

## Annual Review 2024/25 and Forward Plan 2025/26

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

1. Ensuring resilience in local government structures and governance
2. Building resilient and inclusive places
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 2025/26:

- Networking and learning:- to enhance the delivery & impact of Regional and National Subject Boards and working groups (Objectives 1, 2, 3 & 4)
- Influencing and policy development:- establish a support programme for members on devolution and LGR (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4)
- Workforce development:- introduce the ADEPT 'Digital Academy' that develops skills and competencies on new tools (Objective 5)
- To continue to offer excellent membership services:- to grow our L&D offer including a CPD programme for place directors (Objective 5), roll out the *Carbon Leadership for Local Roads* Programme (Objectives 4, 6)
- Research and development:- to successfully conclude Live Labs 2; secure funding for Live Labs 3 (Objectives 4, 6)
- Organisational development:- undertake a review of membership fees / structures to ensure the association 'offer' is fit for purpose in light of devolution and LGR (Objective 6); explore opportunities for other commercial partnerships (Objective 1)

Objective	Outcomes	Achievements – 2024/25	Ambitions – 2025/26
1. Offer excellent membership services	1.1 Grow the membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 97 county &amp; unitary authorities (-)</li> <li>• 2 LEPs (-6)</li> <li>• 6 CAs (-) &amp; 5 STBs (-)</li> <li>• 5 national / regional associations (-)</li> <li>• 22 Corporate Partners (-1)</li> </ul> <p>Static council membership</p> <p>Higher than usual turnover of CPs but recruited 5 new CPs</p> <p>Six monthly 1-2-1s with CPs well-received (approx. 50% take up)</p> <p>Reintroduced six monthly seminars (45+ people attended Jan 25 event)</p> <p>Popular monthly Lunch &amp; Learn webinars</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100 county &amp; unitary authorities (+3)</li> <li>• 9 CAs (+3) &amp; 5 STBs (-)</li> <li>• 5 national / regional associations (-)</li> <li>• 24 Corporate Partners (+2)</li> </ul> <p>Produce regular ‘Hot Topics’ note for CPs</p> <p>Continue bi-annual CP seminars</p> <p>Undertake a review of membership fees / structures to ensure the association offer is fit for purpose in light of devolution and LGR</p>
	1.2 Secure sponsorship income	<p>Secured sponsorship for key national conferences – Live Labs 2 Expo (April 24 &amp; March 25), Spring Conference &amp; Annual Awards Dinner (May), UKREiiF (May), National Traffic Managers (Oct), Autumn Conference (Nov)</p> <p>Great feedback on all events</p> <p>Secured sponsorship for the PACE Programme 2025 (see 1.6) and Gen Z recruitment campaign (see 1.8)</p>	<p>Secure sponsorship for key events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Live Labs 2 Expo (April 26)</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>Seek opportunities for sponsorship of other work packages</p>
	1.3 Maintain strong commercial partnership with	39 FHRG members (+2)	Promote membership of FHRG

	<p>Proving Services (Future Highways Research Group)</p>	<p>Developed <i>Carbon Leadership for Local Roads</i> programme which will provide LHAs with a cheap &amp; simple methodology (based on CCAS) to undertake carbon measurement, management and reduction</p> <p>Extended the methodology to waste – trialled and tested</p>	<p>Support roll out of <i>Carbon Leadership for Local Roads</i> programme (pending DfT approval)</p> <p>Promote carbon leadership model for waste</p>
	<p>1.4 Explore options for other commercial partnerships</p>	<p>Project support for Woodland Creation Accelerator Fund (WCAF):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• delivered successful conference (July) with 100+ attendees</li> <li>• well attended bi-monthly webinars</li> <li>• light touch M&amp;E</li> <li>• worked with FC to prepare for the closure of the programme</li> </ul> <p>Project support EA’s flood work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adaptation pathways project: recruited 3 LAs for the RAPA project; delivered 3 workshops; managed production of toolkit &amp; supporting training materials</li> <li>• delivered 8 webinars – high attendance at all</li> <li>• rep on EA NFM programme board</li> </ul> <p>Programme manager for Live Labs 2 (see 3.1) – DfT funding</p>	<p>WCAF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keep lines of communication open with FC / Defra for future opportunities</li> </ul> <p>EA flood work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch / ongoing promotion of RAPA toolkit and supporting materials</li> <li>• Support EA Flood &amp; Coastal Innovation Programme training for LAs</li> <li>• Surface water issues</li> <li>• Deliver another series of sponsored webinars on flood associated issues</li> <li>• Rep on EA Natural Flood Management programme board</li> </ul> <p>Deliver sponsored webinar series for other partners</p> <p>Investigate the possibility of a fundraising specialist to review potential opportunities</p>
	<p>1.5 Continue to deliver quality L&amp;D programmes</p>	<p>Continued demand for Leadership Development Programme – 2 cohorts recruited for 2025</p>	<p>Administer the LDP and LPP 2025 programmes</p> <p>Recruit for both programmes for 2026</p>

