

# **Folkestone & Hythe District Heritage Strategy**

## **Appendix 1: Theme 10 Transport**

**PROJECT:** Folkestone & Hythe District Heritage Strategy  
**DOCUMENT NAME:** Theme 10: Transport

| Version   | Status         | Prepared by | Date     |
|---|----------------|-------------|----------|
| V01   | INTERNAL DRAFT | F Clark     | 04.02.17 |
| Comments – first draft of text. No illustrations or figures and need to finalise references.<br>Add Folkestone Leas Lift CIC to current activities??? |                |             |          |

| Version   | Status      | Prepared by | Date     |
|---|-------------|-------------|----------|
| V02   | FIRST DRAFT | F Clark     | 13.04.17 |
| Comments – First draft of text ready for circulation. No illustrations or figures and need to finalise references. Photographs need to be added (suggestions made). Still need to cross-check research and add <i>Key Components</i> table. |             |             |          |

| Version               | Status         | Prepared by   | Date     |
|-----------------------|----------------|---------------|----------|
| V03                   | RETURNED DRAFT | D Whittington | 16.11.18 |
| Update back from FHDC |                |               |          |

| Version  | Status             | Prepared by | Date    |
|--|--------------------|-------------|---------|
| V04  | CONSULTATION DRAFT | S MASON     | 2 12 18 |
| Title page added and edit following comments from FHDC |                    |             |         |

| Version | Status | Prepared by | Date |
|---------|--------|-------------|------|
| V05     |        |             |      |
|         |        |             |      |

## **Appendix 1, Theme 10 - Transport**

### **1. Summary**

The District has a valuable collection of heritage assets relating to various means of transportation. For centuries a number of the Districts coastal towns have been important ports and continued to provide cross channel links with continental Europe. The development of the District and its towns and villages have been impacted and influenced by new means of transport, and many of these have now become iconic features of the local character. Means of transportation have played an important role in the local economy and tourism which are notable in Kent due to its proximity to London and the continent. These assets are significant to local identity and offer opportunities to experience parts of the district's history.

### **2. Introduction**

The district has a rich history of various modes of transport that have each shaped the area in important and varied ways. These transportation heritage assets cover the land, air and sea and have played central roles in developing the counties economy, tourism and mobility of its local people as well as for visitors from further afield.

#### ***The Railways***

In 1825 there were two events that would drastically affect the course of transport in Kent. The Stockton and Darlington Railway Company (S&DR) opened and operated the first public railway to use steam locomotives in the country that year. Its first line connected Shildon with Stockton-on-Tees and Darlington and was built with the purpose of providing quicker and more effective transportation of coal from the inland mines in county Durham to its terminus point at Darlington. Coal had previously been carried from the mines by packhorses and then later by horse and carts when the roads had improved, but this was unsurprisingly a limited and much slower means of transportation. The railway opened up a far more effective and lucrative way of transporting coal and it soon also became available for passengers that same year.

Following the Stockton and Darlington Railway, other companies began to invest in this new mode of transport and routes began to be established across the country on which to build new railway lines. In Kent, parliament agreed to the construction of a railway or tram road between Whitstable and Canterbury which then formerly opened in 1830 and became the first railway line in the county. It was a passenger and freight line but was plagued by financial difficulties and did not have much success during its earlier years.

Early railways were not the cheap transport option that some assume, certainly passenger trains were uncomfortable and far from a particularly pleasant way to travel as well as being out of reach financially for many people. The idea of the 'cheap-day out' soon caught on and railway travel became available to working individuals and families that wanted to have a day by the sea for their annual holiday. Railways began affecting the local economies and housing developments, and by 1914 very few places in Kent were more than 3 miles from a train station. Generally,

Kent was not a heavily industrial county and so the railways changed little around the patterns of industry; with the exception of Ashford that became a major industrial centre.

The railways were large employers of labour and were pumping money back onto the Kentish economy primarily in the form of wages. There was a national demise of the long-distance coach service though other forms of transport such as the tramway survived longer and were still used into the early 1950s. Links between villages and the larger urban centres were improved and the high street began to develop with big chain shops starting to appear. The two main railway companies that operated in Kent were South Eastern Railway (SER) and London, Chatham and Dover Railway (LCDR). Particularly from the 1860s, these two companies were in fierce competition with one another that resulted in commercial pressures and financially unviable lines being constructed. In 1899 the two companies merged and then in 1923 they became constituents of Southern Rail (SR).

The railway reached the district in 1843 when the South Eastern Railway Company (SER) built a railway that travelled across Kent from London to **Folkestone** and Dover via Oxted and Tonbridge. When SER reached Folkestone in 1843 the first station was opened and named *Folkestone* in December of that year. It handled substantial numbers of passengers who were travelling to the continent via Folkestone Harbour as well as day-trippers for the town. Eight trains each way ran per day and the fastest trains could reach London 92 miles away in 3 hours and 5 minutes on an average speed of 29.6 miles per hour. Once Folkestone Harbour opened its own station in 1849 *Folkestone* was renamed *Folkestone Old* and then *Folkestone Junction* due to its position at the head of the important *Branch Line* that led to the now busy Folkestone Harbour. Further traffic was taken away from *Folkestone Junction* when a station at *Shorncliffe Camp* (now known as *Folkestone West*) was opened in 1863. The primary business at *Folkestone Junction* had become goods traffic and continued in this way for some years. The line was electrified in 1961 and then in 1962 *Folkestone Junction* became *Folkestone East*. The station was closed to passengers three years later.

The station at *Folkestone West* initially had two platform faces either side of double tracks until the station was rebuilt in 1881 with two platform faces either side of four tracks. Around 1887 a bay was added and between this year and 1947 the station also served as the southern terminus and interchange for the Elham Valley Railway Line. The station was again altered in 1961 during the Kent Coast Electrification and in 1994 due to a loss of boat traffic to the Channel Tunnel the two central tracks were removed.

In 1884, *Cheriton Arch* was provided between *Folkestone West* and *Folkestone Junction* (later *Folkestone East*). The name *Radnor Park* was adopted in 1886 and operated with only two platforms for a few years until it was rebuilt in 1890 with an added bay and then renamed as *Folkestone Central* in 1895. The station was again rebuilt in 1961 when the line was electrified and had two island platforms linked by a subway. In 1999 one of the island platforms was abandoned and whilst all of the buildings were removed the platform remains today. Today *Folkestone Central* and *Folkestone West* are the main stations that serve the Folkestone area.

Insert map of railway network that includes lost and current Folkestone stations.

