

Future High Streets Fund

Call for Expressions of Interest

Application Form



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Applicant Information

Bidding authority: Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Area within authority covered by bid: Folkestone Town Centre

Bid Manager Name and position: Dr Katharine Harvey, Chief Economic Development Officer

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Additional evidence, such as letters of support, maps or plans should be included in an annex.

Applications to the Fund will be assessed against the criteria set out below. Further information on the scoring criteria and their weighting will be published by the department before the end of January 2019.

Submission of proposals:

Proposals must be received no later than 2359 on **Friday 22 March 2019**.

An electronic copy only of the bid including any supporting material should be submitted to highstreetsfund@communities.gov.uk.

Enquiries about the Fund may be directed to highstreetsfund@communities.gov.uk.

SECTION 1: Defining the place

This section will seek a definition of the high street or town centre to be covered within the bidding authority. Places should:

- Explain the high street/town centre geography
- Indicate the population of those living and travelling to this centre, how this links to the wider economic area and its role in the lives of those within the catchment area

1.1 Geographical area:

Include information setting out the extent of the high street/town centre area covered in the proposal and a description of this centre.

Please include maps and supporting evidence as annex documents if required.

Please limit your response to 500 words.

The focus of this application is Folkestone Town Centre, an important coastal town on the East Kent coast and the main commercial, tourist and cultural destination in Folkestone and Hythe District. **See Appendix A Figure 1.**

Folkestone Town Centre comprises four distinct areas - the Primary and Secondary shopping areas, the Creative Quarter and the Harbour and Seafront. Each area has a distinct offer and will play different roles in shaping Folkestone Town Centre's future. The key to the town's future success is to ensure that these areas work well together and complement each other to enhance the town's overall offer. **See Appendix A Figure 2a and 2b.**

Folkestone's Primary shopping area is around the pedestrianised precinct where Debenhams is the main anchor tenant, occupying one of the largest town centre units (2,600 sq.m plot). This is surrounded by a mixture of retail multiples (WH Smiths, Bright House etc.), high street banks, charity shops and discount stores. Adjacent to Debenhams is Bouverie Place - a two level shopping precinct with 30 retail units occupied by high street names such as Primark, Peacocks, TKMaxx, and lower end discount stores including Poundland. The second level is occupied by a large Asda and the largest car park in the town centre with 480 spaces. The main bus station is adjacent to Bouverie Place on Bouverie Square.

The Secondary shopping area to the west of the Primary area precinct is Sandgate Road which has two-way traffic. This is occupied predominantly by independent food & beverage establishments and convenience stores, including a Sainsbury supermarket (4,275sq.m). Located to the east of the Primary shopping area are the pedestrianised Guildhall Street and Rendezvous Street, where the main occupiers are food & beverage establishments, second hand and betting shops. Rendezvous Street provides the main link between the Primary shopping area and the Creative Quarter.

The Creative Quarter, which comprises the Old High Street and Tontine Street, connects the Primary and Secondary shopping areas to Folkestone's Harbour and Seafront. Over recent years private and public sector investment, particularly in the Old High Street, has rejuvenated the area, and many of the refurbished units are now occupied by creative businesses and independent shops, alongside art galleries, workspace and other cultural facilities. While Tontine Street has also seen some improvements, there remains many vacant units and low quality retail occupiers.

In the Harbour and Seafront area there has been considerable recent private and public sector investment in the Harbour Arm which is now home to many artisan food and beverage retailers. There are regular cultural events held there over the summer and the area is attracting a growing number of visitors. The Seafront around the Harbour is underused, with a small volume of

residential and generally poor quality public houses and retail units. Further west beyond the Harbour Arm the Seafront extends to the Lower Leas Coastal Park; this is the site of the Folkestone Harbour & Seafront Development Company's proposed development of up to 1000 new houses which is due to commence this year.

1.2 Population and links to wider economic area:

Information on the population living and working in the town centre area, how the area acts as a centre of social and economic activity and its links to the wider economic catchment area.

