



Annual Report

2024-25

Chorley
Council

Introduction

Welcome to Chorley Council's Annual Report 2024-25. This report provides an overview of our progress in delivering against the priorities set out in the Corporate Strategy and our commitment to providing great council services.

Over the last year we have continued to support our residents through the cost-of-living challenges with access to food, financial relief, energy improvements and providing warm spaces where they can access advice and services. Not only that but our innovative social prescribing service has played a crucial role in improving health and wellbeing, meeting the practical, social and emotional needs of residents and making a real difference to people's lives. Our investment in a range of health and wellbeing initiatives and improvements to our leisure centres are other ways we are helping people to live more active and healthy lifestyles.

Chorley continues to attract new businesses and has seen businesses grow and expand thanks to our strong relationships with the business community and the opportunities that we create through events, grants and ongoing investment in Chorley town centre and local service centres. In turn this creates employment opportunities for residents, who we then support into work by providing access to training and skills. The council's extensive events programme, our green flag parks and the improvements we have made to our public transport network provide enjoyable and inclusive ways for residents and visitors alike to experience Chorley and all that the place has to offer.

Our achievements in this report reflect the council's commitment to ensuring that residents of Chorley benefit from a thriving economy and have good quality of life. We collaborate with our partners to help us in delivering high quality, accessible services and we remain focused on continuous improvement, always finding new and better ways of delivering council services, to ensure that we are modern, sustainable and fit for the future.

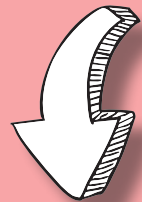


Cllr Alistair Bradley
Leader of Chorley Council



How We Deliver Your Priorities

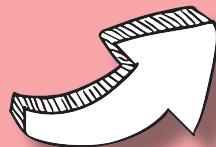
We are not just a district council; we take pride in delivering more for our people and places. We do this by being ambitious for our borough and going beyond our core responsibilities, by meeting the needs of our communities and by inspiring our workforce to deliver great services.



Your **priorities...**

Ensure that we remain focused on what is important.

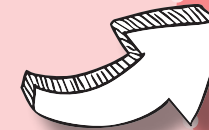
- Housing where residents can live well
- A green and sustainable borough
- An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas
- Healthy, safe and engaged communities



Our **commitments...**

Ensure that we deliver what residents want and need.

- Quality and affordable homes for everyone
- Support for our most vulnerable residents
- Support with health and wellbeing
- Efficient waste and recycling services
- Enhanced town centres and local service centres
- Green space, recreational facilities and events to enjoy
- Thriving local businesses
- Quality employment and skills for everyone
- Sustainable transport and infrastructure



Our **values...**

Inspire us and guide us in delivering council services.

- Customer focused
- Deliver quality services
- Work together
- Forward thinking
- Make a difference



Achieving our vision is about making a difference to people's lives

Enabling strong communities, a resilient economy, excellent services, a greener future and successful people.

Housing where residents can live well highlights...



Supporting residents with rising energy costs

Chorley Council has been delivering the Home Energy Support Scheme since 2023, to help residents who are struggling with rising home energy costs.

During 2024-25 more than 500 households were visited by the council and provided with advice and support around energy efficiency. The programme has achieved the following outcomes:

- Energy advice: residents received practical guidance on energy-saving measures, leading to more manageable energy bills.
- Direct support: distribution of free home energy kits, including draft excluders, helping residents stay warm and reduce energy consumption.
- Enhanced comfort: provision of larger items such as portable heaters offering improved home comfort and energy efficiency.
- Financial relief: onward referrals for potential grant-funded interventions that provide additional financial support for eligible households.

These efforts have collectively contributed to reducing energy costs and improving the quality of life for residents.

Improving housing standards in the private rented sector

The council plays a vital role in ensuring that residents have safe and healthy living conditions and is committed to improving housing standards across the borough. Over the last year, we have focused our efforts on improving energy efficiency across the private rented sector, targeting landlords whose properties are not meeting Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES).

The government has set a target for all private sector rented properties to have an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating of C by 2030 and the council has identified 190 properties in Chorley that are not achieving this rating. We have contacted the landlords notifying them of their responsibilities and duty to comply and are working with them to ensure that the properties are brought up to standard. We are seeing some early success through our engagement with landlords and will continue to progress this work to improve housing quality and energy efficiency.

Housing where residents can live well highlights...

Supporting residents in housing need

Over the past year, the council's Housing Strategy and the Prevention of Homelessness Strategy have been reviewed and refreshed. These strategies set out our plans for improving housing provision and management and how we will support people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. A housing partnership has been established, bringing together registered providers and partners, to collaborate in delivering our housing priorities.

We are working together to identify solutions for reducing temporary accommodation use, ending rough sleeping and creating a balanced housing market that will ensure Chorley residents have access to safe, secure and affordable housing, now and in the future. Over the year we have awarded 193 Disabled Facilities Grants totalling over £1.272 million enabling Chorley residents with medical and physical needs to access funding to carry out adaptations to their home, supporting them to live safely and independently in their homes.