The line between Folkestone Harbour and what was *Folkestone Junction* (later *Folkestone East*) is known as the *Branch Line* and was only used for freight until 1847 when the first swing bridge was constructed that linked the viaduct to reclaimed land and the first sections of the station and warehouse were completed. By 1849 the *Folkestone Harbour* station was open to passengers and became the first international rail-sea-rail service between London and Paris. Folkestone Harbour became a popular port from which to travel via ferry across the channel to Boulogne and competed with its rival at the Dover port which linked to Calais. In 1856 the station and refreshment rooms were reconstructed and then in 1893 the original swing bridge was replaced by a second structure that would serve for a further 37 years until international traffic had increased to such a level that the harbour station had to be extended.

Insert map/image of Folkestone Harbour Branch.

The rebuilding of the station saw the two platforms being reconstructed around a tight curve which then gave access to the timber pier whose foundations had been laid years earlier. Canopies were installed and a footbridge connecting the two platforms was also added adjacent to the level crossing. The goods yard was extended and two signal boxes were added at each end of the station. The port continued to be popular and in 1904 the French Ambassador opened an again extended station that now included cloakrooms, a ticket office, customs halls and refreshment facilities. Further alterations to the station and pier continued and it then acted as an important port for troops during the First World War. In 1930 the swing bridge was removed and replaced with the present structure that is now a Grade II Listed Building.

In 1968 freight facilities were withdrawn from the harbour resulting in the removal of all sidings to the east of the station that was then used as land for the car ferry services. The sidings to the west of the station were also removed and the 'up' platform was extended to connect to the pier platform. Ferry services at the Folkestone Harbour continued but its popularity had declined. When the Channel Tunnel was opened in 1994, many of the ferry services operating from Folkestone moved to Dover and Ramsgate. The last traditional ferry departure from Folkestone Harbour was in 1991 when the ferry Horsa left for the continent. Ferry services continued until 2000 which marked the end of Folkestone Harbour as a cross channel passenger port for the first time in its history. In 2001 the third rail was de-energised and the 'up' line was taken out of use. An official closure ceremony was planned for 2008 but objections meant that it was not until 2009 that Network Rail began the formal process of closing the line. The Office of the Rail Regulator

declared the Branch Line officially closed in 2014 but much of the station, station buildings and tracks still survive in situ today.

In 2004 the Folkestone Harbour was sold by then owners Sea Containers to Roger de Haan and then in 2007 the new Folkestone Harbour Company acquired further land on the seafront. Extensive consultation has taken place to discuss options for the regeneration of the Folkestone seafront and harbour and in 2015 the development proposals received planning approval from Local Authority. Significant regeneration work has already taken place on the Harbour Arm which is now a cultural hub that is open to visitors seven days a week. The Folkestone Harbour Company have agreed to preserve the Station Masters House, signal box, platform canopies and 'Bullion Room' in addition to the listed viaduct and swing bridge as part of the regeneration and redevelopment work. The rich maritime heritage of the Folkestone seafront and harbour are being incorporated into the new development in order to highlight this valuable and integral heritage as well as to reconnect the area to its rich history as a port and seaside town. There are also hopes to re-establish the Folkestone Harbour as a ferry port and again continue services to the continent as it had done for many years earlier.

Insert image of Folkestone Harbour station.

The further history of the railway in the district has been largely characterised by the conflicts between South Eastern Railway (SER) and London, Chatham and Dover Railway (LCDR). Fierce competition between the two companies in the years leading up to their merger in 1899 led to the construction of a number of unprofitable lines that were not financially viable and consequently have not survived. In the district these include the **Elham Valley Railway**, the **Appledore to Dungeness** branch lines and the **Hythe & Sandgate Branch**.

The first moves towards establishing a line in the **Dungeness** area came about in 1866 when the New Romney Railway was proposed and was intended to provide a connection to the Hastings-Ashford mainline at Appledore. This idea stagnated until the 1870s when in 1873 the Rye and Dungeness Railway & Pier Company proposed that the Dungeness area be developed as a major ferry port that would offer a faster crossing than was currently possible from Folkestone or Dover. This again did not materialise and the powers passed to SER in 1875. Extensive research was undertaken into the feasibility of Dungeness as a ferry port with a crossing route to the French fishing port of Tréport. In 1881 the Lydd Railway Company was formed and was granted permission to construct a single track line from Appledore to Lydd via Brookland. The work was done but the Lydd Railway Company soon became part of the SER and the line was subsequently opened in December of 1881 to provide passenger traffic to Lydd and goods to Dungeness.

In 1882 the company was authorised to construct two extensions to the line, the first from Lydd to New Romney and the second from Appledore to Headcorn via Tenterden. A further extension from Headcorn to Loose was also proposed in 1883. The line to New Romney opened to all traffic in 1884 but the other extensions were

not pursued and the Lydd Railway Company had officially been absorbed by SER the following year. Unfortunately for the line and its promoters, the port at Dungeness was never built and so the line never served the primary purpose that it had been built for. The line to New Romney continued to serve the local community transporting farm produce and livestock, mostly sheep, to the market. During the First World War a connection to a firing range at Lydd was added and remained in use until the 1950s.

By the 1920s the coast along much of the district had become a popular location for holiday camps and the construction of the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Light Railway in 1927 further revitalised the area and its railways. By this time SER and LCDR were constituents of Southern Railway (SR) who invested in the line and added two new halts at Lydd-on-Sea and Greatstone-on-Sea. Lydd station was renamed as *Lydd Town* and a new alignment joined the Dungeness branch to the new *Romney Junction* and the original line between Lydd and New Romney was closed. The line was again significant during the Second World War as it found itself on the frontline after the fall of France in 1940. Following the war, repairs were needed and the line continued to operate in transporting holiday makers, livestock and local farmers produce. In 1948 the line again changed hands and was now under the British Railways Southern Region. The 1950s saw the line continue its work until the Beeching Plan in 1963 listed the line for closure. The line between Romney Junction and Dungeness had been closed to goods in 1953 but the continued passenger and goods traffic on the rest of the line had continued to provide a steady income. Goods to and from New Romney ceased in 1964 followed closely by passengers in 1967. The goods service to Lydd Town continued until 1971 when it was also closed.

Today the line remains open to freight traffic and also sees regular nuclear waste traffic from the Dungeness Power Station. There are remains of the station buildings and some are now private residences. They form a collection of valuable heritage assets that are a remnant of a dynamic history of transportation. The Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway has continued to thrive and is now an iconic feature of the district and its transport heritage.

Insert map of original Appledore to Dungeness Branch Lines.

Insert image of RHDR.

