

October 2020

KING'S LYNN TOWN INVESTMENT PLAN



Borough Council of
King's Lynn &
West Norfolk



VISION KING'S LYNN

Contents

Foreword	3
Executive summary	5
Context analysis	7
King's Lynn Today	7
Opportunities and Challenges	9
Business, Jobs and Skills	9
Regeneration of our town centre and riverfront	17
Connectivity	19
Strategy	21
Vision and Priorities	21
A long term, integrated plan for renewal and success	21
King's Lynn TIP Spatial strategy	23
Four core economic areas of the town:	24
Interventions	29
New opportunities for skills and jobs	29
Growing innovative businesses	32
A repurposed town centre	35
A high quality residential offer	37
A sustainably connected town	39
Engagement and delivery	41
Community and business engagement	41
Delivery plan	42

Foreword

Covid-19 has had a huge impact on people in King's Lynn. Alongside the tragic effects of the virus itself on individuals and families, residents have faced uncertainty about jobs and wages and businesses have seen reduced trade with many forced to partially close or make big changes to how they work. But in this extremely challenging time there have also been so many examples of people helping each other out, of local businesses turning their expertise to provide equipment to NHS Nightingale hospitals, and of our town centre businesses helping each other with getting open again and doing everything they can to keep staff and people safe. King's Lynn folk care about each other and about the town and this has really shone through.

This plan is based on over a year of engagement, discussion and design by the people of King's Lynn. It sets out what we need now to help us deal with the impacts of Covid-19 and help our short-term recovery. For the longer-term it sets out our plans to reduce congestion, bring back new experiences and develop our cultural offer in the town centre, support new and growing businesses and bring more people back to live in our unique historic town centre. We have made a good start with recent investment in the School of Nursing, this plan sets out a clear case for the further investment needed and the difference it will make.

Above all this is a plan by King's Lynn people. Our Town Deal Board has debated and collaborated over our challenges and opportunities. 200 young people got involved in sharing ideas and views, over 100 businesses did the same through workshops, surveys and web events. That much of this took place during Covid-19 restrictions is further proof of how committed local people are.

***Cllr Brian Long,
Leader of the Borough Council of
King's Lynn & West Norfolk***





At a time of increased challenge and uncertainty, the Town's Fund and our Town Investment Plan present us with a unique opportunity to realise our ambitions and re-energise and reinvigorate King's Lynn. And at the very heart of our plan is the community.

The Town Board has been proactive in seeking the views of local people, businesses, stakeholders, and the council, to identify the challenges we face in a changing world - and the best solutions to address these. We have sought views on what matters to local people, especially in light of Covid-19, and invited ideas to improve our town and stimulate growth. We have listened to these many voices.

This collaborative approach is the hallmark of our Town Board too, a collective that encompasses a wide range of firms, civic and community organisations, elected councillors, and anchor institutions. All of us are resolute in seeing through delivery and long-term growth, and all of us are committed to providing the foundations for King's Lynn to be the best it can be, for today and tomorrow. Together, we have shaped an aspirational vision.

And we will achieve this vision through projects that are deliverable and impactful. Such as a new School of Nursing to drive excellence in our healthcare, the creation of centres to provide skills training to support economic and employment recovery after Covid-19, and regeneration of our town centre and high street to adapt to modern life.

King's Lynn has a proud and illustrious history. We want to secure its bright and vibrant future too. And with this plan, we can do just that.

Graham Purkins, CTO Merxin Ltd - Town Board Chair

Executive summary

King's Lynn is the major commercial, retail and service centre for a large area of East Anglia, and the largest town in west Norfolk. Our historic port, medieval riverfront and town centre retain the only surviving Hanseatic buildings in the UK.

Today these historic gems are part of a town of 49,000, with a wider catchment area that spans 500sq miles and circa 250,000 people. The town is well connected by rail to Ely and Cambridge, with a direct service to London. The A47 connects to Norwich in the east in an hour and west to Peterborough and the Midlands. An important healthcare sector centred around the Queen Elizabeth Hospital - the town's largest employer, alongside major manufacturing and engineering firms. Many businesses have been here a long time and are deeply embedded in the local community.

King's Lynn has a vibrant and longstanding tradition of creative and cultural organisations, events and activity. Renowned as the 'Festival Town' from its year-round events programme including the King's Lynn Festival with classical music featuring internationally renowned performers - in its 70th year - and Festival Too, Europe's largest free open air popular music event. King's Lynn's visitor economy is built on its hospitality, retail and leisure offer, including The Walks historic urban park, and within close proximity to the Sandringham Estate, Castle Rising and the Norfolk coastline from Hunstanton, with King's Lynn the nearest train station to all these major national visitor assets.

As with many towns, the role that King's Lynn has played in the lives of its residents and the

much larger population it serves has changed over the years and is continuing to do so.

A lack of integrated investment together with out of town retail and residential growth has led to different areas of the town being less well connected, and major assets like the historic area less well used than it should be. Overall the town centre offer has not kept pace with increased demand for town centre living and new cultural and leisure experiences to replace rapidly declining retail.

Local residents have less access to opportunities than they should. Wages are below regional and national levels, and firms struggle to recruit to certain roles, with the availability of skills a big issue. Too many young people here don't get the opportunities they deserve, with fewer than average staying on in full time education post school and GCSE attainment is low.

Covid-19 has made this difficult situation worse. It has hit King's Lynn hard, with JSA claimants rising faster than elsewhere and footfall in the town centre declining further.

This Town Investment Plan sets out a clear plan of action and investment to tackle these issues - to secure our recovery from Covid-19, shift towards a zero-carbon economy and secure the long-term success of our residents and businesses. Over the last year residents, businesses and a range of local institutions have worked together, through Vision King's Lynn and the Town Board, to set clear priorities and a vision for King's Lynn that delivers:

- New opportunities for skills and jobs for our young people and all those affected by Covid-19

- Growing innovative businesses
- A repurposed town centre with new experiences and enterprise
- A high-quality residential and leisure offer in the historic town core and riverfront
- A sustainably connected town

We have prioritised a package of interventions and investments that have been shown to have the greatest future impact on delivering these priorities, based on clear evidence that blends both independent analysis with an in depth programme of engagement and codesign with residents, businesses and local organisations.

These include a new King’s Lynn Youth and employment pledge, to ensure all young people and anyone whose job is affected by Covid-19 gets the support they need to access training and employment. A new School of Nursing will support our growing healthcare sector and provide skilled opportunities for local people.

We will invest in new cycle and walking routes, alongside a new gyratory system to reduce traffic and improve air quality in the town centre. A new creative hub will provide opportunities for cultural and creative businesses at the White Barn, next to a refurbished Guildhall, close to the first phase of riverfront regeneration. We will repurpose historic buildings and retail units, providing new, high-quality homes in the town centre that are 15 minutes’ walk from a direct train to Cambridge and London, alongside new leisure experiences and opportunities for small start-up businesses.

We have integrated all our work and investment plans across a number of different local and national funding streams (including Future High Street Fund and High Street Heritage Action Zone brought together in our spatial plan), to develop an aligned package of investment that seeks £25m from Government following the commitment for investment in 100 towns.

A summary of Town Deal funded projects can be found below:

Innovative, growing businesses and skilled workforce

Youth & Retraining Pledge



Timeline: Delivery 2020-2022

Vision: Repurposed town centre. Revived historic core and riverfront

Innovation & Collaboration Incubator



Timeline: Construction in 2022

Vision: Skilled workforce for growing industry. Growing innovative businesses.

School of Nursing

Timeline: Open by September 2021

Vision: Skilled workforce for growing industry. New skills & jobs for those affected by Covid-19.



Creative Hub



Timeline: First phase small scale hub 2021. Second phase full refurb 2024.

Vision: Skilled workforce for growing industry. Growing innovative businesses.

Historic riverfront and repurposed town centre

Initial Riverfront Regeneration



Timeline: Construction in 2022

Vision: Repurposed town centre. Revived historic core and riverfront

Public Realm Fund

Timeline: Delivery 2021-25

Vision: Repurposed town centre



High Street Unit Repurposing Fund

Timeline: Delivery 2021-25

Vision: Repurposed town centre



Sustainably connected town

Active and Clean Connectivity

Timeline: Construction in 2022

Vision: Sustainably connected town



Context analysis

King's Lynn Today

King's Lynn is the commercial, retail and service centre for a large area of East Anglia, and the largest town in west Norfolk. The town itself has a population of 49,000 and its wider catchment area spans 500sq miles of the Fens, Norfolk, south Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire and circa 250,000 people, including the smaller towns of Wisbech, Swaffham, Hunstanton and Downham Market.

King's Lynn is well-connected by rail to Ely and Cambridge, with a direct service to London. The A47, A10 and A17 are important routes for logistics in the town, and connect to Norwich in the east in an hour and west to Peterborough and the Midlands.

Major companies include paper and paperboard manufacturer Palm Paper, drug delivery manufacturer Recipharm, and equipment suppliers Snap-on Diagnostic. With a long history here manufacturing continues to thrive in King's Lynn, with firms concentrated around the successful Hardwick and North Lynn Industrial Estates along with the developing Nar Ouse Enterprise Zone. Many businesses have been here a long time and are deeply embedded in the local community. Others have invested here more recently, attracted by the high quality of life, good connectivity and affordable sites and homes.

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital is a major anchor institution and overall healthcare is the largest employer in King's Lynn, accounting for 21.2% of jobs. The hospital is the region's largest with a range of departments including accident and emergency services, the Macmillan Centre and a day surgery centre.

King's Lynn is also a major centre of education, with three large secondary schools, King Edward VII Academy, King's Lynn Academy and Springwood High School, with the availability of sixth form at King Edward VII Academy and Springwood. The College of West Anglia is one of the largest providers of education and training in Norfolk and Cambridgeshire, offering A-levels, vocational courses and apprenticeships. The college is partnered with Anglia Ruskin University to offer higher education courses including degrees, foundation degrees and Higher National Diplomas, all on the King's Lynn Campus and will be the location of the new School of Nursing.

The town's riverfront and historic core is a unique medieval asset of international significance, quoted as a 'jewel in a wrapper', with a vibrant and longstanding tradition of creative and cultural activity. We have cultural, historical and leisure assets that if collectively brought together with vision and investment, could be maximised as a draw for visitors. King's Lynn's visitor economy is built on its hospitality, retail and leisure offer, with attractions such as Lynn Museum, Stories of Lynn, Alive Corn Exchange, the Majestic Cinema, True's Yard Fisherfolk Museum and shopping in the Vancouver Quarter drawing visitors to the town centre.

