

## **Comments and Input to Bassetlaw Vision 2040**

### **From Tuxford Town Council**

We provide the following comments after informal discussions within TTC, following the structure of the sections in the Vision document.

#### **Introduction**

We agree that Bassetlaw is a place on the move, and we aim for Tuxford to have its own unique role to play in that. This will be the basis of our Neighbourhood Plan.

We are very happy to see the level of funding secured for Bassetlaw and Worksop in particular, and we are happy that Tuxford has been included in the Rural Infrastructure fund.

We also see a great future for new and higher tech employment – Tuxford Academy is one of the best schools in Nottinghamshire and we want our students to stay and make their lives in Tuxford, whether they go to University or straight to worthwhile and challenging careers.

We also see the need to regenerate town centres and want to do this via a balanced plan for new growth, additional and challenging employment and to address the most long-standing problem of all – HGV traffic through the Georgian centre of Tuxford.

We are positive and believe this can be achieved – and enable some growth in employment at the same time.

#### **The Place**

Tuxford residents share this plan's appreciation of the rural nature of Bassetlaw. We share the plan to leverage the proximity to the A1 for logistics-based businesses, some of which have been in Tuxford for decades. We are delighted in the decision to locate the STEP project in Bassetlaw, and we see that Tuxford's location and human resources could have a significant support role in this.

We also see the value of the visitor economy. The cultural offering available is not only a matter for promoting tourism; we must think of it as a part of our future residents' lives. As we plan to grow faster than the national average, and at the same time upgrade our overall employment with the new energy, green technologies and expanding the important supporting engineering and research activities, this means tertiary educated people and their families moving into the area. We must make them feel that a move to North Nottinghamshire is a positive move.

We feel this is not really prioritised in your outline. We do appreciate it is high level but we feel more could be made of this.

For example: The A1 is really the old Great North Road, and it is easy to forget the importance of this for travellers since the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. Did you realise that the southern end (Charing Cross, London) to Newcastle upon Tyne is 276 miles, and Bassetlaw (actually, Tuxford!) sits exactly half way up? We are the "Heart of the Great North Road" – what about this as a theme for the visitor and

cultural economy? We can appreciate and celebrate the past without diminishing our focus on the future.

We should be bolder in saying we are an attractive location to move to, as well as a great place for a holiday.

### **Bassetlaw by 2040**

**Identity** – We agree and support this, but consider both its role in powering Net zero but also its scenery, rural environment and its history should be part of the mix. The focus on high tech green and other jobs is absolutely welcomed.

We absolutely support addressing the issue of vacant shops on the high streets. We want to see Tuxford town centre re-invigorated and this is part of the task. Addressing HGVs and traffic is also key and is the single most negative perception of Tuxford as far as its residents are concerned. A general commitment to eliminating the conflicts between traffic and high streets would be welcome in this document.

We support the idea of a Visit Bassetlaw and “Rediscover your own back yard”, but we should go further; what about a “Move to Bassetlaw” – what about asking for local businesses to volunteer to join BDC in trade shows to talk about the possibilities of re-locating businesses here? We have plenty of space, and we have more than that to offer.

**Skills** – This is the critical step; We must ensure our schools have the tools they need, and the relationships with local businesses to encourage technical as well as academic routes into local businesses; went to school here; started my career here; plan to stay here.

Tertiary education is a vital component, but technical education and apprenticeships must be clearly stated to have equal value.

As noted above, we have many SMEs and they could make a massive difference; what about identifying areas for micro-hubs for small start-ups, especially for local school leavers?

**Business** - As we look forward within Tuxford, we are realistic and recognise that our logistics businesses will not be able to compete with the massive scale new sites on the A1/A57 junction area once they are in place; we must either evolve or suffer decline; so our plan is to transition to a hub for new, hi-tech businesses... there are probably other locations in a similar position. We must have the skills, as above, we must have the commitment, and BDC must support this.

We see a major focus on Worksop – and that is fine, it is the largest centre; but this must not come at the expense of the other settlements.

**Environment** – We support the growth of green energy projects, though we do wonder (with reference to the Draft BDC Plan, which has a total focus on wind) at the balance; there could be greater emphasis on encouraging wider universal roof solar panels on new-builds (and encouraging orientation to support this). We are blessed with good sunshine and we should use it.

We support the upgrading of and improvement of insulation on older and BDC-owned properties. We would suggest new developments could benefit from communal ground-source heat pumps, perhaps underlying adjacent agricultural land; much of Bassetlaw's rural settlements are not on the gas grid and are therefore reliant on oil; there is an opportunity to promote ground source heat, powered by renewable energy. This is surely not too high an ambition?

**Facilities for All** – We support infrastructure development across the district but we have noticed that the Draft Plan has an almost total focus on Worksop and – to a lesser extent – Retford – for the siting of new community infrastructure. We do not support the idea that the other settlements – including Tuxford, as a Local Support Centre – should be starved of any developer contributions in order to enrich Worksop.

**Healthy District** – We support this section, and we would like to see a strongly stated ambition that every settlement should offer active travel routes within them: every child should feel safe either walking or cycling to and from school and every settlement centre should be welcoming to active travel participants. Each settlement should be challenged to identify new walking and cycling routes to add variety to exercise as well as commuting; circular routes should be developed to ensure people have a range of routes that do not require doubling back.

**Delivering the Vision** – a Vision without a roadmap and set of deliverables is nice to have but not achievable, and people will not feel any ownership of it if they do not know what they can do to contribute. The steps outlined in this section are good. We think that encouraging input and participation from businesses and communities is a vital step.

**Working Together** – TTC will continue to work positively and proactively with BDC. We hope our voice will be heard.

Consolidated and submitted by

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On behalf of Tuxford Town Council