

Salisbury... our place in the future

A Summary of the
Salisbury Central
Area Framework

August 2020



Wiltshire Council



In March 2018, Salisbury was at the heart of a nerve agent attack, which became a global news story affecting perceptions of the city on an international level and leading to negative impacts on the local economy. Since this event, Salisbury's people have been praised for their resilience and community spirit, to the extent that it was voted the best place to live within the UK (The Sunday Times, April 2019).

However, since then Salisbury has been hit by the international crisis brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic, which has taken a further toll on the city's economy. While the impact of the pandemic has delayed the work on the CAF, the shutdown and economic fallout has made the need to plan proactively for the city centre even more acute. It has accelerated the urgency to deliver the recommendations of the CAF in order to support Salisbury in its long-term recovery.

At the same time, Wiltshire Council has declared a climate emergency and has committed to taking accelerated actions in response, resolving to make the county of Wiltshire carbon neutral by 2030.

The plans and projects recommended by the CAF form an essential part of Salisbury's recovery from recent tragic events, to build a bright and sustainable future for the city.

The CAF has been subject to two stages of widespread consultation with the public and follows numerous meetings and discussions with key stakeholders to gather evidence about local ambitions and to understand the commercial realities facing the city. Wiltshire Council will work closely with its partner organisation to deliver the recommendations of the CAF in a co-ordinated way.

Five themes identified by the Central Area Framework

Improving open space and the environment

The delivery of a connected River Park through the city centre and improving connections between the existing green spaces to enhance leisure and enjoyment, while setting aside spaces for nature to flourish.

Bringing out the qualities

To enhance buildings and spaces to best showcase the unique and beautiful heritage of Salisbury.

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Creating people friendly streets

To make the central area a better place for people to move around safely, comfortably and in a more pleasant environment with reduced noise and air pollution and reduced greenhouse gas emissions, prioritising cycling, walking and public transport.

Creating vibrancy

Enabling spaces and premises in the city to adapt to uses which provide entertainment and experiences to residents and visitors in addition to the day-to-day retail, leisure and service offer.

Identifying character areas and their role in the city

Defining identity and purpose to the various parts of the central area to enhance their character and roles



Creating people friendly streets:

Recommendations

To improve the experience of walking and cycling within, to and from the central area

Deliver attractive and safe streets for pedestrians and cyclists that are enhanced with public art, attractive architecture and landscaping.

To define a 'street hierarchy' designed to reduce the dominance of the private car within the city centre

Deliver a strategy to redefine Salisbury's central area road network to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists as well as the needs of vulnerable road users. The street hierarchy is to be anchored on important destinations within the central area, such as Market Place.

To utilising Park and Ride facilities and work closely with public transport providers to improve services.

Work with public transport providers to improve public transport services to encourage modal shift and support the wider strategy of car parking consolidation, supporting the use of greener transportation.

To consolidate car parking in the city centre

Carry out a full assessment to confirm the demand and usage of all city centre car parks for visitor and residential parking. Based on an expected oversupply, consider options for mixed use redevelopment of Salt Lane / Brown Street car parks.

Improving open space and the environment:

Recommendations

To deliver the River Park project

Deliver a connected green infrastructure corridor through the city centre along the River Avon and deliver flood risk mitigation infrastructure to address flood risk in the central area and the wider city, as well as environmental improvements. The River Park will connect the Fisherton Recreation Ground north of the city towards Queen Elizabeth Gardens in the south.

To celebrate the city's relationship with the rivers and meadows

Enhance the interaction and experience of the rivers and the meadows throughout Salisbury by improving footpaths and cycleways and ensuring that any new development near the rivers seek to face and celebrates the river frontage.



Creating vibrancy:

Recommendations

To accommodate changes in retail and leisure floorspace requirements to encourage city centre resilience.

To consider how planning policy can help support a flexible approach to enabling suitable alternative uses to be supported to ensure that vacant premises do not sit empty, thus helping to maintain/increase and support the local economy.

To encourage use of vacant upper floors and under-utilised buildings in the city centre

Implementation of a programme of engagement with owners and landlords to identify, encourage and support opportunities for delivering commercial and residential units (particularly for young people) within vacant/under-utilised upper floors of city centre premises.

To encourage pop-up/meanwhile uses and events/experiences for those visiting the city centre

To produce and implement a strategy to encourage events and temporary uses which boost visits to the city centre, to add vibrancy and increase footfall.

