



Ashbourne Reborn Levelling Up Fund Communications Protocol

VERSION 2.5: FOR DISCUSSION AT COMMS GROUP 17 APRIL 2024

Protocol Endorsement

{Ashbourne Reborn partners agree the principles set out in this document in support of the successful delivery of the programme and related projects:}

Name of partner:

Lead officer:

Signed:

Date:

1.0 Purpose of communications protocol

1.1 To set out an agreed way of working between Derbyshire Dales District Council (Accountable Body), partner organisations, Programme and Project Boards in the delivery of communications activity relating to Ashbourne Reborn.

1.2 The protocol covers the management of communications activity in relation to:

- The over-arching Ashbourne Reborn **programme**, led by Derbyshire Dales District Council
- The two **projects** within the scope of Ashbourne Reborn:
 - Highways and Public Realm, led by Derbyshire County Council
 - Link Community Hub, led by Ashbourne Methodist Church
- Any communications activity as required under Government funding regulations.

2.0 Scope of communications protocol

2.1 Given the partnership nature of the Ashbourne Reborn programme, it is important that roles, responsibilities and ways of working across all stakeholders are clearly set out and agreed in order to ensure:

- Timely and co-ordinated sharing of accurate information
- Adherence to Government requirements around programme / funding publicity
- Targeted and effective use of resources



- The avoidance of mixed messages to the community, stakeholders and local businesses
- That community, stakeholder and local business expectations are effectively managed
- Promotional opportunities are maximised.

2.2 For the purposes of this document, 'communications' activity covers:

- Proactive press releases and related photocalls
- Handling of media enquiries and interviews
- Social media content
- Website content
- Articles in external or internal newsletters
- Printed promotional items such as posters, banners and flyers
- Paid-for advertising (including social media)
- Ward Member updates.

2.3 Activities relating to consultation (statutory or otherwise) or community / stakeholder / business engagement are distinct areas which must be considered and managed separately.

2.4 In the delivery of this activity, partner organisations will carry out their roles and responsibilities as defined by the programme and/or project Terms of Reference, statutory duties and/or Contract Terms and Conditions.

2.5 Communications activity will complement rather than replace other working relationships and requirements for direct communication between parties in pursuit of their responsibilities, which will be linked to and supported by communications activity to ensure that communications about the programme and projects are accurate, consistent and timely. For example, it is anticipated that the main construction contractor, DCC and, where agreed, DDDC will have direct communications with quarry operators and haulage companies about traffic management implications during the construction period. The Comms Officer will share appropriate information more widely that results from or is related to these discussions.

2.6 Any related areas of uncertainty should be raised through the Ashbourne Reborn Communications Group for clarification.

3.0 Organisational commitments

3.1 By signing up to the protocol, each partner is agreeing to the following:

- Adopting a 'no surprises' approach to communications activity (e.g. around proposals or funding announcements) by sharing information with partners in a timely and coordinated manner. This includes consideration of how information – regardless of the form it takes – may inadvertently enter the



public domain (for example, the content of published meeting agendas and minutes or comments made on social media)

- To sign off partnership communications material, where appropriate, in a timely manner
- To respond to media enquiries in a timely manner, in line with requested deadlines as far as possible
- To undertake partnership communications in line with the agreed protocol
- To treat any information received through membership of stakeholder groups within the programme governance appropriately and not utilising information provided in confidence to inform communication activity.

4.0 Roles and responsibilities

4.1 In the interests of consistency and clarity, any communications about projects within the scope of the programme should be posted or shared to the 'Ashbourne Reborn' channels.

4.2 Derbyshire Dales District Council

Will provide a dedicated communications and engagement resource – Ashbourne Reborn Communications Officer – to support Ashbourne Reborn. The post will sit within the DDDC communications and marketing team.

Take the lead role in any communications activity relating to the **programme**, its management and funding (including announcements by Government).

