

# Hereford Town Investment Plan



# HEREFORD

— A greener, fairer city —



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## OUR VISION FOR HEREFORD

Hereford aspires to be one of the greenest & fairest cities in the country, with fantastic opportunities and quality of life for people of all ages. Deeply rooted in our unique rural heritage, we're blossoming into a richly creative, digital, connected & highly-skilled place to live, work, study and visit.



# Section 1: Context Analysis

Our contextual analysis is rooted firmly in an extensive and deliberately planned dialogue with the people of Hereford which occurred over several months and was heavily refined to ensure we were able to overcome the challenges of the Covid pandemic, principally through significant deployment of virtual and “e-enabled” activities.

## LOCATION AND PROFILE

Hereford is a modest city with a unique history and a large reach. It is the sub-regional driver for 192,000 people<sup>[1]</sup>. The city itself is situated at the geographic heart of the county and has a population of 55,800<sup>[2]</sup>. Its population profile follows that of England very closely, with 62%<sup>[3]</sup> of residents of working age. A map of the Towns Fund Boundary for the city is set out below:



Hereford makes up approaching a quarter of the population of the county and accounts for a significant proportion of its productivity. Overall, the county’s GVA is low at £20,738 per head compared to the England average of £28,096<sup>[4]</sup>. This is the most significant levelling up challenge it faces. This issue is underlain with challenging performance in relation to low wages and low skills. Hereford is 5% points behind the national average in terms of people skilled to NVQ level 4 and above.

Hereford’s strongest asset is its heritage and wider cultural creative offer, with 316 listed buildings, 12% of the City given over to green space. It has a fabulous river corridor and a globally significant collection of treasures including its Cathedral, Mappa Mundi and the recently discovered Herefordshire Hoard.

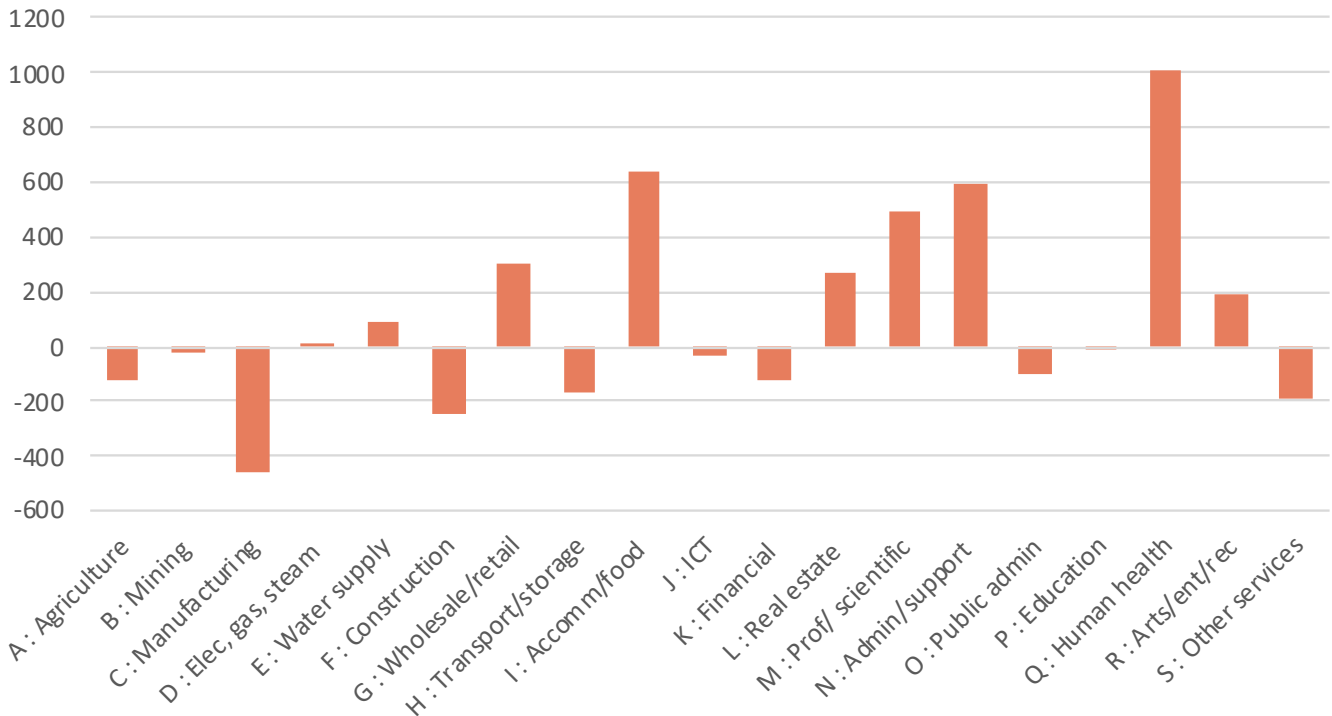
Hereford is also home to a nationally-renowned independent College of Arts, to a large and important Further Education provider, Herefordshire and Ludlow College, and to the Royal National College for the Blind.

Overall, Hereford’s stock of jobs grew by 6.3% between 2015 and 2019, 1.3% higher than the national average and a considerably stronger performance than the three largest towns in the county, Leominster, Ledbury and Ross on Wye, all of which experienced modest job losses during this period<sup>[5]</sup>.

The sectors with the city’s highest location quotients are: manufacturing, water supply, sewerage and waste management, wholesale and retail, accommodation and food service activities, real estate and health and social work. Key employers include<sup>[6]</sup>:

- Food and drink: the city and its wider catchment are home to major brands such as Avara, Bulmers, Chase Distillery, Tyrrells, Weston’s Cider, Ornum Ingredients and Wye Valley Brewery.
- Advanced manufacturing and engineering: with firms such as ATN Europe, KGD and Wiggin Special Metals, Haygrove Group and S&A Group. Skylon Park in Hereford is part of the cyber valley of Gloucestershire and Worcestershire, the UK’s largest cyber cluster outside London. It is also the location of the Marches Growth Hub. Cyber companies located in Hereford include ETL Systems along with Serbus, Simtech-IT, Xreach and Zovolt who are based within the broader hinterland of the city.
- Defence: three Special Forces regiments based in Hereford, with strengths in covert reconnaissance, counterterrorism, direct action, and hostage rescue.
- Construction: with companies including Kingspan, Rehau, Taylor Lane Timber Frame, and Central Roofing and Building Services.
- Retail: M and M Direct and Hoople

Sectoral growth and decline between 2015 and 2019 <sup>[7]</sup> is set out in the chart below:



Manufacturing, construction and other service jobs have experienced the most significant adjustment due to macroeconomic change during the 2015-19 period with retail, accommodation and food services (a proxy for tourism in part) holding up particularly well against national norms.

Central to the drive to increase Hereford’s productivity has been the development of Skylon Park, the city’s enterprise zone in its southern suburb of Rotherwas. This employment area is a key node in the Marches LEP’s Cyber Resilience Alliance. Formed in 2017, the Alliance includes LEPs covering Gloucestershire (GFirst) and Wiltshire (SWLEP). The Science and Innovation Audit (2018) identifies the area as the largest cluster of cyber security activity outside London. Building on this success, the Alliance LEPs are aiming to double the number of people employed in the sector from 5,000 in 2018 to 10,000 in 2028.

In the Marches, the Sector Skills Deep Dive for Cyber Security and Resilience (July 2020) found that the sector currently equates to £667 million, with 4.1% of the region’s total jobs (or 11,800 jobs).

The potential for growth in this sector (e.g. direct jobs, wider investment in products and processes across all industries, acting as a regional testbed) is recognised as a catalyst to improve the region’s GVA per capita and to narrow its productivity gap over the next ten years.

Alongside Skylon Park, the development of NMITE – the New Model Institute for Technology and Engineering is welcoming its first intake of students in 2021 and plans to add 5,000 new engineers to the market by xxx. NMITE is an internationally significant and nationally unique institution which was enabled by a DfE start-up grant of £23 million in 2018 and which has been conceived to create a national pipeline of engineering graduates with a very high level of applied skills.

The latest claimant count data shows that in November 2020 there were 4,675 people in Herefordshire (aged 16+) claiming out-of-work benefits, an increase of 90 claimants from the previous month. The claimant count is currently 122% higher than in March 2020. In England as a whole, it is 111% higher than in March.<sup>[8]</sup>

Applying national projections for the number of employees by sector on furlough based on the tables below:

#### ESTIMATED PERCENTAGE OF SECTOR WORKFORCE FURLOUGHED UK<sup>[9]</sup>

Sector	% on furlough
Manufacturing	31.1%
Construction	46.2%
Wholesale and Retail Trade	21.5%
Accommodation and Food Service Activities	73.3%
Transportation and Storage	32.0%
Information and Communication	13.0%
Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities	13.2%
Administrative and Support Service Activities	31.3%
Education	6.8%
Human Health and Social Work Activities	8.5%
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	69.9%
All Industries	28.4%

This indicates 9,323 staff currently on furlough in Hereford at a rate of 28%, broadly on a par with the national average.

Notwithstanding the longstanding and current challenges facing our city, we see real opportunities to build on its potential, identified and developed through an extensive programme of engagement with stakeholders in its future. This consultation process, undertaken during the pandemic through predominantly online meetings with more than 500 individuals and an online survey which reached 8,500 people, has driven the development of a vision of Hereford as a pioneering rural city empowered by a new model of inclusive and sustainable growth which embraces the structural challenges to the high street accelerated by Covid.

Having identified this highly inclusive vision as our lodestar, we have harnessed the potential power

of the Towns Fund in a plan which underpins our achievements, addresses market failure and applies long-term investment to build an ambitious and prosperous future for all communities in our city.

Our vision has also evolved naturally through consideration of those investment initiatives which align most closely with the sectoral and enterprise priorities of the Marches LEP's Strategic Economic Plan. We believe that the interventions in our Town Investment Plan will address the urgent need to create the education and higher value job opportunities which will attract and retain younger generations of residents, boosting the appeal of our city as a great place to live, to work, to study, to invest and to visit.



## KEY ASSETS AND STRENGTHS

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Our investment plan will build on Hereford's key assets and develop their potential to drive a step change in the economic performance of the city, with a twin emphasis on skills and place shaping.

### KEY ASSETS:

**Global and national heritage assets** – a world class Cathedral and three “treasures” of international significance – the 1217 Magna Carta, the Mappa Mundi and the Herefordshire Hoard. Royal charters dating back to King Richard I, the Friars Street Collections of historical objects and antiquities dating back to the Ice Age and 361 listed buildings.<sup>[10]</sup>

**Resilient city centre** – significant potential to repurpose the city centre with Herefordshire Council as a major landlord of key assets such as Maylord Shopping Centre and the Museum. In October 2020, Zzoomm announced that it will be providing a new full fibre network to cover the entire city, commencing in early 2021.

**A “signature” river corridor** – significant economic development potential providing opportunities around enhanced leisure and green transport options. More widely the City hinterland has growing access to developing landscape, food and drink and leisure assets which are being opened up as part of the contemporary recognition of the importance of the environment.

**Emerging vibrant cultural economy** – with key initiatives such as the Powerhouse performance group, Encore music hub and a growing cluster of maker and creative businesses.

**A creative social economy** – well-established organisations linked to inclusive development, including Rural Media (digital and broadcast provider) and Pedicargo (recycling and delivery business). Hereford and the surrounding area enjoy high levels of volunteering, self-help and participation in community activities. Leadership is provided by Herefordshire Voluntary Organisations Support Service (HVOSS).

**7,000 full and part time post 16 students (14% of the population) and four centres of learning**, two of which, the College of Arts and NMITE, have a nationally distinctive profile. There is also a recognition of the importance of ensuring young people feel they have a stake in the future of the City and our work with the Holmer Road Cycle Track and Skate Park reflect this in the development of this plan.

**Platform for economic development via Skylon Park (Rotherwas)** – Centre for Marches LEP Cyber Resilience Alliance activity and focus of major recent LEP investment – including considerable new business space in the Shell Store.

**Significant defence cluster** - three Special Forces regiments based in Hereford, with significant high technology capability.

**A dynamic food and drink sector** – home to Avara, Heineken and Weston's Cider. Bulmers, Chase Distillery and Tyrrells are all within the wider Hereford catchment. A recent survey by Legges of Bromyard identified that there are more than 120 independent food and drink producers in the county and an emerging food quarter in Hereford.

**Increasing significance of health and care as a growing employer** – spearheaded by the Wye Valley NHS Trust, the core impetus for One Herefordshire, which joined the Government's One Public Estate (OPE) programme in April 2017.