To improve and protect the evening and night-time economy

Develop a vision and strategy to protect and improve the vitality and viability of Salisbury's evening and night-time economy. This should be in collaboration with a partnership of planning and regulatory authorities, operators, entrepreneurs, landowners, residents and customers.

Bringing out Salisbury's qualities:

Recommendations

To support appropriate reuse of heritage buildings, rear courtyards and upper floors

Undertake feasibility study to fully understand opportunities and challenges associated with bringing disused/underutilised heritage buildings back into use. This may include development of design guides or development briefs to fully understand and frontload constraints. Opportunities should be considered for site acquisition or partnering with developers to assist development that contributes to the Council's strategic objectives.

To enhance the quality of the public realm

Work with partners to prepare an updated Public Realm Strategy and set of design codes for Salisbury city centre. Production of a programme for implementation aligned to major development projects such as the redevelopment of the Maltings and Central Car Park and the Cultural Quarter, and improvements around the railway station and Fisherton Street.

To encourage preservation and restoration of historic shop fronts

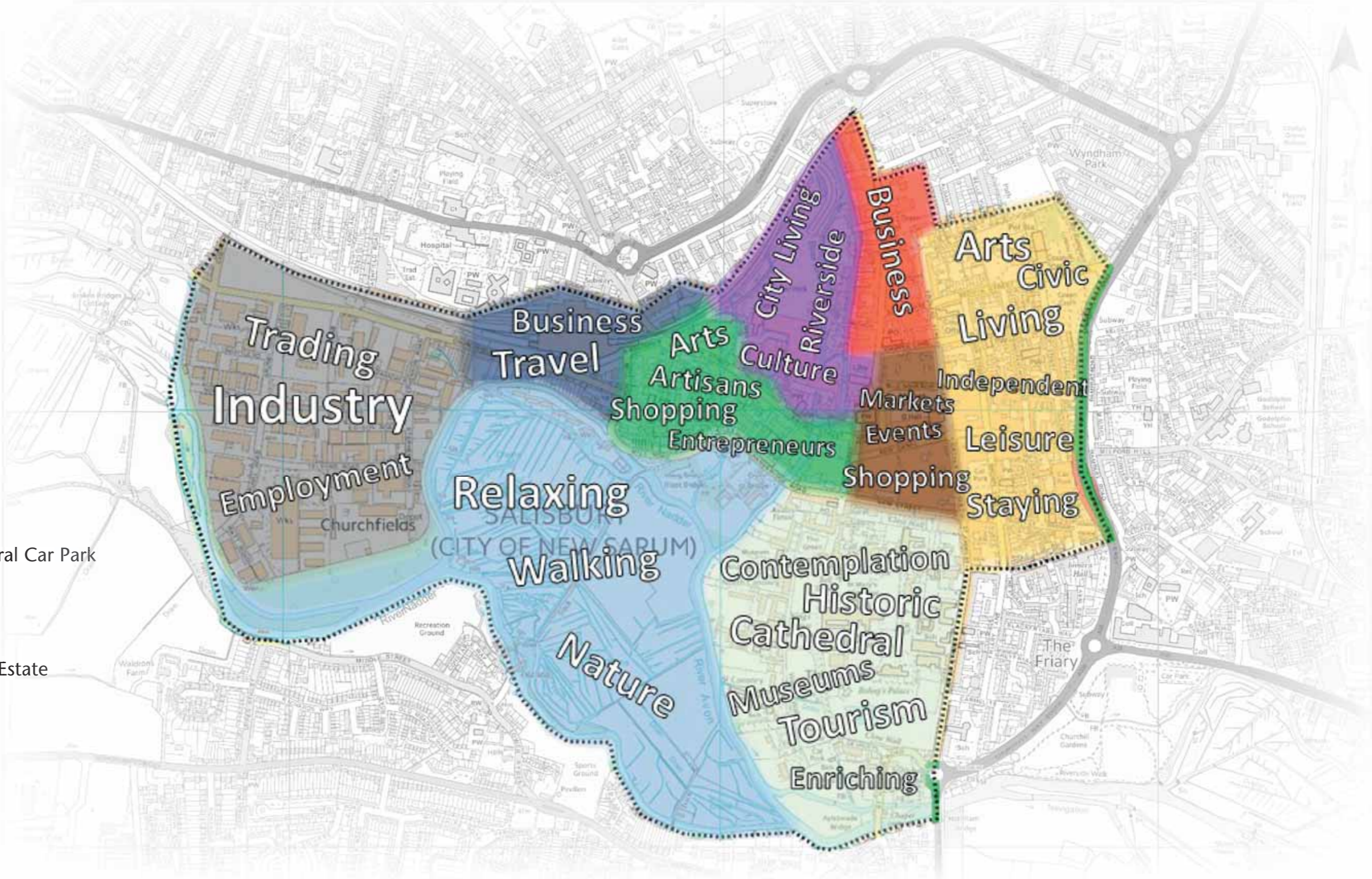
Carry out a review of the effectiveness of existing Supplementary Planning Guidance on shop fronts to ensure it is compliant with up to date national planning policy and guidance.