Provide the following support in relation to both the **programme** and **projects**:

- Drafting proactive press releases (including quotes from relevant partners) and co-ordinating sign off with partners
- Issuing agreed press releases to the media
- Arranging photocalls in liaison with project leads
- Dealing with media enquiries and interviews in liaison with project leads
- Drafting and posting social media on Ashbourne Reborn channels managed by DDDC
- Including content in the Dales Matters publication and internal publications
- Maintaining the web presence at:
<https://www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk/community/ashbourne-reborn>.
- Providing advice to ensure communications reflect LUF branding and publicity requirements
- Regular Ward Member (email) updates and, when required, more detailed briefings by the DDDC Programme Manager for Ashbourne Reborn.

4.3 Projects leads and wider partners

Project leads will take the lead role in communications activity relating to their **project** in line with this protocol. All proactive press releases should ideally be



planned in advance and added to the communications grid overseen by the Ashbourne Reborn Communications Group. Ad hoc requests relating to a specific project should be handled by the communications contact of the relevant partner but coordinated with the Ashbourne Reborn Communications Officer so that content can be shared on Ashbourne Reborn channels. Urgent project communications may be undertaken by project leads in line with section 8 of this protocol.

- 4.4 Comms relating to public realm improvements to the Market Place; Victoria Square; Millennium Square; and Shrovetide Walk will be prepared with the relevant landowner / project sponsor and a joint partner update / release issued.
- 4.5 Wider partners' role will be to support the programme and project communications through timely responses and to be an advocate of Ashbourne Reborn.
- 4.6 Where matters of final sign off are not clear cut, project leads and wider partners are asked to exercise judgment on a case by case basis, and contact DDDC's communications and marketing team for advice.

5.0 Key messages

- 5.1 All partners will include agreed key messages about the overarching programme management, funding and the delivery process in press releases.
- 5.2 These should be included as a standard 'Notes to Editors' in all press releases and reflected in other communications activity as appropriate.
- 5.3 As a rule, the latest messages will be on the Ashbourne Reborn website (<https://www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk/community/ashbourne-reborn>) including Frequently Asked Questions. Standard wording (as of January 2024) is below:

KEY MESSAGES

- a) In January 2023, central government approved a Levelling Up Fund (LUF) bid designed to transform Ashbourne town centre. The total programme will cost £15.2m of which LUF is contributing £13.4m. The difference of £1.8m is made up of match funding raised locally, including County, District and Town Council contributions, significant funds raised from Ashbourne Methodist Church members, friends and grants, as well as grant giving organisations and local businesses.
- b) The exciting programme – named "Ashbourne Reborn" is led by Derbyshire Dales District Council working in partnership with Derbyshire County Council and Ashbourne Methodist Church as lead project delivery partners, in collaboration with Ashbourne Town Team, Ashbourne Town Council and AshCom.
- c) Derbyshire Dales District Council will be responsible for overall programme management and the programme is made up of two projects. The first, led by the County Council, is a series of highways improvements and transformed public spaces including Market Place, Victoria Square, Millennium Square and Shrovetide Walk. The second project, led by Ashbourne Methodist Church, will transform the



existing church buildings on the corner of Church Street and Station Road into a community hub, creating space for a wide range of community uses and events and improved visitor accommodation.

- d) Since funding was announced in January 2023, partners have been busy drawing up designs, gaining planning permissions and preparing for delivery. Although much of this preparation is happening behind the scenes, residents, businesses and visitors can expect to see work starting on the ground from summer 2024. Work is expected to finish by autumn 2025 and will be carefully managed to reduce disruption as far as possible.
- e) Find out more about Ashbourne Reborn; sign up for the newsletter at the DDDC website www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk/enewsreg (tick the box for Ashbourne Reborn), or visit the Ashbourne Reborn website www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk/ashbourne-reborn. Follow on social media: find Ashbourne Reborn on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [X \(Twitter\)](#).
- f) Find out more about the Government's Levelling Up Fund at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/new-levelling-up-and-community-investments#the-levelling-up-fund>

6.0 Branding

6.1 The Ashbourne Reborn and Derbyshire Dales District Council (as accountable body for the fund) logos should be used in relevant communications material such as websites, posters and press releases, together with partner logos as appropriate for each project.