The role that King's Lynn has played in the lives of its residents and the much larger population it serves has changed over the years and is continuing to do so. Many of the issues we face are because King's Lynn needs investment to adapt to changes in what residents need and want from their town and how they use it. The combination

of a much larger catchment area than most similar sized towns, recent housing growth and unique historic riverfront and town core, means that King's Lynn means many different things to different communities and users.

Over the last year residents, businesses and a range of local institutions have worked together, through Vision King's Lynn and the Town Board, in an extensive period of discussion and engagement about the town and its future. A striking feature has been both the desire of local people to get involved and the consistent view that King's Lynn's different assets and areas feel too disconnected, without really benefiting as much as they could from each other. In many large market towns this combination of historic assets, commercial buildings, retail, leisure and residential areas exist together in a mix that is instantly recognisable to residents and visitors alike. But residents and business do not see this as working as well as it could in King's Lynn. This is not just about physical connectivity. Residents report, and the evidence supports, a sense of not being well enough connected to opportunities to start businesses, get involved in culture and arts, learn new skills and find lasting careers.

For example, King's Lynn has a genuinely unique historic town core and riverfront, with the only remaining Hanseatic buildings in England and high-quality historic and cultural venues. But these assets are both relatively inaccessible and seen by too many residents as not being for them.

The relatively modern town centre retail area tells a similar story. The Hardwick out of town retail area is very large, even in comparison with similar sites in comparable sized towns, reflecting its wide catchment area. It inevitably encourages residents to travel out of the town rather than into the centre and reduces the extent to which people from

the wider catchment travel into town. The town centre retail area and the historic core and waterfront seem, in their different ways, to have been unable to adapt and change fast enough to develop an alternative offer to out of town living, leisure and shopping.

Our strengths, weaknesses, challenges and opportunities are set out in more detail in the sections below. But there are three major issues which local people and businesses have prioritised in this plan:

- Progression from school is low and overall skills levels are low, meaning that people leave, earnings are lower, and companies find it hard to recruit
- Connectivity between different areas of the town is poor, leading to congestion, poor air quality and lower footfall. Physical connection from rail/bus station through to the historic core is poor and cannot cope with modern day traffic in the town centre, creating tailbacks on the outskirts and leads to missed opportunities to capitalise on the visitor offer
- The historic town centre and riverfront is underused and town centre retail is declining fast. We need to repurpose it for the future whilst protecting its heritage, so that more people want to live, work and study in this area of the town

The following section explores these different aspects of our town in more detail, setting out the evidence of need, opportunity and the interventions we have prioritised to deliver our vision:

Opportunities and Challenges

King's Lynn has major opportunities and selling points:

- a strong residential and commercial offer, the space to grow and the appetite to develop further, with a track record of delivery
- major businesses and successful SMEs who are committed to the town and to playing a leading role within it
- residents that care deeply about the town and are creative, resilient people

But there are challenges to tackle

- high employment in retail and accelerated vacant units in the town centre
- high road congestion and poor air quality
- lower skills and earnings, poor school attainment
- different parts of the town poorly connected

The following sections identify in more detail the opportunities and challenges and evidence of need that our Town Investment Plan and wider strategy is designed to address.

It is set in three sections that reflect the Town's Fund Guidance:

- Business, Jobs and Skills
- Regenerating our town centre and riverfront
- Connectivity

Business, Jobs and Skills

More than half of employment in King's Lynn is in health (21%), manufacturing (16%) and retail (14%). All employ more people here than on average¹. Our businesses have been core to developing this Town Deal and are committed to working together and with partners to ensure that residents and firms have the opportunities and skills they need for future success and competitiveness. Both the economic evidence and feedback from businesses and residents shows there are a clear set of challenges that we have to address.

Looking at King's Lynn's top ten companies by turnover (right), reaffirms King's Lynn's manufacturing specialism, particularly advanced manufacturing and engineering.

Important healthcare centre with a recruitment challenge

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital is an anchor institution for the town and regional healthcare cluster. Unsurprisingly, the hospital is King's Lynn's largest healthcare employer with 3,000 employees, followed by Children's & Adult Social Services (400) and Norfolk Community Health and Care Centre (200)². The important sector will create opportunities for skills and high-skilled jobs for young people and those looking to reskill in the years ahead.

1 All ONS BRES (2018)

2 Experian Market IQ

Strong manufacturing, but with a productivity challenge

Manufacturing and engineering firms have a long history here and continue to see King's Lynn as an attractive and good value location. Our proximity to Cambridge and connectivity to London, whilst offering a high quality of life and being more affordable has also attracted newer innovative firms such as Inivos and Merxin.

Manufacturing is the highest-productivity sector in King's Lynn at £101,000 per job³ and accounting for 16% of employment⁴. There are more manufacturing jobs here than in most towns (UK average 8% employment). However, the sector has experienced no growth in GVA between 2013 and 2018 and has struggled to recruit highly-skilled staff locally and attract new talent to the town. Our large and small manufacturing firms are clear that skills development and innovation are absolutely core to their future success and growth.

KING'S LYNN TOP 10 COMPANIES BY TURNOVER

1 Foster Refrigeration

Manufacturer of commercial refrigeration equipment. Global headquarters in King's Lynn and a major exporter

2 Palm Paper

Manufacturer of newsprint and paper from 100% recycled fibres. The King's Lynn paper mill is the widest, largest and most powerful newsprint machine in the world

3 Pilgrim's Pride

Manufacturer of pork and ham products, supplying major multiple retailers and the food service industry

4 Recipharm

A global market leader in the design, development and manufacture of drug delivery devices, working in partnership with the major pharmaceutical companies, as well as other medical devices

5 Greenyard Frozen UK

Frozen Manufacturer of frozen vegetables, supplying UK major multiple retailers and the food service industry in the UK and Europe

6 Mars Food UK

Manufacturers of main meal products under the Uncle Ben's and Dolmio brands

7 Williams

Manufacturer of commercial refrigeration Refrigeration equipment. Global headquarters in King's Lynn and a major exporter

8 Snap-On

Developer and manufacturer of electronic Diagnostics diagnostic equipment and software for the automotive sectors in the UK and overseas

9 SKF Cooper

Global market leader in the design and manufacture of split roller bearings. Global headquarters in King's Lynn and a major exporter

10 KL Technologies

Manufacturers of micro-porous membranes, ceramic filters and technical ceramic manufacturing equipment. Global headquarters in King's Lynn and a major exporter

³ ONS, Balanced GVA by industry, 2018

⁴ ONS, BRES, 2018

Overall strong demand for commercial space

There is good evidence of continuing demand for commercial space, start-up and grow on facilities. Industrial space value is closer to average at £5 per sq ft compared with £7 per sq ft for the country as a whole. As a result, there has been a lack of investment in high quality, modern commercial space by the private sector.

The Nar Ouse Enterprise Zone has seen strong demand for businesses wanting to be based in this accessible and prominent part

Nar Ouse Enterprise Zone

of the town with new, high quality premises. The King's Lynn Innovation Centre (KLIC), has many businesses that have outgrown the original space ⁵, but want to stay in the town and be close to collaboration and networking opportunities. The Council is collaborating with New Anglia LEP on investment in new commercial units and an extension to the Enterprise Zones business rate relief period beyond the current March 2021 by would be a welcome boost to support new and growing businesses considering moving to the site.

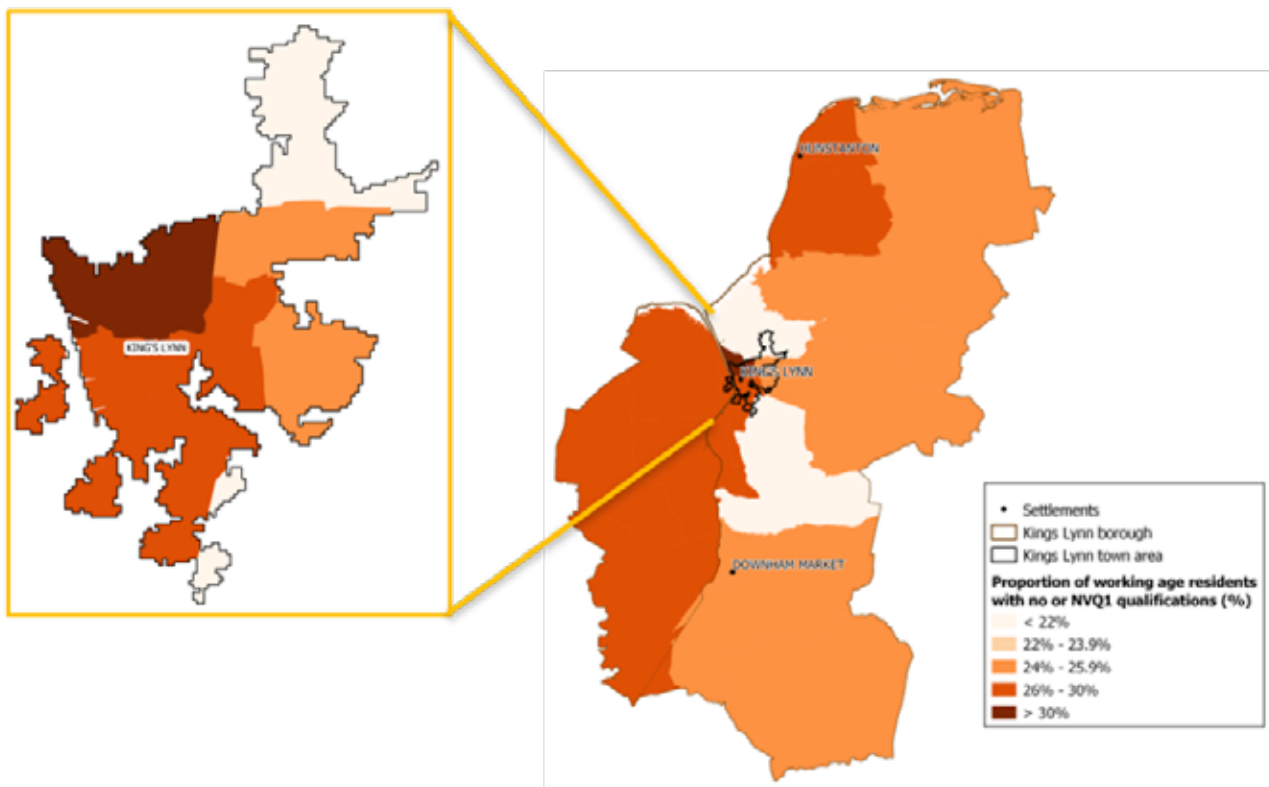


Skills levels are low and recruitment is difficult, reflected in lower wage levels for residents and local people missing out on opportunities

Qualification levels in King’s Lynn are lower than average, 21% of the working population has NVQ level 4+ qualifications compared with 39% nationally, and 11% of people with no qualifications, compared with 8% nationally⁶.