Ensuring sustainable development

Significant progress has been made on the Central Lancashire Local Plan (CLLP), which sets out a long-term strategy for managing and delivering development across the area of Chorley, South Ribble and Preston up to 2041. Chorley Council approved the draft plan in January 2025 and ran a public consultation from February to April, providing Chorley residents and key stakeholders with an opportunity to share their views.

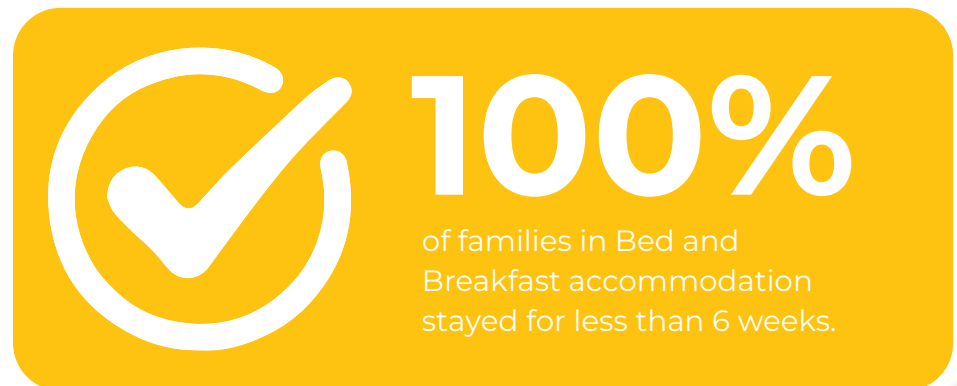
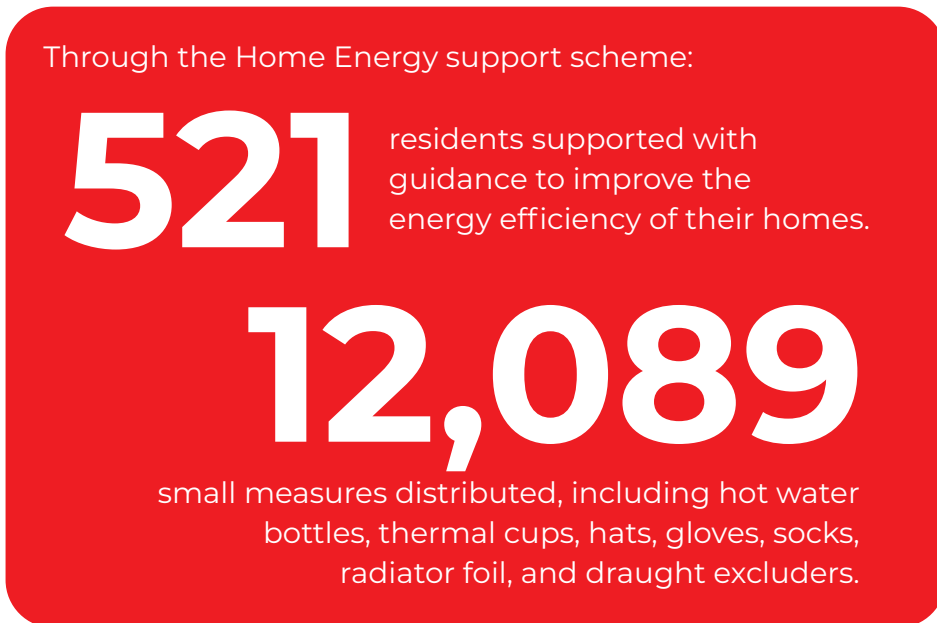
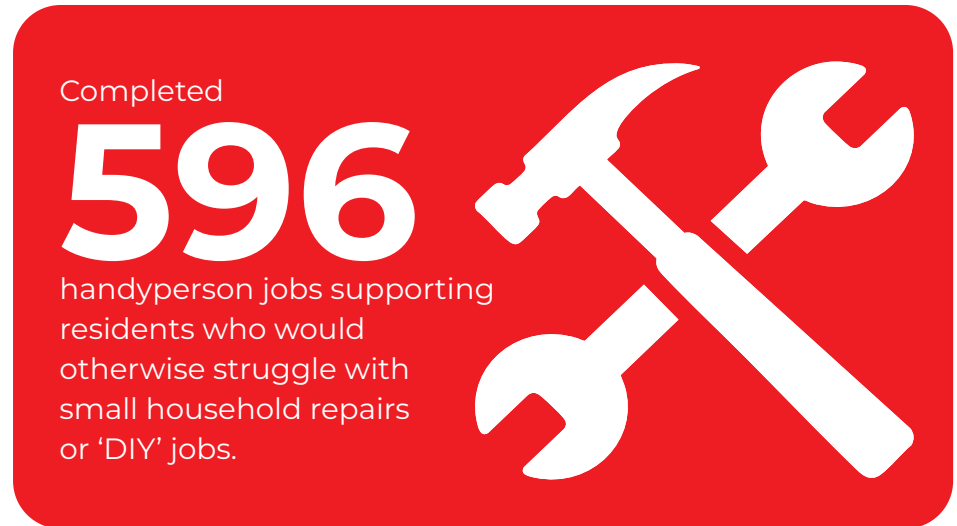
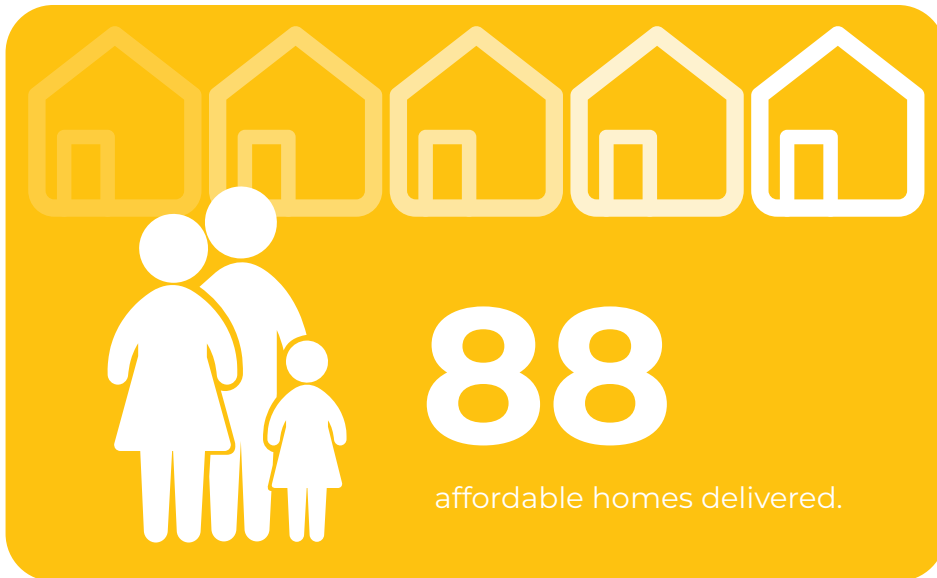
The plan was submitted to the Secretary of State on the 30 June 2025 and will be adopted by the end of next year. The plan sets out a clear approach to delivering both residential and employment development, other infrastructure and protecting the environment across central Lancashire. Once adopted, the Local Plan will ensure that we attract investment and use land effectively to meet the current and future needs of our people and places.



