

Prior + Partners

Strategic Planning

We integrate masterplanning, planning and economics to unlock the potential of places and communities around the globe.

About us

Recognised for leading some of the UK and globe's most complex placemaking projects, Prior + Partners' 100-strong team shape long-term and viable frameworks, strategies and plans which establish places and communities that are economically, socially and environmentally healthy, resilient, and vibrant.

From regional planning frameworks and city-wide transformation strategies, to site level masterplans and development plans, we offer clients the full spectrum of expertise needed to deliver successful outcomes across all scales.



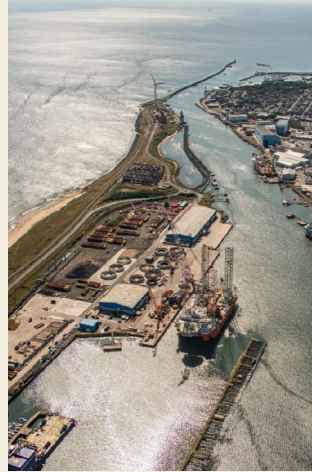
Visions & Place Narratives

Helping communities and plan-makers to articulate their ambitions for long-term transformation.



Strategic Planning

Working at scale to set the direction for cities, regions and nations.



Place Economics

Working collaboratively with towns, cities, and regions to drive positive impact and unlock place-based growth.



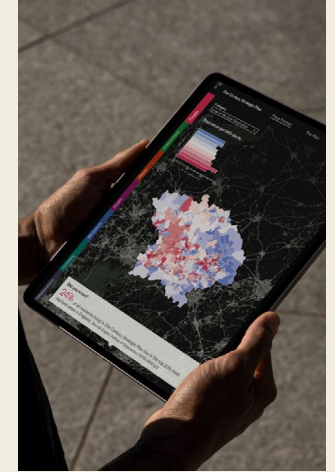
Masterplanning

Designing inspiring, culturally specific, and environmentally resilient places.



Town Planning

Shaping policy and leading applications with a commitment to long-term legacy.



Digital Innovation

Using data and evidence to inform proposals in a smarter, faster, and collaborative way.

Practice

Our team comprises urban designers, planners, architects, economists, spatial scientists, landscape architects, graphic designers, and more.



A new era of Strategic Planning

As part of the Government's mission to kickstart economic growth and deliver 1.5 million new homes in this Parliament, a new approach to cross-boundary strategic planning is being introduced.

Strategic planning, to be universally applied across England, will be mandated by the government—the first time since regional spatial strategies were abolished through the 2011 Localism Act. Spatial Development Strategies (SDSs) are re-establishing a plan-led system that connects national priorities with local realities.

SDSs will provide long-term spatial investment frameworks to ensure that cross-boundary issues are addressed effectively and in an integrated way. These strategies will be critical to delivering homes, boosting economic growth and responding to the climate emergency across England.

Strategic Planning Group

Prior + Partners established the Strategic Planning Group (SPG) in 2024, now recognised as one of the leading national forums shaping the emerging SDS system.

Through a programme of workshops and sector engagements across MHCLG, PINS, NISTA, and local government partners, SPG continues to shape the design of the SDS regime and support Authorities as they begin preparatory work.

Together with SPG members, we produced the influential report *Planning Positively for the Future*, which has helped shape national thinking on the purpose, scope and practical implementation of the new generation of SDSs.

The report sets out clear recommendations for Government and Strategic Authorities on evidence, governance, geography, delivery, skills and transition - helping to guide authorities as they move into this formative early phase of SDS preparation.



Prior + Partners is at the forefront of a new era of plan making.

Through the SPG, we offer:

- 1 Peer Learning & Advisory: Access to national best practice, and model frameworks;
- 2 Policy Influence: Direct engagement with MHCLG, PINS, and NISTA;
- 3 Thought Leadership: Contributions to national debates and publications.

This network gives our clients a strategic edge in navigating the evolving planning landscape.

Prior + Partners is collaborating with Strategic Planning Partners. This relationship ensures that together the insights, best practice and technical expertise generated through SPG are carried through into practical support for authorities preparing SDSs.

For more information on the SPG, or to access the full report, please scan the QR code.



Our approach

Prior + Partners offers a full suite of services tailored to the development of SDSs, including acting as a trusted advisor.

Through our integrated planning, economics, and masterplanning expertise, we help clients advance their strategic ambitions and make informed decisions that deliver transformational change.

With extensive experience in producing coherent spatial plans at regional and sub-regional scales—both in the UK and internationally—we provide tailored support on programme development and route mapping to establish a clear foundation for success.

Our team is actively supporting authorities engaging with the earliest stages of the SDS process—from scope and programme development to building evidence strategies, digital platforms and visioning. This early work is now critical as authorities move from waiting for legislation toward practical preparation.