This is partly a reflection of our business base, with less highly-skilled jobs and businesses, but firms report real difficulty recruiting⁷. Of young people who go on to university, many do not return, and the town has experienced a drop in population for those aged 15-44 in recent years⁸. A lack of attractive and diverse living options for young skilled professionals marks one barrier to increasing opportunities.

Proportion of residents with no or NVQ level 1 qualifications attainment (2018)



Source: Source: Metro Dynamics estimates based on ONS APS (2018) and Census (2011) data

The map shows the proportion of working age residents with no qualifications or NVQ1 attainment in 2018 for the King’s Lynn and west Norfolk borough and King’s Lynn town area. Within the town the darker areas reflect communities where our low wage, low skill problem is highly concentrated.

Overall our highest employing sectors are lower paid than elsewhere, which is reflected in average wage levels that are also lower. (£21,993 compared with £25,118 respectively⁹.)

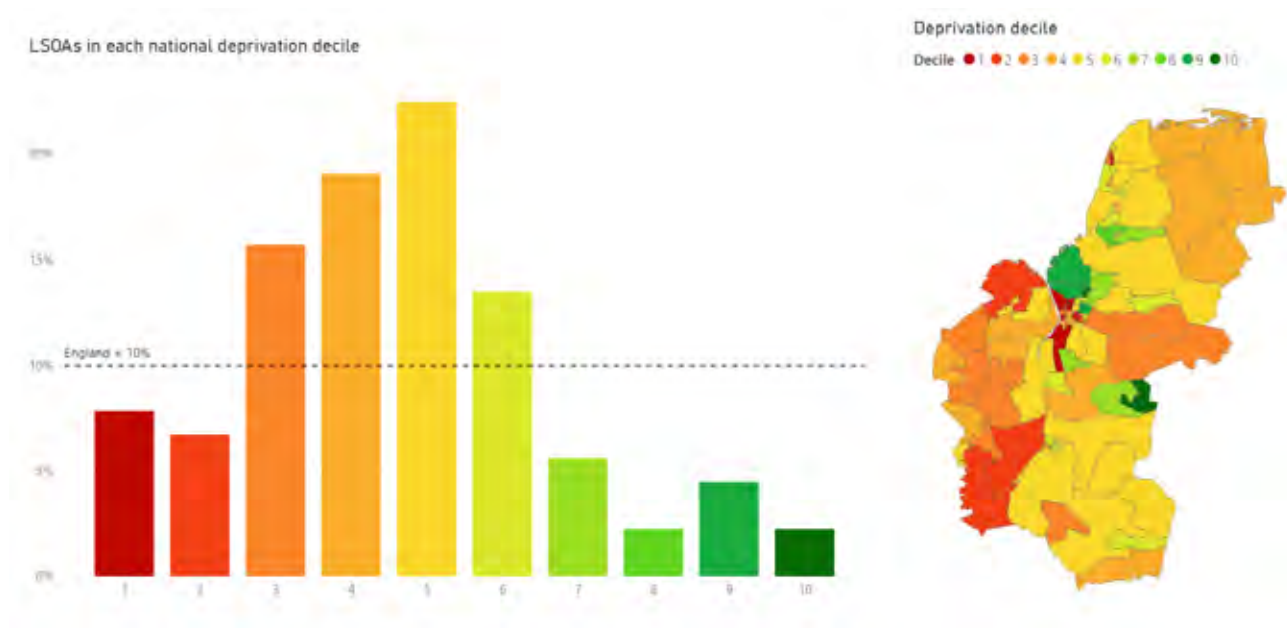
6 ONS, Annual Population Survey, 2018

7 Business Workshops and Survey 2020

8 Borough Council of King’s Lynn and West Norfolk, Housing Needs Assessment, 2020.

9 ONS, Small area income estimates for middle layer super output areas, England and Wales, 2017/18

Deprivation is relatively worse in King's Lynn than the surrounding areas



The Index of Multiple Deprivation is a relative measure of deprivation constructed by combining seven domains of deprivation according to their respective weights¹⁰. Decile 1 represents the 10% most deprived geographies, while decile 10 represents the

10% least deprived. The Borough falls below the England average at the extremes of the deciles, scoring 7.87% for decile 1, and well below average for decile 10 at 2.25%. The map shows King's Lynn in decile 1¹¹.

10 The domains are: Income, Employment, Education, Skills and Training, Health and Disability, Crime, Barriers to Housing Services, and Living Environment

11 Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2020

Young people are not getting the skills they need

Our young people also face barriers to getting the skills they need to succeed in the future economy (see diagram)¹².

Progression from school is also much lower than average and GCSE attainment is lower than Norfolk and

England, despite recent improvements in helping disadvantaged children.

Overall the level of participation within the King's Lynn and west Norfolk labour market is comparable with the rest of the UK, but of those who are inactive fewer are seeking work and health related economic inactivity is higher than average¹³.

At **84.9%**, King's Lynn & West Norfolk's **year 13 pupil participation** in education is **below** the England and Norfolk averages.

POLAR (Participation of Local Areas in higher education) - King's Lynn town, South Lynn & West Lynn's is **17.4%**, **below** Norfolk at **29.5%** and England at **39.6%**.

11.1% of King's Lynn and West Norfolk residents have **no qualifications**, compared to: **7.4%** in the East of England and **7.6%** in Great Britain

8% increase in **disadvantaged pupils** achieving **GCSE English and Maths** at grade 4 in King's Lynn and West Norfolk, compared to **3%** in Norfolk and **no increase** nationally



12 8% increase in disadvantaged pupils achieving GCSE English and Maths at grade 4 in King's Lynn and west Norfolk, compared to: 3% in Norfolk and no increase nationally. GCSE attainment - standard pass (grades 9-4) across a pupil's best eight subjects is 41.8% in King's Lynn and west Norfolk, below the average in Norfolk (45.3%) England (46.7%).

13 Annual Population Survey 2019

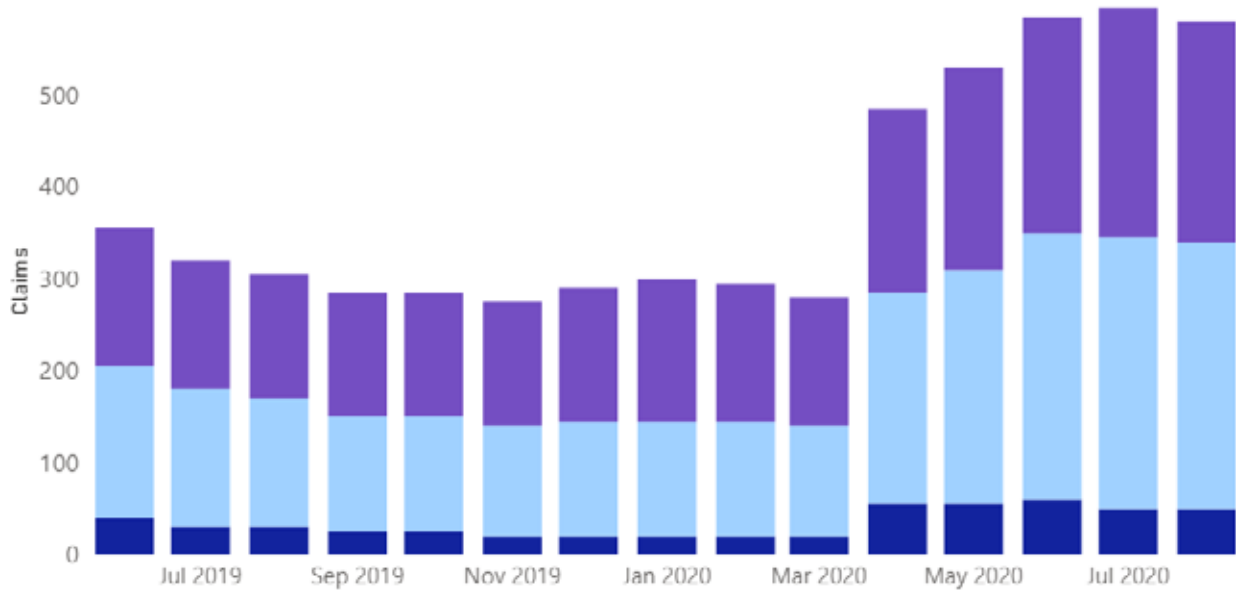
Covid 19 means people of all ages face unemployment and the need to retrain

Since March 2020, total JSA claims in the Borough as a whole have risen faster than the UK, with 578 claims in August compared to 278 in March, a 107.9% increase, compared

to 95.3% for the UK as a whole. 50 of the 578 claims have been made from people aged 16-24. So far, the increase in claims from this group (150%) has been less than for the rest of the country at 178.7%.

