

{Spaces} that inspire

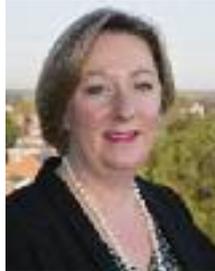
Invest in Rural West Cheshire

Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Introduction & Welcome | 4 |
| Rural Growth Board Vision | 8 |
| Enabling Growth | 8 |
| Space for you | 10 |
| Space to do business | 12 |
| Spotlight on sectors | 14 |
| Space to grow | 16 |
| Space to thrive | 18 |
| Space to live well | 20 |
| Space to enjoy life | 22 |
| Come and join us | 24 |
| Rural Growth in Cheshire West and Chester | 26 |
| Talk to us | 28 |

This document has been produced by Cheshire West and Chester Council and the Rural Growth Board to promote the economic growth potential of rural west Cheshire.

Introduction & Welcome



“When I walk along the Sandstone Ridge and look down on to unspoilt countryside of the Cheshire Plain and having grown up in rural West Cheshire, its hard to envisage that the area is actually home to so many businesses and people and comprises such a variety of bustling towns and villages. I am proud to lead a council that has created four private sector led boards, three of whom focus on our key conurbations but one of which is specifically dedicated to promoting growth in our rural area. Appointed to the board are experts and passionate business leaders who really understand what their specific area needs to grow.

Voted the best place in England to run a rural business (Country Land and Business Association (CLA) league table 2015), Cheshire is clearly the place to locate your business. Broadband and mobile coverage available, planning policies and business support were all ranked highly.

In the wider sub regional context Cheshire & Warrington are the top performing Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) in the North based on GVA per head, indicating that it is one of the most efficient in the country at generating economic prosperity based upon the population it has. The region is amongst the most highly educated in the North, offering an exceptional skilled work force.

We have a strong cultural offer and we are a borough of diversity. Offering a high quality lifestyle. In this prospectus we hear from successful businesses that have already chosen the Cheshire countryside as their home, and outline the opportunities for you as potential investors”.

Samantha Dixon

Cllr Samantha Dixon

Leader, Cheshire West and Chester Council

Cheshire voted best place in England to run a rural business

Country Land and Business Association (CLA) league table 2015



“The Rural Growth Board, set up in 2012 is aiming to actively promote our quality of place in Cheshire. We have worked hard to understand the complex economy in the rural area and market towns across West Cheshire and have a strategy in place which will continue to support and develop a sustainable and thriving economy.

Cheshire’s dairy farming heritage now provides the basis of an advanced Agri-Tech cluster, with breeding companies such as Cogent and Aviagen supplying markets around the world. Resident businesses supporting equestrian sport welcome their international customers at Manchester Airport and with superfast broadband connectivity reaching the vast majority (95%) of our borough; ICT companies flourish alongside working farms.

We are an increasingly mobile and connected society in which the world and our experience of it becomes more virtual than real. Looking around the communities, businesses and the landscape of West Cheshire it does not take long to realise that it has never stayed still. What we have received is one thing; what we shall pass on is another. Those communities, business and

landscape within west Cheshire are ever changing and we have a collective responsibility to recognise and cherish what we have. Rural Cheshire is full of thriving businesses and Cheshire West and Chester Council will continue to encourage business growth and new start-ups.

We work closely with our Cheshire landed estates who are forward thinking and dynamic in their approach to residential and commercial development. Our market towns provide services for those who live and work here and their continued vibrancy is reliant on steady and sustainable growth.

The Rural Growth Board acts as an ‘enabler’ to influence the way that it invests and supports the rural area, and the businesses, residents and places within it. We hope this prospectus show cases the inspiring spaces that are special about West Cheshire and everything we can offer so that we can ensure your business grows and flourishes”.

David Felix

Reverend Canon David Felix
Chair, Rural Growth Board

Rural Cheshire is full of thriving businesses and Cheshire West and Chester Council will continue to encourage business growth and new start-ups



Rural Growth Board Vision

“The Rural Area and vibrant Market Towns are symbolic of Cheshire and are a distinctive mosaic of wonderful countryside. It is a place that accommodates a significant resident population and a substantial part of the Cheshire economy in agri-tech, food and drink sectors, visitor economy and also a thriving small business community. It is a distinctive destination in its own right where the quality of the environment and built heritage is conserved and managed as part of a balanced approach to maximising its unique potential and fundamental role in the very fabric West Cheshire”.

Enabling Growth

The Rural Growth Team understands the needs of businesses looking to invest and relocate. We can work with you to shape bespoke packages of support that add real value to any business, supporting you from the initial vision through to practical delivery. Our team consists of experts in business support, skills, recruitment, regeneration and funding.

