

VISION2040 BASSETLAW



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Front cover: Notts Festival of Science & Curiosity at the Bridge Skills Hub, Worksop
Back cover: Careers and Skills Event, Bassetlaw

INTRODUCTION BY LEADER OF BASSETLAW DISTRICT COUNCIL, JAMES NAISH

BASSETLAW IS A DISTRICT ON THE MOVE.

In June 2022, Gamston Airport was announced as a future UK centre of excellence in vehicle technology research and safety testing. Since then, we have successfully received £18m for the redevelopment of Worksop town centre. We have received £3.4m from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the highest in Nottinghamshire. And most significantly, Bassetlaw has been announced as the future home of the UK's first prototype fusion energy plant, a multi-billion-pound project which will see the West Burton power station site turned into a high-end research, development and business centre in fusion and green technologies, creating thousands of high-skilled jobs and apprenticeships.

While these are all great stories in themselves, together, they represent a rare opportunity to do something special – to transform our district into a hub of new technologies, to regenerate our town centres in the process, and to genuinely improve the opportunities and life chances for Bassetlaw residents of all ages and backgrounds. This can be done at the same time as promoting greener and more sustainable ways of living and “doing business”.

It was in this context, in December 2022, that the District Council unanimously approved the development of a new vision for Bassetlaw to 2040. As an ambitious Council, we not only want to maximise the return on these investments; we want to secure more funding and inward investment to ensure that the district as a whole benefits from the planned transformation. We are committed to making this happen and to taking Council employees, Bassetlaw residents and businesses, and future investors on this journey in a fair, transparent and consultative manner.

This is why we are publishing the first draft of our vision for 2040. To make the most of this unique opportunity, we need to have a clear set of priorities that will enable resources to be focused where they will have the biggest impact. As a District Council, we won't be able to do everything ourselves; and by publishing a clear statement of intent and our vision for the future, we hope that it will inspire partners from all walks of life to join us on this journey.

2023 to 2040 will be a defining period for Bassetlaw. Together, we can do something that will radically change lives, and I look forward to playing my part in making this happen.

James Naish
Leader of Bassetlaw
District Council





Town centre, Tuxford

THE PLACE

Bassetlaw is a great place to live, work and visit with historic town centres, a patchwork of villages and parishes, stunning countryside and superb connectivity.

As the second largest and most northern Nottinghamshire district, bordering South Yorkshire, Lincolnshire and Derbyshire, Bassetlaw has strong economic, heritage and cultural links across the East Midlands and beyond.

Characterised by an abundance of green open space, our historic market towns of Worksop and Retford - as well as its surrounding villages - offer residents and visitors a wide range of leisure, heritage and cultural facilities: from Creswell Crags, Clumber Park and the Welbeck Estate to the Chesterfield Canal, Mayflower Pilgrims Gallery, and Bassetlaw's Green Flag Award winning parks.

The growing town of Harworth and Bircotes offers easy access to South Yorkshire and the north of England via the A1 and M18 road networks and from Retford, you are less than two hours from London, Birmingham, Manchester and Newcastle by train.

Our unique location gives access to the economies of both the Midlands Engine and the Sheffield City Region which makes Bassetlaw a very attractive place to do business. Well-established manufacturing, warehousing and logistics providers already call Bassetlaw their home, as well as multi-national businesses such as Laing O'Rourke, DHL, Cerealto, Brunton Shaw and Trelleborg

which all have operations in the district.

Bassetlaw was once a heartland of coal-fired energy production with three power stations within its borders. And now, with the siting of the STEP energy fusion project at West Burton in East Bassetlaw, it will be at the forefront of developing clean energy technologies for net zero Britain. The multi-billion project will provide new opportunities for residents and businesses in research and development, green technologies and advanced manufacturing and engineering.



Bassetlaw sits in the heart of the East Midlands with superb road and rail connectivity to the rest of the UK.



WhatNext Skills and Careers Event, Workop

BASSETLAW 2023

Our journey to transform the district has a strong starting point. We have a growing population, above average economic activity and planned housing growth for future employees.

Bassetlaw in 2023 shows a district full of potential. With **117,800** residents, our population continues to grow with a notable increase in the number of under 15-year olds, providing the workforce of the future.

The vast majority of the working age population in Bassetlaw has at least one qualification (**95.2%**), with GCSE attainment in Maths and English by age 19 being high at **76%**. Just under a third of residents are educated to degree level and above.