Job seekers allowance claims in King's Lynn and West Norfolk by age group

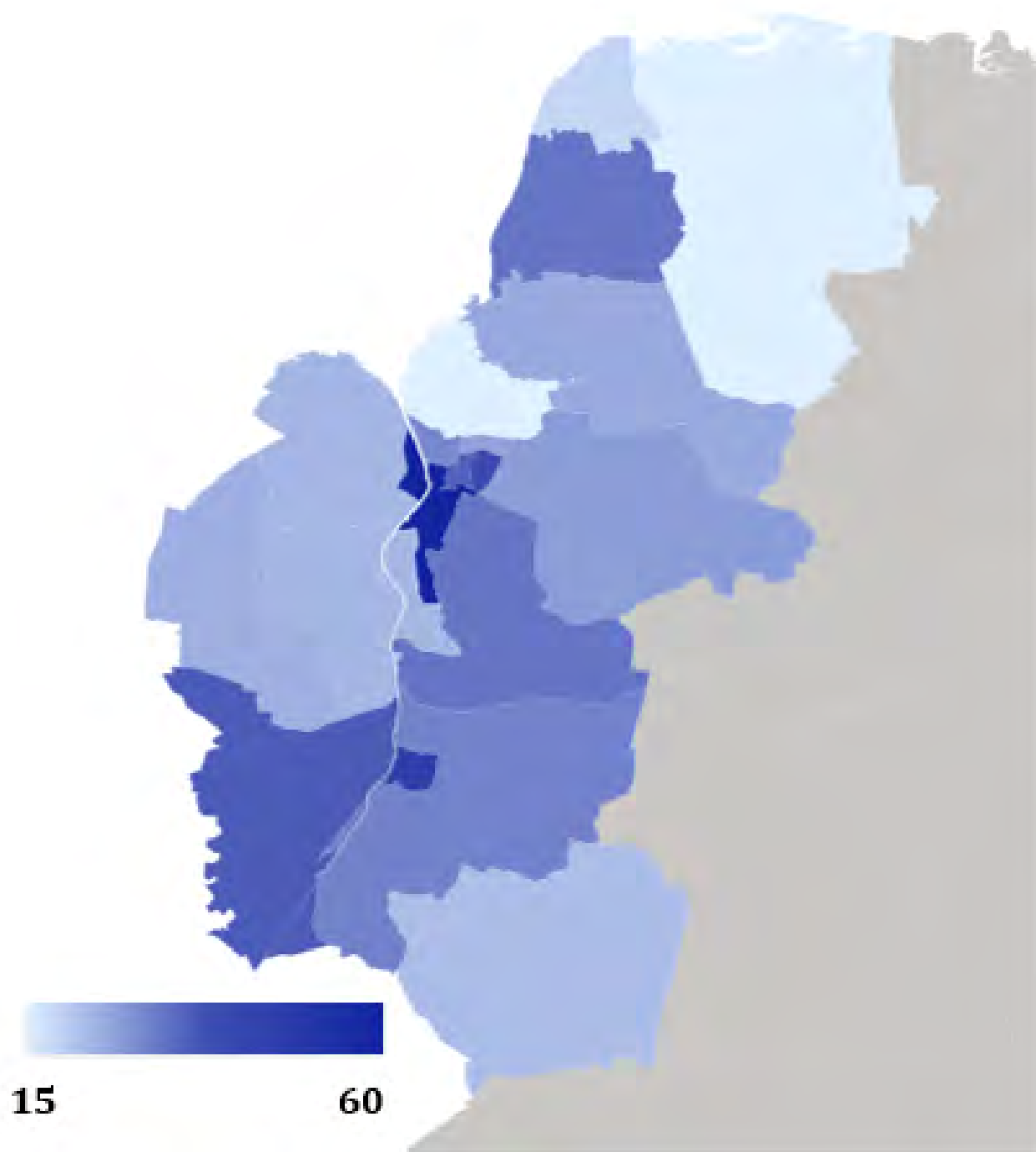
Age group ● Aged 16-24 ● Aged 25-49 ● Aged 50-64



Source: ONS

The map below shows JSA claimants in August 2020 concentrated in the area covered by the Town Deal, Approximately, 202 of the 578 claims in the authority are from King's Lynn Town.

JSA claimants in King's Lynn and west Norfolk, August 2020



Source: ONS

We need to create more business and increase enterprise as a career

Fewer new businesses are starting in the town. The business birth rate in King's Lynn before Covid-19 was 10% compared with 13% across England, and the business churn rate was 19% compared with 25% for England¹⁴.

We need to support more people to successfully start and grow a business and provide the spaces and support that businesses need to grow and to innovate. There are real opportunities amongst the Covid challenges - for jobs and new businesses in healthcare, town centre food and leisure, manufacturing and construction. Our Town Deal and response to Covid gives us a real opportunity and need to make sure they happen and to get local people, businesses, schools and the college are connected up and working together. That is what local partners have come together to achieve and our plan is set out in the strategy section below.

Regeneration of our town centre and riverfront

Protecting and re-purposing a unique historic core and riverfront

Our historic port town and riverfront is a major and genuinely unique asset for King's Lynn. Historic England sees it as being of international significance with a 900-year history as a Hanseatic port town. The historic cluster of buildings that make up the old port town is a Heritage Action Zone and includes the Hanseatic warehouses on the water, the 1095 Minster and the late-medieval Town Hall among narrow cobbled streets. Between the historic core and modern retail centre is the Tuesday Market Place and Saturday Market Place. Large areas of the riverfront are derelict, with vacant brownfield sites between unique old buildings. Close to the old town centre there are a small but growing number of high-quality independent food outlets and shops, but there is little for people to do to keep them there. Overall, residents feel that the small night-time economy and a lack of culture, music and arts experiences is still a barrier to town centre living¹⁵.

Both the riverfront and historic town centre



present major opportunities as attractive places to live, work and visit, close to the water and surrounded by character and culture. Both are 15 minutes' walk from a direct train to London and Cambridge, but the connection is poor and does not lead you to the historic core or riverfront. Repeated studies, including Historic England's Urban Panel have emphasised the opportunity here and the evidence of the importance of water and historic buildings in many national and global examples of successful regeneration and renewal, often with a large residential element.

Our local core strategy reinforces the need to increase density and support repurposing of the town centre, unlocking the potential of the historic riverfront and town faces challenges and barriers:

The historic core is ringed by cleared housing sites being used as surface car parks and the connecting roads are both congested with no real gateway. Connections with the train station are not linked well to the town centre and approaching the historic core and riverfront

- The historic core is ringed by cleared housing sites being used as surface car parks and the connecting roads are both congested with no real gateway. Connections with the train station are not linked well to the town centre and approaching the historic core and riverfront

- The town centre suffers low population density, with recent residential development focused on sites further out of town
- Commercial property values are lower than average. Retail space value in King's Lynn before Covid-19 was £17 per sq ft compared with £26 per sq ft in Britain, and office space value was £11 per sq ft compared with £27 per sq ft in Britain.
- Investor interest in hotel and residential development continues, but the costs of remediating contamination from previous industrial usage and putting in place sustainable flood defences mean the sites are unviable without further public sector investment which is beyond the means of the Borough Council.

A fast changing retail centre

The population of King's Lynn grew through 1960s development, influenced by the town's direct rail link to London. New parts of the town were developed as overspill from the capital with housing, and the retail presence in the town centre boomed between the railway station and the Tuesday Market Place, which connects the historic core to the modern high street.

The Vancouver Quarter dominates this part of the town and is the focus of the more modern retail offer. Built in 1960s and subsequently redeveloped in 2005, for a number of years it exceeded national footfall trends, but recently it has seen footfall reductions and a decline in national stores and higher vacancy rates.

The immediate impact of Covid-19 on the local economy has exacerbated trends in falling footfall around the high street, and accelerated the rate of retail properties becoming vacant. A prominent example of this is the large Debenhams building, which the store has recently vacated. Over the past few months, other national retailers have indicated they plan to follow suit. This building is located on the part of the high street linking to the historic quarter.

Residents, particularly young people, and businesses want a vibrant town centre and want reasons to visit, they see the opportunity to better use and link existing spaces through pop up shops, small scale but high-impact public realm improvements to create more opportunities for outside seating areas for cafés and restaurants and more community spaces, together with reduced congestion and more strategic, accessible parking¹⁶.

Major housing growth

King's Lynn has grown in recent years, and with more than 5,000 homes planned. Alongside the need to prioritise town centre densification, as set out above, we are also benefiting from the major growth areas in the town centre, West Winch, South Wootton and Parkway.

Connectivity

King's Lynn is well connected by rail and the A10 to Cambridge and London and by the A47 to Norwich, Peterborough and the Midlands and North. We serve a large area of over 500sq miles, with many smaller towns and villages, including the tourist hotspots of the North Norfolk coast and Hunstanton as well as large areas of the Fens.

The wider economy of the East of England has grown fast in recent years and is a major engine of UK growth, linked to the Cambridge, Oxford, Milton Keynes Arc. Our relative affordability, high quality of life and good rail and road connectivity is a real opportunity for us to contribute and benefit from this wide regional growth - we are an attractive location for business investment and within reach for people looking for longer but less frequent commutes. The opportunity for new homes in both historic buildings and new build in the town centre will provide accessible town centre living in a unique historic environment close to the station.

Bringing people into the town cleanly and safely

Most of these communities rely on the car and will continue to do so, as local bus services have declined and the only local rail line is the King's Lynn to London route. Rail service usage has increased, with further improvements planned, but bus service levels are low, and business and resident perception is that villages close to town were poorly served. Longer journeys are likely to incur multiple fares from more than one travel operator and bus fare levels are not competitive with town centre car parking charges. There are therefore limited opportunities for high-

quality, cheap public transport services and healthier active modes of travel.

Car use in King's Lynn is high, with clear pinch points for congestion, on junctions on the A149, in the town centre and around the Southgate roundabout, with driving the most common primary mode of transport to work at 69% of journeys. A historic passenger ferry operates from West Lynn to the town centre which is highly regarded and well used; there is scope to invest and increase service capacity of this unique service.

Cycling and walking is high for short journeys, with 17% of journeys to work compared with 8% for England. There is therefore a base of short journey active travel in the town on which to build and evidence of local demand for different forms of private transport.

Congestion areas are worst during weekday rush hours, and on weekends when routes to access nearby coastline, leisure and tourism attractions are an issue. This

raises air quality concerns, limits growth opportunities for residential areas and access to town services, and limits the attraction for people travelling into the town centre.

Digital connectivity

93% of premises have access to superfast broadband, just below the regional and national averages, both of 96%. However, fibre to the premises (FTTP) coverage is low, and actual broadband speeds vary, download speeds range from 1.5 - 50 Mbit/s across the King's Lynn and west Norfolk Borough and 3.8 - 40 Mbit/s in the King's Lynn town area. We are working with Norfolk County Council on making private investment in broadband rollout work for King's Lynn through the Better Broadband for Norfolk programme.

The following section sets out the vision, priorities and actions we have developed to tackle these challenges and take the opportunities.

Strategy

Vision and Priorities

The Town Investment Plan has been developed by local people and businesses as a focused and strategic plan to address the opportunities and challenges that King's Lynn faces in a changing world. Visions are often just a bunch of words assembled in a way that everyone found least offensive. In King's Lynn we are taking a different approach.