Another of the lines that no longer survives in the district is the **Elham Valley Railway** that was again largely as a result of commercial competition between SER and LCDR. This line had mainline status during its operation though much of it has since been lost either by development or through becoming overgrown since its closure in 1947. The Elham Valley Railway Company was authorised in 1864 to construct the railway that would travel between Canterbury and Folkestone but nothing was done until later in 1883 when a new line by the LCDR prompted action. SER took over the Elham Valley Railway Company in 1884 in order to maintain its monopoly over the traffic to Folkestone. The new line ran from *Folkestone Central* to *Canterbury West* via stations at *Lyminge*, *Elham*, *Barham*, *Bishopsbourne* and

*Bridge.* The construction of the line involved some heavy engineering of tunnels and earthworks, the remains of which can still be seen today. The line was officially opened in 1887 between *Cheriton Junction* and *Barham*, the rest of the route to Canterbury following in 1889.

The line was not especially busy, but it had the support of its local communities. It did serve a significant military purpose during the First World War particularly after a landslip on the line between Folkestone and Dover meant that the Elham line became the only link between the two ports. Following the war, the East Kent Road Car Company introduced a local bus service that took away most of the passenger traffic from the line. As a result of this decline, Southern Railway reduced the section between *Lyminge* and *Canterbury* to a single track in 1931 and only the section between *Lyminge* and *Cheriton Junction* remained as a double track. During the Second World War the line was again used by the military due to its strategic position and ability to defend the south coast.

After the war in 1945 the line between *Lyminge* and *Folkestone* reverted to a passenger service and the remainder of the line continued in its transportation of goods. The local population petitioned for the line to be entirely reopened to passenger use but unfortunately this never materialised despite intentions by Southern Railway to do so. The line suffered as a result of post-war rationalisation and was closed to all traffic in 1947. The line was lifted a few years later but remains of the station buildings and the line route survive today and are valuable heritage assets from this lost line. Notably, part of the line is now a public right of way and can be followed from Elham for some 4 miles. The line had the support of its local communities and its remains today contribute an important part to the local character and heritage.

Insert map of original Elham Valley Railway Line.

Insert image of Lyminge Library building – reused station building.

The last section of railway that has since been lost within the district is the **Hythe & Sandgate Branch Line**. Hythe had been bypassed during the 1840s when SER built their main line to Folkestone despite the status of the town as a Cinque Port and busy market town. Later development of Seabrook and Sandgate resulted in SER looking to build a branch to connect the towns during the 1860s. In 1870, the Hythe & Sandgate Railway Company owned the land and SER would finance the line and its construction. The branch line was 3.5 miles long and was opened as a double track in 1874, originally running from Westenhanger. In 1876 there was authorisation to build an extension to Folkestone which would have been beneficial as it would not have faced the same problems that had plagued the Folkestone Harbour branch, namely difficult steep inclines. However, this was never realised and the line continued as it was.

Sandling Junction station was opened in 1888 and the line continued to operate through attractive landscape such as by Saltwood Castle. Following the First World War Southern Railway took the decision to close the branch line in 1931 due to its



lower levels of traffic. Passengers and goods continued to travel from Sandling Junction until temporary closures during the Second World War, and then the line was finally closed at the end of 1951 after a brief reopening in 1945. Again there are remains of this line that survive today that are considered as valuable heritage assets and contribute to the local character. The Sandling Junction station is still open and operates on the main route from London and Ashford to Folkestone.

The railway has and still continues to play an important role in the District's history and identity. The remains of the lost lines and those that survive, particularly the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Light Railway that has been explored in detail in an earlier paper, are valuable heritage assets that allow people to experience the history of the railways in this area. They have developed as an important means of transportation for both passengers and goods and some continue to fulfil this role today. Their development is also integral to changes in other aspects of society such as local and wider economy, living standards and working conditions.

Insert map of original Hythe & Sandgate Branch Line

### ***The Tramway***

In addition to the Hythe & Sandgate branch line, a further 4 miles of horse tramway from Sandgate Hill along the coast to Hythe was constructed and opened in 1891. It was hoped that the tramway would allow for better connections to the towns of Sandgate and Hythe where the branch line stations were inconveniently located above the towns that they served.

**The Hythe & Sandgate Tramway** was distinct in that it remained horse-drawn for the duration of its operation. It had come close to being sold to the National Electric Construction Company which intended to replace the horse-drawn tramway with an electric tramway from Hythe to Folkestone. These plans however never came to anything and the tramway remained under SER. The onset of the First World War meant that the tram service was suspended as the horses were needed for the war effort in France. The tram was reopened in 1919 but there was still a lack of horses following the war and so it took some time for normal service to resume. By this time however the tram was losing its appeal and there was a lack of investment in uniforms or winter services. At the end of the season in 1921 the tramway was closed for the last time.

The tram buildings do not survive in Sandgate and have been severely damaged in Hythe. Some rails do remain embedded and have since been found during development work though most of the tramway track was removed and roads reinstated once it was closed. The stone fascia showing the tramway and company name survive on a building in Hythe that are now privately used. Whilst most remains of the tramway have now been lost, it remains an important asset to the history of transport in the district. The remnants that do survive are valuable and significant to the local character.

Insert image of Hythe & Sandgate  
Tramway + Stone Facia still visible at  
Hythe.

### ***The Leas Lift***

With the arrival of the railway in Folkestone in 1843, and the rise in popularity of the seaside resort and pleasure promenade, new facilities had to be provided to cater for the growing number of visitors to Folkestone's seaside promenade along the Leas and seafront. Folkestone pier was opened in 1888 and the promenade and coastal garden along the Leas had become a prominent visitor attraction. Visitor traffic to the town was also provided by the traffic wanting to use the Folkestone Harbour cross channel links to the continent.

The Leas Lift was opened in 1885 and provided improved access between the seafront and the upper Leas. The cliff railway was the third hydraulic lift of its kind to have been constructed anywhere else and uses a water balancing system. The two cars are connected by a rope that runs over a wheel. When the brake is released the top car's tank is filled with water which makes it heavier than the bottom car and enables it to descend whilst pulling the bottom car up. When the heavier car reaches the bottom the water is released into a bottom reservoir and pumped back up to a top reservoir and so on. The lift proved to be so popular that in 1890 a second track was opened and it is alleged that on an August Bank Holiday that year the lift took around 8500 passengers.

The remains of a further lift that served the Metropole Hotel (now residential apartments) can still be seen on the upper Leas and another lift also connected the western Leas area to Sandgate. The original lift still survives and is designated as a Grade II\* Listed Building. Unfortunately, due to health and safety concerns about the hydraulic system the lift was closed in January of this year (2017) after almost 132 years of service. It has been estimated that during its time of operation the lift has carried approximately 50,000,000 passengers which is a testament to its popularity. The Leas Lift is an iconic feature on the Leas and is a valued local heritage asset as well as being integral to the local character. It is also a valuable example of novel means of transportation that during the nineteenth century formed an important part of the pleasure promenade at Folkestone.

Insert image of Leas Lift.