Investment

- Invested £132k to deliver the Local Plan
- Invested £56k to improve housing standards across the borough and prevent homelessness
- Invested £110k in home energy support

Housing where residents can live well outcomes...



A green and sustainable borough highlights...



Delivering improvements to Chorley's bus shelter network

Back in 2023, the council embarked on an ambitious five-year plan to replace 83 bus shelters across the borough. This work has continued during 2024-25 with a total of 72 bus shelters already being upgraded by the end of year two, which puts us well ahead in terms of meeting our target. Residents are benefiting from brand new shelters, making accessing public transport more comfortable, as well as improving the look and feel of these public areas. This is part of our commitment to promoting sustainable transport and infrastructure across the borough.

Award winning parks

Chorley Council has been awarded two new Green Flag awards, to Tatton Recreation Ground and Carr Brook Linear Park, which means there are now eight Green Flag Award-winning parks and open spaces across the borough. They join the ranks of historic award-winning sites such as Astley Park, Withnell Linear Park Nature Reserve, Harpers Recreation Ground, Rangleetts Recreation Ground, Yarrow Valley Country Park and Coronation Recreation Ground. This is a significant achievement and a testament to our ongoing effort to maintain and enhance Chorley's parks and open spaces for the enjoyment of all.

Improving Chorley's Bus station

In November 2023, Chorley Council acquired Chorley Bus Station from Lancashire County Council and throughout 2024-25 we have made significant enhancements to elevate the customer experience and create a welcoming gateway to the town centre. These improvements include comprehensive internal and external redecoration, refurbishment of the toilets, seating, bins, and reception area, as well as the installation of new digital information screens and a touch screen tourist information point, providing visitors with details on activities in Chorley. Externally, the bus station now features cladding on various sections, including visitor entrances, which visually aligns with the Market Walk extension, integrating our town centre assets. Additionally, a living green wall and new signage have been added, further enhancing Chorley's appeal and supporting biodiversity.

Working towards a net zero carbon borough

In 2019, Chorley Council declared a climate emergency and committed to working towards becoming a net zero carbon borough. Our climate change strategy set out a programme of action focusing on reducing carbon emissions in key areas including transport, energy, and waste and

A green and sustainable borough highlights...

building resilience to changes in the environment and enhancing biodiversity. A study has been undertaken to explore the potential for expanding electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure across all council-owned and managed assets, identifying priority sites. As part of this initiative, the Flat Iron EV charging points have been upgraded with modern, reliable towers, enhancing support for EV users visiting Chorley town centre. The council has distributed over 18,000 trees through our highly successful tree giveaway events in November 2024 and January 2025, contributing to a total of 27,879 trees planted this year.