We have worked closely with residents and businesses, including young people and a wide range of local organisations to combine the relevant evidence and data with insights and experience from local people to agree five priorities for investment. These are the things we want to achieve and which drive all our investment:

Our mission for King's Lynn is to achieve:

- *New opportunities for skills and jobs for our young people and all those affected by Covid-19* and needing to reskill, linked to demand from local employers and opportunities in local sectors
- *Growing innovative businesses* - attracted by our connectivity and high quality of life and supported by the networks and collaborative support that businesses need
- *A repurposed town centre with new experiences and businesses* - increasing footfall, enhancing cultural opportunities, with its different parts better connected
- *A high-quality residential and leisure offer in the historic town core and riverfront* - attracting new people to live and work in the town centre, whilst protecting our unique heritage.
- *A sustainably connected town* - through reduced congestion and better connectivity between the town, its catchment area and residential growth areas, creating safer walking and cycling routes and supporting remote working

A long term, integrated plan for renewal and success

The long-term economic impacts of Covid-19 and the trends it is accelerating will not be clear for some time, but this is the first stage of our evolving recovery plan. It also sets out the major investments we are making to speed up our transition to a zero-carbon

economy, including harnessing some of the positive environmental impacts from Covid-19. The Town Board, Borough Council, partners and residents have all been clear that the town needs a long-term, integrated strategy to deliver the opportunities we have and that also addresses today's problems with actions that can start now.

This plan integrates our recent bids for Future High Street Funding, Heritage Action Zone funding and this Town Deal fund, with our emerging response to Covid 19 recovery.

Theme	Project	Timeline	King's Lynn Vision
Innovative, growing businesses and skilled workforce	School of Nursing	Open by September 2021	A skilled workforce for growing industry. New skills and jobs for those affected by Covid-19.
	Youth and Retraining Pledge	Delivery 2020-2022	
	Innovation & Collaboration Incubator	Construction in 2022	A skilled workforce for growing industry. Growing innovative businesses
	Creative Hub	First phase small scale hub 2021. Second phase full refurb 2024.	
	Multi-user Community Hub	Open by July 2025	A sustainably connected town
	Enterprise Zone Business Rate Relief Extension	From March 2021	Growing innovative businesses
Sustainably connected town	Active and Clean Connectivity	Construction in 2022	A sustainably connected town
Historic riverfront and repurposed town centre	Initial Riverfront Regeneration	Construction in 2022	A repurposed town centre. A revived historic core and riverfront
	High Street Unit Repurposing Fund	Delivery 2021-25	A repurposed town centre
	Public Realm Fund	Delivery 2021-25	
	South Gates Gateway	Finished by 2024	
	South Gate Regeneration Area	Masterplanning 2020-21	A sustainably connected town
	St George's Guildhall Restoration	Open by 2024	A revived historic core and riverfront
	Town Centre Housing Development	Sites built by between August 2024 and March 2029	A repurposed town centre. High quality residential offer

Every stage of its development has been based on the core message from local partners and residents - that this is an opportunity to better integrate the towns social, physical and environmental assets so that all its communities and users can benefit.

The future of Government investment in innovation and economic growth is not clear at the time of agreeing this plan - with major future spending decisions to be taken in the months ahead. So local partners are clear that this is a living plan and one that can and must evolve as both the opportunities for investment and the needs of the local economy change.

King's Lynn TIP Spatial strategy

As has been clear through feedback and engagement of residents and businesses, there is a real opportunity to better integrate and connect different parts of the town and make better use of our assets. How the town works physically has a real impact on the life experiences of our residents, including their access to jobs, skills, services and safe, active travel.

Our strategy is designed to improve connectivity between new and existing residential areas, employment centres, education and healthcare provision and the town centre, improving gateways and enabling safer, more active travel. Our aim here is both to bring more people into the town centre, open up new growth sites, improve digital connectivity and take up and make it easier for everyone to travel around the town as a whole, whilst reducing carbon emissions, improving air quality and further increasing active travel.

There are five principle interventions in this element of our plan:

- Our clean air programme includes a *new town centre gyratory and one-*

way system, reducing congestion and improving traffic flow, for completion in 2023/24. This will also include public realm investment and improving signage and walking and cycling access between the station, town centre and riverfront.

- Our active connectivity programme will create *new cycling and walking routes* from the Parkway housing development, Enterprise Zone and, in the longer-term, from the West Winch housing growth area, ensuring that residents of 4,000 new homes have safe, active travel options to access the town, employment areas, and nearby schools through implementing our cycle and walking strategy.
- The *Southgates regeneration area* will open up the historic Southgate as a major gateway asset for the town and address this bottleneck location in the longer term.
- *Increasing the train service* to eight cars, and in the longer-term increasing trains to London and Cambridge to half hourly will further improve our town centre residential and commercial and visitor offer.
- Continuing to *invest in digital connectivity*, including 5G roll out, through the Better Broadband for Norfolk programme.



Four core economic areas of the town:

1. Nar Ouse Industry and Enterprise Zone

The successful Nar Ouse Enterprise Zone and King's Lynn Innovation Centre are the core of a new economic area being developed for the town. Home to major established firms and newer growing businesses in all our sectors, including food production, pharmaceuticals, healthcare, engineering, and logistics.

Close to the Hardwick retail area and major West Winch housing growth area and well connected through the A47, A17 and A149 - this is where we are focussing our investment for future business location, investment and growth.

Interventions:

- The new Innovation & Collaboration Incubator space for new and growing manufacturing businesses.



2. Modern town centre and retail area

The Vancouver Quarter and surrounding streets are the core of the town centre retail offer and have been affected hard by recent Covid-19 restrictions and long-term decline in footfall and changing retail trends.

Alongside supporting the immediate recovery and reopening of businesses, residents and businesses are clear that we have to act to repurpose this part of the town, make it easier to access and navigate and broaden out the offer and reasons for visiting.

There are real opportunities to make it easier for people to access skills and retraining and a range of other services, making the town's existing retail centre a place where people can get many more things done and provides a wider set of reasons to visit, which has been a strong theme of feedback from residents.

Interventions:

- Our major new **Multiuser Community Hub** on the vacant Argos site, which will also open up the front of the listed Majestic Cinema and will provide a one stop shop for accessing a range of services, including healthcare, wellbeing, skills and employment support.
- We will invest in **repurposing units**, for a mixture of meanwhile and longer-term uses and linking available space up to potential new business and creative uses.
- We will also invest in our **street scene, public realm and signage**, making it easier to navigate the town centre, including immediate investment this year.
- The proposed **School of Nursing** will be sited on the town centre campus of the College of West Anglia (CWA). The new apprenticeship programme will attract 150 students who otherwise would have to travel to Norwich, Peterborough or Cambridge for their training.
- Releasing existing surface **car parks for new homes in the town centre**, and reprovide appropriate levels of car parking that improves access and uses green technology including electric vehicle charging points. This will increase residential density in the town centre, creating new high-quality homes, through both new build and in existing historic buildings, all walkable from the train station, retail centre and riverfront.



3. Historic town and riverfront



The historic town and riverfront has long been both an asset and a source of frustration for local people. There is a long-term interest from investors in both residential and leisure opportunities in this part of the town, driven by increasing demand for UK tourism and rising residential prices and demand in other parts of the East of England. This is matched by short-term caution and a slowdown in activity driven by Covid-19 restrictions and market sentiment. After a long period of both under use and the failure of over-ambitious schemes, residents, business, civic groups and the Borough Council have worked together through Vision King's Lynn to set a clear set of deliverable and focussed priorities, backed up by integrating investment from the Future High Street Fund, Heritage Action Zone and Town's Fund, with a realistic and targeted approach to securing private sector investment.

We are therefore using public investment to unlock a number of sites and projects that will drive future demand and growth, remediating and repurposing land and buildings and creating new business and creative opportunities.

Interventions:

- The restoration of *St George's Guildhall* will create a new heritage and cultural attraction in the Guildhall using the unique selling points of the oldest theatre in the UK and the Shakespeare link, complemented with a centre to promote the built and maritime heritage of King's Lynn in the iconic Customs House.
- The *Creative Hub* will house 575 sqm of commercial space comprising co-working spaces based on hot-desking, offices, and designated space for creative communal use in makerspace and studios. Development of the White Barn will also create occasional performance or event spaces which could be used for productions or markets for food, arts and crafts. This will form part of meeting businesses' and residents' desire to see new experiences and a developed night-time economy in the town centre. Combined with the restoration of St George's Guildhall, these two facilities will transform the town's cultural amenities and offer.
- *First phase Riverfront Regeneration*, will bring back into use the Outer Purfleet dock and Custom House - an entry point from the end of the high street to the riverside - with dry side infrastructure to support the existing visitor pontoons. This project will also provide flood defences and infrastructure, create new outdoor public realm to improve the environment in preparation for further investment in leisure and residential development at Boal Quay and South Quay.

