



Ashbourne Reborn Levelling Up Fund Communications Protocol

VERSION 2.3: FOR PARTNER COMMENT (12 February 2024)

Protocol Endorsement

All partners / project sponsors are asked to officially endorse the principles of this communications protocol, in support of the successful delivery of the Ashbourne Reborn Levelling Up Fund programme and related projects:

Name of partner / project sponsor:

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 and all partner organisations / project sponsors in the delivery of communications activity relating to the Ashbourne Levelling Up Fund proposals (Ashbourne Reborn).

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

- The overarching programme, as led by Derbyshire Dales District Council
- Any communications activity as required under Government funding regulations
- The specific projects within the scope of the Ashbourne Reborn Levelling Up Fund, as led by Derbyshire Dales District Council or the named project sponsor

2.0 Scope of communications protocol

2.1 Given the partnership nature of the Ashbourne Reborn Levelling Up Fund 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)

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, project sponsors and 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 are accurate, consistent and timely. For example, it is anticipated that the main construction contractor and DCC will have direct communications with quarry operators and haulage companies about traffic management implications of 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 comms group for clarification.

3.0 Organisational commitments

3.1 By signing up to the protocol, each partner / project sponsor 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 a 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 any partnership communications using the protocol as set out below.
- 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 Derbyshire Dales District Council

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

Will take the lead role in any communications activity relating to its **own projects**. The District Council's communications and marketing team will provide the following support in relation to the overall programme and DDDC projects.

- Drafting proactive press releases (including quotes from relevant partners) and co-ordinating sign off
 - Issuing press releases to the media
 - Arranging photocalls
 - Dealing with media enquiries and interviews
 - Drafting and posting social media on DDDC channels
 - Including content in the Dales Matters publication and internal publications
- Maintaining the web presence at
<https://www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk/community/ashbourne-reborn>.

Any additional support is subject to ongoing resource discussions.

4.2 Project sponsors/partners

Project sponsors / delivery partners will take the lead role in any communications activity relating to their individual projects but will do so in line with this protocol (i.e. DDDC's communications team will be sighted, for information, on all comms activity and can advise, where appropriate, on spokespeople / sign off.

4.3 Wider partners' role will be to support the programme and project communications through timely responses and to be an advocate of Ashbourne Reborn.



- 4.4 Where matters of final sign off are not clear cut, partners and project sponsors 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 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 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 with Derbyshire County Council and Ashbourne Methodist Church as key 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.
- 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 much 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 overall programme manager and 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 logo (as opposed to MHCLG) should be used on all Ashbourne Reborn project boards and hoardings etc. As a general rule, the HMG logo should be displayed in the bottom left-hand corner of any branding. It will also be included in the standard press release template when created (as referenced in appendix 4). More information about HMG identity guidelines can be found [here](#).
- 6.4 An agreed Ashbourne Reborn press release template with relevant logos should be used when issued proactive media releases.

7.0 Communications plan

- 7.1 Opportunities for media or other promotional activity will be managed through the Ashbourne Reborn communications grid.
- 7.2 This will be overseen by Ashbourne Reborn Communications Group.
- 7.3 Partner organisations may wish to develop their own project communications plans, but these must be managed in line with this protocol and activity reported into the Group(s) referenced in 7.2.

8.0 Communications activity – handling process

- 8.1 Activity relating to the overarching programme or a DDDC-led project 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 sponsor, in line with this communications protocol.



<p>Media enquiries / requests for interview</p>	<p>Any enquiry relating to the overarching programme / DDDC projects should be handled by / directed to DDDC comms team</p> <p>Any enquiry relating to specific projects should be handled by the communications contact of the relevant partner, but please make DDDC comms team aware and consider opportunity for joint comment if appropriate and in line with communications protocol</p>
<p>Requests for proactive press releases</p>	<p>All proactive press releases should ideally be planned in advance and added to the communications grid, overseen by the Ashbourne Reborn Communications Group.</p> <p>Ad hoc requests should be directed to the DDDC comms team.</p> <p>If a DDDC quote is required for a partner-led press release, please allow at least 48 hours for 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>DDDC comms team can advise on DDDC attendance at photocalls.</p> <p>Consent must be gathered for all photos to be used in publicity purposes – using an agreed photo consent form.</p>
<p>Social media</p>	<p>The DDDC comms team will produce and oversee content for council channels, in line with the relevant DDDC social media policies. Partners are encouraged to post and share content, providing it is in line with key messages.</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 projects but should always tag in DDDC (and ideally others) for information and further sharing.</p>
<p>DDDC website updates</p>	<p>The DDDC comms team will produce and oversee content for the council website, in line with the relevant DDDC policies (including Government rules around accessible content).</p> <p>The Ashbourne Reborn Levelling Up Programme Manager will be responsible for working with the DDDC comms team 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>For operational matters (day to day occurrences during the course of the work, such as traffic diversions), the Communications Officer will seek input from the delivery teams, Contractor and DCC in order to produce and distribute content for the relevant channels.</p> <p>High risk/high priority communications matters (for example an accident occurring during the course of the work) will be escalated to the Communications Manager (DDDC and DCC where relevant) and treated according to the organisations' usual urgent/high risk communications strategy.</p> <p>Efforts will be made (via the communications officer) to ensure that urgent communications reach the widest possible audience, including building links with local media such as radio stations.</p>
------------------------------	--

9.0 Media spokespeople

- 9.1 A list of nominated media spokespeople can be found at appendix one.
- 9.2 The Leader or Deputy Leader of Derbyshire Dales District Council will be the lead spokesperson for all press releases and media activity relating to the overarching programme.
- 9.3 For specific projects, the nominated spokespeople from each partner organisation will be quoted, alongside supporting quotes from the Leader or Deputy Leader of Derbyshire Dales District Council.



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

Derbyshire Dales District Council	Political lead: Leader or Deputy Leader of the Council Officer lead: Steve Capes, Director of Regeneration & Policy
Project Sponsor	TBC by each Project
Derbyshire Dales MP	Sarah Dines

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

Derbyshire Dales District Council	
Website	www.derbyshiredales.gov.uk/ashbourne-reborn
Social media channels	Facebook Twitter LinkedIn Instagram YouTube
Publications	Dales Matters – produced twice yearly
Communications contact	Anna Paxton, communications officer, Ashbourne Reborn anna.paxton@derbyshiredales.gov.uk Jim Fearn, communications and marketing manager jim.fearn@derbyshiredales.gov.uk

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 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 with Derbyshire County Council and Ashbourne Methodist Church as key 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.
- 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 much 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>

