

ADEPT President's Awards 2026

Entry form

Award category

Shaping Places for People

Project Title

The Hertfordshire Healthy and Safe Places Framework

Local authority

Hertfordshire County Council

Partner/s if applicable

Hertfordshire Growth Board

Headline summary (150 characters max.)

The Healthy and Safe Places Framework places health, well-being and safety at the heart of spatial planning to reduce health inequalities.

Shaping Places for People: How was this project an innovative response to a significant local challenge? (150 words max.)

The Healthy and Safe Places Framework is the first of its kind in the UK. This pioneering model enables health to be systematically embedded in planning. It has been developed as a countywide, evidence-based approach, placing health, well-being and safety at the heart of spatial planning to reduce health inequalities.

With a difference in life expectancy of over 14 years between the least and most deprived areas in Hertfordshire, reducing health inequalities poses a significant local challenge. This framework is designed to bridge the gap between local population health profiles and national planning policy framework to inform local plans and consistently create healthy, sustainable and thriving new places when delivering growth targets on a local level across Hertfordshire.

It has been commended widely for setting a new benchmark for planning practice, has potential to influence national policy and sets out an approach that can be replicated anywhere in the country.

Shaping Places for People: Please give evidence of the quality of outcomes obtained from the project (for example improved/more efficient services, increased inclusivity for residents, futureproofing the service). (150 words max.)

The Healthy and Safe Places Framework aims to ensure that health, well-being and safety are systematically embedded in all spatial planning decisions across Hertfordshire. It seeks to achieve the following outcomes:

Healthier communities where the built environment actively supports physical and mental well-being.

Reduced health inequalities by using data driven insights to prioritise need and ensure consistent standards across all districts.

Safer places through design that reduces crime, improves community safety and strengthens resilience.

Stronger cross sector collaboration by providing single shared evidence base and language for planners, health partners, community safety teams and developers,

Consistency in approach to planning across all 11 planning authorities in Hertfordshire

Better quality developments shaped by clear, evidence-based principles understood and endorsed by all partners.

More efficient decision making through accessible tools that support earlier engagement, stronger justification for planning policy and more transparent development proposals.

Shaping Places for People: Please give evidence of the level of collaboration between place and people services (both within the council and with external partners/providers). (150 words max.)

The Framework has been co-designed through extensive collaboration between place and people services. This has involved Hertfordshire Growth Board members, including local authorities, the NHS and Police, working alongside Public Health, Sport England and the voluntary and community sector. This multi-disciplinary approach brought together expertise in planning, placemaking, public health intelligence and community engagement.

Prior + Partners provided technical planning input and strategic leadership, facilitating workshops, drafting content, and supporting the creation of the digital hub that makes the framework practical, accessible and actionable.

A dedicated Steering Group has overseen development and early implementation. These regular cross-sector meetings have ensured alignment between planning and health priorities, maintained momentum, and enabled continuous feedback to refine datasets, digital tools and documentation. This integrated approach not only demonstrates strong, ongoing collaboration between place-based professionals and people focused services, but is already recognised nationally as a trailblazing model for joined up planning and health.

Shaping Places for People: Please give evidence of the level of buy-in to the project or its goals from members of the local community, health and social care, and external organisations. (150 words max.)

The Framework brings together seven Healthy Placemaking Principles: Healthy Homes; Movement and Connectivity; Community Infrastructure; Natural Environment; Economy; Places and Neighbourhoods; and Healthy and Safe Communities. These were co-designed to embed residents' voices and community needs. Public surveys, stakeholder workshops and community engagement events shaped these principles, providing evidence of meaningful buy in.

These principles provide a shared baseline for assessing and shaping new developments, regeneration schemes and Local Plans. The digital hub hosts accessible mapping tools and datasets. It has been well received by planners, health and care professionals, developers and voluntary sector partners as a practical, evidence-led resource that strengthens decision-making.

As part of the emerging Local Growth Plan, the Framework will underpin the emerging Spatial Development Strategy, Local Transport Plan and Economic Strategy. This positions the Framework as a core tool for health improvement, prevention and inclusive growth as Hertfordshire transitions to new governance and delivery arrangements.

Shaping Places for People: Please give evidence of the use or consideration of new sources of investment to fund projects. (150 words max.)

The Framework supports clearer consideration of future investment opportunities by providing a consistent, systemwide evidence base that highlights where health, social and environmental outcomes can be strengthened through the planning process. By setting out measurable principles, it enables partners to better understand the long-term economic value of prevention focused design, giving clearer justification for directing or exploring investment in green infrastructure, active travel, community facilities and safe, accessible neighbourhoods.

The Framework also brings planning, public health and place shaping teams together around a shared set of priorities, helping identify where joint or aligned investment may be beneficial and where potential

external funding sources could be explored in the future. Its data, mapping tools and consistent language provide a foundation for partners to assess opportunities, strengthen business cases and consider new investment approaches without predetermining or committing to any specific funding mechanisms.

All categories: please add anything else that supports your award entry

You can access the framework here: https://www.hertfordshiregrowthboard.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/The-Hertfordshire-Healthy-and-Safe-Places-Framework_LD.pdf

You can access the hub here: <https://hertshealthyplacemaking-hertscc.hub.arcgis.com/>