
* All information in this document is a work in progress and subject to development.

# Business, Skills & Employment 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

# 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



- Top 10% most deprived
- 20-30%
- 30-40%
- 40-50%
- 50-60%
- 60-70%
- 70-80%
- 80-90%
- Top 10% least deprived
- Railway
- Motorway

# 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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% working age:

- 40% - 45%
- 45% - 50%
- 50% - 55%
- 55% - 60% (FHD average 59%)
- 60% - 65%
- 65%
- Railway
- Motorway

KEY

**Age profile (over 65s)**

Source: Data from ONS 2019, map produced by PRD

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% of population over 65

- 0% - 10%
- 10% - 20%
- 20% - 30% (FHD average 25%)
- 30% - 40%
- 40% - 50%
- 50% - 60%
- Railway
- Motorway

# Key findings
## Population

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

Focussing short term physical improvements in the tightly deprived geography could act as positive pre-cursor 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.

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

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.

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

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**
## Employment sectors

- Folkestone is reliant on sectors that have been hit hardest by the pandemic: tourism, leisure, and sectors impacted by Brexit including fishing and logistics.
- The latest data shows that those claiming universal credit or jobseekers' allowance is up 100%.
- District data shows that people working in FHD have lower weekly earnings than Kent, South East and national averages.
- The number of businesses has increased 11% in the last 5 years, but employment has decreased by 2% and business survival rates are worse than district/county average.

| | Folkestone Town | | | FHD | England |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Sector** | **2019 Jobs** | **% jobs** | **LQ** | **% of total** | **% of total** |
| Public Admin, Education, Health | 6,275 | 29% | 1.19 | 26% | 25% |
| Financial and Professional Services | 2,910 | 14% | 0.99 | 10% | 14% |
| Business Support Services | 2,750 | 13% | 1.55 | 13% | 8% |
| Retail | 2,700 | 13% | 1.37 | 10% | 9% |
| Hospitality, Leisure and Recreation | 2,665 | 13% | 1.25 | 13% | 10% |
| Construction | 735 | 3% | 0.69 | 5% | 5% |
| ICT, Media and Creative Services | 655 | 3% | 0.51 | 3% | 6% |
| Manufacturing | 580 | 3% | 0.35 | 5% | 8% |
| Wholesale | 500 | 2% | 0.60 | 2% | 4% |
| Motor Trades | 450 | 2% | 1.11 | 2% | 2% |
| Transport | 445 | 2% | 0.69 | 5% | 3% |
| Other Services | 335 | 2% | 0.89 | 1% | 2% |
| Warehousing and Logistics | 230 | 1% | 0.55 | 1% | 2% |
| Utilities and waste | 80 | 0% | 0.36 | 2% | 1% |
| Agriculture and Mining | 10 | 0% | 0.03 | 2% | 1% |
| **Total** | **21,320** | **100%** | **1.00** | **100%** | **100%** |
| *Creative Sector** | *660* | *3%* | *0.60* | *3%* | *5%* |



Table produced by PRD
Source: ONS BRES, 2019. LQ represents concentration compared to England average, where a value above 1.0 means the sector is more specialised locally than in the national economy.
*a cross-cutting sector. Definition from DCMS.

## Key findings
Investment & development

| The Town Centre needs an integrated approach | There are many opportunities for development in the Town Centre | Otterpool Park should attract more footfall | The town centre isn't a very attractive and supportive environment for business growth. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Seek opportunities to encourage investment in the town centre core. Create opportunities for experimentation with alternative uses including social and community services. | Explore opportunities within the town centre for strategic and housing development that will help mitigate against some of the issues facing the core town centre and capitalise on potential. | Proposals and strategies should take into consideration the potentially increased footfall from this future populations and aim to provide services and opportunities accordingly. | The Place Plan must support the provision of suitable and affordable business accommodation, for example through physical changes and business support programmes. |

# Key findings
## Investment & development

**Folkestone is reliant on sectors that have been hit hardest by the pandemic.**

The Place Plan must respond to the major challenges caused by Covid-19 and Brexit. There may be new opportunities related to changing work patterns, remote working and renewed focus on healthy living.

**The nature of employment in Folkestone should be challenged.**

Skills and training support for residents as well as improvements within 'foundational' sectors are needed. New approaches to participation and local ownership will also help ensure more value is retained within the town, supporting better local outcomes.

# Key findings
## Retail areas

— The retail offer reflects wider trends: vacancy rates are high;a survey conducted in February 2019 for the FHSF EOI found that 14.9% of units are vacant across the town centre.

— The Secondary shopping area has a higher vacancy rate of 16%. This fits with UK-wide trends the decline of the traditional high street, the restructuring of the economy around new sectors & the changing tourism sector.

— Perceptions are that the independent retail offer is strong but tends to cater to a younger audience.


KEY

- Primary Shopping Area (Source:Local Plan 2020)
- Secondary Shopping Area
- Study area boundary
- Town centre area

N 0 200m

# 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.


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
## 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 which limits options for overnight stays.


KEY

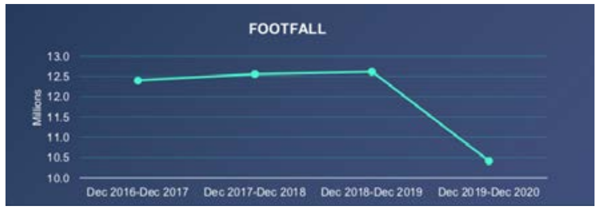
- Restaurants/Takeaways
- Bars/Pubs
- Beauty
- Leisure
- Retail
- Transport
- Study area boundary
- Town centre area

N 0 200m

# 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

**The retail offer reflects wider trends**

Attracting creative re-use to respond to support civic & community functions will build on the social value of the high street.  Supporting a mix of uses will ensure a vibrant Town Centre and support Covid-19 recovery. More radical solutions include social value leases.

**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.



**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.

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

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.

# 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
# DOING BUSINESS IN FOLKESTONE

**Activity 1**

## Doing business in Folkestone

The no. of businesses has increased by11% in the last 5 years, but employment has decreased by 2% and business survival rates are worse than district & county average.

Creative Folkestone has been very successful, but the creative sector is still showing up as a relatively small sector in the economy in the data.

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.

How can Folkestone become an attractive place for businesses?

How can we support businesses to stay and scale in Folkestone?

How can we build on the success of Creative Folkestone, scale activity and use this to support growth in other parts of the town centre?

Where do you think there are opportunities to support skills & training?

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

**Activity 2**
## Folkestone's Town Centre

Footfall 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 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.

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