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WE MADE THAT
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

fletcher priest architects
london + köln + riga

prd steer

NTIA | NIGHT TIME INDUSTRIES ASSOCIATION

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Places, Heritage & Revitalisation 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

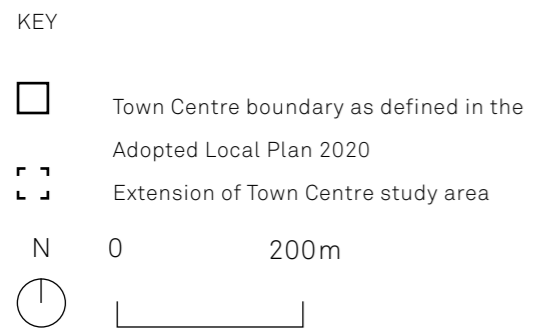
1) WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

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.



Our work so far

- Appraisal & evidence base report
- 1-2-1 conversations
- Workshops:
 - Business, skills & employment
 - Community & culture



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.

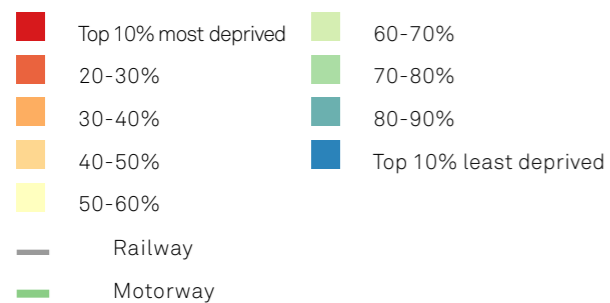


KEY

Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2019

Source: Data from ONS 2019, map produced by PRD

*Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2021



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

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.

KEY

- Museums, galleries and art centres
- Cinemas, theatres and dance venues
- Music related venues
- Gyms, leisure centres and sports facilities
- Skate-parks
- Beach activities
- Beach

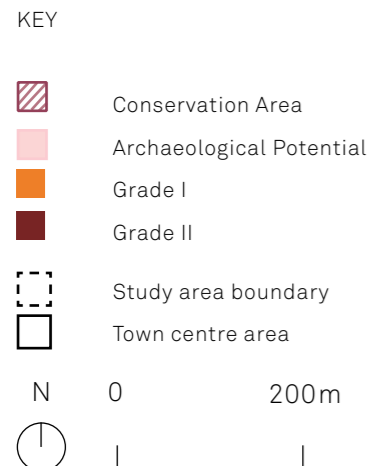
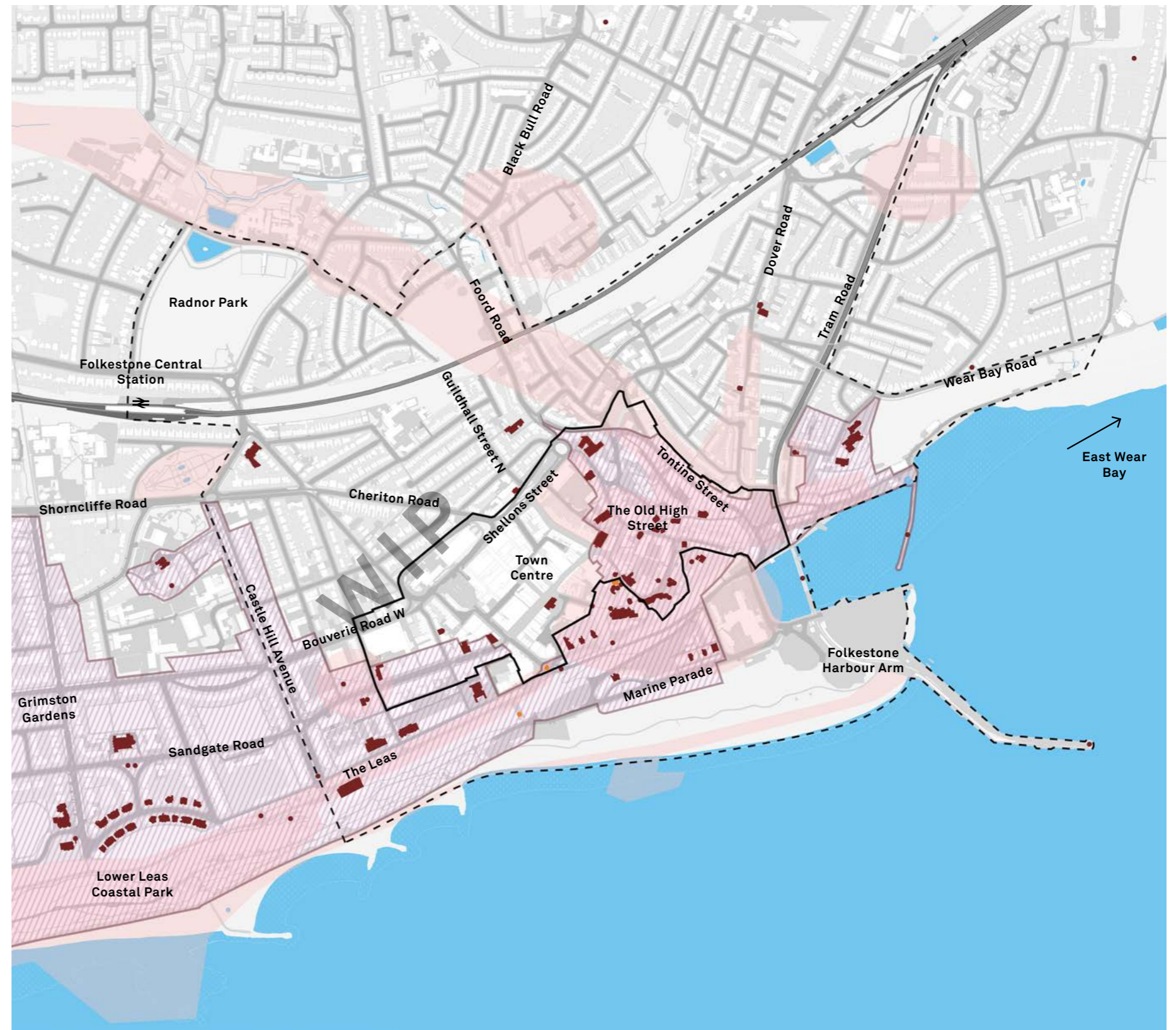
- Study area boundary
- Town centre area