We have a strong culture of apprenticeships dating back to the coal-fired power stations of the 1960s. As a result, **830** new apprenticeships were started in 2021/22.

Bassetlaw has **55,780** homes spread across **63,688** hectares of stunning countryside and benefits from over **10,000** acres of woodland. People are generally happy (**7.29 out of 10**) and satisfied with life (**7.28 out of 10**). Overall satisfaction with the local area as a place to live is good at **71%** and we aspire to raise this further.

Housing provision is growing with **766** new homes completed in the last year. A further **952** homes are under construction with plans for the Council's first **90** modular, low-carbon homes to be built in **2023 - 2027**.

Bassetlaw is also a great place to do business with two business forums and a

Business Improvement District (BID) in place. We have **5,015** enterprises in Bassetlaw and our three-year business survival rate is **59%**. Our economic activity rate of **84.4%** is significantly higher than the England average of **78.8%**.

The average annual salary is **£27,090** with the **private sector** being the largest employer (**81%**). We aim to raise these indicators over the next 15 years by delivering this vision.

BASSETLAW2040

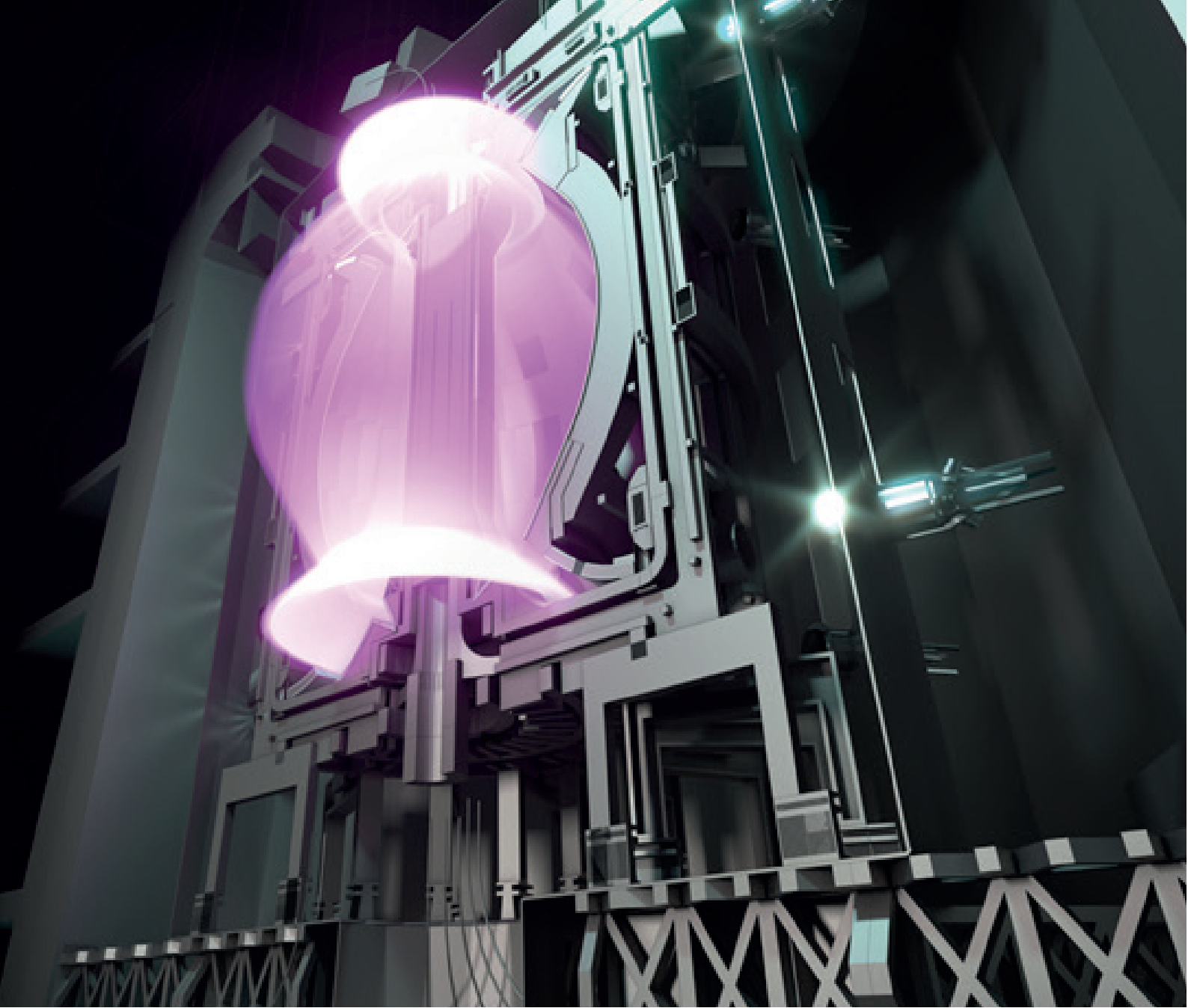
Our vision is for Bassetlaw to become the greenest, most sustainable district in which to live and work, building on its legacy of energy production, manufacturing and logistics to power the net zero economy.