Many businesses in rural west Cheshire choose to establish their HQs here, Uren Foods HQ, 30 local employees and 250 globally, Meadow Foods HQ, 110 local employees, Barlows electrical HQ employing a workforce of 300, and RSK consultancy Head Office with 1125 employees worldwide. They all choose to locate here because of our highly skilled workforce, excellent connectivity and quality of life. Rural Cheshire surrounds Chester which is part of UK Trade & Investment’s North West Financial Centre of Excellence and we have an enviable reputation in professional services. West Cheshire College deliver a traditional apprenticeship programme with the University of Chester rolling out a programme of degree level apprenticeships. Both the University and the College of Law have world class educational facilities for business, science and technology, and have opportunities for business to co-locate. We also benefit from other nearby premier educational institutions, Liverpool University providing a variety of training ranging from veterinary through to business, and Reaseheath College covering engineering, farming, and horticulture through to equine.

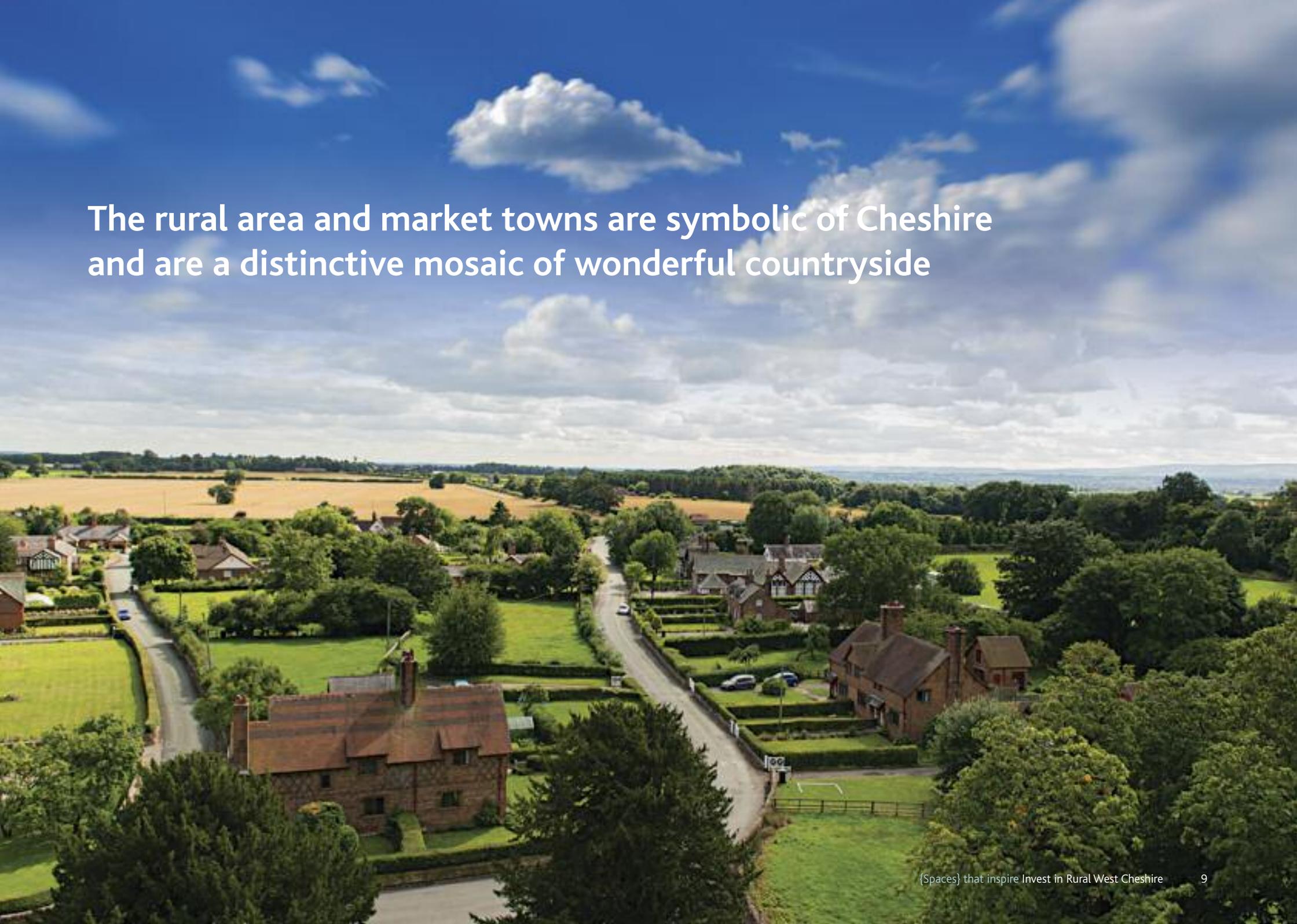
Our team of experts can support you by providing:

- Single point of contact for planning, regulation and economic development
- Tailored package of support from initial enquiry through to final investment decision
- The latest information about site and office availability
- Support with industry and market research to help you understand why Rural Cheshire is the right location for your business
- Site visits and familiarisation with the locality
- Advice on availability of grants and incentives in the wider borough
- Recruitment support including skills identification, interviewing and training
- Connections into established business networks and professional organisations.