Key findings

Conservation

- Heritage assets are of significant importance to the southern areas of the Town Centre and coastline. These assets could be more better identified in current policy.
- The conservation area around Church Street and The Bayle contain a high proportion of empty units.




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
- N 0 200m
- 



Key findings

Severance

- Steep vertical distances have contributed to the fact that the retail and historic heart has become separated from the coastline. Opportunities for large scale growth are hindered by the geographic situation.
- Alleyways, stairs and cut-throughs are important assets that give Folkestone its character but provide problems with accessibility.



KEY

- Problematic inactive frontage
- ↔ Existing links across railways
- M Severance due to road
- Λ Severance due to rail
- Λ Severance due to natural barriers
- ⋯ Study area boundary
- Town Centre boundary
- N 0 200m

Key findings

Heritage & community

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

Access to the coast should be stitched through to the Town Centre.

Natural assets are within close proximity.

Heritage assets could be further celebrated.

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.

Explore opportunities to connect other parts of the town centre to the coast and coastal heritage, whether physically or through activities and uses.

Seek opportunities to improve links from the town centre to natural assets - especially the coastline from Sandgate Street. Make better use of underutilised green assets such as Leas Cliff, to create improved connections.

The Place Plan should seek to celebrate of listed and/or characterful buildings in the Town Centre such as The Folkestone Museum through uses and public realm interventions.

Key findings

Heritage & community

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

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

Changes in topography provides physical barriers but brings character and opportunity.

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.