### ***Cross Channel Links***

Folkestone port has a long history of providing cross channel links to the continent, namely Boulogne. This service has been provided from Folkestone Harbour since the coming of the railway in 1843 up until recently in 2000. When the Channel Tunnel was opened in 1994, this had a profound effect on the ferry services at Folkestone and they quickly moved to other ports such as Dover and Ramsgate.

Cross channel links from Folkestone are now provided by the Channel Tunnel and link to Calais in France.

In 1843, South Eastern Railway (SER) owned the Folkestone Harbour but were not legally allowed to operate their own steamers. The original vessels were sub-chartered from the New Commercial Steam Packet Company that year and provided the first ferry crossings from Folkestone to Boulogne. These vessels proved to be unsatisfactory and so SER formed the South Eastern and Continental Steam Packet Company and quickly ordered eight new vessels. This continued until 1853 when SER were given permission to operate their own steamers. These early crossings were able to get passengers to Boulogne in 1 hour and 45 minutes, and once the railway in France had reached Boulogne the total journey time between London and Paris was 12 hours and 30 minutes. By 1851 the journey was another 90 minutes shorter.

Passenger traffic continued to grow and in six months of 1854 it has been shown that 31,594 passengers crossed between Folkestone and Boulogne compared with 12,132 between Dover and Calais. Later on in 1867 a direct railway line to Calais reached Boulogne and joined the existing route to Paris which meant that the Dover to Calais route was now 4 miles shorter and became more popular. Folkestone Harbour experienced problems with larger steamers due to the conditions of the port and services were further subject to tidal conditions. A new lower water pier was completed in 1861 but the original south pier remained the preferred location for the majority of crossings.

In 1876 an upsurge in passenger traffic saw the extension of the Folkestone Harbour towards the new pier which itself was lengthened in 1881-3 resulting in the almost complete abandonment of services from the old south pier. The journey time was reduced again to 8 hours in 1884 and then in 1886 fixed timetables were introduced replacing tidal services and making the journey possible in 7 hours and 30 minutes by 1891. The harbour was widened again between 1897 and 1904 and is as we know it today. During the First World War services continued although two vessels were lost, one being The Queen that was sunk by German units off the Varne Bank in 1916. Normal service was soon resumed after the war ended.

Insert old photograph of  
Folkestone Harbour pre-WWI

After 1925 the Folkestone to Boulogne crossings were operated by twin turbine steamers Biarritz and Maid of Orleans, but further disruption occurred during the Second World War. Passenger traffic was opened again in 1945 and saw the resumption of the Ostend and Calais service as Dover was still being used by the Admiralty. However it was not until 1947 that passengers were able to travel to Boulogne again from Folkestone. Cross channel services continued to grow again and in 1955 no-passport day excursions were reinstated and Folkestone saw an increase in passenger numbers again. By this time Dover, Calais and Boulogne all had link-spans connecting shore to ship in operation whilst Folkestone was now

struggling and suffered with a lack of investment. Dover continued to develop and was better equipped to handle the increasing car and freight traffic crossing to Calais. Folkestone Harbour was evidently saved by a £9 million investment that finally enabled the building of its own link-span in 1972. This brought with it a new lease of life and the crossing to Boulogne was reinstated on a daily basis. For the first time, twice nightly freight crossings were also established to Ostend.

The vehicle Ferry was late in coming but enabled Folkestone port to handle large amounts of passenger and goods traffic. In 1980 the last packet boat left Folkestone Harbour for Boulogne and ended a long history of channel steamers. Ferries now reigned supreme but more services continued to be diverted to Dover from Folkestone. In 1984 Sealink UK Ltd was privatised and the new Sealink British Ferries looked forward to a profitable future. Under this new management, the Folkestone to Boulogne traffic increased rapidly to record levels though there was now an impending threat from the construction of the Channel Tunnel. In 1990 Sealink British Ferries was sold by Sea Containers to Stena Line of Sweden, but the ownership of Folkestone Harbour was excluded. Expansion and investment was now being concentrated on the Dover to Calais route. In 1991 Stena Line announced the closure of the Folkestone to Boulogne service which took place later that year.

In 1987 Folkestone Harbour was offered a further lifeline when Sea Containers (still the owners of the harbour) purchased the hovercraft company Hoverspeed. In 1992 a new high speed Seacat catamaran service between Folkestone and Boulogne was introduced and quickly became immensely popular with day trippers. Unfortunately with duty free abolition in 1999 passenger traffic dropped significantly and with this so did profitability. In September of 2000 the service between Folkestone and Boulogne was finally closed and for the first time in its history, the Folkestone Harbour ceased to exist as a cross channel port.

Insert image of Folkestone Harbour  
and associated assets eg Viaduct and  
Swing Bridge

The Channel Tunnel now provides cross channel services from Folkestone to Calais for both passengers and freight. The Folkestone Harbour still survives in good condition and a number of the station buildings remain. The viaduct and swing bridge are Grade II Listed Buildings and other assets at the harbour are being preserved as part of the new harbour and Folkestone seafront development by the Folkestone Harbour Company. The heritage assets relating to Folkestone's history as a popular cross channel port are significant to the local identity as a port town with a rich maritime heritage. There are a number of opportunities as part of the new developments here to optimise on interpretation and heritage regeneration. The heritage here constitutes an important collection of assets that are a testament to the varied and once substantial cross channel links provided from Folkestone port.

### ***The Channel Tunnel***

The Channel Tunnel has had a significant impact on the district in a number of ways. As far as the heritage assets explored in this paper are concerned, the Channel

Tunnel has pushed some into decline such as the ferry services from Folkestone Harbour. However, it now plays an important part in the cross channel links between Folkestone and the continent as part of the District's means of international transport and so is being included here.

The idea for a tunnel connecting England to France was first conceived around 1802 when a French engineer proposed an underground highway for horse-drawn carriages. However, it was not until 1856 when the first serious railway proposal was put forward again by a French surveyor who suggested the tunnel to the Emperor Napoleon. This did not come to anything but much later during the 1980s a coalition of French and British leaders invited private companies to submit proposals for an international link. An underground tunnel beneath the channel came out on top.

Construction began in 1988 with the tunnel being dug simultaneously from Britain and France. It is one of the largest and most expensive construction projects ever undertaken and finally cost a total of £9 billion. Some of the machinery used to bore out the tunnel were designed and made especially for this task. The spoil was used on the British side to create a 73-acre hoe known as Samphire Hoe between Folkestone and Dover. On December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1990 the French and British tunnels connected and the project was subsequently completed in May of 1994. The tunnel was officially opened by Queen Elizabeth II and French President Francois Mitterrand. Today the Channel Tunnel has seen a continued increase in passenger and freight traffic and offers up to 4 crossings to Calais per hour that take 35 minutes from Folkestone to Calais.