Housing Growth Areas

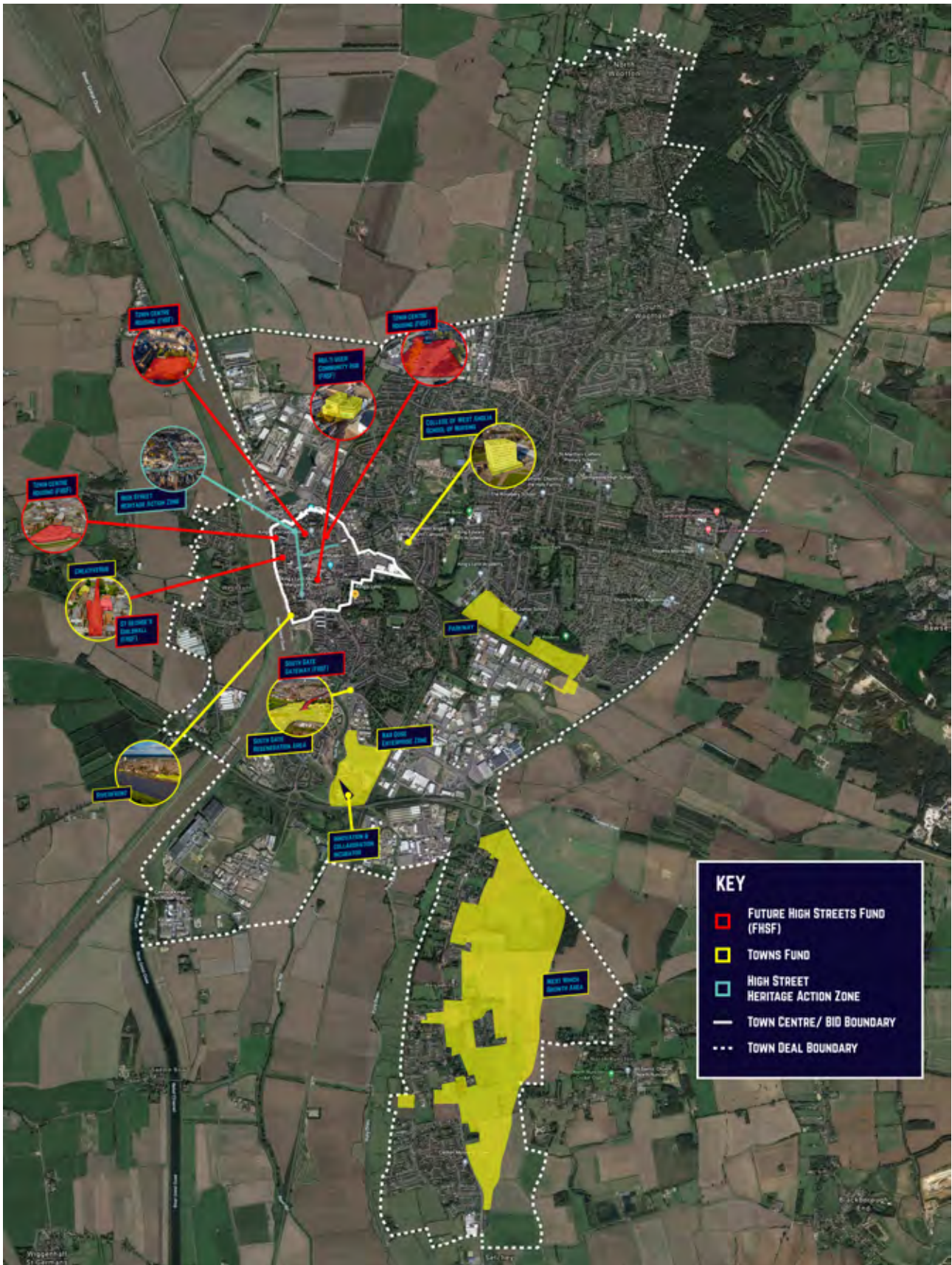
King's Lynn will continue to deliver the high-quality housing required to meet the needs of a growing and young population, with 1,718 new homes delivered since 2010 and more than 5,000 planned. Alongside the need to prioritise town centre densification, as set out above, we are also delivering the major growth areas in West Winch, South Wootton and Parkway. West Winch will deliver 4,000 homes alone, and require major new transport investment, including in clean and active travel to connect to local schools, employment areas and countryside.

Our aim is to ensure all our housing areas are well connected with active and clean travel options, including to nearby schools, employment sites and the town centre.

Interventions

- Active travel and clean air programmes, Town centre housing, Town centre repurposing and public realm programmes described above

Location of all Town Investment Plan Interventions



Interventions

The following section sets out how we are planning to deliver the aims outlined:

New opportunities for skills and jobs

for our young people and all those effected by Covid 19 and needing to reskill, linked to demand from local employers and opportunities in local sectors

Projects

- King's Lynn Youth and Retraining Pledge
- School of Nursing
- Multiuser Community Hub

What we want to achieve:

In the next two years...

- Supporting young people and people affected by redundancy to gain new, relevant skills

In the longer term...

- Developing a local talent pipeline to support the needs and ambitions of local businesses
- Establishing a skills support hub in King's Lynn for local people to have a physical home for life and employment skills support

How we will achieve our aims:

KING'S LYNN YOUTH AND RETRAINING PLEDGE

OUTPUTS

- Increase in capacity and accessibility to new skills facilities
- Increased and closer collaboration with employees
- Increase in the breadth of the local skills offer that responds to employer needs
- Increased benefit for the public education over the longer term

OUTCOMES

- New learners assisted into employment
- Increase in working-age population with qualifications

As we have set out, the evidence is clear that the need in King's Lynn is greater than surrounding areas, and likely to increase in the coming months. Young people have expressed ambitions to stay in King's Lynn to pursue their careers, and businesses we've spoken to say they struggle to connect to and recruit the right talent. Existing region-wide provision for skills and employability support is not designed to meet this local demand and there is evidence that a range of providers struggle to deliver effectively in King's Lynn¹⁷. The College of West Anglia, Council and business partners have come together to put in place a package of support for youth skills and adult retraining provision that will focus on the immediate and short-term impact of Covid-19. A King's Lynn Youth Pledge will focus skills and employability support on local under 30s - who have been

17 WSP analysis for Norfolk County Council, August 2020.

hit by the labour market impacts of Covid-19.

For those being made redundant and facing change in their career path, a King's Lynn Retraining Pledge will support people to diversify their skills and return to employment. This programme of support will connect talent to local businesses - both for skills transfer and employment opportunities. This will perform the double function of providing new skills and networking exposure for individuals as well as support for businesses to collaborate and connect to local talent.

By supporting King's Lynn with revenue funding now, across two financial years, the Towns Fund would add local capacity for delivering skills, employment and business support at a time when the town is feeling the impact of Covid-19 on the futures of young people and local businesses.

The Youth and Retraining Pledge will connect to priority enterprise projects in King's Lynn's Town Investment Plan: the Creative Hub and Innovation and Collaboration Incubator. Activity will include working with businesses to understand skills requirements and offer of experience with individual skills development clients.

The Youth and Retraining Pledge will connect to priority enterprise projects in King's Lynn's Town Investment Plan: the Creative Hub and Innovation and Collaboration Incubator. Activity will include working with businesses to understand skills requirements and offer of experience with individual skills development clients.

SCHOOL OF NURSING

OUTPUTS

- Increase in higher level skills offer responding to local skills needs
- New nursing skills facilities increasing accessibility to local people
- 2 new clinical simulation suites and specialist equipment

OUTCOMES

- 150 new learners assisted
- 4 hospital beds additional nursing capacity for Queen Elizabeth Hospital

Young people in King's Lynn are less likely to progress onto higher education than elsewhere in the country. With the nearest nursing training more than 40 miles away, this presents an opportunity to offer higher-level skills training locally in a sector visibly growing in importance, in partnership with an anchor institution for the wider area - the Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

This project will address both immediate demand for new skills training, and provide a growing future of training for a more highly-skilled local talent pipeline.



MULTIUSER COMMUNITY HUB



OUTPUTS

- New community centre in the town centre
- Development of 1 abandoned site on the high street
- Increase in capacity to deliver skills provision

OUTCOMES

- New learners assisted with life skills and into employment
- Improved perception of the place by residents and businesses

King's Lynn's skills and employability needs are recognised by providers, but evidence shows that regional programme delivery can be difficult in this area¹⁸, and there is a lack of visible signposting joining up the provision available locally and connecting individuals to programmes¹⁹. This points to a need for a visible physical home for skills and employability support in the area, connecting employers and local people in better ways than they have said operates here.

A new Multiuser Community Hub in King's Lynn town centre will establish a home for navigating the variety of services available to residents, and provide direction for people to connect to services provided physically or online. This project forms part of our Future High Streets Fund.

This will be housed with the library and space for social enterprises and other organisations, in order to increase accessibility and signposting to support for residents.

18 WSP analysis for Norfolk County Council, August 2020

19 King's Lynn stakeholder workshop feedback, 2020

Growing innovative businesses

attracted by our connectivity and high quality of life and supported by the networks and collaborative support that businesses need

Projects

- Innovation and Collaboration Incubator
- Creative Hub
- King's Lynn Youth and Retraining Pledge

King's Lynn has a supportive and collaborative business community, and strengths in manufacturing and healthcare, as well as presence in scientific and technical

How we will achieve our aims:

INNOVATION & COLLABORATION INCUBATOR



services. The town has a history of creative and innovative businesses, and there are new opportunities in areas that businesses want to explore and into which expand. This is evident from the engaged and collaborative forum the Town Deal Board has provided local business leaders.

We want to achieve:

- Building enterprise and industry space in the town for businesses to work, start and grow collaboratively
- Developing a local talent pipeline to support the needs and ambitions of local businesses

OUTPUTS

- 3,397m² increase in high quality, affordable commercial floor space
- Increase in the amount of shared workspace and innovation facilities

OUTCOMES

- 167 full time jobs created
- 10 enterprises utilising high quality, affordable and sustainable commercial spaces

We are continuing to develop our Enterprise Zone, and we have seen good demand for businesses wanting to be based in a part of the town with new, flexible premises.