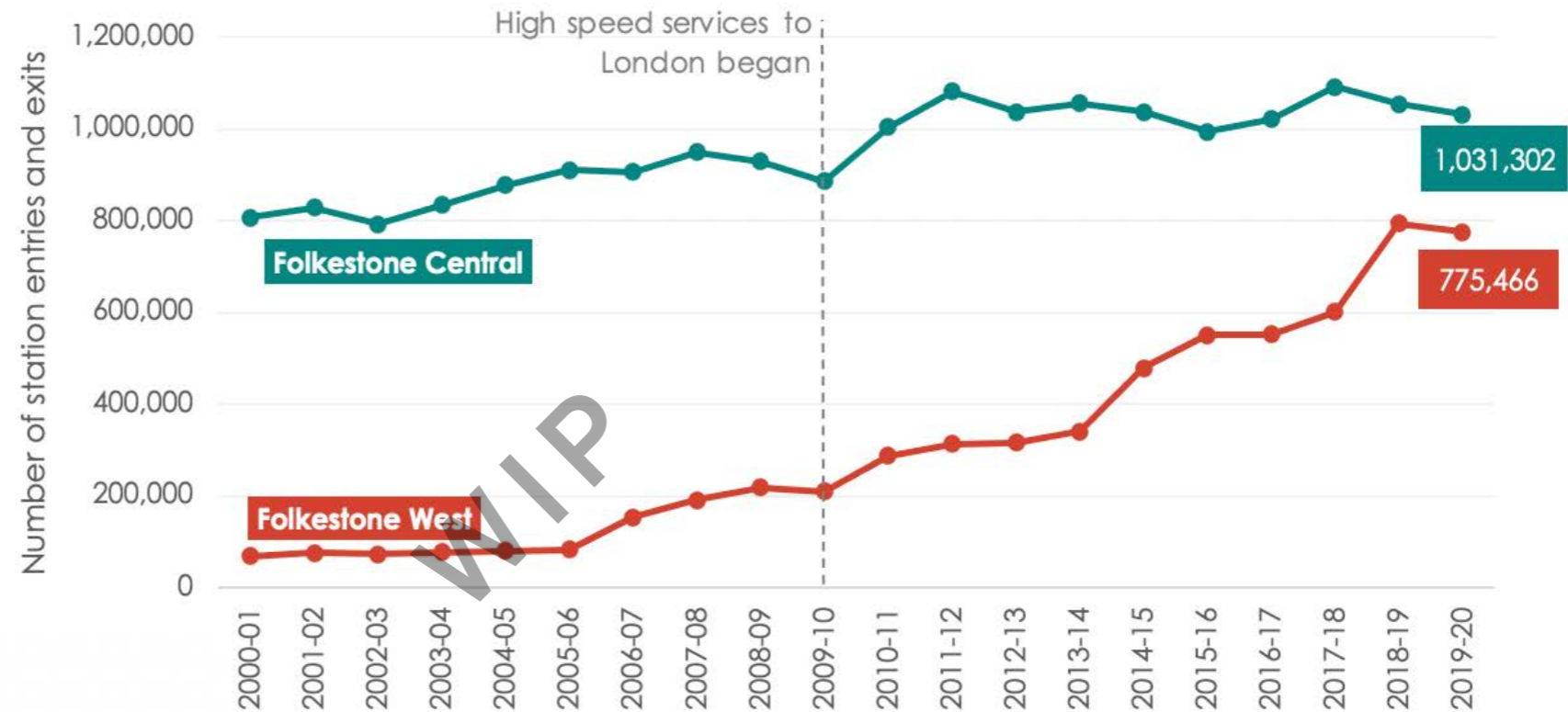
Boosting a sense of belonging and civic pride. Heritage assets could play a pivotal role in enhancing the sense of local pride.

Accessibility must be considered to overcome barriers to movement and reconnecting assets.

Key findings

Visiting Folkestone

- Beautiful beaches, strong heritage and excellent train & road links to London and Europe have supported a growing visitor economy in recent years.
- Station usage data, with over 1.8 million entries and exits made at the two stations in the town in 2019/2020, shows a 19% increase on 2015 levels and a 65% increase on 2010.