With supporting evidence to include:

Resident and workplace population, travel to work catchment area, town centre footfall, commercial space, retail activity, cultural activities, diversity of uses and social/ historical importance of the centre

Please limit your response to 750 words.

Folkestone is the largest town in the Folkestone and Hythe District and is the district's main retail and employment centre. Historically Folkestone grew into a fashionable 19th Century seaside resort with the coming of the railway to the town in the 1840s and the establishment of a cross channel port, with ferry links to Boulogne. The decline in British seaside holidays since the 1950s has left its mark on the town, and the opening of the Channel Tunnel in 1994 led to the eventual closure of ferry operations from Folkestone in 2001. The port-based infrastructure remains however, and one of the problems facing the town is the port centric road structure which is oriented towards the harbour area and bypasses the town centre. ***See Appendix A Folkestone's Historical Development.***

The built-up urban area of Folkestone is home to around 47% of the district's residents – some 51,300 people in 2011. The town centre itself provides around 16% of the districts employment, with jobs for some 5,500 workers in 2017 Folkestone. Considerable numbers of visitors are attracted to Folkestone each year and events such as the Folkestone Triennial in 2017 attracted 150,000 visitors to the town over its 3 months duration.

The main socio-economic characteristics of Folkestone's population in comparison to the wider areas are:

- High Benefit claimant rates
- Low employment and economic activity rates
- Low self-employment rate
- Low qualification levels
- Higher proportions of 16 to 44 year olds

See Appendix A Socio Economic Composition of Folkestone

Folkestone is second only to Margate in terms of having the largest built-up area population on the East Kent coast. It is within commuting distance of central London, with a 51 minute journey on HS1 to St Pancras and it is the closest town to mainland Europe via the Channel Tunnel which lies 3.5 miles from Folkestone Town Centre. ***See Appendix A Figure 8***

A recent study shows that there are 85,000 residents within Folkestone's Principal Catchment area for comparison goods with 26,000 being active shoppers. Unfortunately, Folkestone currently achieves only an 18% penetration as the main shopping location within this area, with some 22% shopping online and the remainder going to nearby neighbouring centres such as Ashford, Canterbury and Dover.

Population forecasts suggest that this population will grow by 6.8% over the next 20 years, but this could be considerably greater with the housing development planned along Folkestone's seafront and in the new Otterpool Park garden town which will have up to 10,000 new homes. Otterpool Park, for which a planning application has recently been submitted, will be located just 9 miles from Folkestone Town Centre. **See Appendix A Figure 9.**

Within Folkestone's Primary and Secondary shopping areas, there are 415 units which together provide 860 metres of unit frontage. The overall vacancy rate is 14.7%, with 11.4% of the retail frontage footage in these units.

Town centre footfall data, which at this stage is limited only to Bouverie Place, show there has been a steady decline over the last 5 years, which is having an impact all over the main and secondary shopping areas of the town. Over the last year alone footfall has fallen by 5%, while since 2013 it has fallen by 13%.

Folkestone is a key employment centre in East Kent, with some major employers located in the town, including Saga and Red Eagle Recruitment. Almost one third of town centre jobs are associated with the retail, leisure, creative and cultural sectors which provide jobs for some 1,665 people. Since 2015 there has been a 3.5% employment decline in Folkestone Town Centre. Although the majority of these job losses have been in the financial and insurance sectors, if the high proportion of retailers in Folkestone that are struggling nationally were to close, we anticipate substantial further job losses in coming months. **See Appendix A Figure 7.**

Folkestone Town Centre has reasonable accessibility by public transport, being served by Folkestone Central train station to the north east of the main shopping area and a bus terminal in the town centre, adjacent to Bouverie Place **see Appendix A Figure 4.**

SECTION 2: Setting out the challenges

Clear description of the issues and challenges facing this area.

This section will seek a description of the issues and structural challenges facing the high street or town centre area to be covered within the bidding. Places should:

- Describe the key challenges facing the area
- Provide evidence to support this argument (additional sources can be included in annexes). Set out why this place would benefit more from moving forward to co-development than other places within the area

We will not accept bids covering town centre areas that are not facing significant challenges.