# Evidence of Need, Challenges and Opportunities

## 1. ENTERPRISE AND INNOVATION

Hereford is the economic prop which sustains much of the economic dynamism of the county and is home to its core services. The economic success of our city is therefore critical to the wider sustainability of the county as a whole. It represents approaching 30% of the population of the county and its stock of jobs is 44% of the county total<sup>[11]</sup>. 24% of Hereford’s jobs are in knowledge intensive sectors, on a par with the England average of 25%<sup>[12]</sup>. The city has a job density of 91% compared to the England average of 86%<sup>[13]</sup>. The somewhat dated origin and destination data from the 2011 census show the long-term relationship between the city and the core towns which it sustains (acknowledging at the same time, that this picture needs to be understood in terms of wider out-commuting which reveals its influence in terms of comparative wage rates as set out in the section below):

### COMMUTING 2011 CENSUS

Currently residing in	Place of Work						Total
	Leominster	Bromyard	Kington	Hereford	Ledbury	Ross-on-Wye	
Leominster	2,033	120	41	640	50	16	2,900
Bromyard	191	987	5	417	44	10	1,654
Kington	60	14	395	160	17	9	655
Hereford	543	212	38	18,425	299	302	19,819
Ledbury	54	23	4	360	1,597	41	2,079
Ross-on-Wye	20	17	7	443	60	1,818	2,365
Total	2,901	1,373	490	20,445	2,067	2,196	29,472

Whilst the city performs well in the context of its local geography, the wider statistics demonstrate the challenges it faces in terms of enterprise and innovation. Notwithstanding the key role played by the city, wages at place of work across Herefordshire as a whole, are £490 per week compared to an English average of £589. At place of residence, they are £533. This demonstrates that earnings in Herefordshire are almost £100 per week lower than the national average and that Herefordshire residents as a whole earn wages which are over £50 lower per week than the national average<sup>[14]</sup>. The clear inference from these statistics is that those in the county earning higher wages out-commute in some considerable numbers to achieve them. This is further borne out by the fact that the GVA per head in Herefordshire is 27% lower than the national average<sup>[15]</sup>. Other contributory factors are the relatively high proportion of workers involved in low paying jobs in agriculture.

### CHALLENGES:

**Availability of skilled workers** – 35.8% of Herefordshire’s population is qualified at NVQ4 and above, compared to a GB average of 40.3%<sup>[16]</sup>.

**Underperformance of the tourism sector** - our visitor economy was worth an estimated £10 million in 2018 vs e.g. Worcester £170 million, Lincoln £210 million and Chester £700 million <sup>[17]</sup>.

**Location and access** – Hereford is relatively isolated. It has poor rail and road links to major economic centres, which limit the scale of its markets and access to a wider workforce. New thinking is essential to overcome these challenges, addressing the development of local assets including land, capital and people (neo-endogenous growth). The impact of the pandemic has been a positive disrupter in this context creating opportunities to repurpose the City Centre and move to a more sustainable e-enabled means of generating higher value employment.

**Support for innovation and development** – The lack of a dedicated Higher Education presence in Hereford (until the creation of NMITE) has led to the need for external agencies to lead the R&D process in relation to the development of businesses in the city. There have nonetheless been some notable innovative achievements which need to be built on, the foremost of which is the Midlands Centre for Cyber Security developed at Skylon Park by the University of Wolverhampton.

**Physical connectivity** - The need to link the less prosperous south of the city more with the north; the need for congestion reduction (hence electric buses); the need for improved active travel infrastructure; the need to help the city transition from a single-driver-car mode to a different default as part of addressing the climate crisis.

## OPPORTUNITIES:

**Wider Impact** – As already indicated, the development of Hereford will support the wider sustainability of the county, particularly (based on evidence of commuting flows) the five other towns of recognisable scale in the county.

**Sectoral Growth** – there are clear opportunities to expand a number of key sectors, including tourism, food and drink and the environmental and social economy sectors which sustain Hereford’s unique character. We have recognised the current challenge associated with the climate and ecological crisis and see this plan as a key element of our approach to addressing this.

**Digital Connectivity** – the proposed rollout of superfast broadband network to the whole of the city. Zzoomm is committing private investment to create a full fibre network which will e-enable the city and its business growth potential more widely.

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## 2. PEOPLE

Hereford has a higher proportion of part-time jobs (42.6%) than the national average (32%)<sup>[18]</sup>. Whilst relatively resilient in comparison to some other areas in terms of Covid impacts, it has a projected 9,300 workers on furlough. The city also has 15% fewer workers qualified to NVQ level 4 and above than the national average<sup>[19]</sup>. At a county level, wages earned in Hereford make up 44% of all incomes, with the county average salary almost exactly £100 per week lower than the national average<sup>[20]</sup>.

Hereford scores lower than the England median in relation to income, education and living environment domains within the English Indices of Deprivation 2019<sup>[21]</sup>. Herefordshire is a cold spot for social mobility: it is one of the worst 20% of local authorities in England in terms of school achievement for disadvantaged children who go on to get a good job and secure housing<sup>[22]</sup>.

## CHALLENGES:

**Skills and training** – The low level of skills (as evidenced by the Annual Population Survey and the English Indices of Deprivation) represent perhaps the biggest challenge to the economic development of our city. Until recently, the lack of a comprehensive Higher Education offer has been a key challenge in terms of meeting the needs of employers. Our Skills Foundry proposals with portals in the City Centre and South Wye, recognise that the City needs an inclusive approach to learning engaging people at all levels.

**Employment and wages** – the ratio between part and full time jobs needs to be carefully addressed to ensure people are able to fulfil their full potential in the labour market, if this is done well it will increase productivity by ensuring we provide everyone with the opportunity to work in a way (in terms of hours worked) that maximises their economic potential. The Government’s “Good Work Plan” is very important in this context: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/good-work-plan>. Wage levels need to increase to fuel the sustainable local economic development of the city and wider area.

**Social Mobility and deprivation** – it is clear that the area to the south of the River Wye has the poorest outcomes in terms of deprivation and social mobility. This area of Hereford must be a key focus of long-term strategic thinking and intervention.

## OPPORTUNITIES:

**Skills Development** – the operational inception of NMITE and the regionally distinctive offer of the College of Arts (which has an objective to double its HE numbers) both provide real potential to develop a distinctive workforce. Work is currently underway to develop a skills board in Herefordshire and we have engaged with this initiative to ensure all learning providers have the potential to contribute to our skills agenda.

**Quality of Place** – post-Covid shifts in commuting patterns present an opportunity to attract skilled talent to Hereford on the basis of its natural attractiveness and its relative affordability in terms of living costs. Hereford is also an attractive location to highly skilled people seeking to find a more rural milieu as a response to the urban threats linked to Covid.

**Partnership Working** – there is a track record of collaboration between public and voluntary sector organisations through initiatives such as Building Better Opportunities Herefordshire, one of two such projects in the Marches LEP area, whereby nine partner organisations are working together to help those aged 19+ furthest away from employment to gain the skills and experience they need to get into work. Other programmes include In2 and No Wrong Door which focus on different age groups.

**Social Economy** – the city's relatively strong social economy provides a series of very useful access points to promote entry to the workforce and career development in terms of social mobility. This is particularly important in addressing the challenges of those furthest from the labour market.

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## 3. PLACE

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Hereford has a distinctive retail profile, an under-developed river corridor at the heart of the city and nationally and internationally significant heritage potential linked to its medieval importance as a key settlement in the Welsh Marches.

British Land's landmark investment in the Old Market in 2014 transformed a moribund and obstructive section of the city into a vibrant 21st century retail and leisure complex. Herefordshire Council's recent acquisition of the core Maylord shopping centre has created opportunities to repurpose the heart of the city centre, with the entry of a landlord who is prepared to take a long-term strategic view based on social as well as narrow commercial returns.

Overall, the number of jobs in wholesale and retail in the city rose by over 300 between 2015 and 2019.

One twelfth of the city area<sup>[23]</sup> is given over to green space and it has 361 listed buildings<sup>[24]</sup> and a world class heritage offer.

Key development opportunities proliferate on the rim of Hereford's city centre including the old cinema complex on Commercial Road, the Station Approach area, the Hereford Football Club facilities around Edgar Street and along the north bank of the River Wye, where a number of local sporting clubs have aspirations to use their sites to open up access to the river.

There is still space for consolidation at Skylon Park where the establishment of a food and drink research facility has been identified as the next stage in the development of the enterprise offer. Skylon Park is already host to a number of value-adding activities including the development of the NMITE Campus, the new Shell Store business workspace and the cyber security cluster.

There have been significant LEP focused investments in Hereford including £3m to the Hereford City Centre Improvements project, £1m for an integrated wetlands project to reduce phosphates in the river Lugg to lift the current planning moratorium, and £1.6m to accelerate the NMITE Skylon Campus developments.

Our portfolio of complementary projects align with the LEP's key priorities and will support the LEP area's recovery from Covid.

Projects being funded by Herefordshire Council in Hereford include £5.5 million of city centre improvements (e.g. the refurbishment of the historic core of Hereford through investment in the streetscape with high quality materials and consistent soft and hard landscaping). This project builds on temporary measures for walking and cycling implemented during Covid, with the aim of increasing footfall and the economic potential of businesses, improving active travel opportunities and air quality and promoting private investment in property in order to create a modern city centre environment.

## CHALLENGES:

**Unrealised tourism potential** – Hereford is a nationally important heritage centre, with assets that have significantly underperformed their potential as tourist attractions for decades. In particular, our current museum and art gallery, along with aspects of the Cathedral visitor offer, are in urgent need of contemporary refreshment and updating.

**Covid** – following national norm projections, projected furlough levels equate to 21.5% of wholesale and retail jobs, 73% of accommodation and food jobs and 70% of arts, entertainment and recreation jobs. This level of disruption has strengthened the major long term structural challenge to the viability of our city centre.

**Dislocation between north and south of the city** – notwithstanding its own economic potential, the River Wye acts as an economic barrier between the north and the south of the city, with the south manifesting significant differential deprivation compared to the north. This also represents a challenge in terms of connecting the “out of town” economic growth potential of Skylon Park to the south of the city and the city centre.

**Diversification** – there is a need to enable and support a greater mix of uses within the city centre in response to long-term changing trends and evidence of demand.

**Inhibiting road Infrastructure** – the road layout of the city centre, particularly the A49 and A439 and only one viable river crossing, effectively split the city into different, relatively disconnected segments which inhibit synergy and complementary development within its built core. They also introduce significant city centre pollution<sup>[25]</sup>.

## OPPORTUNITIES:

**Globally and nationally significant heritage** – Scope to build a powerful heritage and visitor offer linked to the very high number of treasures and listed buildings in the city centre. There is real local enthusiasm to build on this as a driving force, exemplified by observations from Kath Hey, the current Mayor of Hereford:

*“Since the emergence of our fantastic local, artisan food/drink scene and the development of a new ‘Visit Herefordshire’ website and social media campaign, we are beginning to see a real change in fortunes with regard to tourism. We now need to build on this success with further funding from many sources.”*

**The River Wye** – opportunities to improve access to the river for tourists and wider recreational activities, increasing the value of riverside properties and enhancing the scale of leisure activities in the city.

**City centre redevelopment** – the cluster of assets at the heart of the city (Maylord, Cathedral Close etc) currently controlled by the City Council, Herefordshire Council and the Hereford Diocese represents significant collaborative potential to repurpose the city centre as a platform for festivals and events, linking to the legacy of the Three Choirs Festival, the calendar of nearly fifty annual festivals in the county and the proximity of the Hay Literary and Abergavenny and Ludlow food festivals. At a wider perimeter level, the One Public Estate initiative led by Wye Valley NHS Trust is a potential catalyst for development in the Commercial Road/Station Road area, building on Marches LEP investment in the City Link Road/ Station Approach which opened in 2017. Other bright points in the future evolution of the City include plans by Herefordshire Council to build 2,500 zero carbon homes in the next decade and the significant recent investment in student accommodation through the Station Approach development.

**Alternative transport options** – new proposed greenways for both cyclists and pedestrians provide scope to overcome the stifling impact of the current road networks on the functionality of the city centre. There are also proposals for a transport hub at the train station (moving the bus station to outside the train station). This would improve connectivity and open up the current country bus station site for redevelopment. Plans also include the improvement to Commercial Road, improving the public realm and narrowing the road for enhanced pedestrian usage.

## 4. TRANSPORT AND CONNECTIVITY

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The evidence base for the development of the Hereford Transport Strategy Review describes how people respond in a wide variety of ways to investment in and changes to the transport network. These include changing mode, travelling more or less, travelling to different destinations and moving house, all of which are difficult to predict with confidence.