Email: ruralgrowth@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

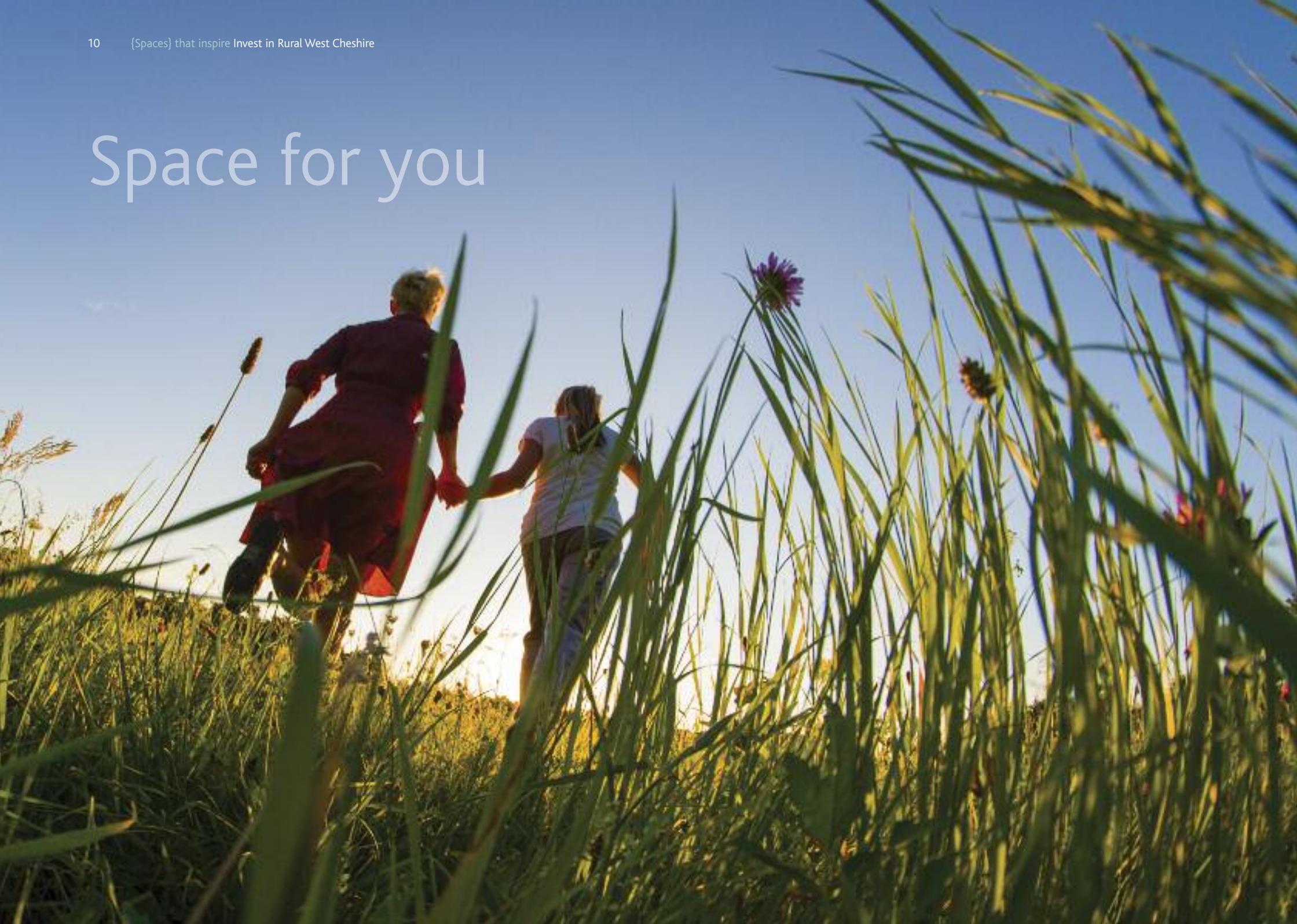
Telephone: **01244973165**

Website: <http://rural.westcheshiregrowth.co.uk>



The rural area and market towns are symbolic of Cheshire and are a distinctive mosaic of wonderful countryside

Space for you



31 million+ visitors to Cheshire West and Chester and 46 million to the wider county

The map shows the geographical context of Cheshire West and Chester. It includes labels for MANCHESTER, LIVERPOOL, WIRRAL, RURAL WEST CHESHIRE, CHESTER, CHESHIRE EAST, and NORTH WALES. A small inset map of the United Kingdom highlights the location of Cheshire West and Chester in the northwest of England.