2.1: Challenges

We recognise that each place will see different challenges. Supporting evidence on the challenges facing areas could cover the following:

- *Proportion and/or number of vacant properties*
- *Openings/closures of commercial units*
- *Diversity of uses in the town centre area*
- *Resident/customer surveys*
- *Pedestrian flows and footfall trends*
- *Evidence of congestion and air quality*
- *Perception of safety and occurrence of crime*
- *State of town centre environmental quality including provision of green spaces*
- *Accessibility*
- *Housing demands*

Folkestone Town Centre is going through a period of structural change which reflects the way communities visit, shop, interact and socialise on a daily basis. We recognise that it is vital that Folkestone Town Centre provides services and facilities for the community, but also maximises its economic potential as a visitor destination too. It is clear that to thrive it must overcome the current challenges and develop its offer to better serve residents, as well as attract more visitors and inward investors.

There have been significant improvements made to parts of the town over recent years and this investment has been largely focused on the Creative Quarter and Harbour areas. This has resulted in marked differences in quality between the offer in these places and the main shopping areas. This issue needs to be addressed if the town is to achieve its potential and thrive in the future for both residents and visitors alike.

The main challenges of the shopping area are summarised below and supporting evidence is provided in **Appendix B**:

- High retail unit vacancy rate in the Primary and Secondary shopping areas which is expected to get worse
- Low quality retail offer, including a poor quality and declining street market
- Declining numbers of town centre shoppers, as demonstrated by a decreasing footfall
- Lacks vibrancy and a town centre residential population.
- A maligned perception of Folkestone Town Centre which is reflected in low proportions of residents from the principal catchment area shopping in the town centre
- Limited leisure offer and poor night time/evening economy
- Challenges with transport, parking and connectivity
- Decreasing town centre employment with the retail sector likely to see further job losses

- A high proportion of low quality business accommodation which discourages inward investment
- High incidence of crime and anti-social behaviour
- High levels of social deprivation with four Folkestone Town Centre Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) within the 10% decile of the most deprived areas nationally

The impact of these challenges means that Folkestone is increasingly becoming a town of 'two halves' – a growing area of high quality independent creative shops and a high quality food and beverage offer in the Creative Quarter and Harbour Arm, which is attracting increasing numbers of visitors, and a declining primary and secondary shopping area with poor quality shops and falling footfall.

The challenges facing Folkestone Town Centre are further exacerbated by the geography of the town and current road structure which impedes traffic flow and hinders its vibrancy and potential to grow. Various roads within the primary and secondary shopping area are not currently connected and the route to the train station is circuitous. This has impacted on the attractiveness of the town as a shopping and visitor destination for both car users and pedestrians.

The national multiple retailers currently operating in the town are experiencing unprecedented challenging trading conditions due to the change in customer habits and the rise of digital trading. Consequently independent retailers that often rely on the footfall attracted by anchor stores find themselves in an unstable environment too, which is exacerbating the problem. Unfortunately, the health of Folkestone's shopping area is expected to suffer further in light of imminent business decisions expected across the retail, banking and leisure sectors and our analysis indicate that the shop vacancy rate could increase to as much as 25.5% in the Primary shopping area and potentially substantial job losses.

The ability of the town centre to diversify its economy by attracting inward investment into the town has been hindered to date by the high proportion of poor quality business accommodation within the town. This is highlighted by the Shepway Employment Land Review 2017 which identified that while 42% (39,640 sqm) of all the district's office floorspace is located in Folkestone Town Centre, 'a lack of office developments and refurbishments has resulted in much of the available stock of offices being largely unsuitable to meet the requirements of occupiers that are looking for more modern premises'. This issue has been further constrained by the limited car parking provision for office occupiers in the Folkestone Town Centre and the combination of these factors has impacted severely on the ability of the town to attract new employment, despite the benefits that HS1 has brought to the town.