We approach every project with a methodology rooted in clarity, collaboration, and delivery.



Our Core Strengths in Strategic Planning

1 Elevated ambition

We are experts at leading long-term, ambitious visions and strategies that are specific to place.

2 Integrated digital evidence

We understand the value of an integrated and agile evidence base and can provide guidance on appropriately scaled evidence for Strategic Plans that aligns to work expected to underpin Local Plans.

3 Place economics

We are specialists in economic research, strategy development, case making, appraisal, and forecasting, providing the insight needed to shape coherent Local Growth Plans.

4 Infrastructure first

Leveraging our analysis, we prepare Infrastructure Delivery Plans that identify infrastructure needs at every scale, from local plans through to sub-regional strategies.

5 Empowering healthy places

Our 'Living Framework' transforms public health priorities into place-based planning for healthier, more inclusive communities.

6 Clear spatial frameworks

Working at scale to set the direction for long-term growth.

7 Compelling communication

We design visual identities and communicate compelling ideas clearly and effectively.

Elevated ambition

Developing a Shared Vision and Place Narrative with a wide range of stakeholders can be complex and, at times, challenging. This is a challenge we embrace, as we believe the process is often as important as the final output.

A “one-size-fits-all” approach to engagement does not work. We tailor strategies and methods to suit the diverse stakeholders we meet, building on their knowledge and capacity through a programme of participatory dialogue. Without a structured process that draws stakeholders toward a shared position, it is impossible to cultivate the ‘champions’ and ‘adopters’ needed to drive the vision forward.

Whether at a regional, city, or town-wide scale—or aligned with large and complex development opportunities—we work creatively and collaboratively to help clients and communities articulate their ambitions. Our approach captures the story of a place from its past, through the present, and toward its future aspirations: cultural, economic, environmental, and spatial.

Ultimately, our visions and narratives shape the identities of places, providing a strategic foundation for collaboration, investment, and sustainable growth.

We have led place visioning for many local authorities and nationally significant projects. This new era of strategic planning provides a critical platform to celebrate place identity and communicate stories and ambitions with confidence.

We are experts at leading long-term, ambitious visions and strategies for place.



CPCA Shared Ambition Cambridgeshire, UK

A clear, unifying vision guiding the region's growth to 2050

Prior + Partners supported the Combined Authority through an eight-month programme of engagement with councils, residents, businesses, and partners.

With a tailored and iterative approach, we fostered new ways of working together across the region—ways that demonstrated an ability to come together and share joint exploration, validation and challenge.

Through this journey, a clear and evidence-based understanding of place emerged—one that recognises Cambridgeshire and Peterborough for its distinctive set of global, national and local assets, but also as a region ready to face its challenges.



Environment

Cambridgeshire and Peterborough 2050

-79%
reductions in CO₂ emissions from commercial sources since 2005.²³



37%
of land across the region is at flood risk, rising between 43% in Fenland to 67% in Cambridge.²⁴

36,000
hectares of the region's nature-rich areas accounting for only 0.5% of the total land area, while agriculture accounts for 79%.²⁵

553
designated Local Sites in the region, identified for their significant biodiversity and geological value, an increase from 517 sites in 2008/09.²⁶



21%
of GHG emissions in the region are from the Land Use, Land-use Change and Forestry sector, second to the Transport sector at 26%.²⁷

13.7kt
of CO₂ emissions per km² in Cambridge, compared with 3.4kt in Peterborough.²⁸

19,000
unique species of wildlife are found across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough, out of a total 70,000 across the UK.²⁹



How can we harness our region's natural beauty and leadership in sustainable technology to tackle pressing environmental challenges both at home and across the globe? Is it possible to create environmentally responsible strategies that will safeguard everyone's health and sustainability in the future?

Our Strengths

From serene Fenlands to busy metropolitan parks, our region boasts incredibly rich landscapes. This variety of natural beauty improves the standard of living and helps locals develop a strong bond with their natural world.

The area is also recognized for its leadership in climate initiatives, with significant efforts in green technologies and renewable energy addressing global environmental challenges.

Our commitment to environmental stewardship is further reflected in our extensive green and blue infrastructure, providing numerous publicly accessible natural spaces, which benefit residents' physical and mental well-being as well as biodiversity.

Our Challenges

However, our region faces pressing environmental challenges that require urgent attention. Much of the Fenlands is at risk of flooding, threatening homes, agriculture and infrastructure. Predicted rise in sea levels could have an existential impact on the northern part of our region, therefore taking a holistic approach to deal with this looming threat is required.

Over-development, particularly in urban fringes, exacerbates these risks and puts additional pressure on already strained natural resources and habitats. The region's reliance on cars contributes to significant air pollution, particularly in urban centres like Cambridge and Peterborough, where traffic congestion leads to elevated levels of harmful emissions.