Supporting businesses and growing the local economy

Supporting businesses to thrive in our borough is one of the council's economic priorities. Through the provision of our business grants scheme, we help new businesses to start up and succeed and support existing businesses to expand and grow, which creates local employment opportunities and promotes a resilient economy. During 2024-25, we awarded grants and funding to 145 businesses across the

borough. Grants were provided for retail and hospitality sectors, business investment for growth (BIG), relocation, shopfront improvements, startups, upskilling, and apprenticeships and we allocated money from the Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) to accelerate growth and create employment opportunities in rural areas.

Decarbonising council assets

We are committed to reducing the carbon footprint of council buildings and have invested in a multi-year renovation programme of five major assets. The council has been successful in securing approximately £5.1 million from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme and has also committed a further 12% contribution to help deliver decarbonisation works to Chorley Town Hall, All Seasons Leisure Centre, Brinscall Swimming Pool, Astley Community Centre, and Eaves Green Community Centre. This programme of works will involve enhancing building fabric, installing locally manufactured air source heat pumps, solar panels, and upgrading lighting and heating controls. These improvements will ensure the buildings are well-heated and powered, providing a

low-carbon, comfortable environment for users and residents.

Recognising businesses that have reduced their environmental impact

Our Net Zero Business Accreditation Scheme promotes sustainable practices and supports businesses to take action to reduce their environmental impact. In November 2024, we hosted the Chorley Council Net Zero Business Accreditation Awards, with six local businesses winning awards for their efforts in reducing their own carbon footprint as well as encouraging others to make a difference for climate change. Some of the winners included Crowberry Consulting Ltd a sustainability consultancy based in the heart of Chorley, Red Rose Storage Limited a self-storage company whose facility was purposefully designed to ensure it is as energy efficient and self-sufficient as possible, and Reeds Refillery a local independent refill shop in Chorley Town Centre which allows the community to reduce their own waste by refilling food and household liquids and reusing containers.

A green and sustainable borough highlights...

Enhancing our parks and open spaces

In 2024-25, the council made significant improvements to eight parks and open spaces in Chorley, ensuring they remain fit for purpose and continue to benefit the community and bring visitors to the borough. Key projects included:

- **King George V Playing Fields:**

Following public consultation, a new boundary path to the football field was installed in Adlington, along with car parking, landscaping, and tree planting. These enhancements were funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), Section 106 developer contributions, and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

- **Jubilee Playing Fields:**

Enhancements in Adlington, included playing pitch improvements, new fencing and gates to the canal, new benches, tree and hedge planting, a wider resurfaced path network, increased car parking capacity, and new signage at all entrances. Additionally, bollard lighting was installed on the main path, and floodlighting was added to the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) and skate park, with new lining for basketball and football.

- **Euxton Villa Artificial Grass Pitch:**

Led by Euxton Villa with support from Chorley Council, this project in Euxton, which began in April 2024, is now complete. The council contributed £100,000 to the new artificial grass pitch from Section 106 developer contributions, resulting in a state-of-the-art facility that will benefit the community for years to come.

We recognise the importance of parks and open spaces, and opportunities for sport and recreation in supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of our residents.

Enhancing biodiversity in Chorley

The council is being proactive in progressing the National Planning Policy Framework's mandatory requirement for net gains in biodiversity in planning decisions. Biodiversity net gain (BNG) is about making sure that development can take place whilst actively halting and reversing the decline in nature or preventing harm of ecosystems. Efforts are underway to establish the borough's first private Habitat Bank for offsite BNG, aimed at compensating for habitats lost due to new developments in Chorley. The council is also readying the planning team through training and by creating and maintaining a BNG register, as well as publishing guidance for local developers.



Investment

- Invested £353k to continue delivering improvements to Chorley's bus shelter network
- Invested £2.0m in parks and open spaces, which assisted in increasing the number of parks with a Green Flag Status
- Invested £780k in grant funding for businesses, to support employment opportunities and strengthen Chorley's economy

A green and sustainable borough outcomes...

42%

of household waste was sent for reuse, recycling and composting.



57

bus shelters improved this year, bringing the total replaced over our five year programme to 72.

Improvements made to **8** parks and open spaces

- George V Playing Fields,
- Jubilee Playing Fields, Near Meadow Sandy Lane,
- Kimberley Street Open Space Coppull,
- Orchard Drive Play Area,
- Buckshaw Roundabout,
- Gillett Playing Fields Limbrick
- Euxton Villa Artificial Grass Pitch



8

Green Flag parks including:

- Astley Park
- Harpers Recreation Ground
- Rangletts Recreation Ground
- Yarrow Valley Country Park
- Withnell Linear Park Nature Reserve
- Coronation Recreation Ground
- Tatton Recreation Ground
- Carr Brook Linear Park.



27,879

trees planted across the borough this year, bringing the total delivered since 2020 to **179,659** trees.

An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas highlights...



Improving local service centres

Chorley Council has enhanced local service centres to attract more visitors and customers, boost economic activity, and increase employment. In 2024-25, Astley Village Community Centre was refurbished, including resurfacing the soft play area, installing powder-coated fencing, rendering walls, and adding new fascia boards.