On the one hand, studies have found that improvements to the public realm (such as improved paving and landscaping) can boost local trading by up to 40%. Schemes which increase levels of physical activity, such as additional walking and cycling, have been found to generate 'very high' value for money when assessed against HM Treasury criteria. On the other hand, engagement with Herefordshire businesses has highlighted how traffic delays lose them time delivering products and costs them money, including late delivery penalties, which puts them at a competitive disadvantage.

Translating this analysis to deliverable policy proposals, the local authority has proposed a range of sustainable approaches to the long-term future of transport in Hereford. These involve reducing the impact of the private motor car by promoting walking, cycling, electric buses and public spaces and moving away from the provision of a western bypass for the city.

Alongside this package of physical investments, there are also private sector led plans to provide super-fast fibre broadband across the whole city. Herefordshire Council is also proposing to initiate a focused local area broadband network (LoRaWAN) which will enable the rollout of key services on an e-basis, with scope to enhance dedicated connectivity between the city and wider county using this network.

## CHALLENGES:

**Reducing severance and rebalancing movement towards sustainable travel** - the need to reprioritise key city centre routes in favour of pedestrian movements to enhance connectivity between the city centre, historic core, South Wye and Skylon Park, which will also improve air quality.

**Supporting regeneration** – enhancing the environment and open spaces in key areas to improve quality of life, unlock sites and enable development.

## OPPORTUNITIES:

**Transport Strategy and Traffic Management** – investments in sustainable, low carbon transport, enhancing the effectiveness of the key public transport nodes such as the Station Approach, promoting the development of new walking and cycling options in the City Centre, reducing the impact of pollution and increasing the economic connectivity of key sites in the City.

## 5. CLEAN GROWTH

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The Towns Board is committed to clean growth which is core to our vision and the first criterion we used when assessing project proposals; our TIP demonstrates our commitment to helping Hereford make the transition to carbon neutrality as soon as possible (2030 is our aspiration) and this is reflected in several dimensions of our TIP including building standards for construction projects; emphasis on quality of life; connectivity through public transport; and the food waste recycling project. We see green growth as being about more than 'building windmills' – it includes e.g. developing the skills base to retrofit leaky homes, developing the domestic visitor economy, and developing our digital economy.

This commitment is reflected in the approach of Herefordshire Council. In September 2019, elected members agreed to accelerate the reduction of emissions and to aspire to become carbon neutral by 2030-2031. The County Plan signals how the Council will identify climate change action in all areas of its operations. The Carbon Management Plan 2020/2021-2025/2026, for example, highlights an LED street lighting project (which would lead to a 78% reduction in street lighting emissions in 2018/2019 from baseline year), efficient design and retro-fits, improved operations, renewable energy supply, hybrid and electric cars, asset rationalisation, behaviour changes, LED office & car park lighting and 100% renewably sourced energy and energy management improvements.

In July 2020, the 99% Organisation and the RSA launched Herefordshire 2030, a new initiative designed to create a blueprint for how Herefordshire can become a greener, fairer and more prosperous county by 2030.

### CHALLENGES:

**Net zero innovation** - there is a pressing need to trial, test and develop potential solutions to achieve this target as an integral part of the delivery of the Towns Fund in Hereford.

**Delivering Clean Growth** – We have recognised the imperative to embed the principles of clean growth across our portfolio of investment projects and to utilise the skills and expertise of our Climate Commission professionals in order to meet the clean growth aspirations for the city.

### OPPORTUNITIES:

**Scale & form** - Hereford's compact form in terms of its retail and heritage core make it an ideal location for sustainable growth to serve an expanding population. More creative thinking is needed to ensure a cohesive set of connections with the development opportunities in the most challenged economic area of the city, south of the River Wye.

**Social economy** – we have identified a number of highly innovative proposals linked to the social economy of the city. They include a retail waste recycling project and the provision of electric vehicles alongside the development of new greenways. All these concepts are driven by local action and local civic bodies.

**Digital and fibre opportunities** – the proposals to increase the scale of fibre and digital connections, driven in part by Covid, provide scope to reduce the use of the internal combustion engine and to enhance the e-enabled reach and economic development potential of the city. This will involve working with projects described later in this plan, led by organisations such as the Hereford Green Network, the Hereford College of Arts and the two local authorities which cover the city.

**Transport strategy** – Herefordshire Council's refined Transport Strategy provides a major impetus to reduce pollution and to increase the sustainable connectivity of the city and is a significant enabler of the clean growth components of our Town Investment Plan.

## Climate for Investment

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Our proposals build on Hereford's successful track record of attracting public and private sector investment and delivering highly ambitious multi-million pound projects on time and on budget. Our investment landscape in the last decade has been dominated by a number of transformational capital projects, all of which have achieved or are fast approaching sustainable forward velocity.

1. British Land's £90 million landmark investment in the Old Market retail and leisure complex was the first significant retail development in Hereford in 25 years and has enabled Hereford to recapture regional retail market share for the first time in decades [source: British Land]. It opened in 2014 with 32 tenants and annual footfall expectations of 3.5 million visitors; in the ensuing five years, footfall consistently exceeded 5 million.
2. Skylon Park in Hereford is the designated enterprise zone of the Marches LEP. Since breaking ground in Autumn 2013 as one of 48 Government-designated national enterprise zones, Skylon has emerged as a world-class business cluster with unique defence and security capabilities, building on Hereford's association with UK special forces as the home of the SAS. In the ensuing seven years, it has attracted 38 new companies, creating more than 350 new jobs. Herefordshire Council committed £16 million of initial funding to develop the enterprise zone in 2013, establishing the required infrastructure and remediating the site. The Marches LEP have provided a further £5.4 million in 2020/21 to develop the North Magazine site, home to the Shell Store, Midlands Centre for Cyber Security and NMITE developments.
3. Arguably our most ambitious investment initiative is the disruptive new engineering university project which will open its doors to its first pioneer cohort of students in 2021. So far, NMITE has attracted £50 million of public and private sector funding support (£31 million cash and £19 million in-kind). NMITE will build on Hereford's well-established learning offer in the shape of the highly successful Hereford College of Art, Hereford and Ludlow Further Education College, Hereford Sixth Form College and Royal National College for the Blind.
4. One Herefordshire is a consortium of public sector organisations, comprising Herefordshire Council, Herefordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Wye Valley NHS Trust, West Mercia Police and Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service. One Herefordshire joined the Government's One Public Estate (OPE) programme in April 2017. Between 2019 and 2022, the consortium will deliver three projects supported by Government. They are: (i) the urban village development - to undertake master planning and feasibility work to release land for key work housing; (ii) the refurbishment of Hereford Hospital's Lionel Green building, to enable the relocation of services and to release other premises for redevelopment; and (iii) to provide funding for a One Public Estate programme manager.
5. In addition to these stand-alone projects, there has been around £20 million of private sector entrepreneurial investment in the last five years, principally in the city's hospitality sector and aimed ultimately at establishing a world-wide brand identity for Herefordshire's independent food and drink producers.

With a competitive 21st century retail and leisure offer in place, a thriving manufacturing base, an emerging university set to cement the city's reputation as a national centre of learning, a commitment to rationalising and supporting public service provision and some exciting green shoot investments in hospitality, we have a strong track record of ambition, vision and delivery.



## Section 2: Strategy

Our long-term aspiration for Hereford builds on a detailed analysis of the key strategic documents and frameworks which underpin the current levelling up ambitions of the city. These documents are summarised at Appendix 1.

### VISION

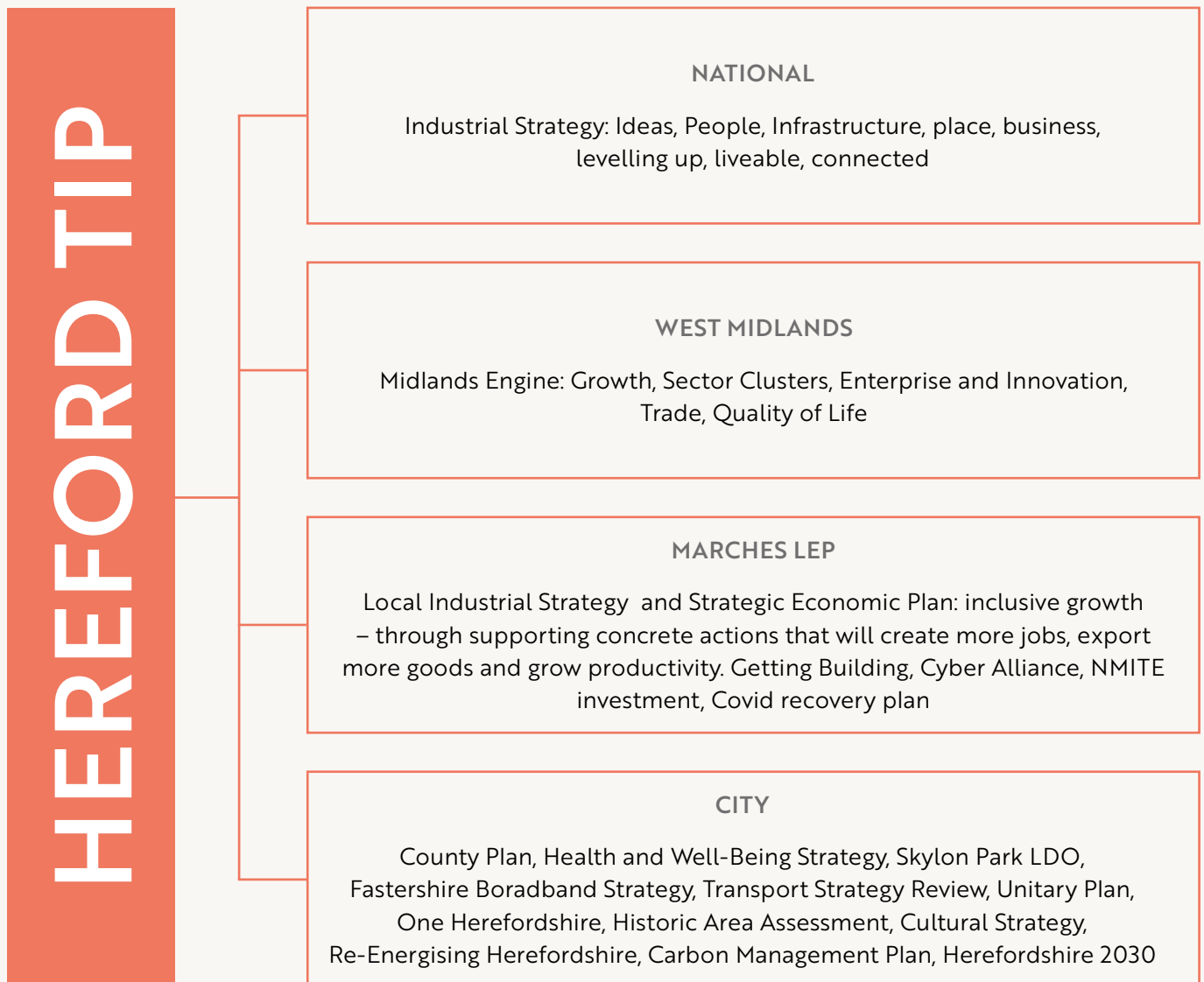
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*Hereford aspires to be one of the greenest & fairest cities in the country, with fantastic opportunities and quality of life for people of all ages. Deeply rooted in our unique rural heritage, we're blossoming into a richly creative, digital, connected & highly-skilled place to live, work, study, invest and visit.*

- *Greenest: Hereford is a green and sustainable city, always working towards zero carbon as it grows.*
- *Fairest: Hereford is always levelling up with opportunities for all, fair wages, and social and economic regeneration that improves the lives of all residents.*
- *Creative: Hereford is a city where innovation and creativity always flourish across all sectors.*
- *Digital: Hereford is a digitally smart and ambitious city that always embraces emerging technologies.*
- *Connected: Hereford is an integrated city; our people, places and projects always connect to each other.*
- *Heritage: Hereford's individuality always shines through. With our rich history, unique landmarks and assets and our rural legacy, there is no other city in the country like Hereford.*
- *Highly skilled: Hereford is a city of learning and skills for all ages, a place where highly skilled people and businesses always thrive and come together to ensure that skills are shared.*

## STRATEGIC CONTEXT

We have set out in the diagram below the core strategic context which underpins the framework for our proposals:



## INVESTMENT PLAN FOCUS

We have committed very significant group time to identifying our priorities. This has involved a comprehensive consultation process, running in parallel with our desk research and dialogue with strategic agencies and stakeholders, complemented by a series of direct engagements with the private sector.