6.2 The Derbyshire Dales District Council logo must only be used in accordance with DDDC's brand guidelines.

6.3 Government logo use: The HMG and LUF logos should be used on all Ashbourne Reborn information boards and hoardings etc. in line with LUF guidance. It will also be included in the standard press release template (attached as appendix 4). More information about HMG identity guidelines and LUF branding can be found in the [Levelling Up Recipient Guidelines 2023](#).

6.4 The agreed Ashbourne Reborn press release template with relevant logos should be used when issuing proactive media releases.

7.0 Communications plan

7.1 Opportunities for media or other promotional activity relating to the **programme** and **projects** will be managed through the Ashbourne Reborn Communications Grid.

7.2 This will be overseen by the Ashbourne Reborn Communications Group on which all partners are represented.



7.3 Partner organisations may wish to develop their own communications plans, but these must be managed in line with this protocol and activity reported into the Group referenced in 7.2.

8.0 Communications activity – handling process

8.1 Activity relating to the **programme** will be led by the DDDC comms team, in conjunction with relevant partners.

8.2 Activity relating to a specific **project** will be led by the relevant project lead, in line with this communications protocol.

<p>Media enquiries / requests for interview</p>	<p>Any enquiry relating to the programme should be handled by / directed to DDDC comms team.</p> <p>Any enquiry relating to a specific project should be handled by the communications contact of the lead partner, but please make DDDC comms team aware and consider the opportunity for joint comment if appropriate and in line with communications protocol.</p> <p>It is recognised that on occasion, in participating in media interviews on other projects, some partners may be asked to comment on activity being delivered under Ashbourne Reborn. This is understood and the Protocol does not seek to prevent this.</p>
<p>Requests for proactive press releases</p>	<p>All proactive press releases should use the agreed Ashbourne Reborn press release template, ideally be planned in advance and added to the communications grid, overseen by the Ashbourne Reborn Communications Group for action by the Ashbourne Reborn Communications Officer.</p> <p>Ad hoc requests relating to the programme should be handled by / directed to the DDDC comms team.</p> <p>Ad hoc requests relating to a specific project should be handled by the communications contact of the relevant partner, but please coordinate with the Ashbourne Reborn Communications Officer so that content can be shared on Ashbourne Reborn channels. Project leads should consider the opportunity for joint comment if appropriate and in line with communications protocol.</p> <p>Joint press releases will be released by each partner organisation using the agreed Ashbourne Reborn press release template.</p> <p>If a DDDC quote is required for a partner-led press release, please allow at least 48 hours for the approval process, as far as possible.</p>
<p>Requests for photocalls</p>	<p>Photocalls will ideally be tied into proactive press release opportunities and should be requested in line with the process above.</p>



	<p>The DDDC comms team can advise on DDDC attendance at photocalls.</p> <p>Consent must be gathered for all photos to be used for publicity purposes – using an agreed photo consent form.</p>
<p>Social media</p>	<p>The DDDC comms team will produce and oversee content for Ashbourne Reborn channels, in line with the relevant DDDC social media policies. Project leads and partners are encouraged to post or re-share Ashbourne Reborn content to their own channels.</p> <p>Where appropriate, partners will ‘tag’ one another in social media posts and re-share content to increase reach and engagement.</p> <p>Partners are encouraged to post content on their social media channels relating specifically to their own project but should always tag in DDDC (and ideally others) for information and so that content can be shared on Ashbourne Reborn channels.</p>
<p>DDDC website updates</p>	<p>The Ashbourne Reborn Communications Officer will produce and oversee content for the Ashbourne Reborn web pages of the DDDC website, in line with the relevant DDDC policies (including Government rules around accessible content and branding).</p> <p>The Ashbourne Reborn Levelling Up Programme Manager will be responsible for working with the Communications Officer to ensure the dedicated webpage at: www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk/community/ashbourne-reborn is kept up to date.</p>
<p>Urgent Communications</p>	<p>There may be a need for urgent/responsive comms during the delivery of the programme. Effective communication must take place with appropriate authority, with an agreed sign off process to avoid unnecessary delay.</p> <p>Urgent communications relating to the programme should be handled by / directed to the DDDC comms team.</p> <p>Urgent communications relating to a specific project should be handled by the communications contact of the relevant project lead / partner. The contact should coordinate with the Ashbourne Reborn Communications Officer so that content can be shared on Ashbourne Reborn channels. The contact should make the DDDC comms team aware and consider the opportunity for joint comment if appropriate, and time allows, in line with the communications protocol.</p> <p>High risk/high priority communications matters (for example an accident occurring during the course of the work) will be treated according to the organisations’ usual urgent/high risk</p>