There is also potential for further residential development in the heart of Folkestone Town Centre and this has been recognised in the recent Places and Policies Local Plan submission draft (Jan 2019) which has a specific policy to encourage the use of upper floors of town centre properties for this purpose. This recognises that not only could such conversions meet the needs for homes but it would also serve to 'to enhance the vitality and viability of the centre' (p272) by bringing the community back into the centre of the town.

We recognise that it is vital to respond quickly to the challenges facing Folkestone Town Centre and future proof it. This includes reimagining the centre as one with clearly defined areas that complement each other, with pedestrian encouraged to flow through the town between the train station and secondary shopping areas and the Creative Quarter, Harbour and Seafront areas. In this way, the whole of Folkestone Town Centre can benefit from the success that has been achieved in attracting visitors to the Creative Quarter and Harbour Arm and the income this has drawn into the town.

Folkestone and Hythe District Council is working alongside key stakeholders and the community to build a more integrated and cohesive offer within Folkestone Town Centre by bringing forward opportunities to provide facilities and services that better serve residents and businesses, as well as to make the most of its potential as a very attractive seaside town in attracting more visitors. The key to our success in achieving this will be to place Folkestone at the forefront of innovation to make the town centre fit for the future.

2.2: Rationale for selecting town centre area

Set out your rationale for choosing this town centre area as opposed to other centres within your local authority, and why this area is most in need.

Please limit your response to 500 words.

There are 3 main town centres within the Folkestone & Hythe District, as defined within the Core Strategy retail hierarchy and Folkestone is identified as ‘the highest-order centre in the district, a ‘Sub-Regional Town’’ which is ‘the focus for retail, leisure, cultural and public services for the whole of the district’ (p271). It is also the town which faces the greatest challenges but also has the greatest opportunities for the future. Through its close connections to London and Europe it has the potential to attract many more visitors and new residents and is capable of accommodating substantial commercial growth *see Appendix A Figures 1, 2a and 2b.*

The new Otterpool Park garden town, where up to 10,000 additional homes are planned over the next 30 years, lies only 9 miles from Folkestone Town Centre. Folkestone Town Centre will be the closest main retail and leisure destination for these new residents and so offers great potential for the town in the future. However, for the town to benefit from this growth, the offer needs to attract the higher spending potential that these new residents are expected to bring. *see Appendix A Figure 3*

Folkestone Town Centre itself comprises four discreet areas– the Primary and Secondary shopping areas, the Creative Quarter and the Harbour & Seafront. Over recent years there has been considerable private investment within the Creative Quarter and Harbour Arm which has resulted in many new independent creative retail businesses and food and beverage establishments establishing themselves and serving to attract considerable numbers of new visitors to Folkestone. This has not been the case in the main shopping area which has become increasingly underutilised, with high vacancy rates and a low quality retail offer which has resulted in a falling footfall. This is creating a town of ‘two halves’ – one which is thriving where private sector investment has created an attractive environment which has attracted new independent retail businesses that live, create and sell products, the other which is facing even greater challenges through being anchored by a Debenhams store which is under threat of closure.

The strategic intent is to ensure that all parts of the town centre work better together in the future through developing an offer that will make it more cohesive and integrated. This will be achieved by taking forward opportunities to diversify the offer and attract new uses into the main town centre, potentially including new entertainment facilities, such as a cinema, a better food & beverage offer and more community facilities, such as a health centre.

The aim is to ensure a town centre which better serves the residents, has more homes, attracts more businesses and maximises the growth potential of the town becoming a significant visitor destination in the South East. Whilst Folkestone Town Centre faces multiple challenges, it also has enormous potential to evolve and the level of opportunity cannot be underestimated.

SECTION 3: Strategic ambition

This section will seek evidence of the level of ambition from the local authority, support from stakeholders and evidence that the local authority is well-placed to use the Future High Street Fund to tackle these challenges in a way that will fit with wider existing plans. Local authorities should:

- Set out a high-level vision for improving their area and how this links with need expressed in Section 2
- Demonstrate how this ambition will align with other funding streams (public or private)
- Cover how investment from government will support the area and help overcome these challenges
- Demonstrate engagement with and support from local stakeholders including other tiers of local government, if applicable (supporting evidence of this support such as letters should be attached as an annex)
- Show how this will link to wider strategic plans, including the Local Plan and Local Industrial Strategies e.g. around housing and local growth
- Provide an estimate of how much revenue funding they would need to support the development of their strategic vision and business case for a specific proposal

This phase relates to defining places and challenges and we therefore are not asking for specific project proposals at this stage.