		<p>Secured mentors for several of the cohort</p> <p>Delivered in-person LDP alumni event (July) – now confirmed as a regular event</p> <p>Delivered executive recruitment webinar</p> <p>Launched pilot Leadership Pathway Programme aimed at Tiers 5 &amp; 6 (with Solace) – 60 applicants so rapidly adapted the programme to accommodate 28</p>	<p>Ongoing provision of mentor support and interview experience</p> <p>Introduce a CPD programme for place directors</p>
	<p>1.6 Support delivery of the PACE programme with Amey (<i>Pioneering, Action-orientated, Creative &amp; Entrepreneurial</i>)</p>	<p>Delivered successful 2<sup>nd</sup> year, with eight exec place directors plus a director from Defra</p> <p>Three, one day sessions (Feb, May, Sept)</p> <p>Published summary documents, blogs and stronger places assessment toolkit; delivered plenary session at 2024 Autumn Conference</p> <p>Secured funding for 2025</p>	<p>Work with Amey to deliver 2025 PACE programme – aiming to recruit up to 10 exec place directors plus director from govt dept</p> <p>Publish outputs from the programme (white papers, blogs, think pieces, etc)</p> <p>Secure funding for 2026</p>
	<p>1.7 Deliver other training opportunities</p>	<p>Delivered ADEPT / CIPFA Green Finance training day (March 24)</p> <p>Plus bespoke one-off green finance training day for Hertfordshire County Council (Nov)</p> <p>Navigating Transition workshop did not take place - lack of demand</p>	<p>Investigate other training opportunities including behavioural insights &amp; artificial intelligence / digital skills (see 1.8)</p>
	<p>1.8 Develop / implement the Workforce programme</p>	<p>Skills work is under 4 workstreams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff retention toolkit: received Highly Commended award at CN awards</li> <li>• Gen Z recruitment campaign: went live Feb 25</li> </ul>	<p>Staff retention: no further action planned</p> <p>Recruitment:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDI: published ADEPT charter; working with other LG bodies to develop a work plan</li> <li>• Future skills: considering proposal from Colas for a Digital Academy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete delivery of Gen Z campaign pilot (end April); maintain microsite for further two months then review next steps</li> <li>• Disseminate learnings, tools, etc</li> </ul> <p>EDI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finalise 'what next' plan</li> </ul> <p>Future skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop / roll out 'Digital Academy' initiative</li> </ul>
2. Networking & Learning	2.1 Enhance delivery & impact of subject & regional boards plus working groups	<p>Merged NW and NE Board into North of England Board</p> <p>Completed light touch review of Regional Boards</p> <p>In general - meetings remain online with good attendance levels and engagement with govt depts / agencies</p> <p>Responded to a growing number of government and select committee inquiries</p>	<p>Implement changes in light of regional board review</p> <p>Continue to deliver (where appropriate) joint board / working group meetings on issues of mutual interest</p> <p>Respond to government consultations &amp; committee inquiries – seek to give verbal evidence where possible</p>
	2.2 Maintain strategic engagement with key bodies to ensure ADEPT's contribution is heard and valued	<p>Agreed a public affairs strategy which will build ADEPT's profile with parliamentarians</p> <p>Produced a series of priority asks documents for the new government</p> <p>Engagement with key government departments and other bodies continues to strengthen – but not always at as senior a level as desired (reflects complexity of place?)</p>	<p>Continue 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, MHCLG, Treasury – support Board Chairs in building strong relations with relevant dept(s)</li> <li>• ADPH, ADASS, ADCS, plus LGA, LEDNet, CCN, London Councils, Solace</li> </ul>