To improve wayfinding in the city centre

Prepare and deliver coordinated wayfinding strategy supplemented with new technology and apps to improve ease of movement, exploration, understanding and enjoyment for residents and visitors.



Identifying character areas and their role in the city



Chequers

Key objective

To enhance the mixed-use character of the Chequers with a focus on urban living, employment, retail, leisure and culture.

Recommendations

- Consider the future redevelopment of Salt Lane car park and/or Brown Street car park for a mix of uses.
- Strengthen pedestrian routes between the city centre/Culver Street car park and between the city centre/Salisbury Arts Centre.
- Create pedestrian-prioritised streets or spaces to allow active uses to spill out and create vibrancy in the area.
- Work with Winchester Street traders to support activity.
- Enhance the public realm.



Fisherton Street

Key objective

To nurture the city's creative industries, artists, small businesses and entrepreneurs.

Recommendations

- Improve the quality of the public realm along Fisherton Street.
- Improve connectivity between Fisherton Street and adjacent character areas, e.g. The Maltings, Cultural Quarter and railway station.
- Seek funding to upgrade / improve the quality of historic buildings and shopfronts.
- Protect and maintain the nature of existing retail and commercial uses within the characteristic fine-grained, smaller floorplates.



Centre

Key objective

To enhance the mixed-use character of the Chequers with a focus on urban living, employment, retail, leisure and culture.

Recommendations

- Continue to support national comparison retailing within the centre area.
- Explore opportunities for development at High Street to improve/diversify the retail offer, and create linkages to the river as well as opportunities for living and leisure.
- Strengthen role of the Market Place, through a variety of events.
- Encourage use of upper floors.
- Explore options to enable the upgrade and improvement to historic buildings and shopfronts that have fallen into disrepair.
- Enhance the public realm.



The Maltings, Cultural Quarter and Central Car Park

Key objective

To enhance the cultural offer and evening economy, alongside the provision of new urban living.

Recommendations

- Deliver regeneration in accordance with the Maltings and Central Car Park masterplan.
- Improve city centre vibrancy and vitality during the day and evening by establishing a re-imagined and more attractive Cultural Quarter.
- Strengthen connectivity between the Cultural Quarter and Fisherton Street/The Maltings.
- Deliver the central element of the River Park to include protection and restoration of the River Avon SAC chalk river and its flora and fauna.



The Meadows

Key objective

To improve the city's access and connectivity to the Meadows and protect its environmental qualities and historical significance.

Recommendations

Improve access between Salisbury central area and the water meadows by creating better walking routes and opportunities for engagement with the river.

Raise awareness and promote the positive qualities of the Meadows and improve public understanding of this heritage asset.

Enhance the water meadows as a visitor attraction, building on the existing work of Harnham Water Meadows Trust, enable public access to the river in appropriate locations.



Churchfields

Key objective

To enhance the Churchfields Industrial Estate area and support a diversification of employment generating uses.