Insert image of the Channel Tunnel Folkestone Terminal.

### ***Lydd Airport***

The Lydd Airport, known formerly as Ferryfield, was built in 1954 as a replacement for the old Ashford Airport at Lympe. It was built for Silver City Airways and was initially used for car carrying air ferry services operating primarily to Le Touquet in France. By 1959 the airport was handling over 250,000 passengers annually making it one of the busiest airports in the country. There was a decline in services during the early 1970s when the roll-on-roll-off ferry services were being offered at Folkestone and Dover, but freight and other passenger services did continue.

Insert image of Lydd Airport.

The airport is still in operation today and continues to offer passenger and goods transportation. In 2014 plans to expand the airport were approved though they have been met with opposition from some local interest groups.

*Key Components* table to summarise main heritage assets relating to this theme to be inserted here.

### 3. Description of the Heritage Assets

The heritage assets of this theme will be grouped into categories as per the type of transportation. The majority of the assets are undesignated but form an important collection of heritage assets that are integral to the local character and historic identity of the various towns involved.

#### Railways

##### *Folkestone*

The railways first reached the district in 1843 at Folkestone and there are now two main stations that serve Folkestone town; *Folkestone Central* and *Folkestone West*. The first station to have been constructed at Folkestone was known originally as *Folkestone* but later became *Folkestone East* which is now closed to passenger and good traffic and is only used occasionally but railway staff. Remains of the *Folkestone East* station survive though none of them are designated:

- Signal box survives in situ but is probably due to be dismantled in 2018.
- East good yard is overgrown but survives in fairly good condition.
- Sections of the ‘up’ and ‘down’ platforms remain in situ, the ‘down’ platform being used occasionally by railway staff but is also due for demolition once the signal box has been removed.

There have been a number of proposals for various means of reusing the land as well as calls for the reinstatement of the *Folkestone East* station. As it is an undesignated site, it is not afforded statutory protection as a building or architecture of special historic interest but is clearly important to the local communities. The station is part of the town’s transportation heritage and is valued as the first station to have been established in Folkestone upon the arrival of the railway. It currently remains disused and is becoming overgrown and neglected.

##### *Folkestone Harbour*

The Folkestone Harbour has played a significant role not only in the history of the railway, but also in Folkestone’s long history as a cross channel port. There are a number of heritage assets that survive from the heyday of Folkestone’s Harbour, the *Branch Line* and the ferry port. Some of them are listed and so are afforded statutory protection whilst others have been identified as valuable and are being preserved as part of the development plans for Folkestone’s seafront and harbour. Significant opportunities for interpretation have been identified and the hope is that in incorporating these assets into the new development, it will reconnect the area and the people that live and visit there to the rich maritime heritage of Folkestone. The below heritage assets have been identified at the *Folkestone Harbour* relating to its role as a railway station (heritage assets relating to the ferry services will be explored later on in this section):

- Platforms and canopies survive in good condition with the 'down' track still in place.
- Two footbridges are extant.
- Signal box remains at the north end of the platform in excellent condition with all equipment also remaining.
- Small remnant of SER station building at the north end of the 'down' platform.
- Goods yard extant but is now used as a car park.
- **Viaduct and Swing Bridge** extant and are a **Grade II Listed Building**. The viaduct was built in 1843 by SER and was designed by William Cubitt who was the Chief Engineer of the line at the time. The structure across the harbour consists of 13 arches with one hidden by the adjacent jetty access ramp on the west side of the viaduct north of the harbour. The swing bridge is also included in the designation for group value. It was designed in 1930 by George Ellson who was the then Chief Engineer for Southern Railway. The concrete structures beneath the viaduct are not included in the listing. The viaduct and swing bridge are important heritage assets as they illustrate bold architectural design as part of an important and early rail-sea passenger interchange. This viaduct is also a particularly unusual example of a harbour viaduct and which has contributed to its listing. As a group these assets are important in relation to the **East Pier and Lighthouse at the end of Folkestone Harbour Outer Pier** that are also **Grade II Listed Buildings**.
- The **Folkestone Harbour Company** have also agreed to preserve the **Station Masters House, signal box, platform canopies** and '**Bullion Room**' as part of the Folkestone Seafront and Harbour development. These are not designated heritage assets but have been recognised as being integral to the local character and identity of the Folkestone Harbour. They will be incorporated into the development and regeneration of the area so as to reconnect the place and people to the rich maritime heritage of Folkestone and its harbour.

#### *New Romney and Dungeness Branches*

Parts of the line are still used for freight traffic and nuclear waste removal from the Dungeness Power Station. However other parts were closed permanently such as the section between *Romney Junction* and *New Romney* that ceased to operate for passengers and goods in 1967. There are valuable remains of station buildings and platforms that give an insight into the railway heritage of the district and its development over the years. Some of the stations have been completely lost to development and are now used for purposes such as car parks or industrial estates. Some simply no longer exist at the site. Remains that are extant and form a collection of heritage assets relating to these branch lines are listed below:

- *Brookland Halt*: The 'down' platform remains in good condition though the 'up' platform has become badly overgrown and is largely obscured. The station building is extant but is now used as a private residence.
- *Lydd Town*: The 'down' platform and signal box have been demolished. The 'up' platform and station building are extant though are now derelict and in poor condition. Some internal walls of the station building were removed during the 1970s when it was used as a motor workshop. The station building is boarded up and has suffered from vandalism and fire damage to the south east of the structure. The goods yard is extant and has remained largely derelict. In 2008 planning permission was given to Kent County Council to use the space as a temporary storage for refuse collection vehicles.

The reuse of the site as an interchange has been included in the district's Local Plan. Ideas to reopen the station with a view to improving access to Lydd airport have also been aired but have never materialised. It would however be difficult to reopen the line due to issues such as the number of occupational farm crossings and the line is not electrified and so passengers would need to change to diesel railcars at *Ashford International*.

- *Dungeness*: Only partial remains of the clinker and timber platform survive and are badly degraded due to coastal erosion and dereliction. The concrete base of the station building can still be seen.
- *Greatstone-on-Sea*: Only the concrete forecourt is extant and is now used as a car park. The platform was demolished and is now covered by an access road.

#### *Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Light Railway*

The Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Light Railway was opened in 1927 with the extension from New Romney to Dungeness being opened in 1929. The miniature 15in gauge line that runs between Hythe and Dungeness continues to operate today and has become an iconic feature of the district's railway heritage as well as to the tourism offer of the area. It is a popular attraction and enjoys consistent passenger traffic throughout its daily services. It played an important role during the World Wars being on the front line and was utilised to operate armoured miniature trains. The line has also had the continued support from SER and then later Southern Railway as it generated considerable traffic for the New Romney Branch Line right up until the latter's closure in 1967. The Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch Railway is now a valued and significant heritage asset that has played an important role in the history of the railway within the district. Whilst it is not listed, its communal and historical significance make it an integral part of the local character and identity.

