

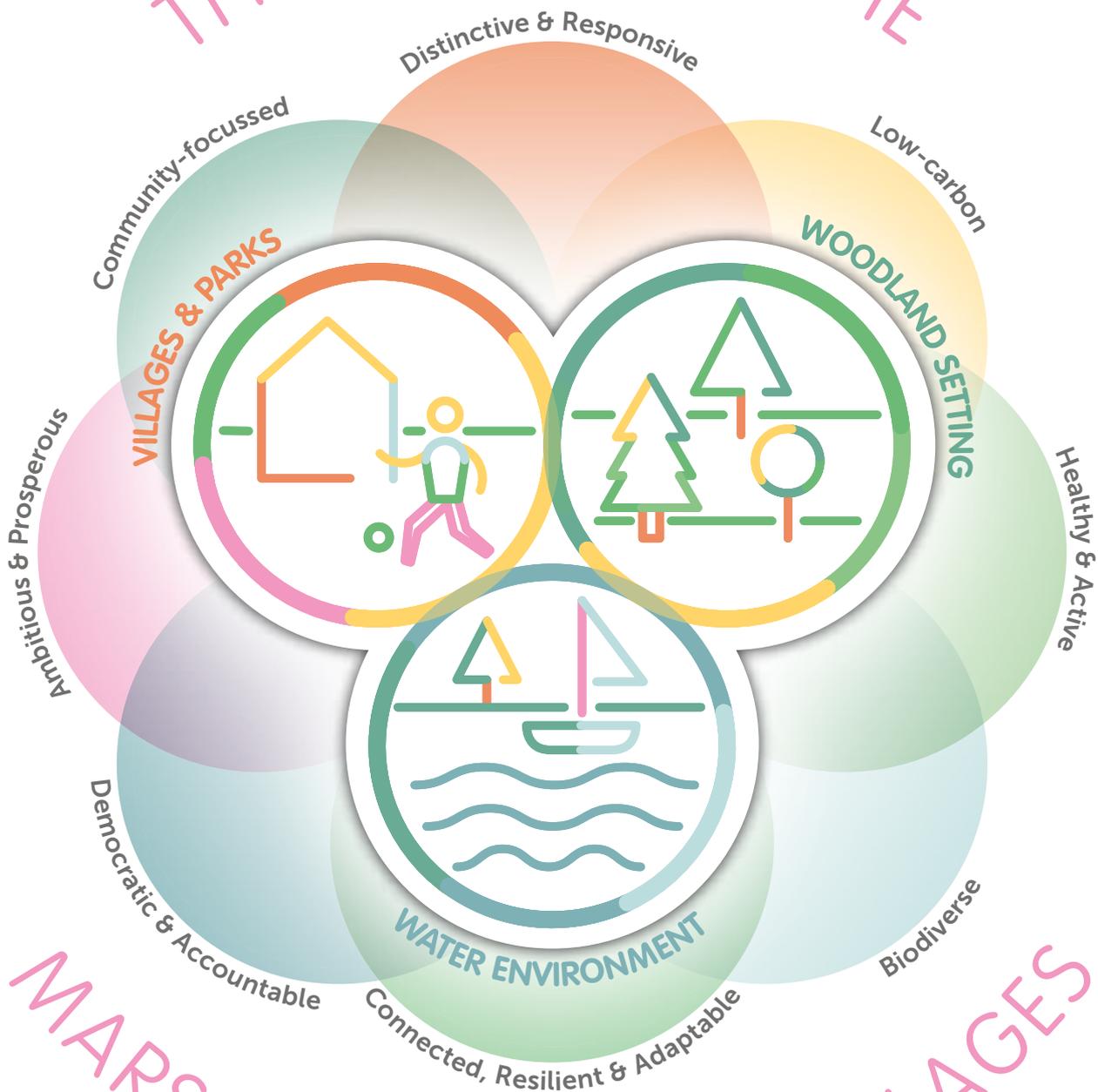
## 3.0 THE CORE COMPONENTS AND KEY PRINCIPLES FORMING THE VISION FOR THE MARSTON VALE NEW VILLAGES

The Marston Vale New Villages will become a truly special place. It will support communities to achieve their aspirations and to live fulfilling, healthy, sustainable and prosperous lives at the centre of an extraordinary, accessible landscape which will be a focal point within the Forest of Marston Vale.