To deliver this vision, we have identified six strategic 'pillars' or foundations on which the Bassetlaw of 2040 should be built.

- **IDENTITY** We will build a stronger sense of identity for Bassetlaw as a place to live and work, rooted in its commitment to powering the net zero economy.
- **SKILLS** We will develop the skills that will be needed to power the UK's manufacturing industry and green economy, using wage growth to address deprivation and inequality.
- **BUSINESS** We will become a great place to 'do business' by proactively investing in offices, connectivity and supporting infrastructure.
- **ENVIRONMENT** We will mitigate the impacts of climate change through green energy planning, improving building efficiency and enhancing natural environments.
- **FACILITIES FOR ALL** We will promote partner investment in high-quality education, health and other facilities which should be easy for everyone to access.
- **HEALTHY DISTRICT** We will encourage sustainable living and promote good mental and physical health for all Bassetlaw residents.

B&Q Distribution Centre, Blyth





Artist impression of the STEP fusion reactor vessel that will be built at West Burton in East Bassetlaw

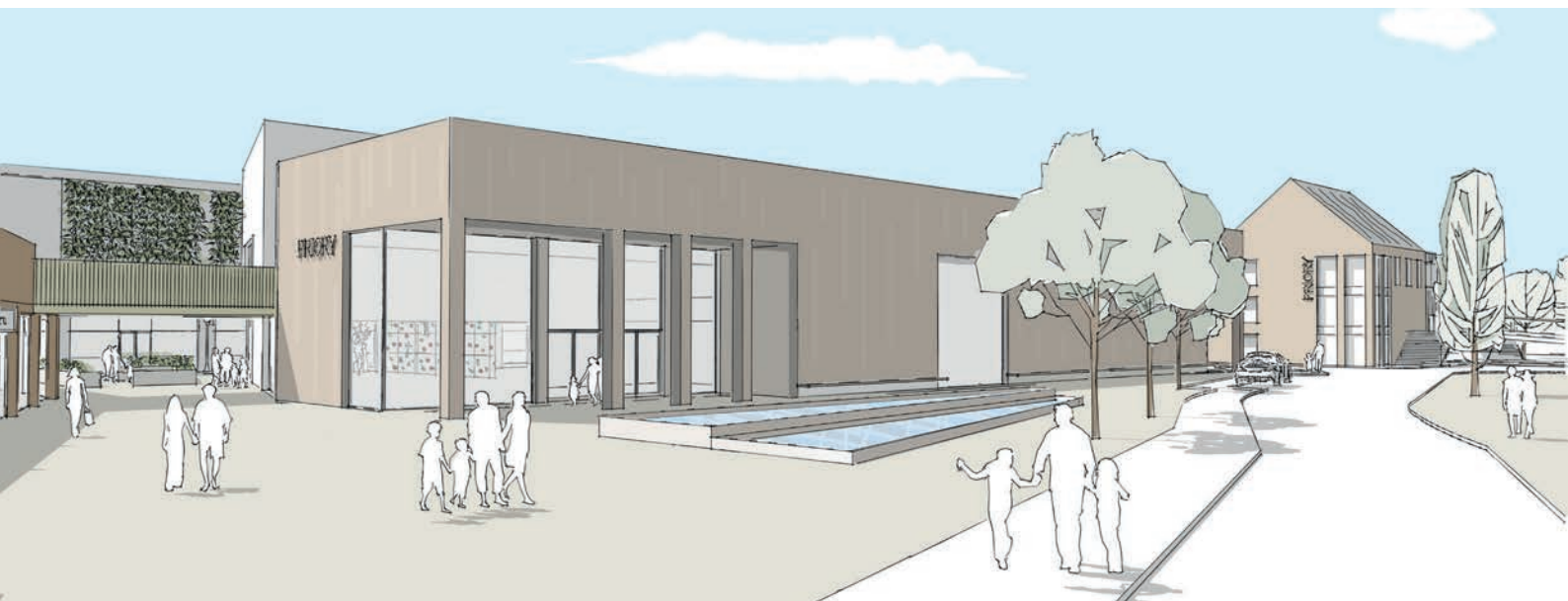
IDENTITY

We want to build a stronger sense of identity for Bassetlaw as a place to live and work. Our aspiration is to become the greenest and most sustainable district, well recognised for powering the net zero economy.

Over the next four years which is the first phase of delivering our vision, this will be achieved through:

- Progressing and promoting the STEP project as a flagship development in Bassetlaw, turning the 550-acre site into a premier fusion energy and business location.
- Implementing masterplans and Neighbourhood Plans for Worksop, Retford, Harworth & Bircotes and Tuxford town centres, including through the delivery of Levelling Up Fund, Long-Term Plan for Towns and UK Shared Prosperity Fund projects.
- Determining the future of the Cottam and High Marnham power station sites by 2025, with the aspiration to bring more high-tech and green energy jobs into the district.
- Improving vacant shop fronts on our high streets, making them more attractive to tenants.
- Launching a Visit Bassetlaw website and a “Rediscover your own backyard” campaign, promoting the best that Bassetlaw has to offer to its residents and visitors.
- Developing a strong brand and identity to market the district as a place to invest, live, work and visit.
- Investing in access improvements, street furniture, directional signage and other works to improve the public realm in Bassetlaw town centres, promoting pedestrianisation and active travel routes wherever possible.

Proposed new leisure facility for the Levelling Up funded Priory Centre redevelopment, Worksop





