandemic. This can be seen through the amount of local voluntary and community group activity. This positive energy and involvement from the community is assisted by the Town Council in supporting and promoting this burgeoning activity.

The challenge for the Town is to continue to provide the infrastructure and services to support its growing population. Thornbury Town Council supported the production of a Neighbourhood Plan which was adopted by South Gloucestershire Council in 2022, to help guide the development of the area and reflect the issues of significance to local people.

The 2021 Census reveals that the population of South Gloucestershire increased by 10.5% between 2011 and 2021 with a population in Thornbury of 14,500 in 2021 spread across 6,100 households.

Further information relating to Thornbury from the 2021 Census is shown below. Whilst 2021 Census Middle Layer Super Output Areas are not precisely co-terminus to the Town Council ward boundaries, there are key trends and information relating to the Thornbury area which are noteworthy.

The following information is taken from the Office for National Statistics sources on the 2021 Census.

Household deprivation

Thornbury (England)

Household is not deprived in any dimension **54.7%** (48.4%)

Household is deprived in one dimension **33.1%** (33.5%)

Household is deprived in two dimensions **10.1%** (14.2%)

Household is deprived in three dimensions **2.0%** (3.7%)

Household is deprived in four dimensions **0.2%** (0.2%)

% of all households

Length of residence in the UK

Thornbury (England)

Born in the UK **92.4%** (82.6%)

10 years or more **4.6%** (10.1%)

5 years or more, but less than 10 years **1.4%** (3.0%)

2 years or more, but less than 5 years **1.0%** (2.3%)

Less than 2 years **0.6%** (1.9%)

% of all people

Highest level of qualification

Thornbury (England)

No qualifications **11.7%** (18.1%)

Level 1, 2 or 3 qualifications **39.7%** (39.9%)

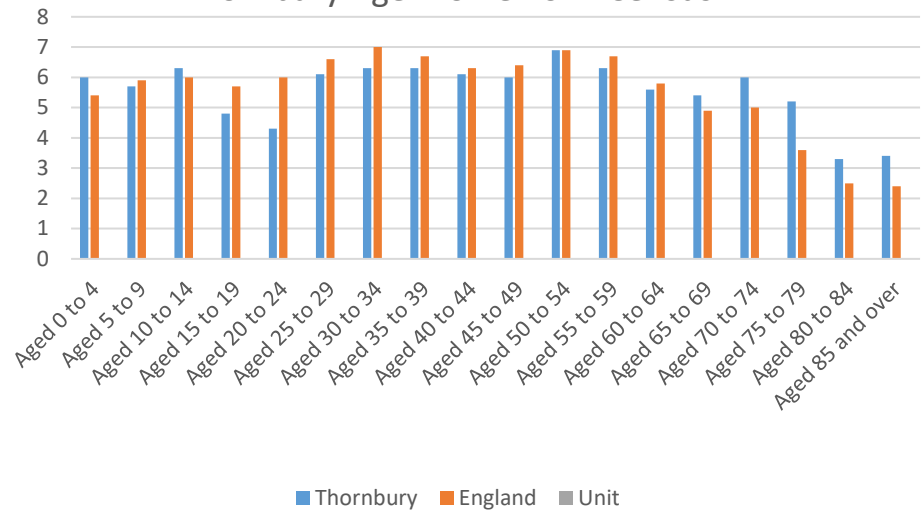
Apprenticeship **5.4%** (5.3%)

Level 4 qualifications and above **40.7%** (33.9%)

Other qualifications **2.5%** (2.8%)

% of people aged 16 years and over

Thornbury Age Profile 2021 Census



Occupation

Thornbury (England)

1. Managers, directors and senior officials **12.5%** (12.9%)

2. Professional occupations **24.8%** (20.3%)

3. Associate professional and technical occupations **14.2%** (13.3%)

4. Administrative and secretarial occupations **11.8%** (9.3%)

5. Skilled trades occupations **8.9%** (10.2%)

6. Caring, leisure and other service occupations **8.2%** (9.3%)

7. Sales and customer service occupations **6.5%** (7.5%)

8. Process, plant and machine operatives **5.2%** (6.9%)

9. Elementary occupations **7.9%** (10.5%)

% of people aged 16 years and over in employment

Economic activity status

Thornbury (England)

Economically active: In employment **58.2%** (57.4%)

Economically active: Unemployed **2.0%** (3.5%)