The MVNV will foster and celebrate sustainability and innovation. The design will create a built and natural environment which makes it easy for its communities to make the transition to low carbon lifestyles. Its buildings will make the best use of energy, water and other natural resources. Its infrastructure will secure reductions in carbon emissions and will be adaptable to new technologies as part of minimising environmental impacts of development and responding to the impacts of climate change.

The overall vision for the MVNV is formed by three Core Components, supported by eight further Key Principles.

# THE VISION FOR THE



# MARSTON VALE NEW VILLAGES

## CORE COMPONENTS

The placemaking concept for the Marston Vale New Villages has three Core Components: villages and parks, woodland setting and water environment. These are the fundamental, defining elements of the Marston Vale New Villages which make it aspirational, unique and locally-distinctive:



### VILLAGES & PARKS

The historic settlement pattern of the Marston Vale is defined by its dispersed, diverse villages set in an arable landscape. The MVNV will reflect and respect the existing character of the Marston Vale by the creation of a series of new, linked villages. Each village will respond to its landscape context focussing on the field and hedgerow patterns, the lakes and watercourses, the topography of Ends and Farmsteads. Placemaking that respects the character of the Marston Vale will be at the heart of all design decisions.

To achieve this, it is critical that the scale of the new villages are proportionate to the context of existing settlements and that the identity, character and setting of new and existing villages is protected through the creation of a rich, multifunctional and varied landscape framework.

Whilst each village will be physically separate, the MVNV will be functionally inclusive. The design, delivery and governance of each village will facilitate the formation of positive, respectful and constructive relationships between communities both existing and new. The new facilities, services and opportunities of the MVNV will be accessible and available for all to benefit from.

Innovation and design quality will be integral to successful placemaking: each village will be locally distinctive, defined by its immediate context, whilst also contributing to the already diverse architectural vernacular and identity of the Marston Vale. A range of building types, styles, densities and building heights will be provided, all of which will define a village character, form and scale.

The design of streets, the landscapes, surface water features and the public realm will contribute to the village identity sought and will be designed to draw countryside character into and through the villages.

Equally as important to the delivery of this Core Component is the creation of an accessible and multifunctional blue and green infrastructure framework.

The MVNV parks will be managed and maintained to enhance the health and wellbeing of the communities of the Marston Vale and their governance will offer the opportunity for community ownership and management.





## WOODLAND SETTING

Creating an exemplar sustainable development at the heart of a nationally designated Community Forest, the Forest of Marston Vale is a unique and distinguishing context for the design and delivery of the MVNV.

Achieving the aims and objectives of the Forest of Marston Vale *Forest Plan* is a key driver influencing the second Core Component of the MVNV. As a fundamental principle, the development will meet policy requirements for providing tree canopy cover. However, the commitment to extensive tree planting allows a deeper, more meaningful consideration of how this can be designed to enrich the lives, education, health and wellbeing of the communities of the Marston Vale and can enable the development to meet high environmental standards.

A varied wooded setting will permeate through the whole development – its villages, parks, landscapes and movement infrastructure – as a consistent unifying aspect of its character. It is a context which will inform placemaking and the design of the MVNV at each stage of the planning process and will be a key consideration at a variety of scales – from the spatial disposition of new woodland planting, the strategic design of the landscape framework, open spaces and parks to the detailed design of the public realm, garden spaces, allotments and orchard, materials, public art, signage and place naming strategies.