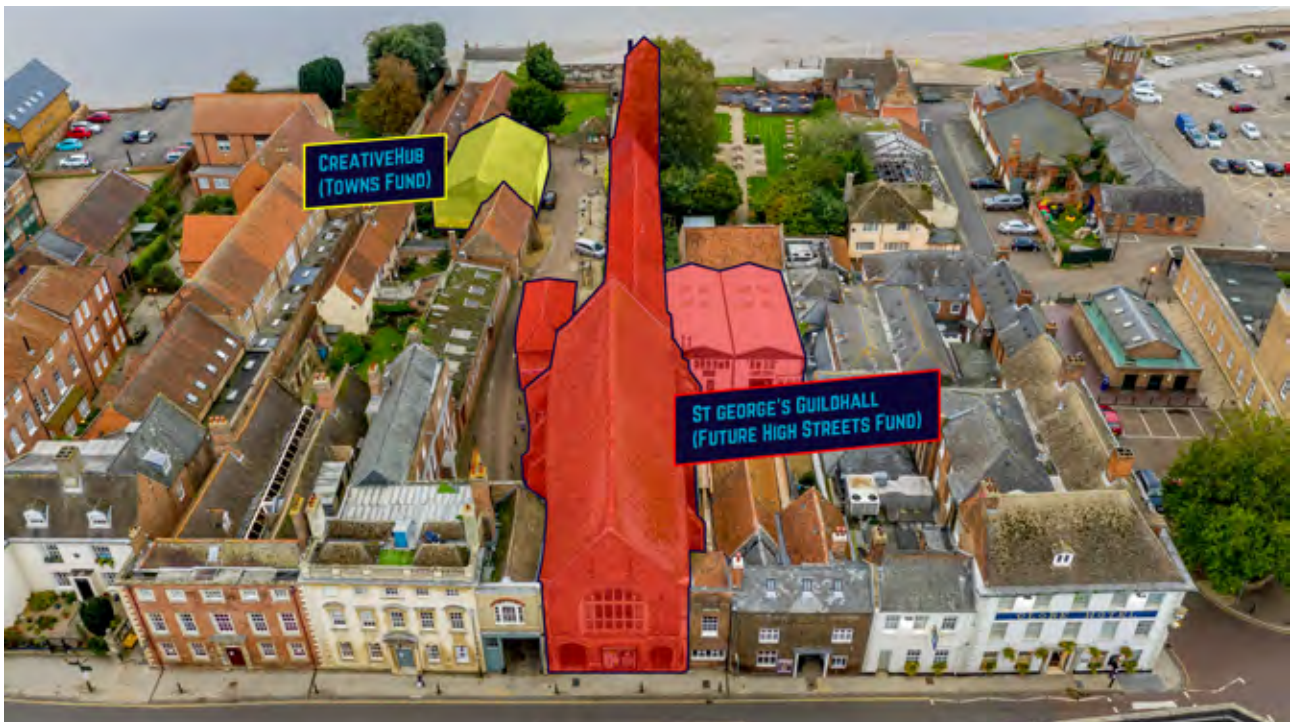
Businesses have been clear that there is a strong demand for additional technical space - such as the Norwich Hethel Engineering Centre model - with business-led wrap around support and peer-to-peer networks that are now widely seen as crucial to increasing firm's capacity to absorb and adopt new technology and innovation. Locally this is the case for our engineering, manufacturing, science and technology firms - where there is increasing cross over between the sectors and demand for specialist workplaces and spaces for demonstrator and R&D projects post-Covid-19 as they are not activities that can be carried out remotely.

We are therefore proposing a new Innovation and Collaboration Incubator for local

businesses specialising in manufacturing, engineering and related business demand (which is likely to include firms in science and agritech, for example). The new facility based on the Enterprise Zone will provide 36000sqft of commercial workshop, office and coworking spaces for new and growing manufacturing businesses. Innovation and collaboration will be delivered by an operator model designed to provide the wider support and networks as has been proven successful on similar sites including the Hethel Engineering Centre.

A priority of the Town Deal Board is to ensure that businesses in this new space will be supported in offering skills opportunities to young people and those retraining, as well as exposure to the local talent pool. Businesses and individuals will benefit from a local network sharing practices on new ways of working and delivering training.

CREATIVE HUB



OUTPUTS

- New arts venue
- Upgraded historical building
- 575m² increase in high quality shared workspace and innovation space

OUTCOMES

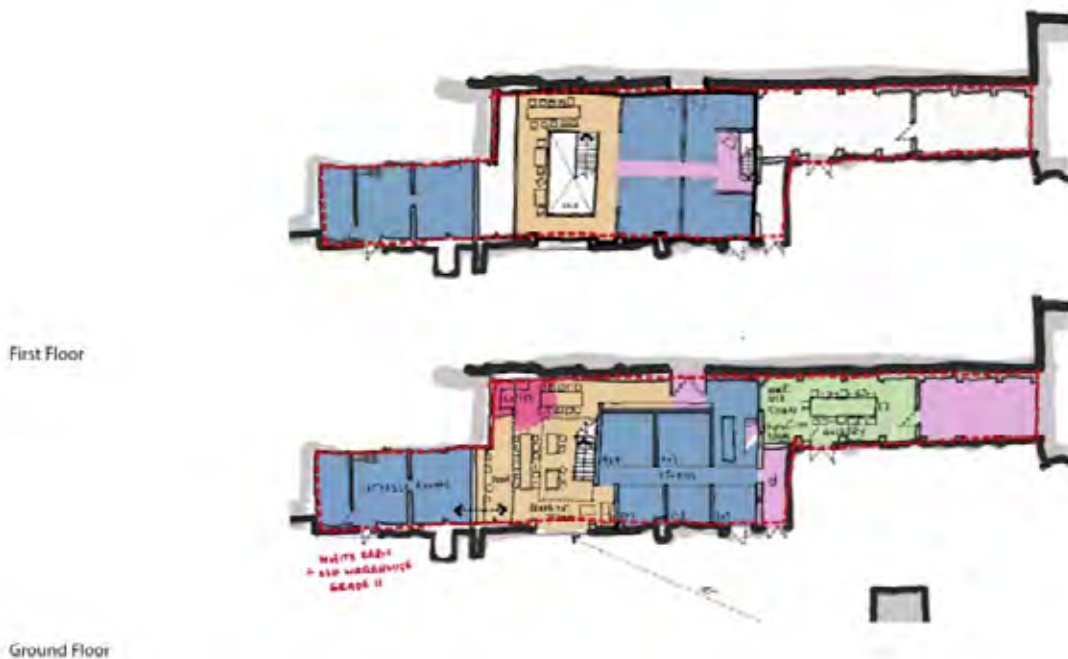
- Improved perception of the place by residents/visitors
- Support for 48 entrepreneurs and small business tenant members utilising business incubation, acceleration and co-working

A Creative Hub will be a new home for creative industries in King's Lynn, bringing together creative businesses to collaborate, develop skills and grow. There is a keen interest for more arts

and creative opportunities among young people, from creative entrepreneurs to collaborate and share skills, and from the community for cultural events space.

In addition of a new creative workspace in King's Lynn will encourage more people to work in the town centre, commuters making use of the town's direct rail connection with Ely and Cambridge.

The development of the White Barn also creating occasional performance or event spaces to be used for productions or markets for food, arts and crafts, will form a part of repurposing the town centre, and businesses' and residents' desire to see new experiences and a developed nighttime economy in the town centre.



KINGS LYNN CREATIVE HUB
WHITE BARN 2024
ART BY MARK
2024



A repurposed town centre with new experiences and businesses, increasing footfall, enhancing cultural opportunities, with its different parts better connected

Projects

- Town Centre Repurposing Fund
- Public Realm Fund
- St George's Guildhall Restoration

We want to achieve:

- Higher density and living in the town centre
- New experiences, cultural and night time events in the town centre

How we will achieve our aims:

TOWN CENTRE REPURPOSING FUND

OUTPUTS

- Delivery of new quality residential space in the town centre
- Delivery of new commercial space for pop up business opportunities
- Development of abandoned sites

OUTCOMES

- Increased footfall in the town centre
- Improved perception of the place by residents, visitors and businesses

A concern at the top of people's minds for King's Lynn town in the midst of Covid-19 is the accelerating rate of retail units becoming vacant, and a desire to repurpose the retail centre for new and different pop-up experiences. This project aims to rejuvenate King's Lynn's town centre by repurposing vacant units into business/living spaces. Repurposed units will be occupied by businesses, leisure and community uses on the ground floor and facilitate town centre living on the above floor(s), their new function will increase footfall and spend in the town centre, as well as improve the health and appearance of the high street.

The repurposed units will house multiple businesses in a 'market hall' style business model. Traders will be offered flexible rates and a central location, as well as the opportunity to be part of a new draw to the town centre. This would build a nighttime economy and new experiences.

PUBLIC REALM FUND

OUTPUTS

- Improved public spaces in the town centre
- Upgraded commercial spaces and physical assets in the town centre
- Programme of public realm grants to support high street businesses

OUTCOMES

- Increased footfall in the town centre
- Improved perception of the place by residents, visitors and businesses

Businesses and community groups we have spoken to agree that an intervention for repurposing the town centre requires improving the physical attractiveness of the town centre. The public realm fund is a capital ask to deliver interventions highlighted in an upcoming public realm action plan.

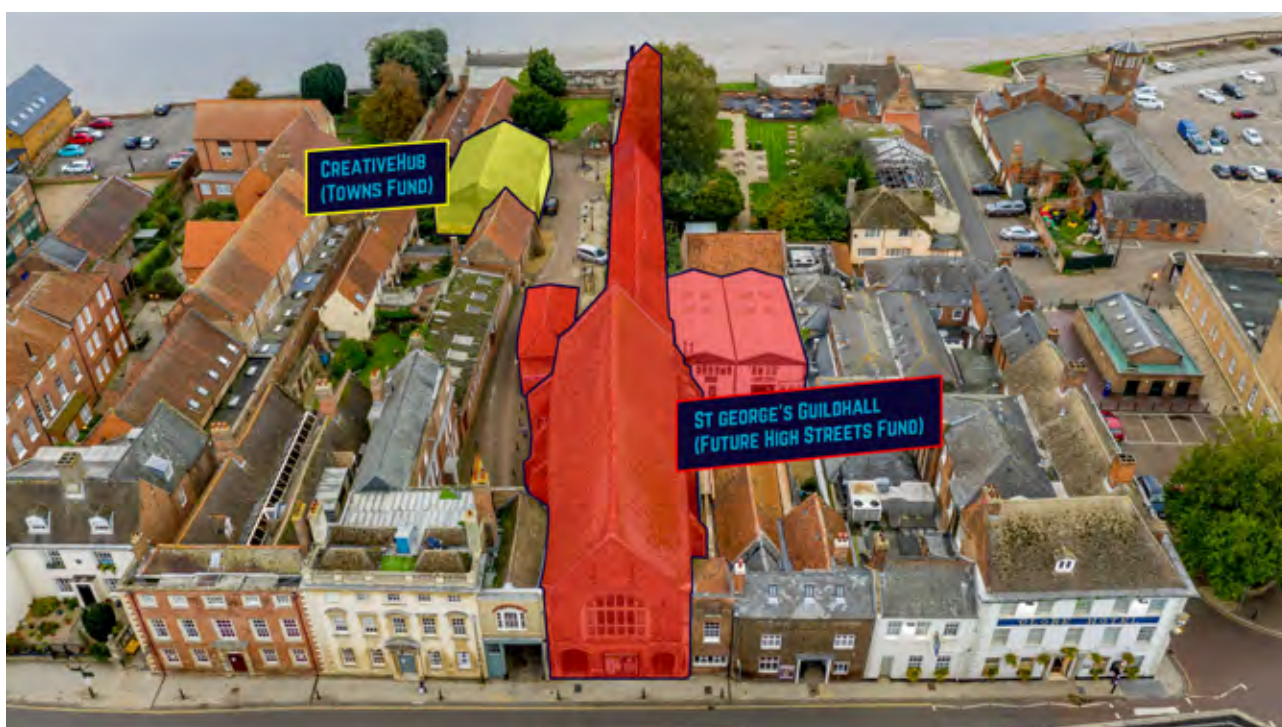
INTERVENTIONS

The aim of the project is to improve the perception of the town centre, creating a quality and distinctive public realm, softening the townscape, and prioritising active travel. The purpose of this project is to improve and make better use of the public realm - creating a safe, vibrant, and attractive town centre.

