



# SHAPING PLACES FOR THRIVING COMMUNITIES

Strategic Plan  
2017-2020 and beyond

# ADEPT

The Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport

## SHAPING PLACES FOR THRIVING COMMUNITIES

ADEPT represents Place Directors, the place-making strategists and policy shapers across top tier local authority areas. They are the leaders who design long-term strategies for place-based services.

A place is a complex system of people, natural and built environments in which we live, learn and work. Successful places are where healthy, sustainable communities thrive and businesses can operate productively.

Our membership includes Local Enterprise Partnerships and corporate partners drawn from key service sectors, collaborating effectively to create places that work for all.

ADEPT members shape our social, economic and environmental frameworks. We respond to the changing needs of our communities through strategy, integrated infrastructure, service provision and partnership.

Our greatest strength lies in our networks, bridging the gap between local and national governments, public and private sectors. We operate across boundaries, not within silos, bringing partners together to make the case for place.

This document sets out ADEPT's vision to 2035 and beyond, and how we plan to shape the places in which we live and work, building successful communities that are fit for the future and enabling good growth.

### ADEPT's vision: Place shaping for the future

ADEPT members are not only responsible for providing services now; they design strategies and invest in infrastructure to facilitate the future, laying the foundations for the communities we need to become.

### ADEPT's priorities: People, Planning & Place

Places must work for the people that live in them. For ADEPT, successful infrastructure is more than hard engineering; it provides the social, economic and environmental systems that support thriving communities and businesses.

### ADEPT beyond 2035: Creating the places of the future

Tackling challenges that include climate change, employment, housing and population growth requires vision, leadership and innovation. ADEPT members are embracing change now to design the future, harnessing the power of big data to find creative solutions.

### ADEPT to 2035: Bringing regional strategies to national planning

Creating communities that work for all relies on effective localised decision-making aligned with national strategy. Integrated industrial, economic and environmental strategies must make the case for place, securing support from national Government.

### ADEPT 2017 - 2020: Building partnerships to deliver services

Providing services that support thriving communities means getting the basics right and providing opportunities in a climate of uncertainty. Our relationships with contractors and communities enable us to remodel our transport systems, deliver effective waste management, and transform our services, targeting investment based on need.

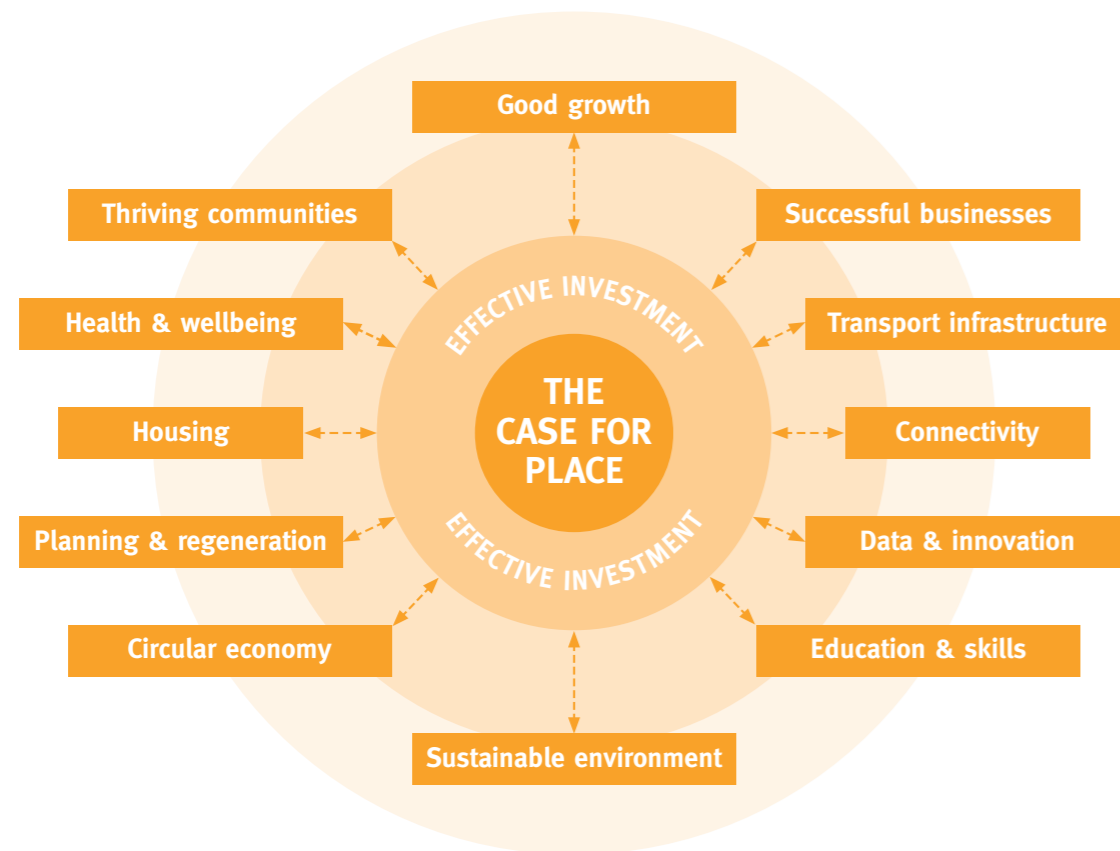


## THE FUTURE OF PLACE

Technological innovation is shaping our behaviour and how our places operate.

