

## **Annual Review 2023/24 and Forward Plan 2024/25**

*Placing Communities First*, our Strategic Plan for 2023-26, has six priorities:

1. Ensuring resilience in local government structures and governance
2. Levelling up for people and place
3. Delivering green growth
4. Taking action on climate change
5. Our most valuable asset is our people
6. Being the best we can be

Specific objectives for 2024/25:

- Networking and learning:- to enhance the delivery & impact of Regional and National Subject Boards and working groups; maintain strategic engagement with key government departments and agencies plus other relevant organisations (Objectives 1, 2, 3 & 4).
- Influencing and policy development:- to prepare for a new government and subsequent spending review, including raising ADEPT's profile with parliamentarians (Objectives 1, 2, 3 & 4).
- Workforce development:- develop an innovative campaign to tackle recruitment challenges of 16–25-year-olds within the sector and to improve equality, diversity and inclusivity within the place workforce (Objective 5).
- To continue to offer excellent membership services:- to further grow our membership, offer quality training and development programmes, and build our commercial partnerships (Objectives 5 & 6).
- Research and development:- to use the Live Labs 2 model to establish ADEPT as leading the way in implementing innovation in the highways sector and others (Objective 6).
- Organisational development:- seek more active engagement from Executive Place Directors in order to a) ensure resilience within the Leadership Team b) deliver ADEPT messages more widely and c) raise ADEPT's profile (Objective 6).

Objective	Outcomes	Achievements – 2023/24	Ambitions – 2024/25
1. Offer excellent membership services	1.1 Grow the membership, particularly LAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 97 county &amp; unitary authorities (+5)</li> <li>• 6 CAs (+1) &amp; 5 STBs (+1)</li> <li>• 7 LEPs (-4)</li> <li>• 5 national / regional associations (-)</li> <li>• 22 Corporate Partners (-)</li> </ul> <p>Achieved +95% retention rates</p> <p>Six monthly 1-2-1s with Corporate Partners continue to be well-received</p> <p>Popular monthly Lunch &amp; Learn webinars</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100 county &amp; unitary authorities (+3)</li> <li>• 7 CAs (+1) &amp; 5 STBs (-)</li> <li>• 5 national / regional associations (-)</li> <li>• 23 Corporate Partners (+1)</li> </ul> <p>Investigate membership options for those LEPs remaining as distinct entities</p>
	1.2 Secure sponsorship income	<p>Secured sponsorship for key national conferences – Spring Conference &amp; Annual Awards Dinner (May), National Traffic Managers (Oct), Autumn Conference (Nov)</p> <p>Great feedback on all events</p> <p>Secured ongoing sponsorship for the PACE Programme (see 1.6) and work on people issues (see 1.8)</p> <p>Secured sponsorship from Midlands Highways Alliance and DfT for the Gen Z recruitment campaign pilot</p>	<p>Secure sponsorship for key events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Live Labs 2 Expo (April)</li> <li>• Spring Conference &amp; Annual Awards (May)</li> <li>• National Traffic Managers Conference (Oct)</li> <li>• Autumn Conference (Nov)</li> <li>• PACE Programme</li> </ul> <p>Successfully deliver the Gen Z recruitment campaign pilot; clearly define what next, timeframes, etc</p> <p>Seek opportunities for sponsorship of other work packages</p>
	1.3 Maintain strong commercial partnership with Proving Services (Future Highways Research Group)	<p>37 FHRG members (+1)</p> <p>Refreshed the 5-year MOU (1<sup>st</sup> May)</p> <p>Active and ambitious workplan – new Prospectus published June 2023</p>	<p>Promote membership of FHRG</p> <p>Promote CCAS as the industry standard for measuring Scope 1, 2, 3 emissions</p> <p>Continue to disseminate research findings</p>