Economically inactive **39.8%** (39.1%)

% of people aged 16 years and over

Distance travelled to work

Thornbury (England)

Less than 10km **22.3%** (35.4%)

10km to less than 30km **26.3%** (14.4%)

30km and over **3.5%** (4.3%)

Works mainly from home **37.5%** (31.5%)

Other **10.3%** (14.5%)

% of people aged 16 years and over in employment

Number of cars or vans

Thornbury (England)

No cars or vans in household **11.8%** (23.5%)

1 car or van in household **38.9%** (41.3%)

2 cars or vans in household **37.1%** (26.1%)

3 or more cars or vans in household **12.2%** (9.1%)

% of all households

Accommodation type

■ Thornbury (England)

Whole house or bungalow **87.9%** (77.4%)

Flat, maisonette or apartment **11.9%** (22.2%)

A caravan or other mobile or temporary structure **0.2%** (0.4%)

% of all households

Tenure of household

■ Thornbury (England)

Owns outright **42.4%** (32.5%)

Owns with a mortgage or loan or shared ownership **34.9%** (29.8%)

Social rented **11.5%** (17.1%)

Private rented or lives rent free **11.2%** (20.6%)

% of all households

Household size

■ Thornbury (England)

1 person in household **27.2%** (30.1%)

2 people in household **37.3%** (34.0%)

3 people in household **15.7%** (16.0%)

4 or more people in household **19.9%** (19.9%)

% of all households

Number of bedrooms

■ Thornbury (England)

1 bedroom **7.7%** (11.6%)

2 bedrooms **15.5%** (27.3%)

3 bedrooms **42.4%** (40.0%)

4 or more bedrooms **34.4%** (21.1%)

% of all households

General health

■ Thornbury (England)

Very good health **49.3%** (48.5%)

Good health **34.3%** (33.7%)

Fair health **12.2%** (12.7%)

Bad health **3.4%** (4.0%)

Very bad health **0.9%** (1.2%)

% of all people

Disability

■ Thornbury (England)

Disabled under the Equality Act **17.8%** (17.3%)

Not disabled under the Equality Act **82.2%** (82.7%)

% of all people

These up to date and locally derived statistics demonstrate the extent to which, despite being a relatively affluent area overall, there are many in Thornbury who are less well-off and may be experiencing significant life challenges:

Thornbury North	Thornbury South
<p>Households which are deprived in at least one dimension. (these are indicators around education, health, housing and employment, see Appendix 1 for full information)</p>	
31.4%	34.6%
<p>People aged 16+ having no qualifications.</p>	
10.4%	13.9%
<p>Single parent households with dependent children</p>	
5.3%	5.9%
<p>This figure rises as high as 15.1% of households in some of the Output Areas within Thornbury North (smaller areas within the Middle Layer Super Output Areas)</p>	<p>This figure rises as high as 14% of households in some of the Output Areas</p>
<p>People who have moved to this area within the last year from elsewhere in the UK</p> <p>The year before the 2021 Census. Indicates a significant level of in-migration.</p>	
12.7%	7.7%



Thornbury Town Council Strategic Plan 2023- 2028

INTRODUCTION

This Strategic Plan sets out Thornbury Town Council's vision, values and priorities for the next 5 years. The Strategy builds on the council's track record, takes into account latest census information and feedback from the resident's survey 2022.

VISION

To be a local leader as Thornbury expands; deliver high quality, affordable services; work positively in partnership with local and public sector organisations, local businesses and the community throughout Thornbury

VALUES

- Transparency and integrity
- Quality and sustainability
- Community cohesion
- Forward thinking

PRIORITIES

These priorities will guide the Town Council's decision making and budget allocation for the next 5 years and will be delivered by more detailed action plans, reviewed annually.

- Implement Thornbury's 'Climate Change and Local Nature Action Plan' to deliver the council's commitment to tackle the Climate Emergency
- Develop enhanced support and services for young people in recognition of Thornbury's growing younger population
- Implement the Council's Capital Strategy to ensure that our building and land assets are used in the best interests of the town
- Promote community activities to build Thornbury's sense of community and pride

At the same time, the council will continue to:

- Deliver high quality open spaces and cemetery provision
- Deliver its partnership with voluntary and community organisations through the grants programme and Service Level Agreements
- Work to engage all parts of the community, such as older and young people; new residents and communities; cultural and historical organisations; sports and recreation clubs.
- Represent the town and council's views as appropriate, for example in responding to planning application and other consultations
- Regularly communicate with residents, using all appropriate media outlets, so that everyone can be involved
- Be prepared to explore new ideas and opportunities that fit within our 5-year Strategic Plan
- Be a good employer and deliver value for money

3. Monitoring and Review

The implementation of this Plan will be monitored regularly by the Town Council, and an overall progress review made at an appropriate interval pertinent to agreed outcomes to enable the Council to be responsive to changing local circumstances and needs.