Effective flood management strategies, sustainable urban planning, and a shift towards greener transportation options are essential steps toward a healthier and more resilient environment.

Integrated digital evidence

To unlock the potential of places and communities, Prior + Partners takes an innovative approach to understanding the dynamics and characteristics that shape them.

Our comprehensive evidence bases integrate spatial and quantitative analysis—covering socio-economic data, place characteristics, and infrastructure—to reveal the factors driving place performance and inform future direction.

We analyse and interpret large, complex datasets to generate focused, data-driven insights, which are always sense-checked and grounded in our deep understanding of place.

We prioritise data-driven storytelling. Leveraging our expertise in data visualisation, digital mapping, and graphic design, we translate complex evidence into clear, actionable insights.

Our integrated teams produce a single, coherent compendium of information that serves as a robust evidence base for decision-making. Developed early in the process, this evidence helps shape ambition, vision, and strategy, rather than simply justifying predetermined positions. It provides the backbone for informed choices and ensures policies are both justified and aligned with national frameworks and local contexts.

We understand the value of an integrated and agile evidence base.



Welwyn Hatfield Place Portrait Hertfordshire, UK

Digitally enabling a shared understanding of place

Prior + Partners' Welwyn Hatfield Place Portrait is an interactive digital tool that turns complex, fragmented data into clear, actionable insights. Integrating over 95 datasets on demographics, health, environment, mobility, and more, it reveals opportunities and challenges across the borough—from flood risk and heritage to access to health facilities and open spaces.

With built-in regional and national benchmarks, the tool enables evidence-based decisions, helping to prioritise investment and shape growth. Acting as a 'single source of truth', the Place Portrait is a dynamic, flexible resource that empowers planners, policymakers, and communities to guide sustainable, inclusive growth.



Place Economics

We put economics at the heart of planning and placemaking, using evidence and analysis not just to describe challenges, but to set ambition, shape delivery, and secure investment.

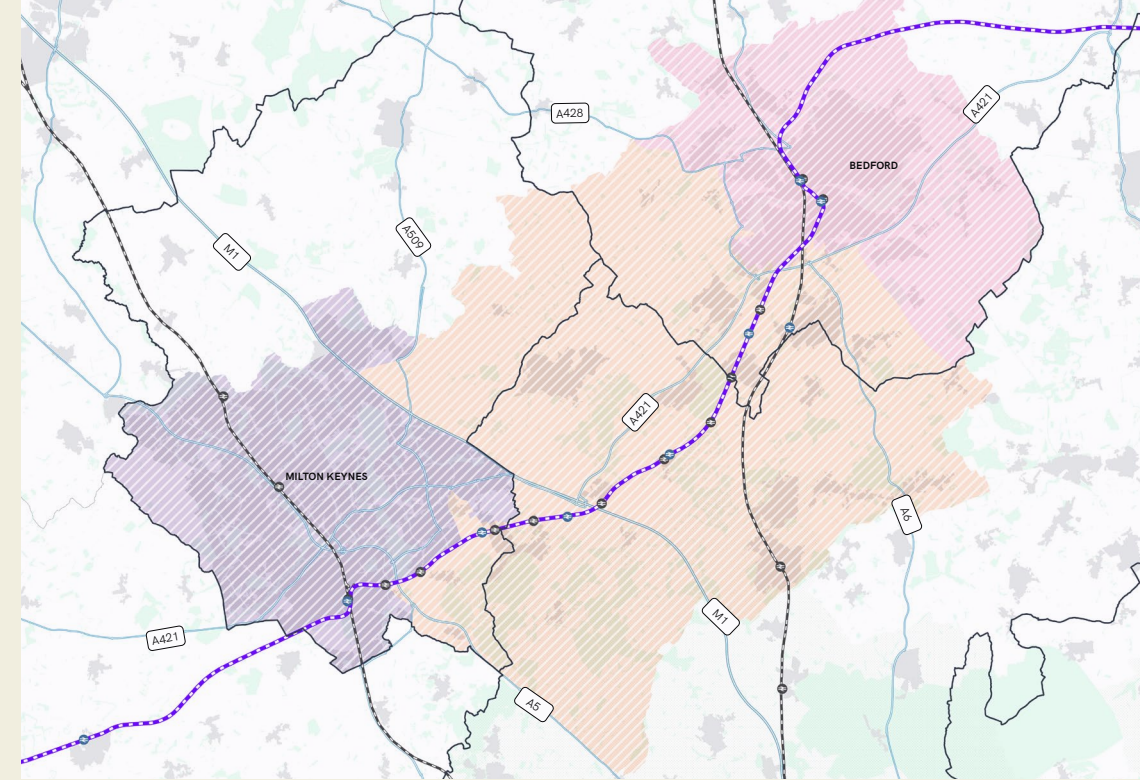
The genuine integration of our economic strategy, appraisal, case-making and economic forecasting with the spatial dimension of Prior + Partners' work is what we term 'Place Economics'. This gives us a unique perspective and blend of skills to support distinctive placemaking.