		<p>Contributed to a number of formal reviews e.g. NAO, NIC, OEP</p> <p>Continued engagement with fellow professional organisations i.e. ADASS, ADCS, ADPH plus LGA – published joint briefing note and letter on LG finance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Net Zero Council (replacing the Local Net Zero Forum), Climate Change Committee</li> <li>• National Highways, Network Rail, Homes England, Office for Environmental Protection, EA, Natural England, UKHSA, NAO, NISTA</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>Live Labs 2 Expo (April), Spring Conference &amp; Annual Awards Dinner (May), WCAF conference (July), LDP alumni (July), National Traffic Managers Conference (Oct), Highways UK (Oct), Autumn Conference (Nov), CP seminar (Jan) successfully delivered with positive feedback; ensured a diverse range of speakers</p> <p>Delivered many more technical webinars on a range of topics including a series of webinars with NE and EA</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 (March) &amp; parliamentary event (April)</li> <li>• Spring Conference &amp; Annual Awards (May)</li> <li>• LDP alumni event (June)</li> <li>• CP seminars (July &amp; Jan)</li> <li>• National Traffic Managers Conference (Oct)</li> <li>• Autumn Conference (Nov)</li> </ul> <p>Plus other webinar events / series yet to be confirmed</p>
3. Research & Development	3.1 Use the Live Labs programme to establish ADEPT as leading the way in implementing innovation in the highways sector and others	<p>Ensured efficient &amp; effective programme management / spend</p> <p>Regular comms inc. articles, blogs, interviews, presentations at events</p> <p>Established a behavioural insights workstream</p> <p>Delivered media training for seven LL leads</p> <p>Delivered first Expo (April) – 220 attendees, interesting programme, positive feedback</p>	<p>Ensure efficient &amp; effective programme management / spend / comms</p> <p>Deliver parliamentary event aimed at influencing senior reps from across the highways, and infrastructure, sectors</p> <p>Prepare for end of LL2 programme</p> <p>Develop proposal for Live Labs 3</p>

		<p>Award win for one of the LL projects at Highways UK</p> <p>Delivered second Expo (March 25) – great attendance, varied and interesting programme, positive feedback</p>	
<p>4. Influencing &amp; policy development</p>	<p>To deliver on the objectives of the Strategic Plan</p>	<p>Re-established Home to School SEND Transport working group</p> <p>Published joint report with Causeway on economic impacts of street works</p> <p>Delivered webinar series with Natural England, and Environment Agency</p> <p>Published refreshed policy positions on digital connectivity, resources &amp; waste, housing, commuted sums; also ‘priority asks’ briefing notes on transport, resources &amp; waste, housing, climate change &amp; green growth</p> <p>Coordinated joint presidents’ briefing note &amp; Ministerial letter on LG finance for Autumn Budget</p> <p>Secured a seat on MHCLG’s Local Government Funding Reform Strategic Group</p> <p>Work on HUG2 delivery led to Ministerial meeting</p> <p>Secured reference to ‘wider environmental leadership’ in the Devo White Paper</p>	<p>Establish a support programme for members on devolution and LGR – work closely with LGA and other LG partners and CPs</p> <p>Focus on Planning &amp; Infrastructure Bill and Devolution Bill (work with the LGA to influence bill teams)</p> <p>Publish policy positions on Local Area Energy Planning, travel demand management, active travel (refresh)</p> <p>Continue to work with other associations, LGA, Solace to make the case for place (inc. Spending Review)</p> <p>Continue to influence implementation of Environment Act (particularly BNG, LNRS, waste reform) and protected landscapes reform, Land Use Framework</p>

		Blueprint Coalition: ongoing work developing a proposal for a statutory duty for climate change (LGA now leading)	
5. Organisational development	5.1 Regular service review	<p>Updated the Strategic Plan to reflect the language of the new government</p> <p>Regular monitoring of comms channels</p> <p>Ongoing work with 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>Produce the next 3-year Strategic Plan (2026-29)</p> <p>Think more commercially when taking on new projects</p> <p>Ongoing work with 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>
	5.2 ADEPT company business	Held regular Directors' meetings throughout the year	<p>Ensure we meet all legal requirements</p> <p>Effective budgetary management including auditing of annual accounts</p>
	5.3 Ongoing support (Secretariat)	<p>Retained policy support for Environment, Climate Change, Transport &amp; Connectivity 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>Secure more admin support to deliver growing programme of events and other activities</p> <p>Ensure smooth annual membership retention / recruitment processes</p> <p>Plan for 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ADEPT</p>

Hannah Bartram  
 March 2025