The outcome of this process of inclusive engagement is a vision which articulates five core long-term imperatives:

- Greenest
- Fairest
- Creative

- Digital
- Connected

This vision has informed the assembly of a portfolio of interwoven skills and heritage projects which we believe strongly will deliver the three core strategic objectives of the Towns Fund: urban regeneration, a stronger skills base and improved connectivity.

Finally, we have applied clean growth and Covid proofing lenses to our selected projects and to the overall portfolio to ensure that they will deliver a coherent and mutually reinforcing programme of long-term positive change.

We believe that this self-reinforcing model of development will transform the skills landscape in Hereford and attract new residents, businesses, students and visitors who will support the economy of the city and its existing communities, resonating powerfully with the broader levelling up mission at the heart of the Towns Fund. Our Investment Plan consciously rejects growth for its own sake and embraces an integrated model of contemporary place-making based specifically on the history, character, community, terroir, and ambitions of Hereford.

This approach has been inspired by and consciously aligned to the vision of NMITE, our transformational new university project, which seeks to break the mould of generic Higher Education.

A brief summary of the interwoven themes in our Investment Plan is set out below:

**Greenest** – There are clear and compelling post-Covid opportunities to repurpose our city centre as a sustainable living and working organism. This involves harnessing new modes of transport, shrinking distances and finding new ways of earning and learning through digital means and enhancing our local bio-diversity. This evolving dynamic has informed the development of a range of projects including the Greening the City project (our programme of new green spaces and routes), the highly innovative Soil from the City recycling initiative, the Lines Project community market garden and the provision of electric buses.

**Fairest** – As we move away from growth for its own sake, we believe that enlightened and inclusive economic development can be a tide which lifts all ships. We recognise the long-standing obstacles to social mobility in Hereford and the gaping disparities in opportunity and life chances between the north and south of our city. We believe that the most powerful antidote to these obstacles is the empowerment of all our people with the skills of the future. This has inspired the development of an inclusive new learning brand, the Skills Foundry, which will operate at many levels in key locations including Hereford's High Town, the Maylord Shopping Centre and the Lines Project in South Wye, in addition to spokes in Herefordshire's five market towns. The Skills Foundry will provide multiple

progressive access points designed to engage learners of all ages, with a particular emphasis on digital skills development supported by Hereford College of Arts, NMITE, Rural Media and businesses in the city and county. We are also committing to support Hereford's social economy and to making the city fairer through the Soil from the City, Powerhouse, Encore and Castle Green Pavilion refurbishment projects.

**Creative** – With the long tradition of its distinctive College of Arts, Hereford has a significant track record of creative achievement. A number of the Fairest categorised initiatives mentioned above have a creative component. We will complement them through physical investment in key portals to the Hereford story. These investments will include a new landmark Museum, a new Library and Digital Learning hub, repurposed performance and community space at Castle Green and the development of an art installation at the Station Approach, the main public transport node in the city. We will also support capital investments to enhance the operational capacity of two regionally significant creative initiatives: Powerhouse and the Encore Music Hub.

**Digital** – Significant private and public sector investment to provide superfast broadband to the city and to create a dedicated service network (LoRaWAN) has inspired us to add value through the development of a new Digital Media Centre and invest in enhanced opportunities for skills development and training in media at the Hereford College of Arts. Taken as a whole, this package of external investment and the allocation of Towns Fund resources will begin to realise the potential of Hereford as a creative and e-enabled city. A stronger digital voice will enable us to project Hereford as a thriving independent centre of enterprise, culture and learning and to overcome the relative economic remoteness of our city.

**Connected** – The Towns Fund emphasizes the economic importance of connectivity. We have built on the commitment to sustainable transport in the refined Herefordshire Transport Strategy with our Electric Buses initiative. We have also sought to free up the economic potential of the River Wye as a key connector linking the north and south of the city and underpinning a key component of its tourism offer through our River Wye Infrastructure proposals. In the context of our Greenest agenda, this investment also enhances the economic potential of one of the city's greatest natural assets. We have

interpreted improved connectivity as a means to draw the city into a more cohesive working whole across its diverse communities. The Lines Project is a key South Wye element of this strategy through its incorporation in the broader envelope of the Skills Foundry. Spatially, we have emphasized the inter-connection of all projects, creating a skills corridor running from the base of the College of Arts in the north of the city, via the art installation at Station Approach through the city centre to the Lines Project in South Wye and a sports corridor running from the north of the city through the Holmer Extreme Sports cluster to the city centre.

**Post Covid Hereford** - This ecosystem of inter-connected projects stakes out a transformational post-Covid future for our city. It repurposes the Maylord shopping centre at the heart of the city for a new library and learning centre, a new digital media hub, an enhanced creative and performance space linked to the Powerhouse and Encore initiatives which will attract footfall in its own right. NMITE's developing city presence will begin to repopulate High Town's empty retail units and complement its Rotherwas campus. The Electric Buses initiative, Lines Project Community Market Garden, Soil from the City and Greening the City projects will connect with our rural hinterland, knitting the city into a new model of economic sustainability. Enhanced River Wye infrastructure will provide a natural corridor opening up leisure opportunities in the city centre supported by the Castle Green project. A landmark investment in the Museum will create a step change in the potential of the city's visitor economy and will provide an impetus for enhanced collaboration with the Cathedral in terms of its assets and property holdings at the historic core of Hereford.

**Clean Growth Hereford** – Our Investment Plan has been conceived through the lens of the city's commitment to addressing the climate emergency. In addition to emphasizing the importance and potential of the natural assets of the city through our Greening and River Wye investments, our plans for Electric Buses and the highly innovative Soil from the City and Community Market Garden projects all create the structural framework for clean growth. Moving further up the technical and greening agenda, the NMITE clean growth agenda around Advanced Engineering and the development of our media related learning facilities linked to the College of Arts and Rural Media facility provide new sustainable routes to economic development,

supporting a future model for Hereford. Our city will realise its full potential by enhancing our natural assets and by empowering our core population, in turn supporting the wider communities within the county for which it acts as the hub.

**A Few Words About Heritage** – Hereford has punched well below its weight as a visitor destination for many years, a weakness which will come into sharper focus as NMITE opens its doors for business. As indicated in Section One above, Hereford's visitor economy was worth an estimated £10 million in 2018 vs e.g. Worcester £170 million, Lincoln £210 million and Chester £700 million. According to Visit Britain's website and to many participants in our stakeholder engagement programme, there is "nothing to do" in Hereford. Our strong conviction that Hereford's heritage offer and cultural ecology is a sleeping giant is a core element of our strategy to regenerate Hereford, informing our plans to develop a new landmark Museum and to develop ripple-out connections with the Cathedral and its treasures, with the River Wye, more widely with the built form of the city and its many listed buildings and with its unique history and independent food and drink culture. We believe that combined match-funded TIP and Council investment in the public realm and visitor economy of £35 million in the next five years will create a sustainable step change in the city's tourism sector. A stronger visitor economy means a stronger Hereford.

**A Final Note About Other Projects** – Our process of engagement initiated proposals for more than forty individual projects. Although we are only able to support a limited number of initiatives through the Towns Fund, we have uncovered a highly compelling pipeline of ideas for the longer-term development of the city through our stakeholder engagement programme.

Details of the most robust additional initiatives are set out as an Appendix to this report .

The Hereford Town Investment Plan – on one page – taking account of the above rationale, and aligning the projects with the three core themes of the Towns Fund is set out below:

## HEREFORD STRONGER TOWNS BID PROJECT MAP

-  **FAIREST**
  - 1. Extreme Sports
  - 2. nMite
  - 3. College of Arts
  - 4. Maylords
-  **GREENEST**
  - 5. Electric Buses
  - 6. Greening the City
  - 7. Soil in the City
-  **CREATIVE**
  - 8. Museum
  - 9. Powerhouse
  - 10. Encore
  - 11. Castle Green
-  **DIGITAL**
  - 12. Digital Media
-  **CONNECTED**
  - 13. River Wye infrastructure
  - 14. Lines & Belmont Projects



CONNECTIVITY	URBAN REGENERATION	SKILLS AND ENTERPRISE
Electric Buses	Museum	NMITE
Soil from the City	Castle Green	Digital Media
Greening the City	River Wye Infrastructure	Powerhouse
River Wye Infrastructure	Station Approach (Meadow Arts)	Encore
Lines (Community Growing) and Belmont Projects	Maylord Centre	Maylord
	Greening the City	College of Art
	Extreme Sports	

## OUTCOMES AND TARGETS: THEORY OF CHANGE

Our actions, outcomes and targets are set out in the table below which forms a theory of change linking back to the vision, objectives and challenges:

Key Issues	Towns Fund Intervention Framework	Project	Output	Outcomes
<b>Primary Focus: Fairest, Secondary Impact: Connected and Creative</b>				
1. Low Skills 2. Poor social mobility	Skills Infrastructure	Skills Foundry	Skills Foundry - digital skills, increase in skills participation, repurposing of retail space, generation of enterprise.	1. Increase in the number of qualifications delivered 2. Engagement of new non-traditional learners
		Inclusive Community Projects – the Lines Project, Extreme Sports Hub, Encore Music Hub and Powerhouse Creative Arts	Inclusive Community Projects- supported employment, learning and workspace	3. Reduction in Economic Inactivity
<b>Primary Focus: Greenest, Connected, Digital, Secondary Impact: Creative</b>				
1. High Carbon Footprint 2. Climate Challenges to Infrastructure 3. Poor Road and Rail Infrastructure	Urban Regeneration and Land use	Soil from the City, Holmer Road Extreme Sports, Castle Green, River Wye Infrastructure, Greening the City	Castle Green - new civic space, new tourism infrastructure. Holmer Road - sports related jobs, visitor infrastructure, civic space. Greening the City - enhanced public spaces, increase in community well-being and footfall. Soil from the City - Jobs, recycling, reduced carbon footprint.	1. Increase in jobs 2. Increase in GVA 3. Reduced Distance from Markets 4. Increase in people visiting Hereford
	Local Transport	Electric Buses, River Wye Infrastructure	Transport interchange, enhanced public spaces	5. Repurposing of Unused Buildings to Stimulate Town Centre Footfall
	Remediation and Development of Sites	Maylord, Museum Building, Refurbished Pavilion, Greening the city, River Wye infrastructure	Mutually reinforcing linkages between key Town Fund projects – increasing accessibility to the Towns Centre and Tourism assets	6. Enhanced Digital Media Capacity
	Digital Technology	Creative Digital Hub	Skills development, Enterprise engagement	
<b>Primary Focus: Creative, Secondary Impacts: Fairest, Connected</b>				
1. Scope to Enhance Retail Engagement and Footfall 2. Limited Utilisation of Heritage Assets “USP” 3. Under performing Visitor Economy	Heritage Assets	The Hereford/Marches Experience (Museum), River Wye Infrastructure	Museum - footfall, tourism jobs. River - footfall, tourism jobs, enhanced infrastructure.	1. Increase in Jobs 2. Increase in GVA 3. Increase in Scale and Value of Tourism Sector
	Commercial/Retail Repurposing	Maylord Centre – repurposed retail offer (library and learning facilities), Powerhouse Hereford, Encore Music Hub (Maylord), Station Approach Installation (Meadow Arts)	Host for element of the Skills Foundry, Library relocation, base for digital and creative activities linked to the fund, Powerhouse and Encore Music Hub - repurposing of retail space, visitor numbers, footfall, learning outcomes.	4. Creation of a Context Promoting Inclusion Through Heritage 5. Diversification and Repurposing of the Retail Offer

Our actions, outcomes and targets are set out in the table below which forms a theory of change linking back to the vision, objectives and challenges:

Issue	Current Situation	Action	Transformation Targets: 5, 10-15, 30 years
Skills	Hereford is in the lowest 40% of settlements within the English Indices of Deprivation in terms of its Education outcomes.	Increase the targeting of learning interventions at those areas of the community where the greatest gap exists between local and national levels of qualifications and skills.	<p><b>5 years</b> Effective interventions close the skills gap between Hereford and the national average bringing the city into the 5th decile in terms of the IMD.</p> <p><b>10-15 years</b> Hereford exceeds parity with England for the proportion of population with higher skills outcomes, and employers indicate limited skills shortages. Recognition as a national centre of learning around the digital economy, manufacturing economy, the learning economy and the heritage sector.</p> <p><b>30 years</b> Creation of a nationally significant cluster of high value skilled workers particularly in relation to the manufacturing sector, and the heritage, culture and arts sector, which is a key driver of sustainable new businesses and jobs growth.</p>
<p>Job Density:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. High Carbon Footprint</li> <li>2. Climate Challenges to Infrastructure</li> <li>3. Poor Road and Rail Infrastructure</li> </ol>	Hereford has good job density 91% compared to the Great Britain average of 86% this does reflect the relative isolation of the City as a jobs centre with a sparse Hinterland. The challenge is to attract higher paid jobs in view of the low in the county particularly at workplace.	Increase the number of jobs per head of population in Hereford to increase the range of skills and increase the scale of wages available in the City.	<p><b>5 years</b> Through an increase in the range and quality of jobs in strategic sectors, particularly digital, manufacturing, learning and heritage Hereford increases its performance compared to the England average for the stock of jobs per head of population.</p> <p><b>10-15 years</b> Through a continuing trend around the activities set out above Hereford has 10% more jobs per head of population than the national average.</p> <p><b>30 years</b> Hereford builds on its sectoral strengths and supply chains, which enable it to outstrip the national number of jobs by over 10% on an on-going basis.</p>
Employment: social mobility	Hereford is just behind the national average in the 4th decile in terms of the English indices of deprivation and has scope for improvement. This is accounted for mainly by neighbourhoods to the south of the Wye with a third of the population of the city living in neighbourhoods in the bottom 2 deciles of the IMD.	Increase the number and range of job opportunities in Hereford. There needs to be a specific focus on those who are most excluded within the local labour market.	<p><b>5 years</b> Hereford has employment outcomes, on a par with the national average, with the reduction delivered through very clearly focused targeted interventions in key neighbourhoods of deprivation in the south of the City. These interventions are particularly targeted on giving young people a stake in the community through work.</p> <p><b>10 – 15 years</b> Hereford has a diverse range of sustainable employment opportunities, with no neighbourhood hotspots of unemployment and disadvantage. This enables it to have an unemployment level, which is 10% less severe than the national average.</p> <p><b>30 years</b> Hereford has levels of employment, without an overheating jobs market, which are considerably better than the national average and are statistically counted as representing zero unemployment and which sustain the skills needs of its key sectors particularly: manufacturing, heritage and learning.</p>

Issue	Current Situation	Action	Transformation Targets: 5, 10-15, 30 years
<p>Wages:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social mobility</li> <li>Skills</li> </ol>	<p>Herefordshire, for which Hereford is the key economic driver has a weekly salary at workplace of £490 compared to the English average of £589. Its weekly average salary for residents is £533. In both regards it is significantly lower than the national average and the difference between workplace and residence based salaries indicates that a proportion of higher earning individuals travel outside of the area to generate their incomes. Hereford is the key driver for the economy of the county. The industrial structural information below shows that the above wages lag is not accounted for by the number of high quality jobs (expressed as KIBS) in Hereford. It is clear however if Hereford can increase its share of KIBS jobs it will help the whole county perform more effectively and raise levels of prosperity.</p>	<p>Increase the number of better paid jobs in Hereford particularly in KIBS sectors.</p>	<p><b>5 years</b> An increase in the skills base and range of job opportunities enables Hereford to approach parity with the average wage at a national level.</p> <p><b>10-15 years</b> Hereford is in the top 50 % of settlements in terms of the Indices of Deprivation income measure. It has a weekly wage based on the growth of high value components of its industrial base, which is on a par with the national average.</p> <p><b>30 years</b> Hereford is in the top 33% of settlements in terms of the Indices of Deprivation income measure. It has a self – sustaining number of economic sectors operating at an international level, which provide it with the ability to achieve wage levels, which are better than the national average.</p>
<p>Industrial Structure:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scope to Enhance Retail Engagement and Footfall</li> <li>Limited Utilisation of Heritage Assets “USP”</li> <li>Under performing Visitor Economy</li> </ol>	<p>Hereford is on a par with the national average when it comes to workers involved in Knowledge Intensive Businesses (KIBS) – 24% in Hereford compared to 25% in the England average.</p>	<p>Increase the number of people working in KIBS and maximise the range and quality of jobs in the High Street and Heritage sectors and the number of digital and learning sector jobs.</p>	<p><b>5 years</b> An increase in the stock of Knowledge Intensive Businesses, increasing local productivity and driving up the number of KIBS to at least parity between Hereford and the national average.</p> <p><b>10-15 years</b> Hereford exceeds parity with the national average in terms of Knowledge Intensive Business jobs, with distinctive strengths in manufacturing, heritage, and retail.</p> <p><b>30 years</b> Hereford has a more diverse economic base whilst having maximised the number of Knowledge Intensive Businesses in its area through activities, which draw strength from the business opportunities arising from its character as a heritage, learning and retail centre. It will be in the top 33% of places in England in terms of the number of jobs provided by KIBS related businesses.</p>
<p>Underperforming Visitor Economy</p>	<p>Hereford currently significantly underperforms in terms of realising the economic potential of its world class heritage offer. As indicated in section one above Hereford's visitor economy was worth an estimated £10 million in 2018 vs Worcester £170 million, Lincoln £210 million and Chester £700 million.</p>	<p>Realise the full heritage potential of the City leading to a step change in visitor numbers.</p>	<p><b>5 years</b> Hereford closes the gap in tourism performance with Worcester as a near neighbour with a visitor economy increase to £50 million p.a</p> <p><b>10 -15 years</b> Hereford achieves parity with Worcester and becomes regionally significant as a visitor location with a visitor economy worth £200 million p.a.</p> <p><b>30 years</b> Hereford is nationally recognised as a world class visitor attraction with a visitor economy worth £500 million p.a.</p>



Issue	Current Situation	Action	Transformation Targets: 5, 10-15, 30 years
Health Outcomes: Social mobility	Hereford is almost on a par with England in terms of its health outcomes in terms of the English Indices of Deprivation.	Reduce the number of people with poor health outcomes particularly in relation to sustaining levels of economic activity which are currently better than the national average 17.3% compared to 20.6%	<p><b>5 years</b> Hereford is on a par with the national average in terms of health outcomes as measured by the English Indices of Deprivation. Through a series of targeted employment focused interventions, including self-employment options and through an increase in the range and diversity of local jobs levels of economic activity fall to comfortably below the national average.</p> <p><b>10 -15 years</b> Hereford maintains levels of economic inactivity below the national average. It is perceived as a healthy town with a dynamic and adaptable workforce.</p> <p><b>30 years</b> Hereford has better overall levels of health and well-being than similar towns in terms of size and functionality.</p>
Demography:  1. Social mobility  2. High Carbon Footprint  3. Climate Challenges to Infrastructure	Hereford has a moderately higher stock of over 65s 20% compared to the national average 18%.	Find new and innovative ways to make an ageing population a strength rather than a weakness.	<p><b>5 years</b> A digital revolution gives more people a stake in staying in Hereford as a location of choice to work. The stock of jobs and businesses increases. This leads to the start of a new demographic balance with the working age population rising by 2%.</p> <p><b>10-15 years</b> The creation of more net jobs increases the working population to 5% above the national average.</p> <p><b>30 years</b> Hereford is a location of choice for economically active people seeking employment in key sectors for which it has an international reputation. With the growth of the digital sector as its key “enabler” It has a higher proportion of people in the 16-64 age range and lower levels of economic inactivity than the national average.</p>

## SPATIAL STRATEGY AND PROJECT PLAN

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The Towns Fund will underpin the economic repurposing of Hereford as a green and fair city over the next 30 years.

Our investment programme includes a portfolio of projects which will deliver a contemporary Cathedral city repurposed through skills and heritage as key drivers. The spatial focus of the programme is the city centre. This is a highly accessible environment which operates as a hub not just within the Towns Fund boundary but more widely for Herefordshire as a whole. Concentration of our resources on assets in this area offers the best opportunity for clean, inclusive and sustainable growth. It will also provide a key catalyst to build the post-Covid functionality of the heart of the city.

Our thinking has aligned the list of projects with the key spatial documents underpinning the evolution of the city namely:

- Marches LEP Local Industrial Strategy and Strategic Economic Plan
- Herefordshire County Plan,
- Herefordshire Broadband Strategy,
- Transport Strategy Review,
- Unitary Plan,
- One Herefordshire,
- Historic Area Assessment,
- Cultural Strategy,
- Re-Energising Herefordshire,
- Carbon Management Plan,
- Herefordshire 2030

Outside of the city centre, we plan corridors of opportunity (linking further outlying projects on Holmer Road, Commercial Road and in South Wye) complemented by plans for new greenways for pedestrians and cyclists, further enhanced by a new city centre Electric Bus circuit. At the heart of the wider vision of connectivity is an objective to realise the full leisure and economic potential of the River Wye in the life of the city. Looking more widely still, we have a number of projects such as the new digital media centre which will harness the enhanced digital capacity being provided through the plans of the private sector and Herefordshire Council.

## PROJECT PROFILES

Project profiles, concepts and illustrations are provided for each of the schemes within our Investment Plan alongside the following tables, arranged thematically to align with our local priorities and the Towns Fund Investment Framework. The projects address key policy areas for the economic development of Hereford and seek to drive the collective aspiration of the public, private and community sectors to drive sustainable growth and create a cleaner, more inclusive city. The rationale for investment is clearly articulated in each case, linking back to the need, opportunity and strategic fit. Full details of output, outcome and GVA calculations are included in Section 2.

Greenest: Soil from the City					
Description	Soil from the City is an ambitious and achievable project, planning to divert commercial and municipal food waste from landfill and turn it into a resource to benefit the city.				
Rationale	<p><b>Emissions and Transport</b> By using emission free modes of transport, reducing vehicles on the road and reducing emissions by recovering resources, Soil from the City will contribute directly to the national Government's 25 Year Environment Plan 'Clean air' target to reduce harmful emission by 2030.</p> <p><b>Green Recovery</b> By developing a brown field site, generating jobs in the green sector and using zero emission transport, this project aligns with the Governments Ten Point Plan goals for green industrial growth following the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p><b>Food Waste</b> Food waste is a valuable renewable resource which is largely lost to landfill or incineration generating avoidable green house gas emissions. With a Government national target for food waste to be collected separately by 2023, Soil from the City will directly align with the Environment Bill, Circular Economy Package, 25 Year Environment Plan and Ten Point Plan.</p>				
Funding	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Total Cost: £1.5 m</td> <td>Towns Fund: £1m</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Towns Funding will support</td> </tr> </table>	Total Cost: £1.5 m	Towns Fund: £1m	Towns Funding will support	
Total Cost: £1.5 m	Towns Fund: £1m				
Towns Funding will support					

Greenest: Electric Buses					
Description	<p>An electric bus service connecting transport hubs to retail centres, tourist attractions and health facilities. Service can be embedded in a wider campaign to encourage sustainable travel to and within the city.</p> <p>Proposed route includes Station Medical Centre, Railway Station and Student accommodation, County Hospital, Country Bus Station, St Peter's Square for Town Hall, Old Market, City Bus Station and Broad Street for Cathedral and Cultural Quarter.</p> <p>Service to have a bespoke identity from information at the bus stop, driver training and care of passengers which will become the hallmark of the city, operating at high frequency every day.</p>				
Rationale					
Funding	<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Total Cost: £1.8 m</td> <td>Towns Fund: £1.8m</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Towns Funding will support four electric or hydrogen buses including energy supply, Design and Marketing, Training, Bus stops and shelters, real time information</td> </tr> </table>	Total Cost: £1.8 m	Towns Fund: £1.8m	Towns Funding will support four electric or hydrogen buses including energy supply, Design and Marketing, Training, Bus stops and shelters, real time information	
Total Cost: £1.8 m	Towns Fund: £1.8m				
Towns Funding will support four electric or hydrogen buses including energy supply, Design and Marketing, Training, Bus stops and shelters, real time information					

## Greenest: Greening the City

Description	The project will significantly improve the appearance and attractiveness of the city through the commencement of a range of interrelated greening, public realm, and cycling/ walking and digital connectivity projects significantly enhancing Hereford as a place to visit, learn, live, work and invest.	
Rationale	The project seeks to improve perceptions of Hereford city for visitors and instill pride of place for residents, encourage more visits to the city centre by creating different ways of interacting with the city centre for residents and visitors. The actions to bring about this change include interventions such improved access to the city at key gateway locations, improved navigation and orientation within the town through digital signage and green focal points and improved public open spaces and greening of the city (creating a more pleasant, relaxing and clean environment for visitors to enjoy), resulting in higher footfall, longer dwell times, increased spend and economic uplift.	
Funding	Total Cost: £1.5 m	Towns Fund: £1.5m