	<p>communications strategy and escalated to the Communications Managers of DDDC, DCC and AMC as appropriate.</p> <p>To note: Whilst urgent communications will need to be responsive to the given situation and addressed by the appropriate project or programme lead, it is the responsibility of all partners to ensure communications remain reflective of the project and programme parameters. For example, communications, urgent or otherwise, cannot commit partners or the programme to additional cost or delay without prior agreement at the appropriate level, as reflected in the Governance structure.</p>
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9.0 Media spokespeople

- 9.1 A list of nominated media spokespeople can be found at appendix one.
- 9.2 The Chair of the Ashbourne Reborn Programme Board, Leader or Deputy Leaders of Derbyshire Dales District Council will be the lead spokesperson for all press releases and media activity relating to the **programme**.
- 9.3 The Chair of the relevant Project Board (or nominated deputy) will be the lead spokesperson for all press releases and media activity relating to specific **projects**. The nominated spokespeople from each partner organisation will be quoted, with supporting quotes from the lead spokesperson from Derbyshire Dales District Council.



Appendix one
Ashbourne Reborn Levelling Up Fund Programme partners and nominated spokespeople

Derbyshire Dales District Council	Political lead: Chair of the Ashbourne Reborn Programme Board, Leader or Deputy Leaders of the Council Officer lead: Steve Capes, Director of Place and Economy
Chair of the Highways and Public Realm Project Board Chair of the Link Project Board	Cllr Simon Spencer (or nominated deputy) Tony Walker (or nominated deputy)
Derbyshire Dales MP	Sarah Dines

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Appendix two

Ashbourne Reborn Levelling Up Fund Programme partners' communications channels and communications contacts

Ashbourne Reborn website	www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk/ashbourne-reborn
Ashbourne Reborn social media channels	Facebook Twitter LinkedIn Instagram YouTube
DDDC Publications	Dales Matters – produced twice yearly
Derbyshire Dales District Council / programme communications contact	Anna Paxton, communications officer, Ashbourne Reborn anna.paxton@derbyshiredales.gov.uk Jim Fearn, communications and marketing manager jim.fearn@derbyshiredales.gov.uk
Highways and Public Realm project communications contact	Jennie Hodgkinson, senior communications officer DCC jennie.hodgkinson@derbyshire.gov.uk
The Link Community Hub communications contact	Stuart Green, AMC publicity officer stuart@greenofashbourne.plus.com

Appendix three – media contacts

A list of local media contacts will be agreed and shared by DDDC with partners to be used for the distribution of agreed press releases.



Appendix four – press release template (with Notes to Editors)

Press Release



Date: XX 2024

TITLE

BODY TEXT OF PRESS RELEASE

ENDS

Media Enquiries: Please contact XXXX

NOTES TO EDITORS

- a) In January 2023, central government approved a Levelling Up Fund (LUF) bid designed to transform Ashbourne town centre. The total programme will cost £15.2m of which LUF is contributing £13.4m. The difference of £1.8m is made up of match funding raised locally, including County, District and Town Council contributions, significant funds raised from Ashbourne Methodist Church members, friends and grants, as well as grant giving organisations and local businesses.
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- f) Find out more about the Government's Levelling Up Fund at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/new-levelling-up-and-community-investments#the-levelling-up-fund>

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