## Historical context

Hemel Hempstead has become one of the most important towns in Hertfordshire.

Favourable geological conditions enabled the Grand Junction Canal to pass through the market town in the 18th century, connecting Hemel Hempstead to the Capital. The London to Birmingham railway was constructed in the 19th Century, followed by the link to Harpenden (now known as the Nickey Line), ensuring good trade connections. Towards the end of the 19th century, the town expanded further with housing developed for London commuters.

Designated a 'mark one' New Town in 1946, Hemel provided good family homes in healthy neighbourhoods, easing overcrowding and poor living conditions in many London boroughs. It has grown considerably from that time when the population was around 20,000. Today it is home to 96,000 residents. In the same timeframe, England's population has grown by some 15 million.

Hemel Hempstead has a vibrant economy which attracts business investment, jobs and skills. It has been home to major companies such as Kodak, BP, Amazon and The British Standards Institution, and is often used as a film and television location.

We now need to plan for the next phase, to help equip Hemel Hempstead's economy for the future; delivering homes and infrastructure to support the changing needs of current residents and the aspirations of future generations.

- What are the major features of Hemel Hempstead's history that you would highlight?
- > What is your favourite thing about living in Hemel Hempstead?