206,400 working age residents in Cheshire West area

Over 2 million full time, part time and self employed people within the 1 hour drive catchment area of Chester City

Aspiration to grow visitor spend to exceed £3 billion by 2020, resulting in increasing employment in the visitor economy

Space to do business



2 international airports
within 35 minute drive



92% have superfast broadband

92% of the borough able to connect to superfast broadband at 24 mbps⁺

Successful Connecting Cheshire partnership striving to deliver 100% coverage of superfast broadband by 2020

Rural not spots prioritised for roll out over the next 4 years¹



11 large business parks

5 of which have development potential

Space to invest
Space for opportunity



Planning Permissions for **over 13,900 new homes** across Cheshire West Borough



37% above NVQ 4

37% of local residents are educated to NVQ Level 4 or above



2 hour train journey to London



2m⁺ within 1 hour drive

Over 2 million full time, part time and self employed people within the 1 hour drive catchment area of Chester City



31,050,00 visitors

to Cheshire West per year and rising

¹ Subject to funding approval



30 minutes to
Liverpool City Centre



30 minutes to
Manchester



Liverpool
Airport



Manchester
Airport

Ellesmere Port

Neston

Frodsham

Northwich

Chester

Winsford

Tarporley

1 hour to Holyhead
and North Wales

30 minutes
to Crewe

KEY

-  Urban settlements
-  Market towns
-  A roads
-  Motorways
-  Rail networks
-  Cheshire West and Chester rural area