The adjacent shopping parade received external redecoration and upgraded lighting to create a more welcoming environment, with a new mural promoting culture and art, and showcasing the attractions of Chorley. Chapel Street, a key part of our town's identity, faced challenges such as empty properties and tired facades. The council undertook a project to revitalise Chapel Street, refreshing its appearance to create a welcoming atmosphere, attract potential new tenants, and breathe new life into the area.

Creating a 21st century town centre

After securing £20 million funding from the UK Government in 2023, Chorley Council has now appointed a specialist design team to advance proposals for transforming areas of Chorley Town Centre. The team, comprising architects, engineers and design consultants, will work on three schemes: creating a new civic square in front of the historic town hall, developing new homes at the council's depot on Bengal Street, and refurbishing the council's Union Street offices to attract tenants.

This programme will reshape and refresh the town centre as well as providing long term benefits such as regeneration of these areas, creation of community and multi-use spaces for residents to enjoy, accommodation, business and employment opportunities - all of which will support Chorley's economy.

An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas highlights...

Creating employment and skills opportunities

In 2024-25, the council developed an Employment and Skills Strategic Framework setting out how we will work with partners to promote employment, education and training opportunities for residents. In July 2024, we delivered the Chorley Employment Gateway Expo at Inspire Youth Zone which attracted 133 residents seeking employment support or volunteering opportunities, with 41 employers and organisations promoting their vacancies, courses, and support offers. Additionally, the Chorley Careers Event in November 2024 was attended by approximately 420 local students and residents, along with 28 employers and education providers. The event offered attendees the chance to explore career paths and learn about various job roles and organisations.

Chorley - the best of Lancashire all in one place

The council has a vision to put Chorley on the map as a top visitor destination and this year we developed an ambitious five-year Destination Management Plan to help achieve our goal. The plan sets out new branding and place positioning promoting Chorley as having the best of Lancashire, all in one place. This new brand recognises Chorley's vibrant events calendar, high-quality visitor experiences and many tourism initiatives that appeal to both residents and visitors. The plan was developed using local data and intelligence, and through extensive consultation with Chorley's businesses, visitors and other key stakeholders and identifies key activity to support growth of the visitor economy. The plan was launched at the Choose Chorley Business Networking Event in February 2025, and a Tourism Network has been established to support its delivery, ensuring that local businesses, groups and individuals are able to play a role positioning Chorley as a leading destination by 2030.



Investment

- Invested £45k to encourage more visitors to the borough, and to improve the visitor offer and the economy
- Invested £25k to focus on the future growth of Chorley's economy
- Invested £100k in an employment and skills programme

An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas

outcomes...

Chorley coach visits have increased by

46%

to the Town Centre.

83%

Chorley overall employment rate.

310

jobs created through council
support and intervention.

9%

Town Centre Vacancy Rate,
reflecting a healthy and
vibrant town centre.

652

businesses attended business
networking and engagement
events provided by the council.

145

businesses receiving grant
funding, totalling over
£780,000.

Secured
£25.654m

in external funding for development.

401

businesses receiving advice
and support from the
council and partners.

Healthy, safe, and engaged communities highlights...



Social Prescribing

Chorley Council's Social Prescribing Service is recognised as a fantastic example of delivering personalised care in communities. The council works alongside health partners and voluntary and community sector organisations in connecting patients to support and activities that empower them to take control of their health and wellbeing.

In 2024-25, the social prescribing service helped over 1,100 residents by offering free, confidential support tailored to individual needs. As a result, 98% of service users reported an improvement in their ONS wellbeing score saying they now have higher life satisfaction, a sense of worth, increased happiness, and reduced anxiety. The social prescribing service was a finalist for the Transforming Lives category at the 2025 MJ Achievement Awards, highlighting that this is an innovative and sector leading model.

Minimising the impact of the cost of living for residents

Chorley Council is committed to supporting residents who are struggling with the increased cost of living. In 2024/25 we supported voluntary and community sector organisations to establish community cafes in community hubs whereby residents can access advice, guidance and be signposted to support services. Our Warm Spaces have continued to operate across the borough, providing free Wi-Fi, low-cost or free hot drinks, and social opportunities. Additionally, we have continued to support emergency foodbanks and five food clubs within the food network, these services allow residents to supplement their weekly shop and get access to emergency food parcels. Chorley Help the Homeless, St Laurence's Church, and United Reformed Church provide free hot food provision throughout the week.

Healthy, safe, and engaged communities highlights...

Delivering a programme of health and wellbeing initiatives

The health and wellbeing of residents is important to Chorley Council. In 2024-25, we continued to deliver a range of supportive projects, including:

- **Better Health, Better Self Programme:** This lifestyle improvement initiative encourages participants to focus on non-weight goals, such as “playing with grandchildren” or “being healthy enough for surgery”. On average, participants lose about 6 kg (1 stone) while achieving their lifestyle goals.
- **Health Promotion Event:** Held at All Seasons Leisure Centre, this event focused on “Starting Well” and featured 25 partner organisations sharing information with children, young people, and families about healthy lifestyle habits. Approximately 200 people attended, with 10% visiting the leisure centre for the first time.