#### *Elham Valley Railway*

The Elham Valley Railway line closed to passengers and goods traffic in 1947 despite support from the local communities that it served. The section between Peene and *Cheriton Junction* has now been built over by the Channel Tunnel terminal but there are remains of some of the other stations that existed along the line, the two tunnels and parts of the track route way. There is also now a museum at Peene that exhibits artefacts from the Elham Valley Railway and illustrates its history



as part of the railway developments in the district and Canterbury City. The heritage assets that survive today are listed below:

- *Lyminge*: Sections of both platforms survive and a roader shed has been removed and re-erected at the entrance to the Elham Valley Railway Museum at Peene. The station building is in excellent condition and is now used as a Kent County Council library.
- *Elham*: Parts of the 'up' platform survive as a garden boundary wall of a house called 'The Sidings'. The Station Masters House and two other railway cottages are now private residences. Leaving Elham the line of the track can be followed for approximately 4 miles north of Elham towards Barham and is a public right of way.

### *Hythe & Sandgate Branch*

The Hythe & Sandgate Branch Line closed in 1951 and now little remains of the line and its associated station buildings. Most have been completely demolished and replaced with new developments whilst the Sandling station is still open and operates along the main line from London and Ashford to Folkestone. The surviving remains have been listed below:

- *Sandling Junction*: The Hythe Branch 'down' platform is extant, and the north end is now used to reach the 'up' platform of the main line at Sandling station.
- *Hayne Tunnel (Hythe)*: The route from Sandling to Hayne Tunnel as of 2012 is now a public footpath along the Elham Valley Way. The tunnel itself remains in situ and has survived in fairly good condition though has now flooded several feet deep and the south of the tunnel has been partially filled with refuse.

## **Ferries**

### *Folkestone Harbour*

The heritage relating to the ferry services that have operated from Folkestone Harbour for over 150 years is significant to the local character as well as to Folkestone's identity as a historic port providing cross channel links. As has been shown previously in this paper, there are assets at the Folkestone Harbour that are designated and others that are being preserved as parts of the new developments to the seafront and harbour area. The surviving assets that remain from the ferry services offered here are listed below:

- The Sealink Ferry booking office on the west side of the harbour are extant but are now used for offices and a café. Recently, part of the building also provided a venue for the Folkestone's Fishing History and Heritage Museum.

## **Tramways**

### *Hythe and Sandgate*

The horse-drawn tramway that ran for 4 miles from Sandgate Hill to Hythe town was ultimately closed in 1921 due to other means of transport becoming more popular and the tramway seeing a decline in passenger traffic. It was unique in that it remained as a horse-drawn tramway throughout the duration of its operation despite ideas to convert it to an electric tramway which never materialised. The tracks have since been removed and reinstated as roads though some of the rails remain embedded and have been uncovered during ground works. Any evidence of the tramway terminus at Sandgate has now been lost with the tram sheds having been initially used as a bus garage and then later completely demolished and developed for housing. There are however remains of the tram buildings and tracks at Hythe that are listed below:

- Remains of tracks are still embedded in the forecourt of the Old Tram Shed and will be kept in place.
- The tram shed and stables at Rampart Road in Hythe have survived. They were initially reused as a furniture and antique warehouse storage facility. In 1947 the stables and offices became a repository for Newman's removal business and the tram shed was reused as a restaurant. In 2000 the tram shed was still being used as an Indian restaurant but soon afterwards closed and remained empty. In 2010 the building was badly damaged by fire and was subsequently partially demolished and is now boarded up and remains derelict. Because the offices and stables were brick buildings, they were undamaged and have now been reused as office.
- A stone fascia from the original tramway offices is extant on the office wall facing the derelict tram shed and stables. The fascia reads "S.E.R FOLKESTONE, HYTHE & SANDGATE TRAMWAY 1894". The land where the tram shed and stables sit derelict has recently been granted planning permission to build a two-storey building but this has received opposition as it will obscure the stone fascia. It has been agreed that the stone fascia will be viewable from the new building but will unfortunately be obscured otherwise.

Though there are now very few extant remains from the tramway, those that do survive are valuable heritage assets of this historic means of transportation. They are undesignated but are integral to the local character and distinctiveness.

## **The Leas Lift**

### *Folkestone*

The Leas Lift is another iconic feature of the District's transport heritage and has been a significantly popular attraction as part of the Folkestone seafront promenade and amusement park. The area has seen continued regeneration, particularly the Lower Leas Coastal Park, and has a significant collection of heritage assets that the Leas Lift is an important part of. These include the Leas Pavilion, the bandstand and the Pulhamite Caves in the coastal garden. This is a distinctive area of Folkestone and has a strong identity that is emphasised by its many heritage assets.

The Leas Lift survives in excellent condition and has been operational up until recently when in January of 2017 the lift was unfortunately closed. Details of the lift are below:

- The Leas Lift, including the waiting rooms, pump room, lower station tanks, track, cars, wheel houses, tank room, upper station tunnel and railings are a **Grade II\* Listed Building**. The lift has survived in excellent condition and has been operational for nearly 132 years since 1885.

It has been designated because it is only one of eight water balance cliff lifts built nationally and is one of the only three operated by the original system. It has a unique arrangement of two wheel houses with dual controls and originally two separate lifts and cars beside one another. The lift retains its original 1890s reciprocating pumps and early cast steel herringbone gears, original balance wheel and brake assembly and is the only functional lift in the world with a working band brake. It also has a unique automatic hydraulic remote engine control system and the waiting rooms as well as pump house are of particular architectural interest having been contracted by Reginald Pope.

#### **4. Statement of Significance**

Folkestone & Hythe District contains transport heritage assets that tell the story of transportation through the years. They have had significant impacts on the evolution and development of the District and continue to play an important role in the local character. Of particular significance are the railways and cross channel port heritage assets that have contributed a great deal to the identity as a coastal district. Whilst only a few of the transport heritage assets are designated, they should still be considered as important to the local character as well as to the local communities. There are a number of community groups that are working to preserve and enhance these assets which clearly demonstrates the communal value placed on this type of heritage. Overall, the transport heritage should be considered to be of **moderate to considerable significance** for its historical and communal value as well as for its contribution to the local character.

#### ***Evidential Value***

Unfortunately, a number of the heritage assets relating to this theme have been completely lost and so the likelihood of uncovering further remains through archaeological investigation is low. However, there has been evidence found during ground works of remains such as tramway and railway tracks and so continued investigation in these areas is likely to uncover further evidence. Due to the nature of these assets, they do not have as greater historical depth as many of the other themes in this strategy, and a number of the built structures are either stone or brick and so have survived well. Several of the assets that have survived have been very vulnerable to neglect and dereliction, but archaeological investigation is unlikely to reveal more than what is still extant. Work is also being done to regenerate the assets that have fallen out of use recently and so again what survives constitutes the extent of the asset and further investigation would reveal little more information.