Malpas

Never more than 10 minutes
from spaces that inspire

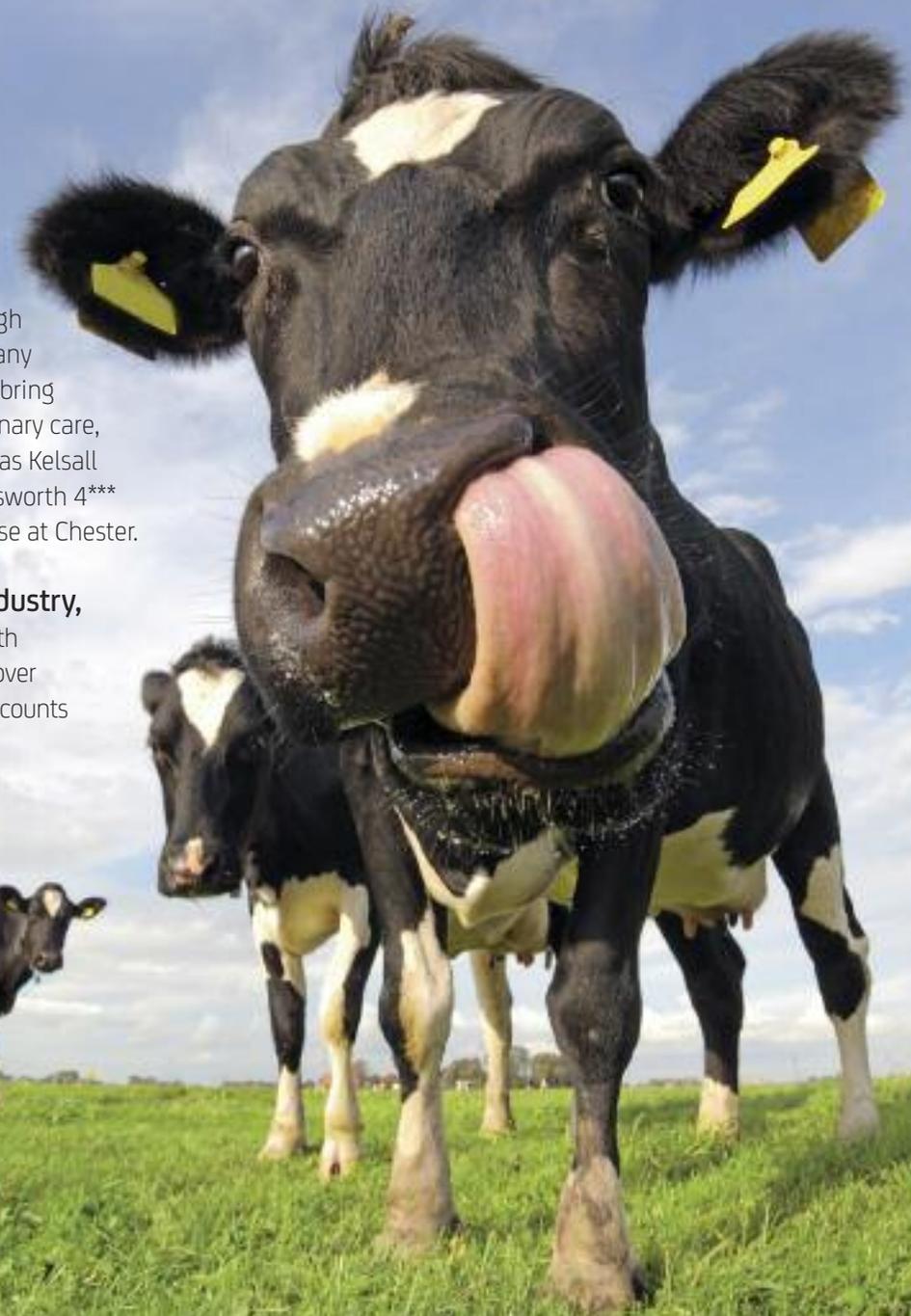
Spotlight on sectors

Agri-tech (Advanced Technology in the Agricultural sector) is growing rapidly in the region with potential for specialisation and investment. A strong multi-LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) is emerging that will focus on the development of the agri-tech sector. This provides a grounding for future business interest, productivity and growth in the Cheshire area.

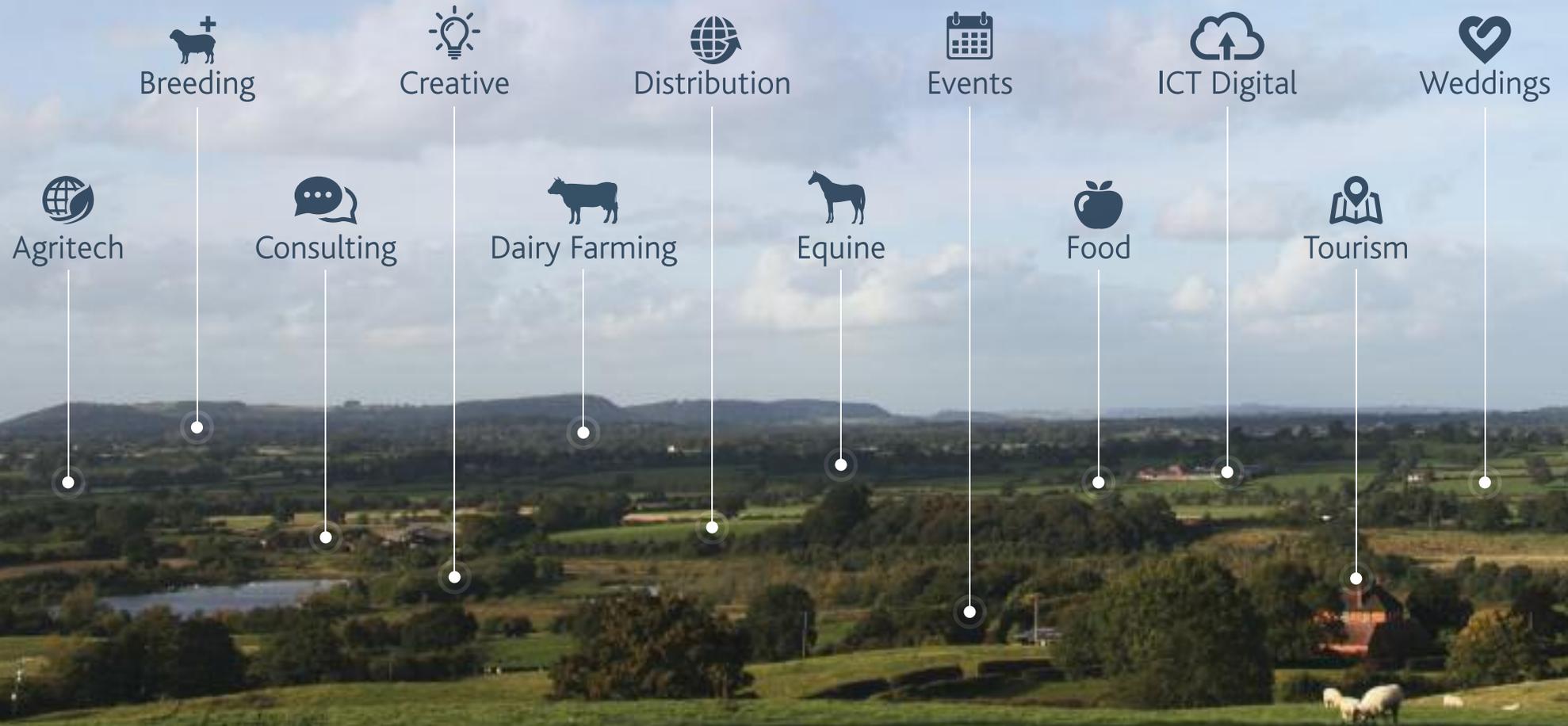
Consultancy, professional services and ICT are all dominant sectors in our rural area. This sector has great potential within the rural area, there are growth opportunities for the future here.