Notts Festival of Science & Curiosity at the Bridge Skills Hub, Worksop

SKILLS

Highly-skilled jobs will drive increased wages and living standards. We want Bassetlaw to develop the skills that will be needed to power the UK's manufacturing industry and green economy, using wage growth to address deprivation and inequality.

Some of the initiatives that will help to deliver this ambition over the next four years include:

- Undertaking a district-wide Skills Audit to identify emerging skills gaps so we can support local businesses to improve their productivity.
- Implementing a new district-wide Skills Strategy, making the most of Bassetlaw's workforce and maximising the skills of our residents to increase productivity, enable economic growth and support social inclusion.
- Expanding course availability within the new Bridge Skills Hub and developing clear sector specialisms.
- Securing funding for a 'job shop' within the new Skills Hub to offer local residents help with finding a new job.
- Ensuring new inward investment into Bassetlaw is tied to apprenticeship and skills training.
- Setting-up 'Bassetlaw Apprenticeships' to manage the quality and quantity of apprenticeships across the district.
- Working with Bassetlaw businesses to establish an 'education covenant', ensuring that Bassetlaw children get 100 hours of meaningful work experience by the time they are 16.

Exhibitors at the WhatNext Skills and Careers Event, Worksop





Middletons Yard managed office space, Worksop

BUSINESS

With excellent transport links to the M1, the A1 and the East Coast Mainline, Bassetlaw is a great place to do business. By proactively investing in offices, connectivity and supporting infrastructure, we are putting business at the heart of our vision for 2040.

Key actions over the next four years will include:

- Developing an inward investment strategy for business growth to promote Bassetlaw and increase the profile of the district.
- Successfully delivering the UK Shared Prosperity Fund projects, supporting local businesses to grow, innovate and reduce their carbon footprint while supporting social inclusion.
- Investing in more affordable workspaces to attract and support micro business, creative industries, entrepreneurs and tech companies.
- Setting-up new trade hubs across the district to encourage new businesses and young entrepreneurs to test their trade and bring ideas to market.
- Expanding support services for small and micro businesses to encourage growth and help with start-up and marketing costs.
- Establishing a network of key site developers and existing businesses to help build and promote profitable relationships which benefit existing Bassetlaw companies.
- Facilitating investment by simplifying and streamlining the planning process tools at former power station sites.