In an age of abundant data, achieving clarity can be challenging. We combine expert analysis with geospatial tools, digital platforms, and graphic design to foster meaningful dialogue with clients and stakeholders. Our focus is always on analysis that adds value to the collective understanding of a place, rather than applying a one-size-fits-all approach.

We specialise in growth strategies and economic projections at city, regional, and local authority levels, covering the whole economy and conducting deep dives into specific clusters and sectors. Through collaborative workshops, we use our analysis to help clients identify strategic priorities and potential interventions.

Once a shared understanding of strategic priorities and potential interventions is reached, we develop clear delivery and implementation plans, alongside preparing investment cases and funding bids, enabling our clients to turn ideas into actionable outcomes and achieve tangible impact.

We are experts in economic evidence, strategy development, case making, impact assessment and forecasting.



East West Rail UK

Unlocking the potential of the Oxford-Cambridge Growth Corridor

Prior + Partners is providing integrated support on East West Rail project, a once-in-a-generation opportunity to leverage planned infrastructure investment to unlock sustainable, transit oriented growth.

Our focus includes the delivery of high-value employment, high-quality housing, environmental enhancements to support resilient, connected communities.

[2]

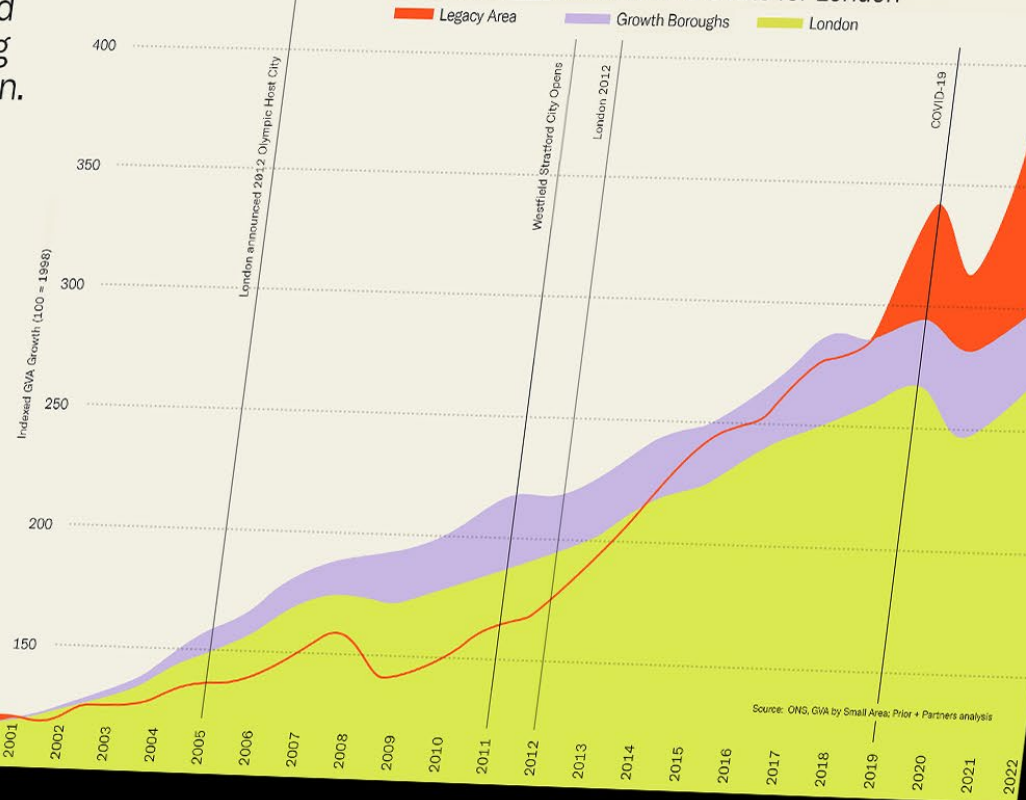
Employment and GVA growth has outpaced both the surrounding boroughs and London.

The post-games transformation of QEOP has delivered the infrastructure and commercial floorspace that has supported a diverse mix of businesses and employment opportunities in future-facing, high-value and resilient sectors ranging from e-sports and gaming to organic cosmetics.

Since 2012, the number of jobs in the Legacy Area has increased **5.4x** more than the average rate for London, **9.0x** more than the average rate for England, and more than any London Borough since 2015! Such a significant rate of growth has been achieved through the actions of the MDC working with partners, which has delivered the infrastructure and initiatives to facilitate GVA growth which has exceeded the rate for London and any London Borough since 2012.