Perhaps the best sources for historical information are the photo archives that many local groups hold which will help with sympathetic regeneration and restoration work.

### ***Historical Value***

The historical value of these assets is important in illustrating the evolution of transportation within the district and how this has also affected wider society, tourism and economy. Whilst the heritage assets from this theme may only date back a few centuries, they are still significant in demonstrating an important chapter in the county's history. The coming of the railway to the district in 1843 and the role of Folkestone as an important and popular cross channel port are integral to the overall local character. Where these assets have survived, people are able to connect to this history of transportation and experience its development in the area. Particularly important is where these assets are still in use today, such as the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway, that can offer powerful opportunities for people to experience the past in the present. Regeneration projects that are aiming to utilise transport heritage in the development, most notably the Folkestone Harbour's railway and cross channel port heritage, again offer unique opportunities to continue experiencing historic transport that has been integral to the local character and identity.

### ***Aesthetic Value***

Many of these assets have become iconic features in the local landscape and therefore have significant aesthetic value. Several of these assets survive in their original form and have continued as an integral part of the landscape and tourism offering. For example, the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway and Leas Lift are iconic features and form an important part of the overall identity of the District as well as the tourism and cultural offering of the area. They also provide a sensory experience for people and allow them to connect to the histories of transport in the district. Assets such as the Folkestone Harbour that have only been out of use for a short time are important to the aesthetics of the area as an important coastal port. They have helped to shape the landscape and character of the district and so continue to fulfil an important aesthetic role.

### ***Communal Value***

The communal value of these assets is particularly important as many of them have fallen out of use in living memory, most notably the Folkestone Harbour and Leas Lift. The nostalgic value placed on these assets is high as they have played an important role in the character of the local area during the lifetimes of current residents. Many of these assets have also enjoyed the support of their local communities, such as the Elham Valley Railway, and so the remaining assets are of significant communal value that is further demonstrated by the local initiatives that are working to preserve and enhance this heritage. Work is also being done that hopes to reinstate various assets, particularly relating to the railways and cross channel ferry services. This again demonstrates the high communal value that is placed on these assets and they continue to play an important role in their local communities. Some of these assets are also important for the local communities in that they provided jobs, supported the local economy and attracted great numbers of

visitors to the area. Many are still able to fulfil this role and these assets have received substantial local support throughout their life and still do. A number of local residents have collective memories of these assets and they are considered and appreciated as integral to the local character and experience of the place.

## 5. Vulnerabilities

The transport heritage assets of the district are arguably among the most vulnerable of those dealt with throughout this strategy, particularly as so few are designated. These assets are being affected by a number of factors that put them at significant risk of damage, deterioration or complete loss. Transportation and its development within the district constitute a rich history, and one that is important to the overall character and identity of the District. There are active local initiatives that are working to preserve, promote and enhance this heritage which further highlights the communal as well as historical value of this type of heritage.

Of the heritage assets highlighted in this paper, few are designated and so do not receive the same level of protection as Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments or other types of designated sites. Whilst some are important as communal assets and also have historical value, they remain vulnerable to neglect and degradation. Local listings can help to recognise sites and features as undesignated heritage assets and they may then merit consideration in planning decisions by Local Authority, but this has yet to be considered for these transport heritage assets.

The biggest threat to the remaining transport heritage assets within the district appears to be neglect and redundancy. Several of the assets, particularly relating to the railways and tramway, have either been completely lost or have fallen into poor states of dereliction through neglect or through falling out of use. Buildings becoming redundant have not been reused and have instead been demolished. A number of station buildings have been lost in this way and have been replaced with the development of car parks, industrial estates and new housing. Some of the buildings currently stand empty and are further vulnerable to damage and criminal activity whilst they are derelict. As an example, the tram shed and stables in Hythe have stood empty for some years now and have fallen into such poor states of disrepair through neglect as well as fire damage that they have now been partially demolished and stand empty whilst plans to redevelop have been approved. This will result in the total loss of these buildings as well as obscuring the extant tramway's stone facade that remains as a heritage asset from this type of transport. Where appropriate, buildings should be reused and as sympathetically as is possible otherwise these sites become vulnerable to rapid decline and dereliction through neglect.

These buildings and sites that are no longer used and stand empty are further vulnerable to criminal activity such as vandalism. This again will cause the progressive decline of the building and may also make it more difficult and costly to restore to any useful function. Other assets that are no longer in use have suffered from natural degradation through weathering and coastal erosion. As an example, the remains of the clinker and timber platform of the original *Dungeness* station have been badly damaged by coastal erosion and natural degradation as they are not in use and have been neglected. Other assets such as extant station platforms and railway tunnels are becoming badly overgrown which is obscuring and detracting

from their significance and contribution to the local communities. If left, this issue will worsen to a point where assets are lost entirely to these natural processes.

These vulnerabilities are of particular importance currently as whilst writing this paper the Leas Lift has been closed and may therefore be put at risk of these same vulnerabilities. Whilst this is a Listed Building and so receives statutory protection which will ensure its overall conservation, as a disused site it will be vulnerable to factors such as vandalism and natural degradation. Care must be taken to ensure that it remains in the condition that it was when it was selected for designation. As an important heritage site as well as communal asset, it is also significant to the local character and heritage of the area in general and is much valued by local people as well as by visitors.

Some of these assets explored in this paper have been reused, such as the Lyminge station building that is now used as a Kent County Council library. Wherever possible the reuse of a historic building is desirable, but care should be taken to remain sympathetic to its historical function, materials and identity. The Lyminge library has been largely maintained in the manner of the original station building and so is a sympathetic regeneration of a heritage asset. However other assets that are due to be redeveloped or used as part of regeneration projects may be vulnerable to unsympathetic development. There are some major projects going on within the district currently, the primary one that will affect a number of these assets being the Folkestone Seafront and Harbour development. This project has positively identified the value of transport heritage assets and their integral role to Folkestone's rich maritime history. In order to maximise the continued impact of these assets on the local character, a sympathetic development and integration into the new development should be sought.

A final vulnerability that is relevant to this group of heritage assets is the lack of resources to ensure maintenance and longevity. Some of the heritage assets within the district have resulted from financial ventures that were not viable, and others have declined for periods of their history because of a lack of resources and investment. The most relevant and current example of this is the Leas Lift that was closed on the 27<sup>th</sup> January 2017 because inadequate funding was raised and so closure could not be prevented. As a Listed Building the Leas Lift will be protected and conserved, but it is unfortunate that this valuable communal and heritage asset will no longer be open for public enjoyment. There are local groups that work to preserve and promote various heritage assets within the district, but a lack of financial investment or backing may make sites very vulnerable to decline and eventual closure. Historic buildings and structures are also often costlier to maintain than their modern equivalents, and so financial resources to conserve and protect these assets becomes even more essential to their survival.