The equestrian sector in Cheshire is flourishing, boasting a number of high profile venues and personalities across many of the disciplines; Cheshire is the place to bring your business. We have exceptional veterinary care, high profile equestrian sport venues such as Kelsall Hill, international events such as the Bolesworth 4*** International and Britain's oldest racecourse at Chester.

Not forgetting our famous Dairy Industry, Cheshire now has some 500 dairy farms with approx. 160,000 dairy cows. They produce over 1 billion litres of milk each year. Cheshire accounts for about 10% of the UK dairy industry.¹

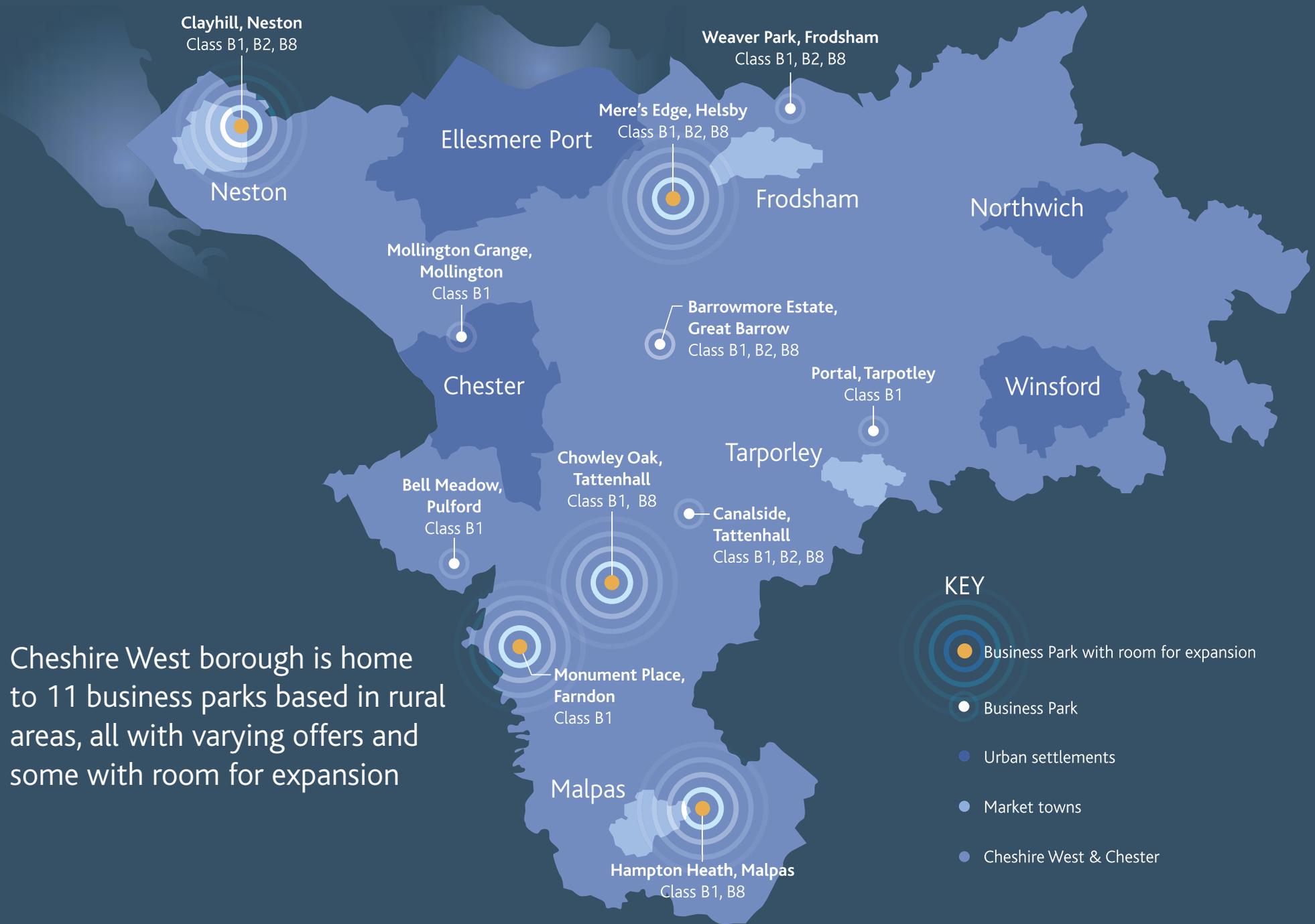


34% of businesses in Cheshire West and Chester are located in the rural area



Space to grow





Cheshire West borough is home to 11 business parks based in rural areas, all with varying offers and some with room for expansion

Space to thrive

EXPOSE' ON ESTATES – in Cheshire West we have a number of thriving landed estates. Base yourself here next to other thriving businesses, where there is a hot bed of activity. Your business may benefit from being next to others, all who are thriving in the rural area surrounded by inspiring landscapes.