## Fairest: Skills Foundry 1 NMITE Future of Work Skills Hub

Description	NMITE Future of Work Skills Hub will be located in a technology-rich, flexible site in High Town, and will support Hereford residents, from school leavers and NMITE learner to businesses and mid-career shifters. It will help individuals understand and identify career opportunities as well as offering flexible support to enable them to reach their growth potential. Young people transitioning into the labour market will be given help to secure high-quality, meaningful work placements, whilst employers will be empowered to develop structured, age-appropriate content with SMART learning objectives.	
Rationale	Even prior to Covid, Herefordshire was a cold spot in the social mobility index, with wages below the national average. With a weak economy and high competition for jobs (particularly in South Wye), young people are being disproportionately affected by the pandemic. Those entering the labour market for the first time will not have access to the same opportunities as before and those that were unemployed prior to Covid will be further disadvantaged having no work experience and for some, no qualifications or skills. The Government and DWP have defined young people as a key priority.	
Funding	Total Cost: £3.067m	Towns Fund: £2.331m
	<p>Phase 1: Developing a full economic and logistical business case is in development for the project, which would be managed by NMITE's proposed governance structure, including oversight by their Board of Trustees.</p> <p>Phase 2: Resourcing secure redundant buildings in High Town, consolidating support from other organisations, and identifying satellite locations in South Wye working closely with DM Labs and others.</p> <p>Phase 3: Refurbishment - begin improvement works. Finalise delivery plan. Start outreach programme.</p> <p>Phase 4: Delivery- recruit delivery staff as necessary, develop curriculum and portfolio of skills courses, advertise, outreach, run workshops, begin training sessions, and develop work experience.</p> <p>Phase 5: Impact measurement of outputs and outcomes. Feedback for continuous development.</p>	

**Fairest: Skills Foundry 2 A new School of Creative Digital Futures in Hereford College of Arts with a "spoke" in High Town**

<p>Description</p>	<p>This flagship, industry-standard, teaching base on HCA's College Road Campus will turbo charge the expansion of HCA's new School of Creative Digital Futures.</p> <p>The facility will host short and full-time courses from Level 1 to 7 (postgraduate), plus a range of weekend and summer schools to inspire, educate and incubate digital creativity and enterprise. Curriculum areas will include film, animation, interface design, games design, social media content and creative digital marketing, Adobe training, app design and build, website creation, motion graphics, projection mapping, virtual and augmented reality and areas of digital innovation that will have emerge between this bid and its realisation. Students will include FE (16+) and HE students as well all age 'short courses'.</p> <p>The project will refurbish c350 square metres of HCA's historic building addressing condition issues and redesign to modernise and reduce inefficiency. Capital investment will include hardware, software, upgraded campus connectivity, a new motion capture studio, and portable equipment such as free-range Virtual Reality equipment.</p> <p>There will be multiple connections between the partners within the Skills Foundry but in particular the School of Creative Digital Futures will have a fundamental collaborative partnership with the Foundry's new city-centre Digital Cultural Hub.</p> <p>HCA's students will curate digital content from animated film to interactive games in its open public galleries, inspire the next generation of digital makers with workshops and events in its public engagement spaces and graduate to establish businesses in its digital enterprise incubation network. The city's Digital Cultural Hub will give students a public showcase for creative content and business incubation for its graduates.</p> <p>The School of Creative Digital Futures and city-centre Digital Cultural Hub strengthen one of the city's main learning arteries. A physical trail of creative digital art will reinforce and embody this, a statement of Hereford's commitment to learning and innovation.</p>		
<p>Rationale</p>	<p>The School of Creative Digital Futures offers a ladder of progression to young people and adult learners from a wide range of Herefordshire's schools, colleges and other training organisations as well as attracting FE and HE students into Herefordshire from outside the county. This creates a pipeline of new digital talent to benefit the city and region with digitally skilled employees, creative content producers and new digital enterprises.</p> <p>It further enhances the city's education development providing specialist, employability focused education for local students and extends the city's HE offer with all the social, cultural and economic benefits incoming HE students bring, supporting the further potentially powerful development of Hereford's identity as a city of learning and innovation as well as heritage and good living.</p> <p>It supports social mobility through education within a curriculum area known to be of interest to a very broad demographic of young people, with gaming in particular a route to engage some of those harder to reach students.</p> <p>The new centre will enhance HCA's current facilities for students and the location on campus will facilitate interdisciplinary working between many different programmes. In particular, it will enable the college to extend its creative digital curriculum further into games design.</p> <p>In the provisional projection of learners, we have only considered the new students to core FE and HE programmes over 3 years of funding and a cautious assessment of numbers engaged for short course and schools' summer schools supported by the facility (although the level of engagement in a one day or week long course is different and the learner number calculation can be further refined in a more detailed business case), but there will be benefits to a much larger group of students through interdisciplinary working on related programmes from Textile Design to Performing Arts.</p> <p>The facilities will support staff to develop their skills and business, many of whom are dual professionals, combining education with professional practice (for example in graphic design). The location of the facility on the College Road Campus will be close to the BBC's new HCA based collaboration office supporting the interconnection between education and the digital creative industries, creating a partnership and centre of expertise to raise.</p> <p>The investment will materially improve one of the city's landmark historic buildings but help it, like Hereford, bridge the gap between celebrating heritage and a future facing ambition.</p> <p>The interconnection of this formal learning facility with the city centre based Digital Cultural Hub with business incubation and support from other partners in the Foundry will help ensure graduates are supported to set up businesses in the city rather than move away.</p> <p>The Foundry collaboration will also support students to expand on the education outreach already delivered by the college through innovative interconnection of digital creativity with growing and sports skills to produce content.</p>		
<p>Funding</p>	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="351 1948 877 2049"> <p>Total Cost: £0.85m</p> </td> <td data-bbox="877 1948 1468 2049"> <p>Towns Fund: £0.65m</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Total Cost: £0.85m</p>	<p>Towns Fund: £0.65m</p>
<p>Total Cost: £0.85m</p>	<p>Towns Fund: £0.65m</p>		

## Fairest: Maylord Shopping Centre Redevelopment and Learning Resource Centre

Description	<p>Maylord Shopping Centre is a strategically significant site, with a footprint of 145,000 sq ft in the heart of Hereford’s city centre. Herefordshire Council secured control of the site through a £4.0 million acquisition in June 2020 to enable its redevelopment to support the regeneration and the diversification of the city centre as a whole.</p> <p>The Council’s intention is to create a vibrant and dynamic new mixed use/ purpose focal point, ensuring the city centre’s long-term viability and maximising the social value benefits for local communities (such as establishing a Learning Resource centre).</p> <p>In summary the project will develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Re-purposed mixed use development at the heart of the city centre, regenerating the city by diversifying reasons to visit and encouraging visitors to spend time and money in Hereford.</li> <li>• Learning Resource Centre - including a new public/ higher education library. The Learning Resource Centre located in a prominent city centre location will provide the whole community with a wide range of services to support the development of their skills, advice and support in seeking new career or personal development opportunities. We are also exploring opportunities for alignment of activity with the other related projects such as Skills Foundry and the Digital Cultural Hub, potentially creating a learning hub.</li> <li>• Community re-use Café - The not-for-profit community enterprise would generate an income to support the Learning Resource Centre and other social value activities. It would provide facilities for those that are visiting and studying in the Learning Resource Centre to be able to socialise. This could for example provide opportunities for young people (such as through the Kickstart scheme) and/or those with learning difficulties to gain work experience working in the café.</li> </ul>	
Rationale		
Funding	Total Cost: £3m	Towns Fund: £3m

## Fairest: Holmer Extreme Sports hub

<p><b>Description</b></p>	<p>To create and improve on the current outdoor facilities located just north of the city centre on Holmer Road. The project will include a new traffic free cycle track and expand the existing skate park facility which will create an active area for local residents but also a destination facility for wider visitors.</p> <p>At its heart, the Cycle Track will have a one kilometre tarmac cycle track that can be used by cyclists of any ability. The facility will also include preschool learning areas, more challenging skills areas and can be used for delivery of learn to ride schemes through to regional competitive events. The facility will be suitable for a range of wheeled sports and will be fully inclusive allowing access to all sections of the community including those with disabilities.</p> <p>The current Skate Park has been a huge success and is award winning across a number of different platforms. The Skate Park offers an activity for children and adults from a range of ages and continually attracts visitors from around the country. The facility is now approaching its tenth anniversary and requires additional upgrades and expansion to meet its full potential, to address growing community need and attract new users.</p> <p>Nearly all of the access to the facilities is free of charge and not subject to admission fees which allows it to be a very low cost option to access a family friendly activity which has significant benefits to both physical and mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>The project will include a new community hub to offer support facilities such as catering and toilets to ensure that visitors and users receive a positive experience in return. The location of the project is within the current cycle network for the city and is part of the wider plans to extend the network across the north of the city.</p> <p>The facilities will develop a focus for a variety of wheeled sports in the county and therefore create economic benefits through employment opportunities and wheeled based businesses in the area.</p>
<p><b>Rationale</b></p>	<p>Since its launch in 2010, the Skate Park has gone from strength to strength and now attracts over 25,000 attendances each year. The park has won a variety of awards and is seen as a model of best practice in terms of management approach and community focus.</p> <p>The time is now right for the facility to develop further so that it can continue to deliver benefits to the wider community. The park is regularly at capacity and restrictions on access are in place to ensure a safe environment.</p> <p>In 2010, a study by the Sports Partnership Herefordshire and Worcestershire found that the future development of cycling in Herefordshire would be supported by the development of a Cycle Track.</p> <p>In order to fully test the idea, Hereford City Council commissioned an independent study (2016) to establish the level of need and the type of facility that could be sustained. The study included extensive consultation and discussions with key stakeholders and found that there is a need for safe access to cycling facilities for both current cyclists but more important new cyclists who require an area to develop basic cycling skills.</p> <p>Cycling is a low cost activity and can be accessed by the whole family including multi generations. The activity itself is low impact allowing a range of people with health conditions to access. The project will also include access to a range of accessibility bikes which have been adapted to suit the needs of disabled users. The 12 bikes are in some cases the only opportunity for some disabled users to take part in activity. Due to the nature of the cycle facility, it is fully inclusive in that there are not specific sessions for some parts of the community. Anyone can access at any time and take part together.</p> <p>The project aims are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Drive usage of the facility by local schools through the facilitation of specific sessions.</li> <li>- Engage with local community groups included those specifically working with children</li> <li>- Clients from low socio economic backgrounds</li> <li>- People from minority ethnic backgrounds</li> <li>- Individuals with a disability</li> <li>- Work with local cycle clubs / groups to support growth in participation levels</li> <li>- Ensure there are pathways for cyclists to progress from recreational more advanced cycling.</li> <li>- Identify and form partnerships with potential partners around health and wellbeing</li> <li>- Develop through co-design a series of bespoke programmes with partners to ensure that each target group/ area has an intervention that meets the needs of local groups and people.</li> <li>- Deliver, co-ordinate or support the delivery of the interventions: led cycle rides, bicycle maintenance sessions, 1:1 training, confidence building sessions</li> <li>- Support any new, sustainable community cycling activities</li> </ul>
<p><b>Funding</b></p>	<p>Total Cost: £1.959m      Towns Fund: £1.184m</p> <p>In 2017 the project was at a shovel ready stage with planning permission secured and detailed surveys etc. However, at that time the funding shortfall was significant and the project was unable to move forward. Although planning permission has now expired we have continued discussions with the local planning authority about the plans which are supported.</p> <p>The Skate Park development has also started early discussion around planning although no formal approach has been made.</p> <p>Both projects have a design and planning stage of around 16-20 weeks with an estimated construction phase of six to eight months dependent on contractor availability and time of year.</p>