However, if a local authority has been working on a specific project that they feel is deliverable in the short term if they were to receive capital funding at an early stage, we invite them to make that clear here. While the details of the project will not be considered in our decision-making at this stage, we may consider fast-tracking these projects during co-development.

We will not accept bids that do not provide sufficient evidence of support from local stakeholders.

3.1 Town centre vision and ambition for change

Set out your vision for regenerating your high street and how this links with the challenges outlined in section 2.

Please limit your response to 750 words.

Our vision is to enhance Folkestone Town Centre to create a place that better serves the needs of the community, provides more homes, attracts new business and is a vibrant and exciting destination for visitors. We aim to achieve this through working in partnership with key stakeholders from the public and private sector to further develop the retail, leisure, residential and business accommodation offer through a number of initiatives that are currently being developed.

We recognise that Folkestone has real potential to grow and make more of the opportunities afforded by the close links to London and Europe via HS1 and the Channel Tunnel. We recognise that if we get our offer right, then we have the potential to attract more London residents as the place to visit, the place to live and bring up young families and the place to set-up a new business. The attractiveness of Folkestone with its combination of beautiful beaches, attractive coastline and excellent accessibility to London all mean that Folkestone has enormous potential to grow and prosper in the future. However, to achieve this vision we need to tackle the problems we currently face and which are inhibiting this growth potential.

The key elements of our plans for the town centre include:

- Considering new uses for under-utilised retail floorspace or units under threat, including conversion to alternative uses such as entertainment, leisure and community facilities which will lead to greater diversity of uses within the town centre.
- Bringing forward development opportunities and capital investment to increase the leisure and entertainment offer, including the potential for a new cinema, to enhance the evening economy.
- Providing more high quality business accommodation, through refurbishments of existing building. This will help to attract more inward investment into the town and capitalise on the locational advantages Folkestone has from its close proximity to central London, which is 51 mins journey time on HS1 to St Pancras, and mainland Europe through the Channel Tunnel.
- Improving the vitality and vibrancy of the town through investments that will attract more residents into the town centre, through the conversion of empty properties into homes, and softer measures to improve the street environment, address issues of antisocial behaviour and increase the level of animation through events and activities, including an improved street market.
- Addressing connectivity and transport challenges to ensure better pedestrian flow around the town to capture more of the benefits of the visitor attractions at the seafront and harbour for the whole of the town and ensure a more integrated offer. This is work that is to be jointly commissioned with Kent County Council and overseen by the Folkestone & Hythe Accelerated Delivery Board.

There is high level commitment from both the Council and key partners to create a Folkestone Town Centre fit for the future. The District Council has recently announced a £3 million high streets fund to support town centre regeneration, which will provide considerable financial resource, to match any contributions from government and the private sector. In addition, there is a team of council officers that will lead on this who are dedicated to achieving the Corporate Priority of realising economic growth opportunities within the district.

Improving Folkestone Town Centre is one of the projects being championed by local MP Damian Collins, as the recently appointed Chair of the Folkestone & Hythe Accelerated Delivery Board. This Board comprises representatives from key public and private sector organisations, including Homes England, Southeastern Railways, Kent County Council, the local Chamber of Commerce, the local business community and South East LEP. The Board has committed to working in partnership with the district council to support the delivery of key projects and will monitor progress and bring resources from their own organisations to deliver results. Realising the opportunities within Folkestone Town Centre is one of the key district priorities and all partners are committed to delivering the plans. A strategic development plan which identifies specific initiatives and capital developments that a range of partners will deliver is being developed to achieve the collective vision for Folkestone Town Centre.