Interventions will be codesigned with local businesses with support from the Business

Improvement District. Interventions are envisioned to include outdoor seating provision, expanded pedestrianisation, new cycle facilities, provision for outdoor pop up stalls for small/startup businesses, street furniture renewal, art and greenspaces. The timing of this proposal aligns with a responsibility to support reopening the town centre following Covid-19.

ST GEORGE'S GUILDHALL RESTORATION



OUTPUTS

- Upgraded and restored important historical theatre in historic town core

OUTCOMES

- Increased footfall and attraction of visitors to the town centre
- Improved perception of the place by residents, visitors and businesses

The oldest working theatre in the country has the potential to add to the cultural offer in the town. It would host shows, events, community events, school activities boosting both visitor numbers to the venue and the town at the same time as preserving a much-loved heritage asset. It will offer a flexible space, offering wider opportunities for both performing arts and social activities.

A high quality residential offer

in the historic town core and riverfront, attracting new people to live and work in the town centre, whilst protecting our unique heritage.

How we will achieve our aims:

RIVERFRONT REGENERATION



OUTPUTS

- Development and remediation of 2 abandoned sites

OUTCOMES

- Improved perception of the place by residents, visitors and businesses
- Enabling residential investment in the area in hospitality and leisure

King's Lynn's most distinctive asset to visitors is the historic riverfront. With the nature of the tourist industry changing due to the impact of Covid-19, there is heightened interest in the visitor economy in the UK, and new opportunities in new places.

Projects

- Riverfront Regeneration
- Town Centre Housing

What we want to achieve:

- Increased density and living in the town centre
- Rejuvenated historic riverfront for visitors and residents

Reviving historic cultural assets in this part of the town and pivoting activity to building the visitor economy around King's Lynn's historic identity would provide new cultural opportunities, create jobs, and create a new community living in this part of the town centre to support and grow local businesses.

This project constitutes the first phase of regeneration for King's Lynn's riverfront. Investment will provide flood defences and infrastructure to support future development of Boal Quay, create new outdoor public realm to improve the environment for in preparation for further investment in leisure and residential development on this site.

This phase will also bring into use the Purfleet dock and Custom House - a landmark from the end of the high street to the riverside - with dry side infrastructure to support the existing visitor pontoons. This will be an enabling step for investment in hospitality, leisure and culture - of which there is ongoing interest - at this part of the riverfront.

TOWN CENTRE HOUSING (FHSF)

OUTPUTS

- Delivery of 169 new quality residential units in the town centre
- Remediation of dilapidated sites
- Delivery of strategic parking sites in the town centre

OUTCOMES

- Increased living and footfall in the town centre
- Improved vehicle flow in the town centre
- Improved perception of the place by residents, visitors and businesses

This scheme includes the relocation of parts of four existing town centre car parks to a new less prominent peripheral site to provide space for 169 high-quality houses and flats - including affordable housing - in the historic core of King's Lynn. This project is part of the wider Heritage Action Zone initiative with Historic England

This will provide new town centre residential offer, increasing density and footfall, and increasing the attractiveness of the town centre.

A sustainably connected town

through reduced congestion and better connectivity between the town, its catchment area and residential growth areas, creating safer walking and cycling routes and supporting remote working

Projects

- Active and Clean Connectivity
- Southgates Gateway

Road congestion is high around the town and town centre, with air quality issues resulting in an air quality management area at a gateway into the town centre. Car ownership is high in King's Lynn, with a large rural hinterland that will continue to rely on car use. However, cycling and walking levels are higher than in other places, and there is the opportunity since people's travelling has changed during the pandemic, to enable the maximization of cycling and walking for local travel and part of the wider leisure and tourist offer.

What we want to achieve:

- Improved active travel links
- Reduced congestion and better connectivity between the town, its catchment area and residential growth areas

How we will achieve our aims:

ACTIVE AND CLEAN CONNECTIVITY

OUTPUTS

- New local active travel provision for walking and cycling
- New public realm and greenery
- New roadway to ease congestion

OUTCOMES

- Improved air quality
- Improved perception of place by residents and businesses
- New infrastructure to support 380 new homes

The active and clean connectivity package is a series of interventions to prevent future congestion and air pollution, in response to the proposed housing delivery of 380 new homes and employment growth in the Enterprise Zone.

The proposed development comprises of three elements, to form an active and clean connectivity package. Projects are 'shovel ready' and respond to local transport and air quality demands. The elements are the gyratory system, Parkway bridge and the Enterprise Zone sustainable travel links.

The gyratory system will reconfigure the central town centre one-way system. This encompasses Railway Road, Blackfriars Road and Austin Street. It will introduce two way working on roads and include changes to cross streets. It will also include measures to assist public transport, walking and cycling.

The project will help to address the air pollution and congestion around the town centre, with the area being designated an Air Quality Management Area.

SOUTH GATE GATEWAY



OUTPUTS

- New and upgraded road infrastructure to ease congestion
- Restoration of historic site
- Upgraded walking and cycling paths

OUTCOMES

- Improved air quality
- Improved vehicle flow into and around the town centre
- Improved perception of the place by residents, visitors and businesses

This scheme is situated in a strategic regeneration area for King's Lynn for the Heritage Action Zone programme and is a transport priority. The scheme will improve the main access to the town centre by diverting traffic round the historic Southgate. By diverting traffic, the road reconfiguration will protect the historic gateway into the town, improve traffic flow and reduce congestion, improve air quality, and provide additional walkway and cycleway space. This will also improve town centre accessibility for pedestrian and cyclists as well as vehicles. The project is the first phase of implementation for wider redevelopment of Southgates for which the council has been strategically acquiring sites to facilitate comprehensive redevelopment and further highway improvements of the roundabout.

Engagement and delivery

Community and business engagement

Genuine codesign and engagement with local people has been absolutely central to developing a new approach in King's Lynn over the last two years. In 2018, partners set up the Vision King's Lynn initiative, to enable the local community itself to build a vision and plan for the future that integrated all local regeneration and placement activity and investment. More than 500 subscribers remain engaged in ongoing conversations and the development of Future High Streets Fund projects and the Town Investment Plan. The Vision King's Lynn website and social media channels are a hub of active input and ideas, as well as updates.

The Town Deal Board has integrated into this community process. Members include community and voluntary organisations alongside local businesses, the college, anchor institutions and elected members. The Board has met monthly since January with a programme of in-depth workshops. It has been a constructive process driven by evidence and experience.

The Board has brought together the insights and contribution of different parts of the community to ensure we have a detailed understanding of the needs, challenges, and concerns of different parts of the community. Ideas, discussions and challenges have created a plan with a practical focus and real backing for the future vision for King's Lynn.

The local media have also been fully involved, with consistent constructive and thoughtful media coverage.

Our community and business engagement

in more recent months has also focussed on the impact of Covid-19, through workshops with local businesses and community stakeholders, and targeted consultation with young people. More detail is set out below:

Consumers

We carried out a consumer sentiment survey in June to understand people's views on reopening the town centre. Concerns expressed included safety in reopening, uncertainty about the future, and the accelerated shift to reliance on online retail and services.

Consumers were keen to return to access high street brands but wanted to see open space used in new ways, including outdoor seating for cafes and restaurants, outdoor event space, and space for pop up retail and leisure/entertainment opportunities. It was also clear that car use was increasing at least in the short term.

Young people

As well as surveying more than 200 young people in King's Lynn we engaged youth groups in workshops on hopes and concerns for the future of the town, including the West Norfolk Youth Advisory Board.

Participants were ambitious to re-purpose empty shop units with pop up uses and independent retailers, facilitating new leisure activities, and making the town centre more attractive. They saw opportunities for enterprise and new businesses. Concerns were congested roads, infrequent bus services, and a lack of safe cycleways.

Interestingly, a majority of young people (64%) expressed a desire to stay in the area, with top career aspirations in health and social care, arts, culture, and education.

Businesses

For the majority of businesses engaged (69%), Covid-19 has 'significantly' affected their business. Many used the Government furlough scheme for staff members, and operations have been adapted. Working from home for all sizes of firm was a challenge, of those surveyed, 75% said staff were unable to work from home, and 82% of those did not have plans to enable staff to do so. Many of King's Lynn's businesses work in manufacturing, and specialist workspaces are vital to the industry.

Along with financial concerns and uncertainty around future trading, many businesses in King's Lynn cited concerns around a reliance on physical presence for their business. While 64% of survey respondents said they were confident their business could recover, there was a keen request for business support in the town to help through this period and planning for the future.

Businesses said they struggle to recruit the right skills locally to enable them to innovate and grow. They wanted the town to be more attractive for people to move and stay, making the most of cultural assets and the direct rail link to London.

VCS and community groups

Culture and heritage community partners in King's Lynn recognised an opportunity to revitalise the town's cultural offer. Suggestions included improving the physical attractiveness and signage around the town, improving the flow from the railway station through the high street to the historic core, greening and outdoor artwork, cycle infrastructure including cycle racks in the town centre, creating opportunities for festivals and events, and introducing pedestrianisation in spots such as the Tuesday Market Place - currently containing car parking.

VCS and community organisations supporting people through the impact of Covid-19 expressed ambitions around enabling online offer of services, supporting those not online, and ensuring additional provision and improved signposting for skills and employability support for those becoming unemployed or in long-term unemployment.

Delivery plan

Governance

For all projects, the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk is the accountable body for the Towns Fund investment. Our s.151 officer therefore takes responsibility for proper use of funds as agreed in Heads of Terms with Government.

The Council will manage the delivery of projects where we are the lead and will provide oversight where partners are leading delivery.

The Town Deal Board will continue to meet as a local forum of business and community leaders on the future of King's Lynn and collaborating on their priorities. The Board will input into steering the delivery of projects through the agreement of Heads of Terms.