## WATER ENVIRONMENT

Brogborough Lake, Lidlington Pit, Stewartby Lake and the Elstow Brook are iconic and distinguishing features of the existing landscape of the Marston Vale. Such significantly sized and grouped waterbodies are unusual in this region and are a legacy of the MVNV's brickmaking history. The creation of the MVNV presents an exciting opportunity to embrace these features, to enhance accessibility where appropriate in order to capture their value as a leisure, recreational, environmental and ecological resource.

The MVNV will also deliver a substantial part of the B&MK Waterway Park which will be a new canal for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century linking the Grand Union Canal in Milton Keynes to the River Great Ouse in Bedford. In this context, the water environment is a Core Component of the design and character of the MVNV.

The water environment will be a principal feature in the design of the green infrastructure framework adding richness to the landscape and supporting leisure, recreation, movement, and biodiversity. Water within the MVNV will be a distinct part of its identity supporting a range of activities and also contributing to a sustainable leisure and tourism offer.

Introducing water as a key feature within the design and layout of the new villages as part of the sustainable drainage system will make a meaningful contribution to the creation of a distinct village character and sense of place within the public realm.

The treatment of water – including surface water drainage and water management – will also be considered holistically, adopting the principle that water is a valued resource and must be used effectively and sustainably.



## THE KEY PRINCIPLES

The Core Components of the Vision for the MVNV are supported by eight Key Principles.



**1. Community-focused:** Each village will have its own sense of identity and will comprise a mix of uses, with schools, community and civic facilities at its centre. Together comprising a series of linked new villages which will provide up to 5,000 new homes, a range of accommodation to provide a socially mixed and diverse community will be provided for people at all life stages and differently abled.



**2. Distinctive and Responsive:** The villages and the landscape framework will have a distinct design character which will be responsive to local context, character, setting and other key design influences including the existing heritage assets.



**3. Low Carbon:** Supporting the move to a low carbon society is a key priority for MVNV. From the macro to the micro scale, innovative approaches and mitigation measures will be adopted to ensure environmental effects of new development are minimised and more sustainable patterns of living can be achieved. Making best use of energy, water and other natural resources through the construction and occupation of new development will be a priority, and designs will be capable of adapting to the impacts of climate change.



**4. Ambitious and Prosperous:** New jobs and opportunities will be created at MVNV, with dedicated employment land provided to support the continued development of the Marston Vale's existing high skill, research and technology led economy. New employment will also be provided within its communities, not only in local services and facilities but also provision of infrastructure and space to support new working practices including homeworking and foster the innovation, creativity and entrepreneurial spirit of its residents.



**5. Healthy and Active:** The MVNV will have a healthy, active and fulfilled community. Its open spaces and green and blue infrastructure will present a unique and biodiverse natural environment with outstanding opportunities for active leisure, recreation, sport, play and outdoor learning. Facilities and schools will be designed to support inclusive education, wellbeing and social cohesion of communities.



**6. Democratic and Accountable:** The community will be offered a direct and meaningful role in the future governance and stewardship of the MVNV. A commitment to ongoing engagement and involvement is a key principle which will greatly influence the detailed design of the development and will assist in the integration of existing and new communities, as well as giving the incoming community a 'voice' to shape the future of their new place.



**7. Connected, Resilient and Adaptable:** MVNV will benefit from the timely delivery of new infrastructure to support its population. Early investment will be made in transport services and infrastructure to maximise access to public transport and strategic transport networks so that impacts on existing road networks are minimised. Delivery of key services and facilities on site, together with a structure of walkable neighbourhoods, will ensure that active travel and public transport are the best and most convenient options for meeting day to day needs.



**8. Biodiverse:** The MVNV will have a rich and varied biodiversity augmenting the value of its existing assets through the creation of new habitats and features resulting in a biodiversity net gain. Management, interpretation and education will help new residents and visitors understand the value of biodiversity and how they can each play their part in ensuring its future.