Our strong ambition and commitment from supporting partners demonstrates why the future is optimistic for Folkestone. However, the challenges are great and support from Government is needed through funding from Future High Streets Fund and input from the Expert Panel to help achieve this. We want to build on the private and public sector investment already made in Folkestone, including through Sir Roger Da Haan's financial support to the Creative Foundation and the Folkestone Harbour Company, and ensure that momentum is maintained by addressing the emerging differences in fortune across the town and to capitalise on future opportunities.

3.2 Engagement and alignment of vision

Set out how your town centre vision aligns with other funding streams, both public and private, including details of partnership working with the private sector in this area. Show how your vision fits with wider strategic plans such as housing, transport and Local Industrial Strategies.

Please limit your response to 750 words.

The Council's ambition to address the challenges to make Folkestone Town Centre a High Street for the future is aligned to number of plans and strategies for both the district and wider geography. Three of the five Corporate Priorities - More Homes, More Jobs and Appearance Matters in the Council's Corporate Delivery Plan 2017-20 link directly to this ambition and the Council's Economic Development Strategy 2015 -20 specifically identifies an objective of realising the economic potential of the district's town's as one of the key ways to build on the economic strengths. Folkestone is recognised as one of the major economic drivers which require investment to capture economic growth opportunities.

There is synergy with this ambition and the East Kent Growth Framework developed jointly by the five East Kent district authorities and Kent County Council in 2018. This framework sets out the case for investment in East Kent and identifies specific objectives to realise the economic potential, including the need for Place making and Shaping. This is in recognition of the need to invest in East Kent towns, including Folkestone, in order to attract new residents and businesses to the area and capitalise on the opportunities for economic growth. This same objective is similarly reflected in the SE LEP's recently published Economic Strategy Statement – Smarter Faster Together which recognises that 'many places face common challenges, for example associated with changing retail patterns' and that 'these assets will need to be carefully managed to create a 'sense of place', adding economic value to both businesses and communities (p46)

The District council is working closely with a number of key strategic partners to develop a comprehensive and ambitious plan to deliver our vision for Folkestone, including with:

Ellandi (owner of Bouverie Place) – we are working with them to consider the future for the town centre and a study has been commissioned jointly that will set out a vision for the town centre and a strategic development programme of initiatives and investments to achieve this. This work is due at the end of March and will provide a starting point for partnership working that will include gaining buy-in from key stakeholders and a commitment to delivery.

Folkestone Harbour & Seafront Development Company – this company is delivering the Folkestone Seafront residential scheme, which has already commenced and will ultimately deliver round 1,000 new homes. The council is working with them on further commercial developments around the harbour to provide additional leisure and entertainment schemes and further enhance the area to attract more visitors.

Creative Foundation –this charity has made considerable investments in Folkestone's Creative Quarter and leads on many arts and cultural initiatives, including the Folkestone Triennial art festival. The council is working with them to ensure a lasting arts legacy from these events for the town and to better link the town centre into the offering.

Owner of building leased to Debenhams – discussions are underway which are considering alternative uses for the building should Debenhams, who are major anchor in the Primary shopping area, vacate this building. Indications are that this is highly likely in the near future and will exacerbate the issues that the town centre is currently facing

There are a number of initiatives underway in Folkestone Town Centre currently, all of which reflect the need to address the challenges and the council's commitment to do so. These are listed below and more detail on these is provided in **Appendix C**.

SE LEP Local Growth Fund – £5.6 mill LGF funding was provided in 2016 -18 for flood defence works, improving access and raising the development platform level for the seafront mixed use development which will provide up to 1,000 new home and residential site. This project was completed in 2018 and was necessary to unlock this major development scheme which has now commenced.

Folkestone Community Works programme – This is an EU funded Community Led Local Development (CLLD) Programme 2018-2022 which aims to ensure that the regeneration of the town benefits the residents and businesses in the central and eastern parts of Folkestone which amongst the top 10% more deprived areas nationally. The programme includes grants (50% intervention rate) for SME businesses to support growth and for capital projects, including provision of a community hub and refurbished business accommodation to provide a hub for new business start-ups

Folkestone Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) – This is a funded programme which provide funding to enhance the 'Old High Street' area within the Creative Quarter of Folkestone. This is a partnership initiative funded by the District Council, Kent County Council, the Creative Foundation and Heritage Lottery Fund.