Retford Enterprise Centre managed office space, Retford





Solar panels on homes in Retford

ENVIRONMENT

We know that the green agenda is increasingly important to local residents and businesses, and the UK as a whole. This is why we will mitigate the impacts of climate change through green energy planning, improving building efficiency and enhancing Bassetlaw's natural environments.

Some of the key ways we plan to improve the district's environmental footprint over the next four years include:

- Implementing a green Local Area Energy Plan for Bassetlaw, enabling controlled growth of energy generation projects across the district.
- Securing biodiversity net gain, management and maintenance by adopting and implementing the new Local Plan and the Environment Act 2021.
- Implementing an emissions strategy to reduce the Council's operational emissions to net zero by 2030.
- Increasing recycling rates by introducing food waste and glass collection at the kerbside.
- Securing funding for a 'one stop shop' for free advice and grants for small businesses seeking to boost renewable energy use and lower carbon emissions.
- Improving the quality and efficiency of Bassetlaw District Council's housing and wider estates by replacing aging housing, improving repairs, reducing the number of empty Council properties, and purchasing and upgrading poor-quality housing from the private-rented sector.
- Ensuring that the Council continuously meets the Social Housing Regulator's consumer standards.
- Developing a district-wide scheme to promote and enforce minimum standards in the private-rented housing sector.
- Working with the Environment Agency and other lead authorities to secure meaningful investment in flood alleviation schemes to reduce known risks to Bassetlaw residents and businesses.
- Understanding and defining the role that the Council can play in helping co-operatives and community groups to generate clean, local power.

New electric vehicles are helping to reduce emissions from the Council's fleet





The Bridge Skills Hub, Worksop

FACILITIES FOR ALL

We want to ensure that people can access services and amenities no matter where they live in the district. This is why we will promote partner investment in high-quality education, health and other facilities which should be easy for everyone to access.

Key actions that we will initiate or promote with strategic partners such as Nottinghamshire County Council and the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board include:

- Delivering new infrastructure across the district by adopting and implementing the draft Local Plan, including additional health, education, road and cycling infrastructure.
- Setting-up community hubs in town centres to bring banking, Post Office, credit union and other essential services together.
- Supporting the delivery of healthy hubs / diagnostic units in prominent public locations to take health and wellbeing services to the public.
- Promoting small public and / or shared transport schemes to improve rural connectivity.
- Pushing for the improvement of the district's digital infrastructure by working with digital and telephony providers.
- Introducing a new Armed Forces Plan for the Council, building on our Armed Forces Covenant Gold Award to ensure key services are accessible to serving personnel and their families.
- Implementing a new 'Customer Experience Plan', ensuring that our residents and customers receive a good-quality, efficient and accessible service when dealing with the Council.

The Mercian Regiment exercising the Right to the Freedom of Worksop and Retford





Walking in Clumber Park by Agnieszka Tyczynska

HEALTHY DISTRICT

Finally, we don't just want to see Bassetlaw become more prosperous; we also want to see resident lifestyles and health outcomes improve. This is why we are committed to encouraging sustainable living and promoting good mental health and physical health for all.

This will be supported over the next four years by:

- Continuing to invest in the Council's leisure facilities to maintain high-quality local exercise options.
- Encouraging residents to be more active in green spaces through walking, cycling and physical activity in the Council's parks and open spaces.
- Running outdoor activities and events in local parks to promote physical and mental wellbeing.
- Promoting health and wellbeing programmes and initiatives, working with local health and education partners.
- Establishing the requirement for a health impact assessment to be completed as part of residential development proposals of 50 or more units, to ensure each scheme promotes healthy place-making.
- Implementing a new Community Safety Plan for the district, including preventative measures to address factors that contribute to risk and vulnerability.
- Minimising the impacts of the rising cost of living on Bassetlaw residents by working in partnership with residents, businesses and the voluntary sector.
- Work proactively with third parties such as Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust to maximise use and promote the broader health benefits of parks and open spaces across Bassetlaw, and to develop appropriate supporting strategies.

Council owned leisure facilities at You@ Space, Bircotes





UKAEA at the Bridge Skills Hub, Worksop

DELIVERING THE VISION

Our vision for Bassetlaw is ambitious and will be delivered alongside a range of partners. To enable us to play our part, we need to build the capacity, capability and financial resilience of the Council, working with staff to make it a great place to work and build a career.