Grosvenor – The Eaton Estate includes the thriving villages of Aldford, Eccleston and Saughton. It contains some 450 homes, farms and businesses, six schools and over 10,000 acres of high quality agricultural land to the South of Chester. At its heart sits Eaton Hall, the home of the Grosvenor family. A number of successful businesses have chosen to operate from commercial properties on the Eaton Estate because of its excellent environment, accessibility and the lifestyle that it offers its staff. We offer a range of buildings from sustainable office developments to small workshops.

Bolesworth – Home to the Barbour family for 160 years, Bolesworth is a dynamic modern Estate and is a place to live, work and most of all, enjoy. Located just eight miles south of Chester, the Estate extends to just over 6,500 acres and is home to over 130 businesses who between them employ over 1,000 people. Our 12 dairy farms produce over 30 million litres of milk annually.

Barnston – Seven miles south of Chester, the Barnston Estate comprises almost 1,800 acres of highly diversified interests. Since 1980 the Estate has made a determined effort to actively move away from its core agricultural base, which then provided 90% of its income. Today, in order to reflect the demands of the modern world, the Estate increasingly focuses on rural regeneration, land development, building bespoke commercial properties and generating renewable energy. Approx. 59,000 sq.ft of office and commercial space is let across a variety of sectors, the Estate indirectly provides employment for up to 100 people. The office and commercial space is spread across our three main sites being Hapsford, Monument Place and Top Farm.

Cholmondeley – Cholmondeley Estates extend to 7,600 acres in South Cheshire and occupies five parishes. Within the property portfolio are 25 farms, predominately dairy units, over 100 residential properties, 40 commercial premises including offices, workshops, post office, public house and racing stables, commercial forestry, both indoor and outdoor education facilities, local services and clubs from Parish Rooms, to Cricket and Tennis Clubs, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, RAMSAR Site, the Castle and Gardens, both cultural and charitable activities and through visits to them and other events, an annual public footfall of over 120,000.

Cheshire West is also home to the **Peckforton** and **Tatton** Estates.



A woman with dark hair, wearing a blue quilted vest over a plaid shirt and jeans, stands in a dairy barn with her arms crossed. She is smiling at the camera. In the background, several black and white cows are visible behind a blue metal railing. The barn has a high ceiling with large windows.

Cheshire accounts for about
10% of the UK dairy industry

Space to live well

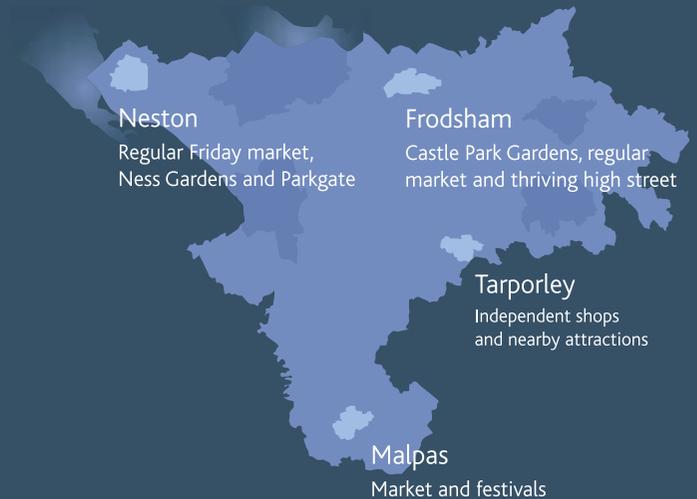
Quality new homes are needed across all our rural areas to ensure that our market towns and villages have the right mix of people to sustain shops, schools, doctors and services. There is great potential for housing developers to provide quality affordable family homes and homes suitable for older persons across the whole borough.

Our rural housing offer is diverse across the borough. Small market towns, rural villages and key and local service centres provide something for everyone. We want to retain the qualities that make Cheshire West's rural housing markets

"markets of choice", whilst ensuring that all current and future residents have the choice to live locally.

Cheshire West boasts four market towns whose total population is 21,900 all of which provide key services for residents, varying high street offers, rural settings and locational benefits.

Cheshire West supports good and outstanding schools, colleges and universities. The quality of the schooling up to GCSE level shows that the proportion of students achieving 5+ GCSEs in the sub region far exceeds the England average.