No Use Empty – A County and District funded initiative designed to address the issue of empty properties in the district and to encourage investment to bring back into use across the district. The District Council has provided additional funding to the County-led scheme which provides interest-free loans to property owners of residential and business properties. One building in Folkestone Town Centre which has been empty since 2008 has benefitted from this scheme, being transformed into affordable apartments with a commercial unit retained on the lower ground floor which is now occupied by an Architect firm

Folkestone Coastal Community Team/Coastal Community Fund - Folkestone Town Council has submitted an application on behalf of Folkestone Coastal Community Team for CCF funding to deliver projects identified in the Folkestone CCT Economic Plan. These includes projects to promote Folkestone, enhance the street scene, providing a sustainable managed street market, enabling better connectivity, creating greater footfall and spend through a comprehensive and co-ordinated programme of events and festivals and rejuvenating the fish market at the Stade.

Lower Leas Coastal Park – a stage 2 application has been submitted to the HLF for the 'Spirit of the Leas' project to deliver capital works improvements to paths either side of the Leas Cliff Hall and the subway linking to the town centre and a community engagement programme to increase knowledge and understanding about the heritage assets of the area.

3.3 Support for town centre vision

Provide details, including letters of support, for your vision from (where applicable):

• *Other tiers of local government including Mayoral and non-Mayoral Combined Authorities and county councils where applicable*

There is a great deal of support amongst key stakeholders and private sector partners to achieve the ambitions for Folkestone Town Centre and to address the challenges it faces. However, this

support is more than just words and letters of support. A number of key organisations are actively working with the council to deliver on these ambitions, including Ellandi – owners of Folkestone’s Bouverie Place shopping centre, and through their membership of the newly formed Folkestone & Hythe Accelerated Delivery Board, chaired by local MP Damian Collins which includes representatives from Homes England, Kent County Council, Network Rail, Creative Foundation, Folkestone Harbour Company, Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, Kent & Medway Economic Partnership, the South East LEP and the Folkestone & Hythe Business Advisory Board.

Letters of support have been provided in the **Appendix D** from the following organisations.

South East LEP

Kent & Medway Economic Partnership

Kent County Council

Ellandi

Creative Foundation

Folkestone Harbour & Seafront Development Company

Folkestone Town Council/Folkestone Coastal Community Team

Folkestone Town Team

Folkestone & Hythe Business Advisory Board

Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce

3.4 Estimate of revenue funding needed

Provide details of how much revenue funding you need to develop project plans for capital funding (including detailed business cases).

Include estimated breakdowns of how you would spend this revenue funding

Please limit your response to 500 words

The District Council understands the challenges and issues that are facing Folkestone and which are hindering its ability to achieving its economic growth potential. It also has a vision that addresses these challenges and will make the most of the opportunities to make it a town centre fit for the future. Through focusing public sector investment on the main shopping area, alongside the private investment being made in the harbour and seafront areas, will ensure that the overall town’s offer will capitalise on the visitors being attracted to the town.

To support taking this work forward, we require some revenue funding which will be invested alongside contributions from the private sector and the funding that is available to the District Council from the £3 million earmarked by the council to regenerate the districts town centre. Our revenue asks and the purpose for which these funds are required is set out below.

- £15,000 contribution towards developing a capital programme with partners to deliver the vision and realise development opportunities as set out above.

- £30,000 contribution to a transport study to optimise the pedestrian and transport flows across the town to maximise the town’s growth potential

In addition to funding, we would also value the expertise and input of the Independent Panel of Experts that MHCLG will be establishing to ensure that our plans are comprehensive, based on best practise and are the most appropriate for realising our ambitions and the growth potential of Folkestone. By adopting an inclusive approach and being open to new ideas, we aim to make Folkestone an exemplar of what can be achieved through public and private sector partnership working and investment.