		<p>Used outcomes of Human Capital Management work to underpin Gen Z recruitment campaign proposal</p> <p>Delivered Carbon Calculation &amp; Accounting Standard (CCAS) plus supporting guidance</p> <p>Research Innovation Programme going from strength to strength with high levels of commercial interest</p>	<p>Support relations between Proving / FHRG and corporate partners, sector bodies, DfT, etc</p> <p>Explore whether the FHRG model could be applied to other sectors e.g. waste</p>
	<p>1.4 Explore options for other commercial partnerships</p>	<p>Project support for Woodland Creation Accelerator Fund (WCAF) – secured additional from Defra to expand the WCAF forum to all LAs</p> <p>Project support for EA’s adaptation pathways work (video, training materials, piloting Rapid Adaptation Pathway Assessment (RAPA) approach, etc) and other flood risk related objectives (primarily webinars)</p> <p>Programme manager for Live Labs 2 (see 3.1) – DfT funding</p>	<p>WCAF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure continued smooth delivery of WCAF inc. M&amp;E; open up WCAF forum to all LAs</li> <li>• Deliver successful WCAF conference (July 24)</li> <li>• WCAF funding finishes this FY – explore other opportunities with FC</li> </ul> <p>Adaptation Pathways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued promotion of adaptation video</li> <li>• Pilot the RAPA approach</li> <li>• Develop supporting materials and comms</li> </ul> <p>Deliver series of ADEPT / EA webinars on other flood risk associated issues; explore opportunities for other EA webinars (eg regulation)</p> <p>Investigate the possibility of a fundraising specialist to review potential opportunities</p> <p>Investigate options for potential commercial partnerships in other areas e.g. municipal bonds, ‘Solar Together’</p>

	<p>1.5 Continue to deliver a quality Leadership Development Programme for Tiers 3 &amp; 4 (with Solace)</p>	<p>Continued high levels of demand – 3 cohorts recruited for 2023</p> <p>Secured mentors for several of the cohort, plus arranged ‘mock place director interviews’ with Odgers</p>	<p>Administer 2 cohorts for 2024/25</p> <p>Ongoing provision of mentor support and place director interview experience</p> <p>Develop an alumni offer</p> <p>Develop &amp; launch a Leadership Pathway Programme aimed at Tiers 5 &amp; 6 (with Solace)</p>
	<p>1.6 Support delivery of the PACE programme with Amey (<i>Pioneering, Action-orientated, Creative &amp; Entrepreneurial</i>)</p>	<p>The ADEPT / Amey <i>Excellence in Place Leadership</i> programme was relaunched as the ‘PACE Programme’</p> <p>Five exec place directors participated (plus two co-directors from DfT as observers)</p> <p>Three, one day sessions (May, Sept, Oct)</p> <p>Published summary reports following each session plus blogs plus a very successful workshop session at 2023 Autumn Conference</p> <p>Amey confirmed sponsorship for 2024</p> <p>Recruited 8 exec place directors (plus a director from Defra)</p>	<p>Work with Amey to deliver another successful PACE programme (8 exec place directors plus Defra director as observer)</p> <p>Provide the opportunity to showcase at the 2024 Autumn Conference</p> <p>Publish outputs from the programme (white papers, blogs, think pieces, etc)</p>
	<p>1.7 Deliver other training opportunities</p>	<p>ADEPT / CIPFA Green Finance training day (Nov 23) <i>postponed till March 2024</i></p> <p>Navigating Transition workshop (Oct 23) <i>cancelled due to lack of demand</i></p>	<p>Investigate other training opportunities including behavioural insights &amp; artificial intelligence (see 1.8)</p> <p>Investigate the options for embedding adaptation training into existing Carbon Literacy Project training (current focus is mitigation only)</p> <p>Pilot the RAPA approach (see 1.4)</p>