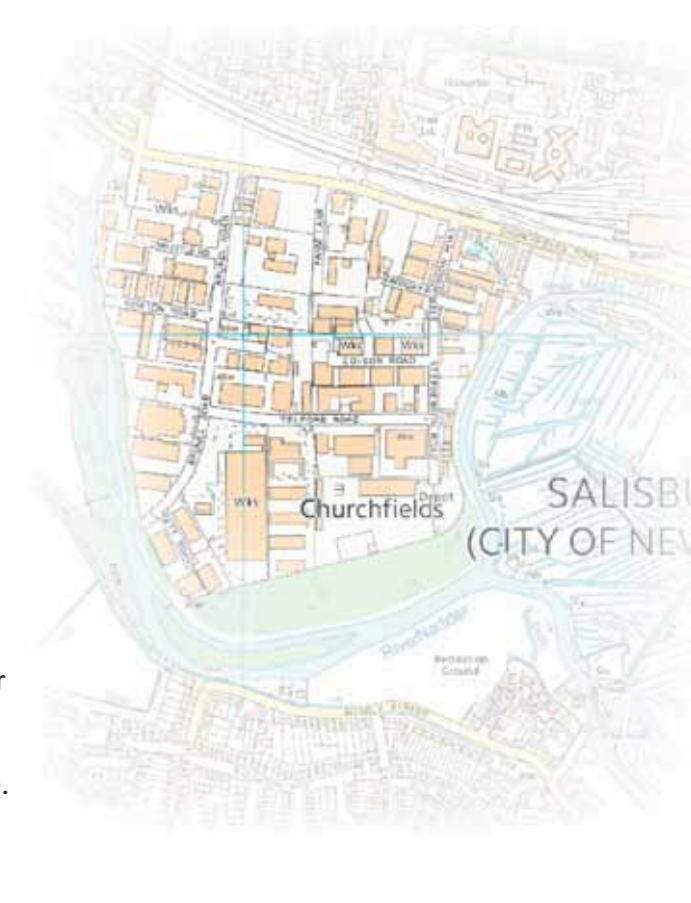
Recommendations

Produce a strategy for the suitable relocation of high traffic generating uses.

Improve the quality of place to attract start-ups and a greater variety of type of employment.

Support higher density employment uses, where appropriate.

Promote relocation of Wiltshire Council's depot and investigate feasibility of residential use for this site.



Station

Key objective

To enhance the city's station forecourt area and create a new hub around the northern station area focused on business and residential uses and an improved transport hub.

Recommendations

Deliver public realm improvements to the station forecourt area, including a much-improved Stonehenge bus stop facility, delivering people friendly streets, and reconfiguration of parking and station-related infrastructure.

Develop a longer-term masterplanned proposal for the redevelopment of the wider station area, to potentially include a business hub (north of station), managed workspace, hotel/ conferencing facilities, retail, and residential uses.



Cathedral Close

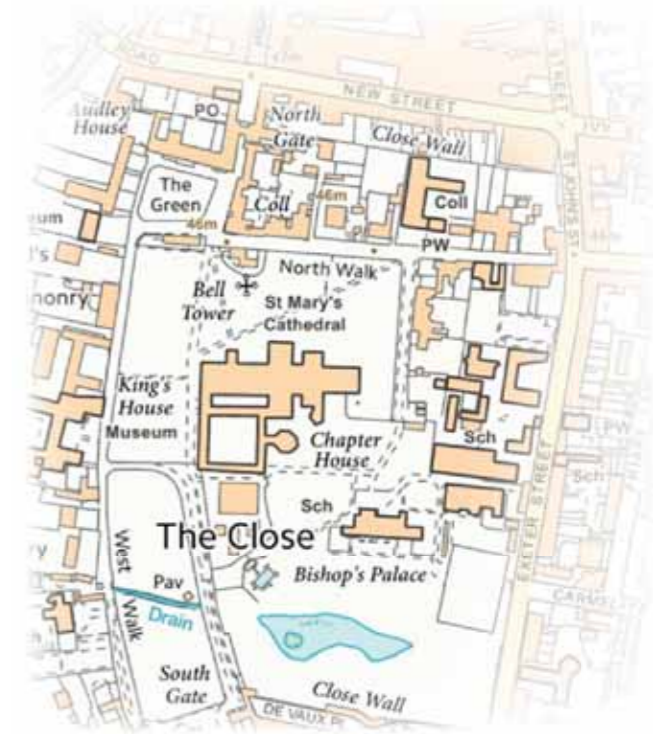
Key objective

To celebrate the history and significance of the Cathedral Close by protecting it as a place for worship and contemplation, as a visitor attraction for Salisbury and providing a space for events, the arts, and other enlivening activities.

Recommendations

Improve connections and pedestrian linkages to the centre, support city-wide events and activities that bring together the city and the Cathedral.

Develop access to the Cathedral's history, heritage and treasures, exploring this alongside the history of the city.



Castle Street

Key objective

To continue its role in supporting secondary town centre, residential and healthcare uses.

Recommendations

- Promote city-centre urban living, incorporating a mix of housing types and tenures.
- Improve way-finding and linkages to the River Park and the Maltings and Central Car Park redevelopment site.
- Support continued healthcare provision.