Infrastructure delivered across the Legacy Area, coupled with the wider legacy transformation has supported employment growth Here East, Stratford Cross, Westfield Stratford City, East Bank, the Hackney Wick and Fish Island Creative Enterprise Zone (CEZ). Without the vision and direction from the LLDC, it is unlikely that this area of east London would have experienced such significant growth and economic recovery during downturns.

Since the 2012 Games, GVA in the Legacy Area has increased **2.8x** faster than the rate for London



Infrastructure first

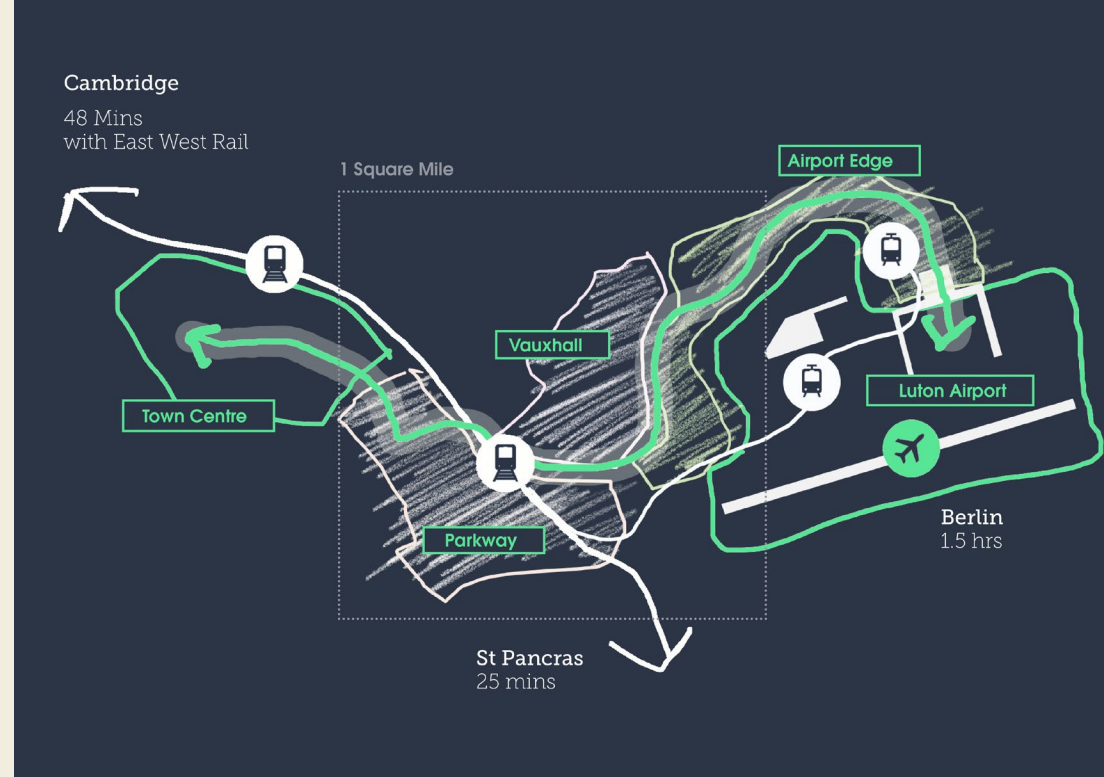
Infrastructure delivery planning is pivotal to creating successful, sustainable places.

Prior + Partners' integrated approach considers how networks of environment, transport, utilities, energy, and digital infrastructure collectively enable growth, support new communities, and strengthen existing ones. By coordinating a cohesive framework, we ensure new investment actively contributes to well-served, connected, and resilient places.

This approach strengthens local economies and enhances quality of life by linking homes, jobs, and services in accessible and sustainable ways. Sequencing is central—we carefully plan the timing and order of investment to ensure delivery is efficient, cost-effective, and aligned with broader spatial and strategic objectives. Effective sequencing maximises the impact of infrastructure projects, reduces risks, improves investor confidence, and helps local authorities and partners make evidence-based decisions on prioritising resources.

Through our integrated expertise, we build the case for major infrastructure projects, grounded in robust social, environmental, and economic rationale, ensuring investment delivers lasting value for communities.

Leveraging our analysis, we identify infrastructure needs at every scale, from local plans to sub-regional strategies.



Luton Gateway Strategic Framework Luton, UK

A framework for the productive heart of the Golden Triangle

The area between London Luton Airport and the town centre is being shaped into a high-value economic corridor, supporting 8,000–18,000 new jobs across advanced manufacturing, aviation services, logistics, and knowledge-based sectors.

Spatial planning connects the airport, rail station, and town centre, with opportunity sites, phasing, and placemaking that enhance townscape quality and environmental resilience. Coordinated delivery—including governance, funding, and infrastructure sequencing—ensures investment is feasible, market-aligned, and drives inclusive growth and long-term prosperity for Luton.

