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NTIA | NIGHT TIME  
INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION

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# **Community & Culture Workshop**

## Agenda

**1.0 Welcome and introductions (10min) - ALL**

**2.0 Introduction to the Place Plan, process & selected appraisal findings (15 mins) - WMT**

**3.0 Place Plan draft objectives (5mins) - ALL**

**4.0 Opportunity for questions (5mins)**

**5.0 Activity 1**

- Breakout discussion (15 mins)- sub-groups of 4/5
- Group feedback (10 mins)

**5.1 Activity 2**

- Breakout discussion (15 mins)- sub-groups of 4/5
- Group feedback (10 mins)

**6.0 Questions & next steps (5mins) - ALL**

# 1) WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

# 2) INTRODUCTION & EARLY FINDINGS

# Project overview

## Study area

The Place Plan is focused on a core of the Town Centre, with a wider area of context under consideration. We welcome feedback on the extent of this area of context.



KEY

□ Town Centre boundary as defined in the Adopted Local Plan 2020

▤ Extension of Town Centre study area

N 0 200m



# Our work so far

- Appraisal & evidence base report
- 1-2-1 conversations
- Workshop: Business, skills & employment

**3.3 LOCAL ASSETS, LANDMARKS & USES**

Land Use



Key issues:

- Dominance of retail
- Lack of leisure & commercial destinations
- Key anchor stores are missing (such as Debenhams)
- Lack of quality guest accommodation
- No healthcare facilities (but the Debenham Centre has COVID-19 vaccinations)

KEY

- Food and Drink
- Hotel
- Leisure
- Education
- Offices
- Residential
- Healthcare
- Storage
- Community service
- Commercial
- Civic
- Utility
- Religious
- Transport
- Retail
- Play space
- Industrial
- Vacancy (Observations)

Study area boundary  
Town centre area

N 0 200m

219\_Folkestone Place  
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PLACE PLAN FOR FOLKESTONE TOWN CENTRE  
URBAN APPRAISAL - DRAFT 15-02-2021

# Programme overview

## Engagement timescales



# Key findings

## Population

- People living in Folkestone Central and East Wards are some of the most deprived in the country.
- In Folkestone Central and Harbour wards, 30% of children live in low income households compared to 20% across FHD and 18% nationally.
- This contrasts to communities in the south-west who are some of the least deprived nationally.
- The disparity in health, wellbeing & quality of life outcomes contributes to the sense of an increasingly divided town.

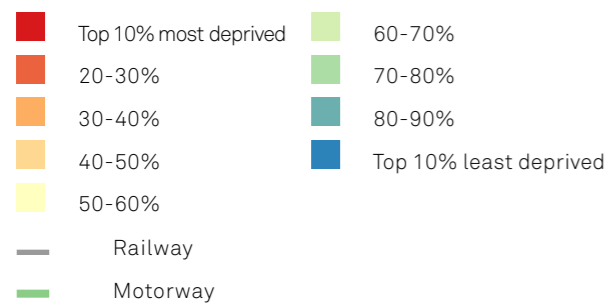


KEY

### Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019

Source: Data from ONS 2019, map produced by PRD

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# Key findings

## Population

- Folkestone has a higher proportion of working age people (aged 16-65) living in the town than the FHD and Kent averages. This relatively large potential workforce means that the town has strong productive capacity.
- Skills levels are comparatively low compared to the rest of Kent, the South East and England averages.
- The data shows a higher proportion of residents with no qualifications and a lower percentage with degree-level or above than those comparators.
- Youth unemployment is as high as 5% in some parts of the town centre, compared to 3% in FHD and 2% in Kent.
- Data from KCC from 2009 found Folkestone Central Ward had one of the lowest social capital (defined as formation of networks and trust between people) in the county.

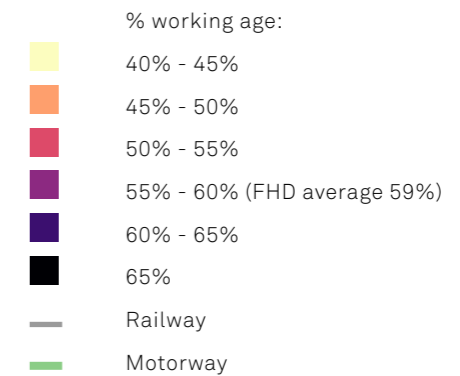


KEY

### Age profile (working age)

Source: Data from ONS 2019, map produced by PRD

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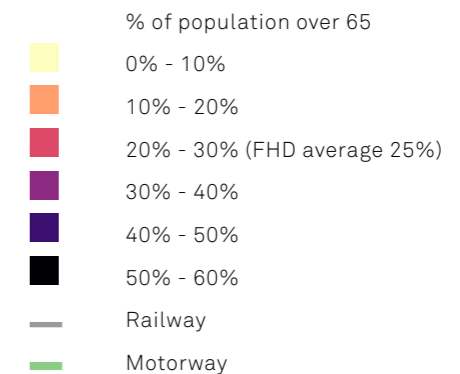


KEY

### Age profile (over 65s)

Source: Data from ONS 2019, map produced by PRD

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# Key findings

## Population

**Central & north-eastern Folkestone has pockets of severe deprivation.**

**Skills levels are comparatively low compared to the rest of Kent, the South East and England averages**

**Folkestone needs to attract and retain young people to live and work in the town.**

Focussing short term physical improvements in the tightly deprived geography could act as positive precursor to longer term improvements. Build on the success of the Folkestone Community Works programme and ensure continued support beyond the end of the project in 2022.