- **Golf Fore the Ages:** In partnership with Duxbury Golf Club, this programme provides a friendly and supportive space for individuals over 50 or those with health issues to meet, socialise, and engage in gentle exercise through golf.

Enhancing Chorley's leisure facilities

In September 2024, the refurbishment of 100 year old Brinscall Pool was completed as part of the council's ongoing commitment to invest in Chorley's leisure facilities. The £600,000 investment in the facility included repairs to the pool structure and upgrades to the poolside facilities and changing areas, all while preserving the site's historic features. All Seasons Leisure Centre is currently undergoing a significant transformation aimed at enhancing the visitor experience. This includes substantial upgrades to the gym facilities, refurbishment of both dry and wet side changing rooms, a new poolside walkway, improvements to the family pool area, and the installation of solar panels to reduce the centre's carbon footprint and promote eco-friendly operations.



Investment

- Invested £315k to launch an enhanced social prescribing service focussed on supporting family and early years
- Invested £117k to deliver a Health and Wellbeing Programme to support the needs of residents across the borough
- Distributed £17,654 to support the Warm Spaces scheme across the borough, helping provide a welcoming environment for residents during the colder months
- Allocated £627,690 through the Household Support Fund (HSF) providing targeted support to households in need

Healthy, safe, and engaged communities outcomes...



Council's Leisure Centres:

363,257 total visits,
166,954 visits by young people,
39,342 visits by older people (65+).



35,274

people benefited from community commissioned services support including counselling, group sessions, food and essentials, social activities, peer support, and referrals to partner organisations.



14,722

residents welcomed with a warm drink and hot meal at **55** Warm Spaces across the borough.

16,037

spaces offered through the Activity and Food (HAF) programme.

17,267

households supported through the Household Support Fund (HSF) with **25,368** measures including energy, food and essential household items.



1,169

people referred to Social Prescribing, helping connect individuals to non-clinical support to improve wellbeing.



181

adults accessing weight and healthy lifestyle support delivered or commissioned by the council.



374

community groups supported and developed via the Communities and Housing service.

57%

of people supported through Social Prescribing reported fewer GP appointments.

Delivering great services highlights...



Events for everyone

The council has delivered a vibrant calendar of 14 events across 44 days. From family favourites like Picnic in the Park to cherished traditions such as the Christmas celebrations, Chorley 10K, Chorley Live, the Annual Bonfire, Remembrance events, and the Chorley Flower Show, our events brought the community together and supported the local economy. Chorley Flower Show, Chorley Live, and the Annual Bonfire each attracted around 10,000 visitors, underlining their popularity. Winter Wonderland welcomed over 7,000 skaters, and more than 1,600 runners took part in the Chorley 10K and 2K. Chorley Live featured over 200 artists performing across 36 venues, providing a welcome boost to local businesses. Chorley Flower Show was shortlisted for the Small Event Award at the Lancashire Tourism Awards 2024 and will celebrate its 10-year anniversary in 2025.

Keeping the borough safe

The council ensures that local businesses and services like pubs, taxis, scrap metal, alcohol and gambling venues comply with the law. We have processed more than 1,000 applications, issuing licences, carrying out inspections, and working with the police and other agencies to protect the public and raise standards across the licensed trade. During National Licensing Week in June 2024, we carried out a successful “Week of Action,” focusing on different areas of the licensed trade each

day. Highlights included supporting Chorley Pub Watch, inspecting gambling premises, inspecting scrap metal sites, running a taxi operation to tackle unlawful taxi activity, and promoting Check 25 at off-licences in partnership with Police and Trading Standards. Only one premise failed of those subjected to a test purchase, and the person who made the sale was issued with a fixed penalty notice and the premises issued with written advice.

Sustainable planning and development

The council plays a key role in shaping Chorley’s future through sustainable planning and development. We have exceeded government targets in terms of determining planning applications within required timescales, demonstrating a highly efficient and responsive planning service. Our commitment to enforcing planning rules, saw us deal with 395 planning enforcement complaints in 2024-25 and by working closely with residents, developers, and partner organisations, we have continued to ensure high-quality development across the borough. We have effectively managed developer contributions through Section 106 agreements and the Community Infrastructure Levy, with, £4.2 million being collected this year through the levy. £629,000 has been allocated to parish and town councils, helping to fund local infrastructure and community improvements.

Delivering great services highlights...



A financially stable council

The council continues to deliver high-quality services through the effective management of budgets and payments, ensuring the wise and responsible use of public money. This is achieved through strong cross-service collaboration, enabling robust financial planning, monitoring and decision-making. Council services work collaboratively to manage income and expenditure, align resources with strategic priorities, and maintain financial resilience. The 'Fit for the Future' programme has been developed to help drive efficiency and value for money across all council services, whilst ensuring that the council remains financially stable and is able to invest in services that matter the most to local residents.