Empowering healthy places

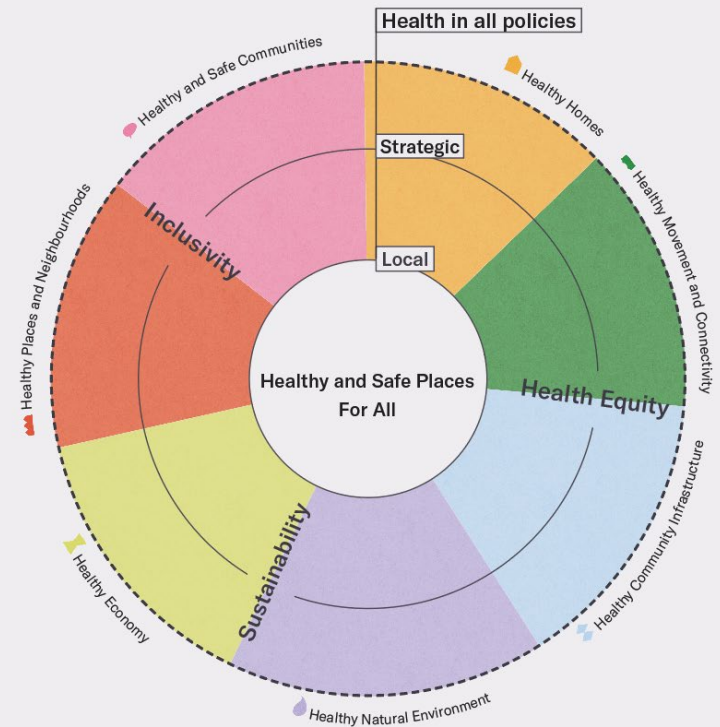
Our ‘Living Framework’ approach translates public health priorities into place-based planning for healthier, more equitable communities.

Prior + Partners is a leader in embedding health in planning and design and has developed The Living Framework, a dynamic ecosystem that translates public health priorities into spatially targeted, evidence-based plans and strategies.

The Framework integrates data, JSNAs, local intelligence, and lived experience to support healthy placemaking at both strategic and neighbourhood scales. It directly supports the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requirement to “promote good health and prevent ill-health, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs and reduce health inequalities between the most and least deprived communities.”

It also aligns with the emerging health duty under the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill, which strengthens Strategic Authorities’ role in addressing health inequalities through place-based planning, including Spatial Development Strategies (SDSs) which must have regard to health outcomes and health inequalities in their area.

The Living Framework empowers commissioning authorities, planners, and communities to embed public health priorities into plan-making, ensuring strategies are both visionary and actionable, responsive to local needs, and capable of delivering measurable health outcomes.



The Hertfordshire Healthy and Safe Placemaking Framework Hertfordshire, UK

Strategic planning at the heart of creating healthy places

Arising from the Hertfordshire Growth Board’s ‘Healthy and Safe Places for All’ mission, the Hertfordshire Healthy and Safe Placemaking Framework guides the creation of healthier, safer, and more inclusive environments across the county.

It embeds principles of health, wellbeing, and safety into planning policy at both local and strategic levels, ensuring that new and existing communities support physical, mental, and social health. The Framework is a vital tool for improving health outcomes, addressing health inequalities, and enabling people to grow, live, move, connect, and thrive within their communities.

Clear spatial frameworks

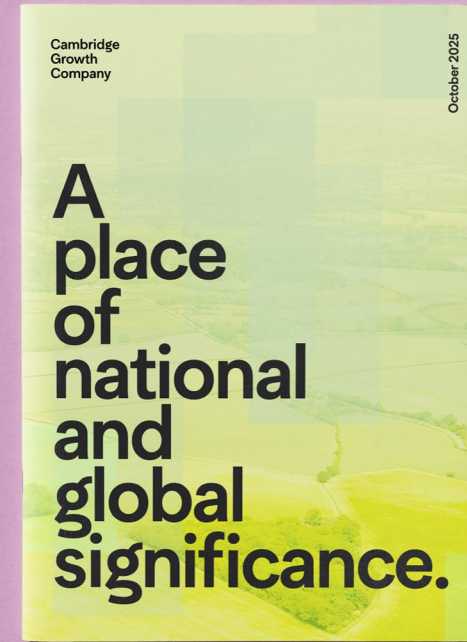
We work with senior leaders and government bodies to assess an area's potential for sustainable growth and resilience. In this role, we help define the strategic vision and direction of a place, setting the parameters for high-quality design, infrastructure delivery, and environmental protection to ensure long-term prosperity and quality of life for communities.

Our methodology integrates multiple layers of data and qualitative evidence, including social, ecological, and physical conditions. From this, we develop population and employment projections, identify key opportunities and constraints, test options, and define spatial strategies.