## Creative: Regeneration of Castle Green Pavilion

<p>Description</p>	<p>Friends of Castle Green aims to transform the historic Pavilion building by respecting its Georgian heritage whilst creating a modern, accessible space and iconic riverside visitor attraction in the heart of Hereford. The refurbished Pavilion will provide café facilities, a multifunctional and flexible community meeting space, a gallery celebrating local arts and heritage and a revitalised home for the Youth Canoe Club. The once-forgotten building will become a thriving and sustainable community hub, a defining visitor attraction in the city and a source of pride for residents.</p> <p>The Castle Green Pavilion is a Grade II listed Georgian building on medieval foundations which suffered from unsympathetic renovations and neglect during the last century. This project aims to restore the historic Georgian pediment and façade, remove an inappropriate 20th century extension and replace it with a welcoming and inclusive space, making the most of its unique riverside location.</p> <p>Currently home to Hereford City's Youth Canoe Club and projects including Livewire Hereford, an inclusive music development programme for young people, the Pavilion has the potential to become the heart of creative and innovative youth development in the city. Easily accessible on foot, Castle Green is a short walk into the city centre and a stone's throw to the Victoria footbridge river crossing, which means it easily accessible to residents north and south of the river, and so perceived as a neutral space.</p> <p>Community-led exercise and cooking classes, speech and drama sessions, rehearsals, meetings, workshops and parties take place regularly at the building. The Pavilion is earmarked to become a Talk Community Hub, where residents can access information and activities to support their well-being and independence. The building is currently underused and not fulfilling its potential. The ultimate vision is for the Pavilion to be a vibrant, sustainable community asset, making the most of its riverside location to attract residents and visitors alike. Offering a new café featuring a creative and locally sourced menu, regularly hosting community events and enrichment courses, showcasing an interactive gallery about the historical significance of Castle Green, providing accessible community space in a warm, light-filled building overlooking the river.</p>		
<p>Rationale</p>	<p>Developing the Pavilion brings a "whole day offer" to people visiting Hereford. We will add to commercial developments in the city by balancing the strong retail development on the north-west of the city with art and heritage offer on the south-east side- all in walking distance, giving visitors a chance to enjoy the essence of the city's rural/urban feel.</p> <p>This project will fill a gap in accessible community space provision, as well as having the very real potential to become a thriving community hub, one of the defining visitor attractions of the city, and a source of pride for residents.</p> <p>Castle Green is "the hidden jewel of Hereford". It has been an occupied site since before the city of Hereford was founded. There is no on-site information on the historical significance of Castle Green. Working with our local community, historical societies, artists, creatives, and technology providers, our goal is to uncover the hidden history behind (and underneath!) the ancient historical gem of Castle Green.</p> <p>There is also huge potential for Castle Green to become the Festival Village for Hereford. We have successfully managed large scale events with up to 3500 people on site. The Green is a natural amphitheatre and with the transformed Pavilion as the anchor point, Castle Green can become nationally recognised as a vibrant hub of culture, commerce, and community activity.</p>		
<p>Funding</p>	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Total Cost: £1.56m</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Towns Fund: £1.56m</td> </tr> </table> <p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restore the historic Georgian pediment and façade whilst ensuring that the building is modern, visually pleasing, and porous, with maximum use of space available.</li> <li>• Provide a multifunctional, flexible, and accessible space for evolving community and commercial use (meetings, special events, training, and educational courses).</li> <li>• Improve access to the river and the Pavilion for people with disabilities by the installation of a lift enabling easy access to the riverbank for the first time in the building's history</li> <li>• Provide a complete adaptation of the Hereford Youth Canoe Centre to ensure that the whole facility can be housed on the lower ground floor which gives direct access to the River</li> <li>• Provide a restaurant/café with a terrace overlooking the river. Local independent restaurant entrepreneurs will be offered the opportunity to run the facility.</li> <li>• Install a renewable energy system. Using river source energy, the building will become a beacon of environmental sustainability</li> </ul>	Total Cost: £1.56m	Towns Fund: £1.56m
Total Cost: £1.56m	Towns Fund: £1.56m		



## Creative: Museum

<p>Description</p>	<p>The project will establish a new, modern visitor attraction at the heart of the city centre. It will build on Herefordshire’s significant cultural heritage, supporting the growth of the cultural sector and also boosting the visitor economy in the city. This will be achieved by transforming the existing Museum, Library and Art Gallery, maintaining the existing Victorian Gothic facade of the building while delivering a modern museum experience. The project will showcase the county’s extensive heritage collections and will have the potential to host new exhibitions of national significance such as the Herefordshire Hoard and the Magna Carta.</p> <p>The project will deliver a world-class museum, applying EnerPHit design standards where possible to minimise its carbon footprint. It will inspire, delight and innovate while attracting visitors and exhibitors from national and international audiences. The redevelopment will embrace the latest technologies such as virtual reality to enable the delivery of a new, high quality visitor experience. The project will facilitate cultural activity in the creative and educational sectors, attracting additional funding for heritage, culture and the arts, thereby benefiting the city and the county.</p> <p>The project will encourage and deliver community involvement and engagement and the facility will require the creation of new jobs and skills investment through apprenticeships, NVQs in the proposed accompanying cafe as well as an increase in volunteering opportunities.</p>		
<p>Rationale</p>	<p>Hereford currently significantly underperforms in terms of realising the economic potential of its world class heritage offer. As indicated in Section One above, Hereford’s visitor economy was worth an estimated £10 million in 2018 vs Worcester £170 million, Lincoln £210 million and Chester £700 million.</p> <p>The heritage offer of Hereford is a sleeping giant in terms of this strategy. This is why the development of a new landmark museum and its ripple out connections with the Cathedral and its treasures and the river Wye and more widely through the built form of the city to over 300 other listed buildings is a core part of our regeneration vision. We believe that the development of this sector alongside the skills agenda as the other “game changer” for the city will create a sustainable step change in the economy of Hereford.</p>		
<p>Funding</p>	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Total Cost: £10m</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Towns Fund: £5m</td> </tr> </table> <p>The following is an indication of possible project milestones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• December 2020 – initial building and architectural survey works</li> <li>• January 2021 – Review of initial building and architectural survey works</li> <li>• January 2021 – Final application for Stronger Towns Funding (subject to shortlisting)</li> <li>• February 2021 – Submit pre-application to National Heritage Lottery Fund for project funding</li> <li>• April 2021 – Commence full business case development (subject to selection)</li> <li>• April 2021 – Begin consultation process with public, businesses, partners</li> <li>• May 2021 – Submit application for project funding to National Lottery Heritage Fund</li> <li>• August 2021 – Finalise business case and building designs</li> <li>• September 2021 – Seek match funding approval and receive response to National Lottery Heritage Fund bid</li> <li>• October 2021 – Subject to funding approval, seek planning approval</li> <li>• February 2022 – Tender for contractor</li> <li>• April 2022 – Appoint contractor</li> <li>• May 2022 – Construction/redevelopment works commence</li> <li>• March 2024 – Construction works completed</li> <li>• April 2024 – Building opens</li> </ul>	Total Cost: £10m	Towns Fund: £5m
Total Cost: £10m	Towns Fund: £5m		

## Creative: Station Approach (Meadow Arts)

**Description** A new gateway programme of contemporary public art commissions to animate the site of Station Approach's Hereford College of Art's students' accommodation building. This bold new project will act as a vibrant statement of intent, signaling the city's commitment to creativity and innovation. Significant commissioned artworks from high calibre artists will be generated, produced and installed on and around the building, potentially reaching into the town itself. This will be a yearly event, extended over 4 years, that will stimulate the cultural life of the town, involving students and the general population. This original approach to public art will contribute to Hereford's identity as a cultural destination.

**Rationale** Station Approach is ideally situated between HCA's 2 sites at the College Road campus and Folly Lane Campus, and the city centre, enabling the community of students and staff to more easily connect with the wider community and social and cultural resources of Hereford.

- Standing adjacent to Hereford train station on the recently completed Link Road, the building will also act as a beacon and gateway into the city and signal the city's commitment to creativity and innovation. Significant commissioned artworks on the building's exterior will help define its identity as a cultural destination for visitors to the city.
- The site and the installation will introduce visitors to Hereford, signpost the college's prominent cultural position in the city and potentially act as the first step to further artistic encounters towards the centre of Hereford. It would be a vibrant statement of intention in a town that is evolving a creative and energised new phase in its development.
- The selected artists will carry out residencies in Hereford to create new work in response to the site.
- The student population will participate in the elaboration and production of the work, gaining crucial professional practice skills.
- The public will be invited to follow the works' realisation through events and multi-media engagement.
- Additional art programmes in the town will accompany each commission.
- HCA and NMiTE student accommodation building addresses the need to benefit from a growth in student and graduate population for the city's economic and cultural future.

**Funding** Total Cost: £160,000      Towns Fund: £90,000

City centre showcase of commissioned public art from high level professional artists over a 4-year period.

- Exhibition opportunities for current FE, BA and MA students at HCA and alumni of art, design, craft, performing arts and media disciplines.
- Display of artwork on the exterior of the building, upon sunken plinths, a large scale billboard for print media, through screens and some ground floor public exhibition, raising the profile of HCA and the region's creative community.
- HCA teaching and learning activities embedded within the programme of commissions and events, developing new skills in public art projects, curating, and educational and outreach programme.
- Capital funding for large-scale screens for outdoor projections and events in the city.
- Urban regeneration in the form of strengthening and innovating local cultural assets through the development of the site and a new venue for public art engagement.

## Creative: Encore Music and Skills Hub

<p>Description</p>	<p>To create a Music and Skills Hub as part of the Maylord Shopping Centre redevelopment</p> <p>The community of Hereford needs a music hub - where anyone and everyone can meet, enjoy a drink, and participate in musical activities whilst learning new skills. Other towns and cities have a music hub – why not Hereford? A Music and Skills Hub will consolidate, extensively develop and bring community music provision to the heart of Hereford.</p> <p>A Music and Skills Hub will provide a centre which is not simply accessible, but one which is fully inclusive. Meeting the needs of the whole community, specifically including those with disabilities or those who do not engage with music and the wider arts. Our Music and Skills Hub will deliver a range of musical opportunities - provision of wellbeing services, educational opportunities, qualification opportunities, skills development, rehearsal space, small performances and educational and skills training.</p> <p>There is a key ambition by the Hereford Towns Fund Board to realise the redevelopment of the Maylord Shopping Centre in the heart of the city, which will address the shortage of cultural and skills facilities for the community, whilst supporting the regeneration of the vacant shops/centre. Encore’s proposal aligns perfectly with this and synergises with other cultural and skills bids.</p> <p>The Music and Skills Hub will regenerate a large shop in the City Centre, giving opportunities for skills development and qualifications, and creating apprenticeships and jobs. Hereford has no centre for community music and these proposals will fill that void, as well as expand the broader and under-developed cultural offer in the city. The project is low risk, as 60% of the services are already well-established and it offers the opportunity for significant growth. It will bring more people into Hereford where they can enjoy their musical experiences and visit local shops, businesses and generally boost the wider economy. It will significantly add to the Maylord Shopping Centre redevelopment.</p> <p>These new community facilities will be led by Encore Enterprises CIC – a well-established ‘Cultural Education’ CIC, Herefordshire’s largest provider of community music and one of the largest cultural organisations in the county.</p>
<p>Rationale</p>	<p>Station Approach is ideally situated between HCA’s 2 sites at the College Road campus and Folly Lane Campus, Encore delivers an extensive range of services to the community (mostly but not exclusively in music). These include a County Music Service, a wide range of well-established music ensembles and other activities for young people (all genres), and a developing range of adult services. In total, nearly 5,000 people per week receive activities through Encore. This includes all ages and abilities, including services specifically designed for vulnerable people e.g. older people, people with learning disabilities etc.</p> <p>Encore has never had a base to provide these opportunities. It has always hired these.</p> <p>The majority of activities take place in premises which were not designed for these activities and are often not welcoming or overly suitable – especially for our service users with disabilities. There are not enough available spaces to hire and many are also expensive. Problems regularly occur where our bookings are cancelled – resulting in cancelled or rearranged services, which clearly isn’t good for those who rely on our services (or good for our business). The cost and time involved with hiring and liaising with so many premises is expensive – as is the cost of continuously moving musical instruments and other equipment around. It also does not allow the ability to provide effective management, business support and quality assurance. In addition, the experience for our service users is not as social as it should be for them. They need to have a place where they can socialise as part of their experience.</p> <p>The cost of the issues above, along with the lack of affordable and available places to hire, means that many new services are unable to start and some current services are unable to expand. Our young people and our adult community clearly both want and need additional services and we are unable to provide these due to the restraints.</p> <p>A successful bid from the Towns Fund would address all of the above needs – both those who deliver and those who use services. It would capitalise on the ability to bring together nearly all of these musical activities, reduce overheads, and provide suitable accommodation for community music activities. Most importantly, it would create a vibrant music scene in Hereford, attracting people from outside the city and outside the county to visit – boosting the wider economy. It would create jobs, volunteering opportunities and the ability to learn skills and qualifications. These are all definitely needed in Hereford – especially post-covid.</p> <p>Overall, we will be addressing the needs of both the social enterprise and the community. Our current established projects equate to around 60% of the offer. The bid will allow additionality of new services to the community (the other 40%).</p>
<p>Funding</p>	<p>Total Cost: £300,000                      Towns Fund: £200,000</p>