Over the next four years, as an organisation, we will focus on:

- Implementing a new commercial strategy, ensuring the Council is well placed to take advantage of the commercial opportunities that will come with the STEP project.
- Undertaking a local government boundary review of Bassetlaw to ensure that the Council provides equal representation and is reflective of current community ties and identities.
- Improving the recruitment and retention of staff.
- Embedding a positive organisational culture across the Council.
- Developing the concept of a Bassetlaw Manager through a management development programme.
- Ensuring the Council can respond nimbly and effectively to changing priorities by reviewing our constitution.
- Continuing to submit high-quality bids for sources of external funding.
- Expanding the council tax base through the delivery of new housing development.
- Increasing the business rates baseline by attracting new businesses to the area.
- Increasing business rates and council tax collection rates to help fund the Council's priorities.

We will fund the Council's ambitions through:

OceanMax Cable being exported to Brazil from Brunton Shaw's Sandy Lane factory, Worksop





Building a traditional Wetu in the Bassetlaw Museum garden, Retford

WORKING TOGETHER

To transform our district into a greener, fairer and more sustainable district, it will need laser-sharp focus and lots of collaborative working.

Every couple of months, we will be reporting how we're doing against each item in the plan and providing updates. You can visit our website at any time to check how we're performing.

We can't deliver this vision alone as a District Council, but by publishing a clear statement of intent and our vision for the future, we hope that it will inspire partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors to join us on this transformational journey.

BE PART OF OUR JOURNEY

“The West Burton site in Bassetlaw was the stand-out location for the STEP fusion energy prototype powerplant.

We look forward to working with the people of Bassetlaw to develop our ambitious plans towards a low carbon future and realise the significant social and economic benefits that it can bring.”

Professor Ian Chapman

UKAEA Chief Executive

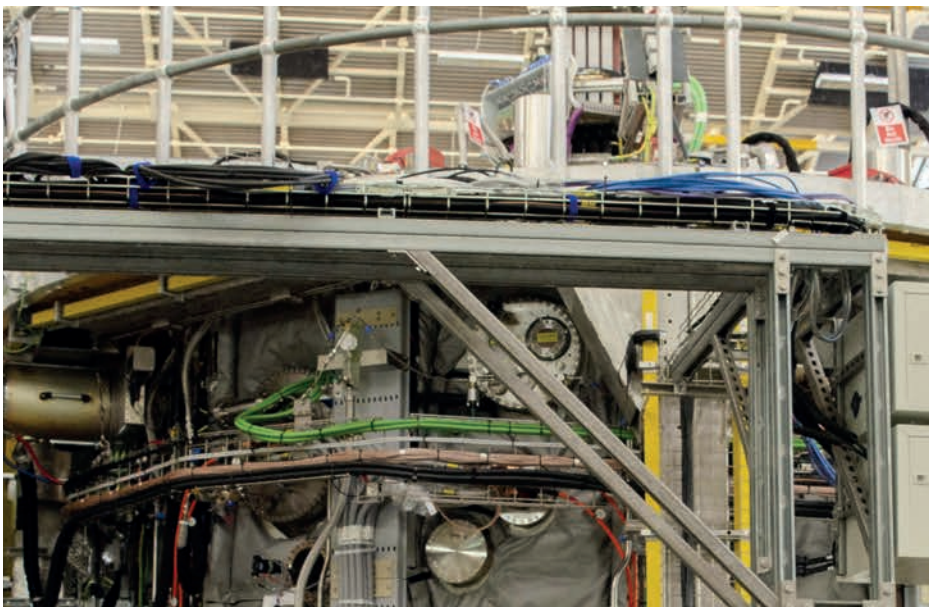
“Since we located our new manufacturing kitchen and customer fulfilment centre to Bassetlaw in mid 2020, we’ve been both pleased and impressed with the support that the District Council have provided in helping us establish and quickly scale.

At each step, we’ve found the team to be approachable, supportive and knowledgeable and look forward to a continued working relationship over the coming years.”

James McCrea

Chief Operating Officer
Butternut Box

MAST-U-fusion experiment, a possible design for the UK’s prototype fusion plant at West Burton



VISION2040 BASSETLAW

If you share our vision,
would like to share your
thoughts or want to be
part of something special
get in touch:

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Bassetlaw
DISTRICT COUNCIL
— North Nottinghamshire