Working collaboratively with clients, stakeholders, and communities, we translate these strategies into comprehensive implementation and roll-out plans across all sectors—including environmental protection, economic strategy, tourism, housing, transport, utilities, social infrastructure, and governance—to create enduring and engaging places.

We measure success by how well our plans connect people to each other and to nature, and by their ability to foster communities that are healthy, resilient, and economically vibrant.

Working at scale to set the direction for long-term growth.

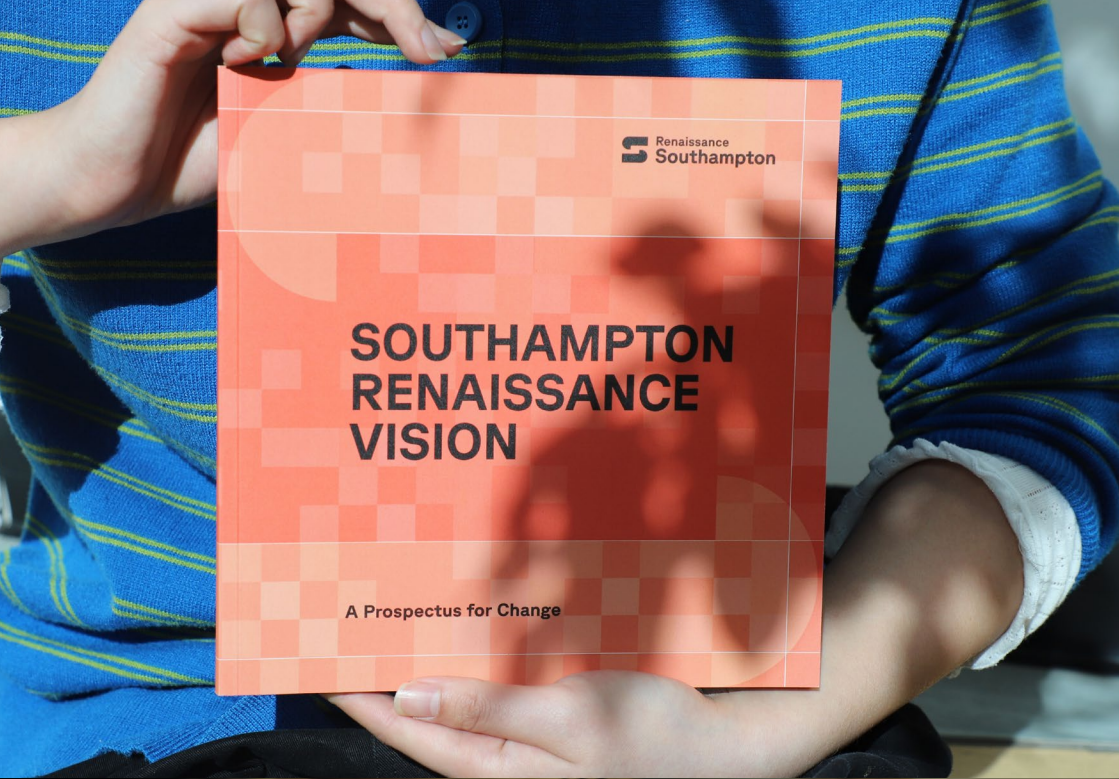


Cambridge Growth Company
Greater Cambridge, UK

A framework for one of the country's most important engines of growth

The Cambridge Growth Company has appointed Prior + Partners and others to prepare a vision, supported by a robust evidence base, to underpin a long-term growth strategy for Greater Cambridge.

This appointment marks a significant step toward shaping a sustainable, strategic future for the region, complementing and extending beyond current statutory development plans. The ambition aligns closely with our practice's purpose, and we will help ensure early, sustainable investment in placemaking and strategic infrastructure—essential for building thriving, connected communities.