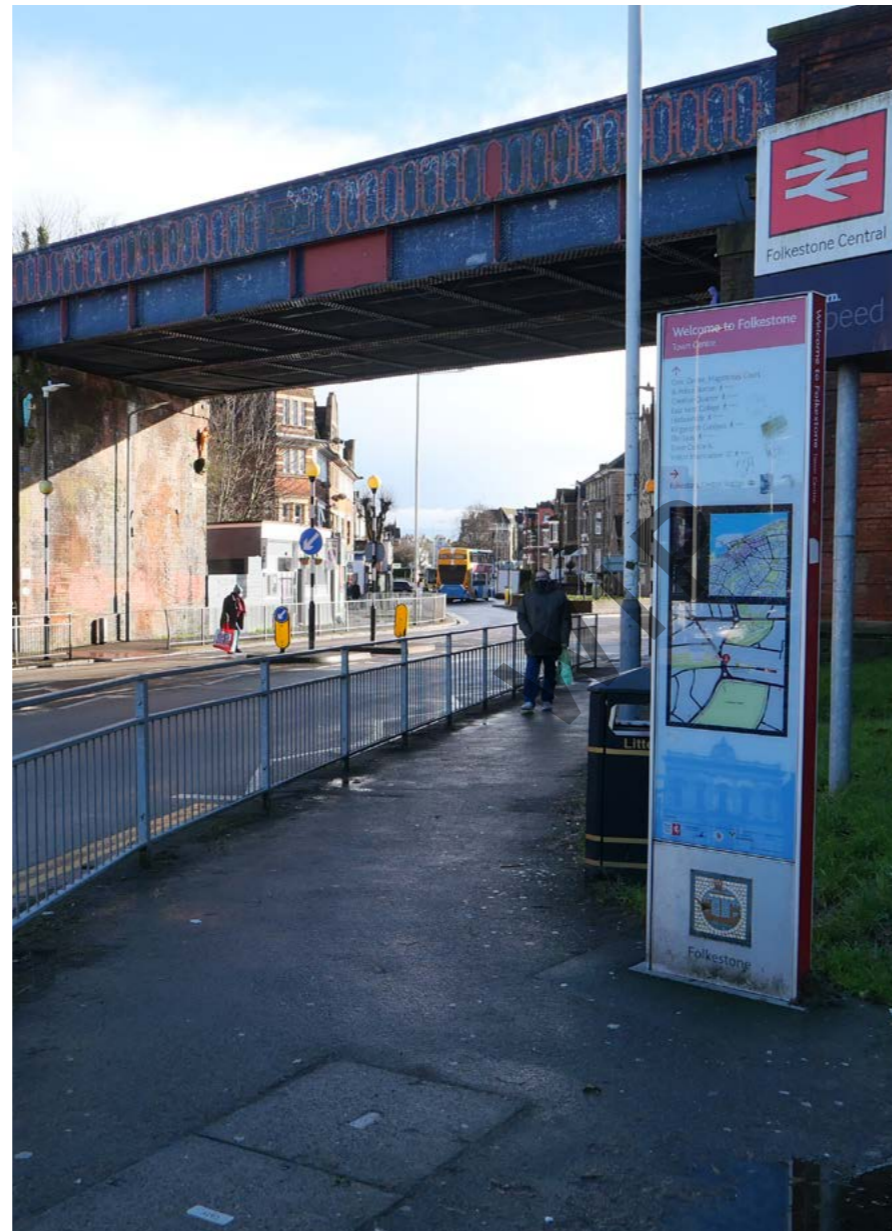


Graph produced by PRD
 Source: Station Usage Estimates, 2019/2020, Office of Rail and Road

Key findings

Visiting Folkestone

- Arrival from the station is disconnected and lacks wayfinding to the Town Centre and local assets.
- Bouverie Place is a clearly visible landmark of arrival into the Town Centre but has poor visual appeal.
- There is no central public square or welcoming entrance



↑ Signage on arrival from the station and view toward Cheriton Street



↑ The environment immediately outside the station is dominated by road



↑ Crossing to Cheriton Street from the station is not intuitive

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

Visiting & Footfall

Folkestone is already an attractive place to visit.

Better pedestrian links and public realm around the town centre area will help to stitch under-used areas back together, placing an emphasis away from the Cultural Quarter.

Folkestone has good transport links but lacks a sense of arrival.

Improving connectivity and wayfinding to the Station area will improve footfall in the Town Centre area. Addressing connectivity & accessibility challenges will also help to support Covid-19 recovery.

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.

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.

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)
**HERITAGE & REVITALISATION
IN FOLKESTONE**

Activity 1

Heritage & revitalisation in Folkestone

Folkestone is already an attractive place to visit. Station usage data shows over 1.8 million entries and exits made at the two stations in the town in 2019/2020, which is a 19% increase on 2015 levels and a 65% increase on 2010.

Folkestone has many assets, including natural environments and a rich history.

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

How can we make the most of Folkestone's assets to attract visitors whilst enhancing the lives of current residents?

How can events & public realm interventions support this offer? Which areas or heritage assets are most in need of support?

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?

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