Being a data driven council

Through the Chorley and South Ribble Strategic Partnership the council has helped develop a Place-Based Intelligence Platform, bringing together data from other local authorities, the NHS and other partners to better understand community needs and improve services. This shared platform supports evidence-based decision-making across areas such as health, housing, and the economy. It has already enabled targeted interventions including support for households in fuel poverty, initiatives to reduce economic inactivity, and projects focused on suicide prevention. The platform helps the council and partners

design more effective, joined-up responses, and as more organisations come on board, the platform will continue to strengthen collaboration and deliver better outcomes for residents.

Winning back our planning powers

In June 2025, Chorley Council won back its full planning powers in respect of dealing with major planning applications, following a programme of improvements that have been made to the planning service. In 2023, government took the decision to de-designate the council due to more than 10% of major planning decisions being overturned by the Planning Inspector. This allowed developers to bypass the council and apply directly to the Planning Inspectorate, although none took up the opportunity due to the council's good reputation locally. Appeal decisions have been below the national threshold since March 2025; therefore, the council meets the criteria for de-designation. This reflects the council's commitment to continuous improvement and ensuring high-quality, consistent planning decision making.

Delivering great services highlights...



Reimagining how we recruit talent

Chorley Council has transformed the way it attracts and recruits talented individuals into a wide variety of roles across the organisation, ensuring that we have the very best people to deliver council services. Our innovative project 'Reimagining Recruitment' has delivered key improvements to the recruitment process including a new recruitment website that enhances data collection and broadens the reach to skilled applicants and a more efficient application process that improves the candidate and employer experience. We are proud to be the first winner of the newly introduced Best Practice Imitation Award at the iNetwork Awards for our 'Reimagining Recruitment' project. The impact has been significant; the average time to hire has reduced by 10%, application numbers per vacancy has increased, and 90% of roles are now filled on the first attempt. As a sponsored employer for UK visa sponsorship, a forces friendly council, and a disability confident employer we also demonstrate that our recruitment practices are inclusive. These positive outcomes demonstrate that a modern recruitment strategy is important in building a strong public sector workforce.

Strengthening our shared arrangements

Chorley Council's shared arrangements with South Ribble Borough Council continue to go from strength to strength. We share a number of services which allows us to combine resources and knowledge, benefit from savings through smarter procurement and shared

strategies and develop a skilled and resilient workforce.

Over the past year, we've taken steps to create further shared services including establishing a shared building control service and a shared management team for Streetscene and Waste services, which includes new roles like an Environmental Crime Manager, to help us tackle environmental crime issues. Proposals have also progressed for a shared Planning Compliance team, covering planning enforcement and developer contributions (CIL and S106), as well as a shared Economic Growth service which will drive forward national ambitions around business growth, skills, employment and innovation at a local level. Shared services help us respond flexibly to the needs of our communities and the changing local government landscape.

Championing equality, diversity and inclusion

The council launched a new Equality Strategy at the start of 2025 setting out clear objectives over the next four years. The strategy ensures that we are meeting our public sector duties under the Equality Act and strengthens our commitment to delivering fair and inclusive services, engaging with residents and championing diversity in the workplace. An example of how we are making our services more accessible is the improvements we have made to the council's website which includes enabling translation, screen reader and speech recognition functionality. The council website ranks 44 of 125 councils on the Skilltide Index, a global accessibility league table that compares websites. We are proud to report that we have achieved an accessibility score of 98%.

Delivering great services outcomes...

Created **69**
**wildflower mini
meadows** and introduced
43 rewilding areas
(grass left unmown) to
improve biodiversity
across the borough.



50,000+

people attended council events
across the borough, including
Chorley Flower Show, Chorley Live,
Chorley 10K and Christmas Celebrations.



**88% of major
and 98% of
minor planning
applications** were
decided within the
specified statutory
timescale.



589,699
social media engagements.

Collected
478.59 kg
per household of residual
household waste.



70%

of customers satisfied with the service
they received from the council.

1,028
licensing
applications
processed

6,518

face to face contacts
via the customer
contact centre.

1,206

planning
applications
processed in
the year.



75,156

calls answered via
the customer
contact centre.

16,782

email contacts received
via the customer
contact centre.



55%
of service requests
are received online.



Over **4 million** domestic
waste wheeled bin collections completed.
(reflecting multiple collections per household)

Facilitated **178** Mayoral
engagements supporting our
communities and promoting
Chorley.



Supported **141**
Council and committee
meetings, task groups, informal
working groups and other
Member meetings.

Case Studies - Making a Difference

Delivering social value in Chorley

Chorley Council is committed to ensuring that every pound spent on major contracts delivers wider benefits for our community. For all council contracts over £100,000, we work closely with contractors to embed social value into project delivery ensuring that investment in local infrastructure also supports local people, businesses, and communities. Over the past year, this approach has delivered tangible results including:

- £40,000 reinvested into the local economy through the use of local suppliers.
- 35+ hours of volunteer time from contractors supporting local schools and colleges, helping students become work ready.
- Apprenticeships for local residents, with apprentices contributing a total of 12 weeks across various projects, developing skills and strengthening Chorley's future workforce.
- Engagement with two schools and one college, and two resident workshop cohorts, offering practical insights into industry and employability skills.
- £500 donated to Chorley Help the Homeless, directly supporting their Gateway project with essential supplies for their community shop.