There is opportunity to improve attainment & provide pathways for young people into higher education, by capitalising on the recent investment in Folkestone College and improving links with universities in Canterbury.

Provide pathways into work, training and skills development for young people to address low skills levels and help to retain young people. In some cases, given the lower supply of available jobs, this will mean looking for new routes into education and other positive activities.

# Key findings

## Cultural quarter

- The quarter has created new jobs & the creative economy is becoming increasingly recognised locally and nationally, but the creative sector is still showing up as a relatively small sector in the economy in the data.
- With the opening of new high end restaurants such as Rocksalt, the cafe and restaurant offer is becoming a reason to travel to Folkestone.
- Developing new sectors, such as the music industry, would help to support an evening economy. It has recently been announced that Folkestone will be the World's First Music Town.

**KEY**

- Bars/ drinking establishments
- Museums, galleries and art centres
- Cinemas, theatres and dance venues
- Music related venues
- ▨ Creative Quarter

**Art walks:**

- Walk A - The Pent Valley and the Railway
- Walk B - The Historic Centre
- Walk C - Waterfront and Harbour
- Walk D - West End

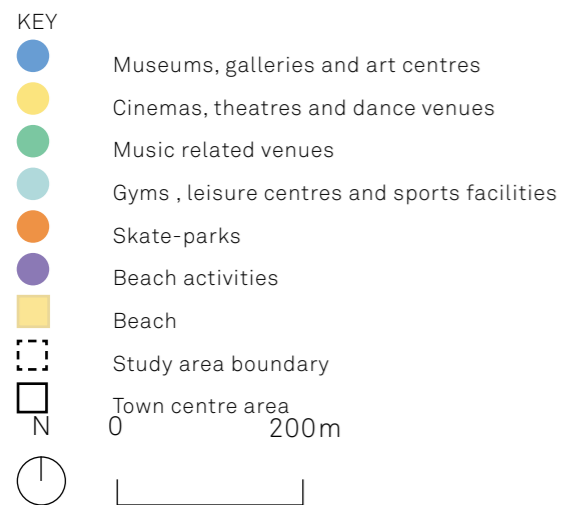
- Town centre area
- ▭ Study area boundary



# Key findings

## Destinations, landmarks & leisure

- The seafront, Cultural Quarter and the harbour areas are landmark attractions but are not well connected.
- As a coastal gateway to Europe, a harbour location with historic significance and an existing seaside destination, this character is not necessarily apparent in all parts of the town centre.



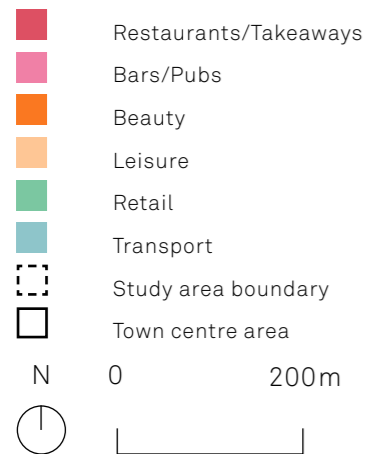
- Some local destinations and historical landmarks:
1. Folkestone Beach
  2. Folkestone Creative Quarter/ Old High Street
  3. The Leas Club
  4. Lower Leas Ampitheatre
  5. William Harvey memorial statue
  6. Leas Cliff bandstand
  7. Foord Road Viaduct
  8. Marine Crescent
  9. The Folkestone Leas Lift
  10. St Mary and St Eanswythe
  11. Folkestone Museum

# Key findings

## Evening economy

- The evening economy is limited: few businesses are open into the evening and many close before 7pm.
- There is a lack of quality guest accommodation & hotels in the core Town Centre which limits options for overnight stays.

### KEY



# Key findings

## Community infrastructure

- Data from KCC from 2009 found Folkestone Central Ward had one of the lowest social capital (defined as formation of networks and trust between people) in the county.
- Folkestone has seen its social capital go from strength to strength in recent years, associated with the growing creative sector & range of community groups.