	<p>1.8 Develop / implement the Workforce programme</p>	<p>Skills work evolved into 4 workstreams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff retention toolkit (published Nov)</li> <li>• Gen Z recruitment campaign concept unveiled at Spring Conference; secured funding to deliver a pilot (Feb 24)</li> <li>• EDI campaign (Feb 24)</li> <li>• Artificial intelligence (AI) blogs</li> </ul> <p>In addition, inputted into the local government chapter of Green Jobs Delivery Group (GJDG) report</p>	<p>Recruitment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver the Gen Z recruitment campaign pilot</li> <li>• Disseminate learnings, tools, etc</li> <li>• Complement recruitment campaigns being led by other organisations eg LGA</li> </ul> <p>EDI issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a ‘what next’ plan</li> <li>• Produce an ADEPT EDI charter/statement</li> <li>• Work with Joint Presidents’ Group &amp; Solace to define some shared objectives / outcomes</li> </ul> <p>Future skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate establishing a Community of Practice on AI issues</li> </ul>
<p>2. Networking &amp; Learning</p>	<p>2.1 Enhance delivery &amp; impact of subject &amp; regional boards plus working groups</p>	<p>Established Climate Change Board</p> <p>Meetings remain online with good attendance levels and engagement with govt depts / agencies</p> <p>Delivered several successful joint board / working group meetings – e.g. flood risk, water quality, water pollution from highways</p> <p>Responded to a number of government and select committee inquiries; also the LGA Local Government White Paper</p> <p>Published <i>Manifesto for Stronger Places</i> (Oct 23); Home to School SEND transport toolkit and</p>	<p>Establish a North of England Board (merging NW and NE boards)</p> <p>Continue to deliver joint board / working group meetings on issues of mutual interest</p> <p>Respond to government consultations &amp; committee inquiries – seek to give verbal evidence</p> <p>Publish refreshed policy positions on digital connectivity, resources &amp; waste, housing, commuted sums</p> <p>Publish new policy positions on strategic planning, energy</p>

		Home to School transport policy position (Nov 23)	
	2.2 Maintain strategic engagement with key bodies to ensure ADEPT's contribution is heard and valued	<p>Published <i>Manifesto for Stronger Places</i> (Oct 23)</p> <p>Engagement with key government departments and other bodies has continued to strengthen</p> <p>Contributed to a number of formal reviews e.g. NAO, NIC</p> <p>Continued engagement with fellow professional organisations i.e. ADASS, ADCS, ADPH, LGA, Solace</p>	<p>Prepare for General Election and Spending Review</p> <p>Continued regular engagement with key government departments and agencies plus other relevant organisations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defra, DfT, DLUHC, DESNZ, DSIT, Treasury</li> <li>• ADPH, ADASS, ADCS, Solace plus LGA, LEDNet, CCN, DCN</li> <li>• Local Net Zero Forum, Climate Change Committee</li> <li>• National Highways, Network Rail, Homes England, Office for Environmental Protection, EA, Natural England, UKHSA, NAO</li> <li>• Professional bodies such as CIFPA, CIHT, RPTI, LCRIG, IED, Green Finance Institute</li> <li>• Blueprint Coalition</li> </ul>
	2.3 Deliver quality events	<p>Spring Conference &amp; Annual Awards Dinner, National Traffic Managers Conference, Autumn Conference successfully delivered with very positive feedback; ensured a diverse range of speakers</p> <p>Ran two workshops: recruitment &amp; retention (Oxford); EDI and future skills (Chester)</p> <p>Delivered many more, smaller technical webinars on a range of topics</p>	<p>Continue to deliver quality, to budget, diverse events with high levels of delegate satisfaction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Live Labs 2 Expo (April)</li> <li>• Spring Conference &amp; Annual Awards (May)</li> <li>• WCAF conference (July)</li> <li>• National Traffic Managers Conference (Oct)</li> <li>• Autumn Conference (Nov)</li> </ul>
3. Research & Development	3.1 Use the SMART Places Live Labs programme to	<p>Live Labs 2 ministerial announcement (Jan 23)</p> <p>Programme went live (April 23)</p>	Ensure efficient & effective programme management / spend

	establish ADEPT as leading the way in implementing innovation in the highways sector and others	Commissioning Board established; M&E programme supplier contracted; active comms programme underway  Expo events management procured and date, venue, programme confirmed	Regular comms inc. articles, blogs, interviews, presentations at events  Establish a behavioural insights workstream  Deliver Live Labs 2 Expo (April) – good attendance, interesting programme, positive feedback
4. Influencing & policy development	4.1 Sufficient, multi-year funding for place-based services	The Strategic Plan 2023-26 and <i>Manifesto for Stronger Places</i> call for long-term investment and a streamlined and simplified funding landscape – repeated these messages in various consultation / inquiry responses  Engaging with Energy and clean Growth WG and BEIS on HUG2 delivery to influence development of HUG3 and ensure smoother running of future grants.  Responded to the LGA call for evidence for its Local Government White Paper  Engaged with DLUHC on ‘simplifying the funding landscape for LAs’ initiative	Work with other associations, LGA, Solace to make the case for place (inc. Spring Budget, Spending Review)  PACE programme 2024 overall theme: ‘making a stronger case for place’  Use the Spring Conference to further enhance the narrative on making the case for place
	4.2 Infrastructure & economy	Established joint T&F group with ADCS on Homes to School SEND transport: published policy paper and toolkit (Nov)  Co-delivered training on level crossing closures (with Network Rail / IPROW)  Ongoing dialogue with Canal & River Trust wrt operation & maintenance activities for LHA highway structures over C&RT waterways	Follow up activity relating to H2S transport issues  Support DfT with prep for Spending Review; other ad hoc requests for intelligence and input  Follow up work on water pollution from roads  Publish Commuted Sums document  Refresh Digital Connectivity and Housing policy positions