These initiatives not only support economic growth but also help residents build confidence, gain new skills, and access employment opportunities. Looking to the future major developments such as the Town Centre regeneration will bring even more social value to Chorley, creating jobs, apprenticeships, and work placements, while continuing to support education and community initiatives. Through embedding social value into our contracts, we are making a real difference to our people and places.



Case Studies - Making a Difference

Chorley Town Centre Ambassadors

The Chorley Town Centre team, including Ambassadors and CCTV operators, are invaluable assets to the community. They play a crucial role by being the eyes and ears of the town centre, building relationships with residents, local business owners, and market traders, and collaborating with partners such as the Police. The team provides a range of support, including assisting visitors, preventing shoplifting, offering lifesaving first aid, providing evidence for enforcement actions, and helping to prevent and detect crime and anti-social behaviour (ASB). Their diligent work and key partnerships with the Police significantly contribute to making the town centre a safer place.

In October 2024, the team successfully prevented an organised gang of shoplifters. The CCTV team, working closely with the Ambassadors, identified the individuals and vehicles involved. The offenders were subsequently asked to leave the area, and all evidence was passed on to the Police. This action helped protect and maintain a thriving town centre economy, ensuring Chorley remains a safe place to visit.

Supporting people to remain in their homes through housing adaptations

Chorley Council provides disabled facilities grants to help residents live safely, independently, and longer in their own homes by improving access and facilities. In 2024, a referral was received for a 55-year-old resident with significantly reduced mobility due to health conditions, impacting their independence and participation in family life. The referral recommended a Level Access Shower and a Stairlift.

Chorley Council collaborated with the housing provider, who approved the bathroom alterations and offered a 50% financial contribution. The council facilitated all works for the bathroom and stairlift. The resident expressed her happiness with the adaptations, noting the positive difference it made for her and her household. This case highlights the successful partnership between Chorley Council and Housing Association partners, restoring the resident's independence and enhancing the quality of life for all household members.



Making it
happen in
Chorley

Case Studies - Making a Difference

Supporting new beginnings in Chorley

Chorley Council's Resettlement team welcome, support and integrate newly arrived households who have come to the UK through approved forced migration routes. The team plays a key role in helping individuals and families rebuild their lives, providing tailored support that includes housing, education, employment, and community integration. Through working closely with local partners, community groups, and national schemes, the team ensures that Chorley is a place of safety, opportunity, and belonging for those seeking refuge. The case studies below demonstrate how personalised support and community collaboration can transform lives:

- **A Future in Pharmacology:** Person A arrived in the UK with their family under difficult circumstances and later had to seek asylum. Despite being moved frequently and facing significant disruption during their GCSEs, they persevered and completed college with aspirations to study pharmacology. However, as an asylum seeker, they were ineligible for student finance and lost hope. With support from Chorley's Resettlement Team, they applied for University of Central Lancashire's Sanctuary Scholarship, awarded to just one student per year. Against the odds, they were successful. They are now studying pharmacology, with renewed hope and a dream to one day develop life-saving treatments. Their mother told the team: "You have saved their life. They had given up and you gave them hope again."
- **Giving Back to the Community:** Person B arrived in the UK via the Asylum Dispersal route with their family. Unable to work initially, they sought a way to contribute to their new community. With support from the council's Resettlement Team, they launched a free haircut service at a local community group, offering support to asylum seekers, the homeless, the elderly, and others facing financial hardship. This initiative has given them a renewed sense of purpose and a meaningful way to give back to the community that welcomed them.



Case Studies - Making a Difference

Investing in success and supporting local businesses

Founded in Chorley in 1896, Frederick's Ice Cream is a cherished family-run business now led by the fourth and fifth generations. Renowned for producing luxury ice cream for suppliers, restaurants, cafés, and pubs across the North of England, the business also operates three popular retail sites including Massa's in Chorley Town Centre.

Massa's, Chorley's oldest café, recently underwent a full refurbishment thanks to a Chorley Council retail and hospitality grant, funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF). The transformation has revitalised this historic venue, now offering a wide range of fresh, home-cooked food, indulgent desserts, artisan coffees, and a selection of wines and spirits, making it a vibrant visitor destination at any time of day.

The Frederick family are deeply embedded in the local community. They actively participate in initiatives such as Totally Locally, the Hospitality Hub, and events like the Chorley Food and Drink Festival, they also support local sports teams and community projects, demonstrating a strong commitment to giving back.

Frederick's invests in its workforce by offering apprenticeships and training opportunities in partnership with local colleges, helping young people develop skills and build careers in the hospitality and food industries.

By supporting local businesses like Frederick's, Chorley Council helps safeguard cultural heritage while driving economic development and nurturing community pride.