Although transport, environment and economic systems are increasingly driven by data and technology, our most valuable asset is our people. Health and wellbeing are vitally important, as is providing the education and skills to ensure our communities are prepared for the future.

All our services, including health, education and skills, will need to be flexible, functioning as part of an integrated infrastructure that supports our communities and businesses.



ADEPT members take a long-term view, scanning the future to ensure our places are resilient and adaptable for decades to come. Our current horizon scanning includes many potential scenarios:

- Petrol and diesel cars become obsolete once the cost of electric vehicles drop and their range increases. Most people no longer own or drive their own cars, using instead shared autonomous vehicles available on demand.
- Roads are safer. The number and severity of accidents has fallen, while streets have become relatively free of cars. However, electrification of transport has increased demand for power with supply much more dependent on local generation and energy storage.
- Councils are smaller and smarter with more automated functions and on-line transactions. Staff are mobile, they orchestrate and commission networks of partners, providers and community groups, sharing data widely. On-line engagement and participation tools involve residents in scenario planning and resource allocation.
- Homes and workplaces have seen great innovation based on fast digital connectivity, smarter use of energy and storage, and the re-use of rain and dirty water. Reduced need for parking means restored gardens offer benefits in terms of improved appearance, biodiversity and drainage.
- Climate change adaptation and high environmental standards have created a more flexible approach to managing natural resources, including flood water. However, resilience challenges from climate change continue with an unpredictable cycle of flood and drought.
- Waste management services from the point of collection are designed to conserve natural resources and realise the value of waste through energy generation and the operation of a circular economy.



## THE CASE FOR PLACE

**Making the case for place has never been more vital. ADEPT is the voice for Place leaders.**

Our communities need long-term strategic objectives for that look forward through the next 20-30 years. This requires an understanding of the distinct timeframes we will be operating within and the potential impacts on people, planning and place. Successful implementation of these strategies will need funding certainty, innovation and flexibility.

### ADEPT beyond 2035

Infrastructure delivery requires long-term planning, but the preparation starts now. Enabling the future will require collaboration and new partnerships, where communities, technology and data come together to drive new thinking. ADEPT members are already building the networks to support our changing communities and places.

### ADEPT to 2035

Decision-making must happen at the most appropriate level. For ADEPT, localised infrastructure, environment and industrial strategies, aligned with national objectives can deliver certainty. Besides long-term planning, good infrastructure demands clear, long-term funding commitments. Importantly, it also provides social and environmental benefits as well as the economic return on investment.

### ADEPT 2017 - 2020

The national landscape is experiencing profound change and uncertainty, particularly in our changing relationship with Europe. ADEPT members can provide the expertise and leadership needed to transform our communities and our localised economies. We will continue to work with Government to make the case for place - sharing best practice to make a positive difference, creating solutions, advising and advocating where needed.

## Spatial planning

Providing integrated infrastructure that works is a long-term commitment. The creation, maintenance and management of our transport, energy, water, waste and digital systems alone require consistent and enduring investment. For example, if we want to see widespread use of autonomous vehicles, then our roads have to be fit for purpose and that investment is needed now. Spatial planning for infrastructure needs to be at a national level and forward-looking, spreading away from London and the cities, not piecemeal and localised. We want to see a long-term environmental framework working alongside a strong industrial strategy and regional decision-making. That is the blueprint for the future.

## Creating Place

We need to redefine infrastructure so that it includes the social, economic and environmental frameworks that make places work for people. Development should not be about volume alone, it should have social value and safeguard the natural environment. For that it must be inclusive and sustainable. To plan effectively, local authorities need longer-term funding certainty rather than short-term bidding opportunities that result in inequitable and ad hoc decision-making. We need to know how local growth will be resourced from 2020/21 onwards, so that we can get on with investing in place.

## People and Integration

Shaping places for the future is complex, requiring new skills and solutions that cut across traditional boundaries. Our most valuable asset is our workforce - keeping people healthy, skilled, and proactive for longer will be essential to our economic security. We need to see investment in people as an economic value rather than a burden, which is why we believe infrastructure needs to be viewed in the broadest, most inclusive terms. Governments of the future cannot afford to keep working in silos, and the inter-relationships between departments and sectors must be strengthened. Local service provision already requires us to work across traditional boundaries; we can support Government as it seeks to do the same.



- ADEPT members are the place-making strategists and policy shapers across top tier local authority areas
- ADEPT members are specialists, delivering services and sharing best practice across key sectors including environment, planning, housing, transport and economy
- ADEPT members design strategies for the future, taking communities beyond 2035
- ADEPT members operate in networks, cutting through boundaries to work with partners across the political, public, private and community sectors
- ADEPT members provide opportunities to develop new talent, supporting the Place Directors of tomorrow.

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[www.adeptnet.org.uk](http://www.adeptnet.org.uk)