Our diverse environment includes coastline, woodlands, plains, hills and represents a great place to live, work, play and invest

Space to enjoy life

Situated in the middle of the county, **Delamere Forest** thrives with c750,000 visitors annually. Walk, cycle, horse ride, segway or high rope through 950 hectares of mixed deciduous and evergreen forest situated 12 miles from Chester. the woodlands themselves generate £2m to local economy.

The Sandstone Trail, a 55km/34 mile long route which cuts through Delamere forest connecting Frodsham to Whitchurch boasting dramatic views, hillforts, ponds, caves and a wealth of wildlife, flora and fauna.

The Ice Cream Farm is the world's largest family-friendly ice cream shop and adventure park. It is a multi activity free family attraction that has grown from a dairy farm producing ice cream from an onsite shop into a regional tourist venue that now has over 800,000 visitors a year.

Cheshire's very own motor racing track, **Oulton Park** is nestled in the small village of Little Budworth, only 13 miles from Chester. Built into the natural contours of the Cheshire countryside, the combination of stunning scenery and spectacular racing make it one of the most picturesque and best-loved circuits for spectators and competitors alike.

Crowds of up to 35,000 regularly visit the circuit for the annual round of the British Touring Car Championship.

The three day Pageant of Power event on the **Cholmondeley Estate** includes **Motorshow Live!** - a supercar celebration. Record crowds of over 40,000 visited the event in 2016.

West Cheshire also boasts a number of high profile events, including **Car Fest** (Children in Need festival), **Ridgefest**, based near Malpas, featuring a wide range of music and art performances and also the **Bolesworth International 4***** show jumping event. There is something for everyone.



17.5 million residents within
two hours' drive of Chester



Come and join us

'Being surrounded by trees, grass, duck ponds and fresh air is not something you can get in a city and with **broadband connections** there is no need to have an urban HQ. Since we arrived here the bus service has improved massively which means we attract staff from Wrexham as well as Chester, both of which are easily commutable'

Adam Rigler, CardOneBanking – an FCA authorised Payments Institution, was founded in 2007 by a group of local people from Chester

'Living and working in a rural area has transformed our business. We have invested in converting our old milking parlour into a **daycare nursery** and this has opened a new door for our family and provides a crucial service and opportunities for working parents. With the help and support from the Rural Growth Team we have also been able to secure funding towards this project'

Vicky Hollins, Owner and Manager of Bradley Barns Nursery – a new children's day care nursery near Malpas

'Running a **busy responsive design and manufacturing** business we sometimes need to be in the hustle and bustle of Manchester, Liverpool and London - but we specifically chose Frodsham as the home of our production facility to allow us to retreat. It gives space, flexibility & most importantly privacy whilst maintaining **great transport links**'

Jon Flowerdew, Partner, WhiteCircle Ltd – upcycling shipping containers for innovative uses in Frodsham

'This area of Cheshire has historic industrial connections which makes it easy for us to recruit from an established talent pool and also has centres of excellence for innovation support such as Thornton Science Park where the University of Chester Engineering Faculty is based. We also have a great relationship with the excellent local schools **providing us with apprentices** for the next generation of employees'

Dan Berrisford, Heat Trace – Helsby



Living and working in the rural area
has transformed our business



Rural Growth in Cheshire West and Chester

The Rural Growth Team along with key partners co-ordinate projects that will improve growth of the economy in Rural West Cheshire. These projects are part of the revised and updated Rural Growth Strategy 2016-2019 which guides the future economic growth of the area. The main aims of the strategy are:

- **Connectivity** – re-enforcing the role of rural areas and towns as sustainable locations and recognising them as complementary to neighbouring urban centres. Improved connectivity to these areas raises their profile for potential new businesses and workers.
- **Skills and training** – addressing the skills needs and gaps by ensuring businesses in the rural area have the necessary key sector skill requirements.
- **Destination branding** – an enterprise brand which establishes the rural area as a place for start-ups, innovation and a strong visitor economy and continuing to enforce a mind-set that places the Rural Area and Market Towns as home to a thriving business community. Separate but complementary to this, a visitor economy brand which is significantly stronger and more direct.
- **Business growth** – enabling large, small and micro businesses to thrive, promoting existing or new sector investment propositions.
- **Rural housing** – meeting the assessed needs of those who live in the rural area already and attracting new people to increase the working age population and facilitate access for younger families.

The Rural Growth Board acts as an ‘enabler’ to influence the way that the Council invests in and supports the rural area, and the businesses, residents and places within it.



Images courtesy of: Eaton Estate, Bolesworth Events and Cheshire Farm Icecream.

¹**Ref:** <https://dairy.ahdb.org.uk/market-information/farming-data/#.WEcrjnTfWhA>

Talk to us about your ideas and future opportunities

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Phone: 01244 973165 Email: ruralgrowth@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk Visit: <http://rural.westcheshiregrowth.co.uk>