## **6. Opportunities**

There are a number of valuable opportunities relating to the transport heritage of the district that can have significantly positive effects on the local area and communities. Within the District there are various heritage initiatives that are working to preserve and promote the transport heritage and also offering important opportunities regarding these assets. There is also significant regeneration work currently active or

proposed within the District that can further add to opportunities regarding the transport heritage.

Accessibility, whether this be physical accessibility or access to information, is often an issue where the heritage in the district is concerned. Opportunities for the improved access to information regarding the transport heritage in the District is being met by initiatives that work to provide extensive archival material and museum spaces that are making the transport heritage available to wider audiences whilst also raising awareness of the heritage offering within the district. Examples include the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway Heritage Group who work to preserve historical items relating to the railway and have created an online archive of photographs, postcards and articles that is available to the public. Not only does this improve accessibility to information about the history of the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch railway, but it also raises awareness about the heritage offering within the District; in this case the railway heritage. The Elham Valley Line Trust and Museum further aims to preserve the heritage of the railway and to make this available to the public. These are important opportunities in the improvement of access to information regarding heritage.

Where physical access to heritage assets is concerned, there are further important opportunities to improve this. The Folkestone Harbour Company and the Folkestone Seafront Project are working to regenerate the Folkestone Harbour and seafront area. As part of this development, there are proposals to reuse the Swing Bridge and Viaduct as an access route to the harbour, therefore reconnecting the harbour to the mainland as well as other valuable regenerated areas such as the Creative Quarter. Not only does this present valuable opportunities to link regenerated areas, but it also improves accessibility by regenerating and reusing important heritage assets. The Swing Bridge and Viaduct are Listed Buildings but are also of significant value to the local character and communities, particularly as they represent an important part of Folkestone's heritage as a popular and once prominent cross channel port that was serviced by various means of transport.

Projects such as these offer important opportunities to raise awareness of the transport heritage within the district and further raise their profile as tourist attractions as well as important heritage assets. The regeneration of transport assets, such as those on the Folkestone Harbour, are important in demonstrating positive heritage-regeneration and the valuable contributions that heritage can make to new developments. Rather than being a hindrance, incorporating heritage into new developments can improve the overall quality of the development by enhancing its character and enabling it to remain as a distinct area with a rich history that people are able to connect to through surviving remains and sites. An example of this is the 'heritage square' that is proposed at Folkestone Harbour. This will incorporate a number of the heritage assets that relate to the transport and maritime heritage of the area and will therefore continue to make it distinct.

Further opportunities relating to this heritage may include new employment prospects and the attraction of new businesses to the area. The extensive regeneration of the Folkestone Harbour may result in employment opportunities for local people, for example the tram-train line and 'park & ride' services that the Remembrance Line Association (RLA) is proposing. The proposed connection to the

High Speed Railway 1 line would also attract more passenger traffic to the area which could in turn have benefits for the local economy, tourism and leisure sectors. Overall, the transport heritage of the district is valued by its local communities and plays an important role in the history of the area. Heritage-regeneration is a significant opportunity, and one that the heritage assets from this theme are currently playing a role in. These assets also remain in some cases as iconic features of the District and are integral to the local character as well as the tourism offering.

## **7. Current Activities**

There are a number of heritage initiatives that are currently active within the district relating to the assets of this theme. Many of the transport assets have significant communal value and are being supported by local community groups that work to preserve, promote and enhance the heritage. The Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway Heritage Group was formed to ensure that items relating to the railway and its 80 years plus history are properly preserved and managed. As part of the group's activity, they have also curated several collections of photographs, postcards and articles again relating to the railways history and are making these available online. These are accessible to the public and continue to promote and preserve the railways heritage.

The Elham Valley Line Trust Countryside Centre and Railway Museum is a further example of important communal work to preserve and promote the railway heritage in the district. The museum was created in the 1980s and aims to exhibit the history of the Elham Valley Railway Line and provide a sensory experience for visitors. A number of special events are held throughout the year and the museum includes relocated and reconstructed heritage assets that may otherwise have been lost. For example, a roader shed from the Lyminge station was relocated here and now sits outside the entrance to the museum. The museum building itself is a 290 year old barn that would have been lost during the Channel Tunnel construction but was relocated here and has been reused for the museum. The Elham Valley Line was valued by the local communities that it served and this sentiment is evident in this museum. It is entirely run by volunteers who are interested in the heritage of the local railways, and opportunities to join the team are also available.

There is a lot of activity relating to this theme in Folkestone, particularly at Folkestone Harbour. The Folkestone Harbour is currently owned by the Folkestone Harbour Company who purchased the harbour and further land on the Folkestone seafront between 2004 and 2007. Extensive consultation has been underway since then to examine a wide range of development options for the 35 acre site. In 2015 the Folkestone Seafront Project received outline planning permission from Local Authority and now aims to regenerate the area in a number of ways. The development will include new housing, shops, cafes, restaurants, public spaces and recreation amenities. It will also build on substantial regeneration work that has been taking place in the area, such as the Creative Quarter, Folkestone Triennial and Mark Sargeant's Rocksalt restaurant. Extensive regeneration work has already been done to the Folkestone Harbour Arm which is now a social and cultural hub for the local community and wider visitors. The Roger de Haan Charitable Trust has also played an essential role in supporting these projects and has made much of the work possible.



The Folkestone Seafront Project is important to the heritage assets from this theme because a number of the heritage assets from the Folkestone Harbour Branch Line have been recognised as being of historical and communal value and are being incorporated into the regeneration of the area. The Folkestone Harbour Company have stated that as well as the Viaduct and Swing Bridge that are Listed Buildings, the Station Masters House, signal box, platform canopies and 'Bullion Room' are also going to be preserved and integrated into the development. A 'heritage square' has been proposed that would include the Station Masters House, signal box and customs house. This would aim to highlight and enhance the important maritime heritage that makes the area distinct as a coastal town and port. It is also hoped that this heritage-regeneration will help to reconnect people to this rich maritime history of Folkestone that is so integral to its local character and sense of place. There are also plans to utilise the Swing Bridge and Viaduct as a means to reconnect the harbour to the mainland and further link this new development to existing regeneration works such as the Creative Quarter and Rocksalt restaurant.

The Remembrance Line Association (RLA) is a local group who formed in 2008 and now have a membership of over 600 people. The group are concerned with the reinstatement of the Folkestone Harbour Branch Line.

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