4. Equalities

In preparing the Strategic Plan the Town Council has worked within the measures of its Equality and Diversity Policy, adopted in 2021. Within this Policy, the Council pledges to:

- *Encourage mutual respect for all of our residents*
- *Recognise and work with every diverse group*
- *Give high quality inclusive services and facilities*
- *Make sure our employment policies and practices are fair*
- *Challenge harassment and discrimination*

The full Equality and Diversity Policy is available on the Town Council website.

5. Town Council Context

- Thornbury is a medieval market town based around 10 miles north of Bristol.
- Historically, Thornbury was a market town for the surrounding farms and hamlets on the road link between Bristol and Gloucester. However, in the late 20th Century, the town grew to accommodate workers building the nuclear power stations, Severn bridge and then later to support the growing aerospace insurance and defence industries to the North of Bristol. The Town has continued to grow with supporting infrastructure of schools, and the St Mary Shopping Centre was built in the 1960's which added to the Town Centre shopping offer.
- The Town has undergone rapid growth again in recent years, yet the community spirit that makes Thornbury unique remains. There is a large volume of local community and voluntary groups and many treasured Community events and activities that make the Town special.
- Thornbury is situated within the County of South Gloucestershire. There are two tiers of local government within South Gloucestershire Council with differing responsibilities.
- Thornbury Town Council is the first and most local tier of government for residents of Thornbury. South Gloucestershire Council is the second tier, and its responsibilities include education, highways, libraries, health and social services, most parking, housing, street cleaning etc.
- Thornbury Town Council has 16 Councillors who are elected every four years. Thornbury has four electoral wards. The Town Mayor/ Chair of Council and Deputy Town Mayor/ Deputy Chair of Council are elected by Councillors at the Annual Statutory Town Council Meeting in May.

Full Council

The full Council meetings involve all of the corporate Council body of 16 councillors. The meetings are held every other month. The full Council is responsible for overseeing the work of the committees, making key decisions that can't be delegated and reviewing major strategic or financial matters.

Planning Committee

The Council Planning and Town Development Committee considers applications in its area at its meetings, usually every three weeks and makes representations to South Gloucestershire Council. The Committee also considers major local and regional planning issues, and planning policy matters.

The Town Council is not the Local Planning Authority and has no powers to determine planning applications in Thornbury, these are decided by South Gloucestershire Council. However, they consult the Town Council on most applications in Thornbury. As well as being able to raise any issues with the Town Council, we strongly recommend that anyone wishing to support or oppose an application does so directly to South Gloucestershire Council.

Finance and Policy Committee

The Finance and Policy Committee oversees Council policies, procedures, and finances, as well as approving grant applications. It meets every 8 weeks. It has two sub-committees.

Open Spaces Committee

The Open Spaces Committee oversees the managing of the Council's parks, playgrounds, football pitches, street furniture, cemetery and closed churchyard at St Mary's Church.

Climate and Nature Committee

The Climate and Nature Committee looks at how Council services impact the environment and is developing a Local Nature Action Plan for the Council. The Committee also looks to initiatives and events to promote nature and biodiversity conservation within the Town.

Staffing Committee

The Staffing Committee oversees the policies and procedures that relate to staffing. The Committee is responsible for ensuring that the annual appraisal of the Town Clerk takes place.

Management Structure

The management of the Town Council is carried out by the Town Clerk who is appointed by, and reports to, the Town Council. The Town Clerk is required to carry out all the functions required by law as the Town Council's proper officer and to issue all statutory notifications. The Town Clerk is responsible for the day-to-day operational management of the Town Council and the supervision of staff. There are a total of 13 members of staff as at March 2023. The Town Clerk at Thornbury Town Council also undertakes the role of Responsible Finance Officer who drafts and manages the Town Council budget (budgeted expenditure of £1.5 million in 2023/24).