### KEY

- Civic institutions
  - Education facilities
  - Nurseries and crèches
  - GP Surgeries & Hospitals
  - Playgrounds
  - Public village halls & other community facilities
  - Private member's clubs
  - Places of worship & religious meeting halls
- 
- Study area boundary
  - Town centre area



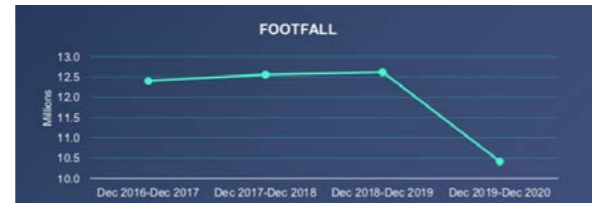
# Key findings

## Footfall

- Footfall has fallen 16% in the past 4 years according to the Folkestone visitor insight Baseline Report.
- The Turner Bates Study in 2019 highlighted leakage to neighbouring towns such as Ashford due to leisure offer.
- With approximately 10,000sqm of new commercial space planned in the seafront development, this problem could be exacerbated and also increase the perception of a ‘town of two halves’.



Total visit change by month (%) Dec 2019 - Dec 2020



Footfall levels (Dec 2017 - Dec 2020)



Dwell time (Dec 2017 - Dec 2020)



Visits per annum (Dec 2017 - Dec 2020)



Number of indoor places visited per trip (Dec 2017 - Dec 2020)



↑ Town Centre Footfall Visitor Behaviours over a 12 month period (Dec 2019 - Dec 2020)

Source: Folkestone visitor insight Baseline Report December 2019 - 2020



Average visits by hour (Dec 2017 - Dec 2020), source: Folkestone visitor insight Baseline Report December 2019 - 2020

# Key findings

## Town Centre uses

**Footfall has fallen in the Town Centre.**

The Place Plan should create a clear strategy for uses in the town centre that complements activity in the Creative Quarter, harbour area and seafront.

**Otterpool Park should attract more footfall**

Proposals and strategies should take into consideration the potentially increased footfall from this future populations and aim to provide services and opportunities accordingly.

**Visual perception of the Town Centre is poor.**

There is opportunity to soften the pedestrian environment by increasing greening and seating.

Develop a long term vision for spaces to the north of Sandgate Street and connections to the north.

**The evening economy is limited**

Introducing complementary new uses, markets, leisure and events will help expand the 24 hour economy. Longer opening times and hotel provision will support evening activation but should remain family friendly.



# Key findings

## Community & Culture

**The Cultural Quarter and developing food culture is putting Folkestone on the map.**

**There is a need to increase shared feelings of identity and community cohesion in Folkestone.**

The Place Plan should build on the success of Creative Folkestone's investment in programmes & events, helping to promote this strong offer. Diversity and accessibility of offer is important.

Boosting a sense of belonging and civic pride. Supporting increased community participation and volunteering is essential for creating local prosperity and enabling a greater sense of ownership and social integration.

# 3) PLACE PLAN DRAFT OBJECTIVES

## Place Plan draft objectives

Make the most of Folkestone's best assets: its coastline, its communities, its heritage and its creativity, to attract visitors and enhance the lives of residents.

Reinvigorate and re-integrate the Town Centre core by identifying opportunities for a new range of uses, community services and employment opportunities in a broad range of sectors.

Identify opportunities for support, skills and training that compliment physical development potential.

Work with the people of Folkestone to develop proposals that are meaningful to all.

Create an environment that encourages walking and cycling, and better connects all parts of the Town Centre and its surroundings.

Champion Folkestone's future potential to secure the support of all partners who will be needed to deliver on the ambitions of the Place Plan.

4)  
**DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS?**

**5)**  
**ACTIVITY 1**  
**COMMUNITY & CULTURE**  
**IN FOLKESTONE**

## Activity 1

### Community & culture in Folkestone

Creative Folkestone has been very successful in attracting visitors & the creative economy.

Youth unemployment is as high as 5% in some parts of the town centre, compared to 3% in FHD and 2% in Kent.

People living in Folkestone Central and East Wards are some of the most deprived in the country and face challenges with low skills levels and low incomes, including 30% of children living in low income households.

What kind of new uses, community uses & events could be introduced in to the core Town Centre? How might this encourage visitors as well as being attractive & accessible to local people?

What opportunities are missing for young people? How can Folkestone become a more attractive location for young people to stay?

Where do you think there are opportunities to support vulnerable or under represented groups?

**5)  
ACTIVITY 2  
FOLKESTONE'S TOWN CENTRE**

## Activity 2

### Folkestone's Town Centre

Visitor numbers to Folkestone have been increasing but footfall in the town centre has fallen 16% in the past 4 years. The Turner Bates Study in 2019 highlighted leakage to neighbouring towns such as Ashford due to leisure offer.

High vacancy rates within parts of the Town Centre (14.9 %), in line with UK wide trends the decline of the traditional high street & restructuring of the economy around new sectors, though independents retailers and businesses seem to be doing well.

Data from KCC from 2009 found Folkestone Central Ward had one of the lowest social capital (defined as formation of networks and trust between people) in the county.

What are your ambitions & priorities for the Town Centre?

What is Folkestone town centre for now?

How can the Town Centre maximise the opportunities of the Otterpool and Seafront developments?

Has this changed? If not, what could be done about it?



# 6) QUESTIONS & NEXT STEPS