		<p>County devo deals – lobbied for the standard framework to include some environmental ‘hooks’</p>	<p>Respond to implementation of the Levelling Up &amp; Regeneration Act inc. reviewing our position on planning</p> <p>Continue work on county devo deals</p>
	<p>4.3 Climate change &amp; environment</p>	<p>Established a Climate Change Board</p> <p>Chaired the Local Adaptation Advisory Panel (LAAP)</p> <p>Supported ADEPT representation at Local Net Zero Forum</p> <p>Delivered green finance training</p> <p>Delivered adaptation pathways video and webinar for the EA</p> <p>Regular engagement with Defra wrt implementation of Environment Act (BNG, LNRS, Land Use Framework, waste)</p> <p>Secured Defra buy in for the concept of Local Environmental Improvement Plans</p> <p>Collated experiences in procuring collective sustainable energy solutions for local communities and engaged with a key provider to improve future delivery.</p> <p>Blueprint Coalition: Published manifesto asks and helped deliver a successful launch. Lobbied to amend the Levelling Up &amp; Regeneration Bill.</p> <p>Recruited a new LA co-chair</p>	<p>Publish new policy position on Resources &amp; Waste</p> <p>Deliver further green finance training</p> <p>Develop a Local EIP framework for national rollout</p> <p>Continue working with EA on adaptation pathways, surface water scheme deliverability, other flood risk issues, also ensure link to RAPA incorporated in Local Partnerships adaptation toolkit</p> <p>Deliver a series of webinars with Natural England</p> <p>Review ADEPT’s engagement with air quality issues</p> <p>Work with LGA and others to develop a more integrated sector voice on local climate action including adaptation</p> <p>Continue to influence implementation of Environment Act (particularly BNG, LNRS, waste reform) and protected landscapes reform, Land Use Framework</p> <p>Blueprint Coalition: work to deliver priorities including influencing manifestos, devo and other webinars, building the coalition’s profile with signatories and others, support new co-chair</p>

<p>5. Organisational development</p>	<p>5.1 Regular service review</p>	<p>Published <i>Placing Communities First: Strategic Plan 2023-26</i> (May 23) and <i>Manifesto for Stronger Places</i> (Oct 23)</p> <p>Implemented the recommendations of the Shared Intelligence review of our members' perceptions to add more value and improve access to all ADEPT has to offer e.g. updated newsletter, forward plan of social media</p>	<p>Update the specific objectives in the Strategic Plan for 2024/25</p> <p>Monitor the impacts of changes to comms (refreshed website, newsletter, focused mailings and social media announcements, website hits, etc)</p> <p>Work with members of the Leadership Team to encourage more active engagement from Executive Place Directors in order to a) ensure resilience within the Leadership Team b) deliver ADEPT messages more widely c) raise ADEPT's profile</p>
	<p>5.2 ADEPT company business</p>	<p>Held regular Directors' meetings throughout the year</p>	<p>Ensure we meet all legal requirements</p> <p>Effective budgetary management</p>
	<p>5.3 Ongoing support (Secretariat)</p>	<p>Recruited deputy CEO</p> <p>Established fortnightly secretariat meetings</p> <p>Retained policy support for Environment, Transport &amp; Connectivity, Sustainable Growth Boards along with comms, finance, admin, events support</p> <p>Ensured resilience in the Leadership Team by recruiting new chairs and vice presidents</p>	<p>Develop a standard branding &amp; template for ADEPT documents / presentations</p> <p>Offer media training to ADEPT spokespeople</p> <p>Ensure smooth annual membership retention / recruitment processes</p> <p>Plan for 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ADEPT (2025)</p>

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 April 2024