For Southampton City Council/
Southampton Renaissance Board

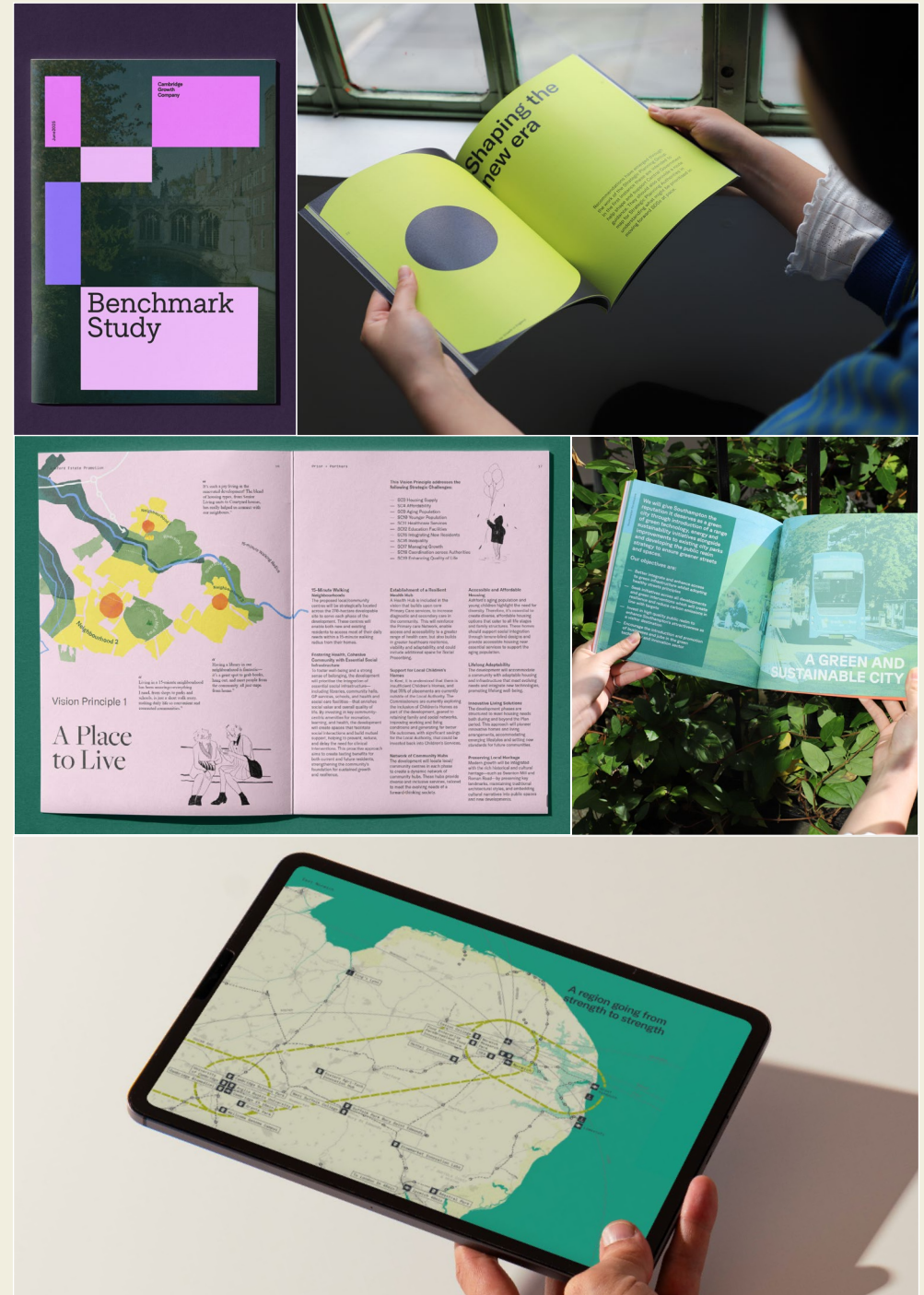
Compelling communication

We design visual identities and communicate compelling ideas clearly and effectively.

At Prior + Partners, we specialise in visual communications, supported by a dedicated graphics and brand identity team. For many years, we have recognised the importance of creating and managing distinctive visual expressions to make project outputs compelling and, where appropriate, aligned with wider place-branding strategies.

Our approach can extend into long-term campaigns and inform engagement, planning documentation, and investment collateral—crucial for a stand-out delivery strategy. We base our work on thorough research and a deep understanding of context, combining clear written, graphic, and verbal communication with robust technical knowledge and expertise.

By presenting concise, digestible, and shareable information, we help investors, communities, and stakeholders engage meaningfully, fostering better conversations and stronger connections. Underpin everything we produce, ensuring that our communications are not only visually engaging but also credible, informative, and strategically effective.



Helping you kickstart your SDS journey...

We are partnering with authorities preparing for the SDS era—helping them route-map early tasks, build shared understanding of place, and establish strong governance foundations.

Our complimentary Place Futures workshops support authorities at the earliest stage of their SDS journey, providing time, space and insight to think strategically.

What are the benefits of a Place Futures workshop?

- 1 An opportunity for participants to connect and build relationships;
- 2 A chance to think big and long-term;
- 3 Uncover aspirations and ambitions, reflecting your place's unique feature;
- 4 Engage critically with key challenges and opportunities;
- 5 Shape the next steps for your place or project.

...and unlock the potential of your place.

We are partnering with **authorities committed** to create better place futures.

By hosting a no-obligation **workshop**, we'll **help you critically engage** with the social, environmental, economic and infrastructure **challenges and opportunities unique to your place**—kickstarting positive conversations and approaches as you begin your SDS journey.

To register your interest, contact us at:
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