## Creative: Powerhouse Culture Hub

<p>Description</p>	<p>Powerhouse is transforming under-utilised space at Maylord Shopping Centre into a hub for Culture, Community and Creative Learning.</p> <p>Spearheading urban regeneration of the twenty first century high street, it will provide a socially accessible skills hub in the heart of the city, and a venue to showcase and celebrate the very best of Herefordshire’s culture.</p> <p>The redeveloped space will stimulate creative, heritage and visitor economies, and connect community through live experiences and cultural programming, contributing to a renewed and reshaped city centre in a way that drives footfall and economic growth, through tourism and community engagement.</p> <p>Our mission is to “reimagine the city” as a bright and vibrant festival destination.</p> <p>It will serve as a go-to space for a new generation of talent, entrepreneurialism and creativity in the region.</p> <p>An increased student population over the coming years, and a renewed agenda to attract and retain cross-sector talent means there is a significant need for a multi-purpose city centre space. A space to meet, eat, drink, socialise, develop ideas, engage in cultural activity, and support local business.</p> <p>We have developed cross-sector partnerships with local independent businesses, Dakin Events, and The Beefy Boys, to generate footfall and economic growth to the area.</p> <p>Our mission is to create a space in Herefordshire that we believe is much-needed - an intersection of culture and commerce.</p> <p>The ground floor will consist of a cafe space, bookshop and social hub. It will have a cinema screen and facilities to showcase local digital and creative projects, and a programme of artists, talks, events and exhibitions.</p> <p>The upper floor will serve as a large multipurpose space, allowing community classes and workshops, rehearsals and creative development resources, including breakaway digital studios and workspace. A new elevator for members of the public will be installed for a fully accessible building.</p> <p>The project aligns with the drive to future-proof the high street through the creation of a space and experience that contributes to town-based tourism. It provides an opportunity for strong partnerships and creative programming to boost the economy, bring people together, increase civic pride, and revitalise the area.</p>
<p>Rationale</p>	<p>Identified Needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An improved provision of cultural offer.</li> <li>• Enormous need for culture and commerce to cross-fertilise.</li> <li>• An urgent re-imagining and repurposing of long-abandoned retail-centric assets.</li> <li>• Need for a greater sense of local placemaking and identity.</li> <li>• Absence of city centre multi-purpose space for culture, social, learning and commerce.</li> <li>• A ongoing and pressing need to address the ubiquitous ‘nothing to do here’ complaint.</li> <li>• Space that brings people into the city centre for cultural experiences, learning and leisure.</li> <li>• Under-developed Tourism offer: with huge opportunity for experiential and cultural programming of national and international status.</li> </ul> <p>Opportunity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Urban regeneration - Spearheading a 21st Century renaissance of the High Street through a new model of community, commerce and culture.</li> <li>• Enterprise infrastructure - Integrating the creative, visitor, heritage and retail economies at the heart of the city.</li> <li>• Championing this multi-sector approach to ensure more resilient models of economic sustainability, and broadening the visitor experience.</li> <li>• Skills infrastructure - More visibility and access of learning, with increased cultural interactions with harder-to-reach groups.</li> <li>• City centre festival integrated with, elevating and adding to the current creative and tourism economies.</li> <li>• Year-round programming designed to support and enable cultural sector partners to upskill, connect and collaborate through a cultural focal point and social space designed to champion, produce and source exceptional work.</li> <li>• Sustainability - project developed with long-term resilience and growth in mind. Including growth of revenue through ticketing, F&amp;B, literature and arts, increased audience numbers and per head spend, investment through sponsorship and mixed funding models.</li> <li>• Festival programming as a focus for upskilling a local workforce of both casual, part-time and permanent staff, through extensive experience of all elements of festival production, digital production and creative output.</li> <li>• Monetising space and increasing footfall through experience of both festival development and delivery.</li> <li>• Year-round programme, leading to high potential for permanent and growing employment opportunities at the Powerhouse building and halo-effect for surrounding businesses.</li> </ul>
<p>Funding</p>	<p>Total Cost: £300,000</p> <p>Towns Fund: £300,000</p>

**Digital: Skills Foundry 3 Digital Culture Hub (DCH) - A Beacon of Innovation and Enterprise Where Creativity Meets Technology**

**Description**

The Digital Culture Hub (DCH) led by Rural Media in partnership with Hereford College of Arts (HCA) will create an ecosystem of digital creativity and innovation for Hereford and Herefordshire, marking the county out as a cultural leader in rural regeneration and social mobility.

The DCH will aggregate in a single, fully accessible, contemporary space the creative technologies, tools and expertise to inspire and raise the skill levels of creative and cultural entrepreneurs, SMEs, students, public, private and VCSE sectors in the county, enabling them to take advantage of the booming, post-Covid digital economy. Studio-based and remote incubator/accelerator programmes will enable young creative talent to establish new cultural enterprises in Herefordshire and strengthen the talent supply chain - both in and out - for the public, private and VCSE sectors. Centralized resources, e.g., broadcast-standard TV, radio and interactive studios and equipment, together with access to experienced industry professional and their networks will underpin and drive Herefordshire’s national and international brand and profile, adding momentum and competitive edge to the county’s tourism sector, and providing work experience and employment for developing and established talent.

Online courses, mentoring, internships, funding and membership services will complement live bootcamp, workshop, and cross-discipline collaboration events, providing a year-round programme to drive new ideas, research and project/production development. The DCH will be structured around five areas 1) Multi-level digital creative skills training (film, TV, audio, animation, immersive, interactive, digital marketing & comms, coding, gaming); 2) Cultural and creative business development and entrepreneurship (incubator space - physical & remote; workshops; mentoring; accelerator programmes; leadership & governance; professional networks; investment & finance models); 3) Broadcast standard film, TV, audio and interactive facilities (production studios, meeting rooms, remote conferencing and live streaming facilities and support, strategic partnerships and access to regional broadcasters and distributors); 4) Outdoor Digital Engagement (ODE - public digital display screens; festival & events kit; outdoor/pop-up cinema equipment; Live2Digital - capture & stream service); 5) Public-facing space for cultural tourism and engagement (connected to ODE, physical access point for cultural and experiential offerings, housing Visit Herefordshire digital team).

- Rationale**
- The Digital Culture Hub will:
- Capitalize on the growth (turbocharged by Covid) of creative industry micro-businesses choosing to locate outside urban conurbations
  - Benefit public, private and VCSE sectors and the county’s zero-carbon targets by building digital skills,
  - Combat rural isolation and challenges stemming from an older age demographic by empowering the community through improved digital literacy
  - Address the critical issue of ex-migration of young people from Herefordshire and attract talent seeking to establish tech businesses in the area through the combination of skills, business support, ideas exchange, and access to national and international networks.
  - Draw upon HCA and RM’s expertise in inclusion, diversity and social mobility to engage communities traditionally excluded from access to creative and digital skills training and employment.
  - Raise residents’ sense of pride in their city and county through public exhibition (physical and remote) of cutting-edge digital cultural content, distributed via social channels for residents to share and respond to.
  - Inspire and transform the way residents and visitors experience Herefordshire, and businesses reach out to new markets and investors through DCH’s Createch, upskilling and entrepreneurship development services, carrying creativity, and innovation and ambition at its core.
  - Attract start-ups from further afield to re-locate to Herefordshire and encourage fringe enterprises and collaborative projects to spin-off thanks to high-speed digital connectivity and the growing profile of the CDH as a rural exemplar.

**Funding**

Total Cost: £1.745m	Towns Fund: £1.195m
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20-21 - initial renovations of site;  
 2021-22 - full renovation, purchasing and fitting of bulk of equipment; Rural Media moves sites;  
 22-23 - updating of key systems and tech;  
 23-24 - updating of key systems and tech

## Connected: River Wye Infrastructure

<p>Description</p>	<p>Enhancement of the river and its surrounding infrastructures in the city centre.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement to a wide promenade style pathway that will enhance accessibility for walking and cycling</li> <li>• Lighting and power points for this pathway and improved lighting alongside Bishop’s Meadow and King George’s playing fields with power points to be used for community events, pop up cafes and markets.</li> <li>• Accent lighting on beauty spots (trees etc) both northside and southside of the river and up lighting for old bridge</li> <li>• A ramp leading onto the Great Western Way for connect the south and northside pathways for cyclists and the disabled</li> <li>• A pontoon sited at the Left Bank Village and Sea Cadets facility to increase utility and access to this portion of the river. Improving interconnectivity of community businesses along the river including Rowing club and Rugby Club.</li> <li>• A crane based at the rowing club/Sea Cadets for disabled access to vessels and boat removal from the river.</li> <li>• Digital signage along this stretch of river, giving directions and information about local amenities and other community based offerings available. These could also be used for the promotion of upcoming events within the city centre</li> <li>• Purchase, clearing and installation of seating along the north and south stretches of river to encourage families to engage in activities like picnics next to the river (x 20)</li> <li>• Infrastructures that will support camping, tourism and “staycation” activities to this stretch of river.</li> </ul> <p>All of these measures will be implemented to improve the long-term desirability of Hereford as a tourist destination as well as increase the variety of things to do for local people. This is a project that collaborates with community benefit organisations with existing infrastructures that will give strong ongoing support to the project and will create skills opportunities for young and disadvantaged people. The work undertaken will exponentially increase the aesthetic appeal and usability of this stretch of river and will increase business opportunities for various organisations in the future e.g. more Events potential on Bishops Meadow and more camping based at the Rowing and Rugby Clubs, more footfall into Hereford wanting to use facilities after their river trips for leisure or courses.</p>		
<p>Rationale</p>	<p>The project will truly have a positive impact in the follow areas:</p> <p>A. Contributes towards making Hereford zero-carbon and nature-rich – Better cycleway/walkways loop (proposed additional Beryl Bike site at the Rugby club)</p> <p>B. Contributes towards ‘levelling up’ i.e. improves opportunities for disadvantaged groups in particular. – Increased disabled access to the proposed loop where improved infrastructure is being placed and facilities for disadvantaged and disabled groups to have better access to the river using equipment, training and facilities.</p> <p>C. Improves quality of life for residents - Enhancement of the beauty of an area of historic significance, increase in access to the river for all age groups and to open up the river to more activities (lunches on the water, wedding receptions, day trippers). Better lighting cycleways for safer towpaths for local people. Increase in long term job prospects for a greater number and training/qualifications in the nautical field for local people.</p> <p>D. Promotes innovation, creativity, &amp; new technology – Digital signage, and web opportunities (working NMITE to create new ways to deliver information about the local area to tourists and residents). The proposed use of hydroelectric energy solutions for the new lighting and power sources. (under investigation Andy Venables)</p> <p>E. Improves physical connectivity and accessibility – Towpath improvements creating better access and connectivity. Pontoon creation to enable a river cruiser to take tourists and local people up and down the river and make a connection between the Sea Cadets and Left Bank to create the best possible offering to trainees for their enjoyment and learning. Making a better connections between north side and south side of the river encouraging social mobility. Encouraging sustainable means of travel using the improved pathways in and around the city centre.</p> <p>F. Promotes learning and skills – New training in specialist fields as mentioned above, new jobs created immediately and ongoing over decades to come from increased activity in areas that had been neglected.</p> <p>G. Attracts visitors and investors, builds on heritage – Enhancing a key site in Hereford and the beauty of the most visually accessible section of the river by the greatest number of people. The new pontoon sites will be a fantastic marketing opportunity to make the iconic site around the Old Bridge even more vibrant for Herefordshire. These works will increase things to do for locals and will create an environment that will draw more people into Hereford. Hereford has the opportunity to offer wonderful “staycation” camping and caravanning near to river sites which this project will mobilise.</p>		
<p>Funding</p>	<table border="1" data-bbox="319 1809 1482 1859"> <tr> <td>Total Cost: £1.61m</td> <td>Towns Fund: £1.5m</td> </tr> </table> <p>Initial works include planning applications, ecological surveys, structural engineers, council authorisations and a full schedule of works produced. The next phase will be the completion of the two pontoons and installation of the river crane so that additional activities on the river can commence in the latter part of 2021. Late 2021, we would aim to begin the works to the towpath and all of the associated lighting and related tourism promotion infrastructures including lighting and power supplies and installation of picnic sites. Completion of designs for digital signage. Mid 2022, the aim would be to instal the accent lighting on the beauty spots along the river and to complete up-lighting of the two bridges. Installation of digital signage.</p>	Total Cost: £1.61m	Towns Fund: £1.5m
Total Cost: £1.61m	Towns Fund: £1.5m		

## Connected: Skills Foundry 4 The Lines Project

Description	<p>The Lines Project will provide a vibrant, inspiring and inclusive sports, food and skills community hub for the people of South Wye, the most deprived element of Hereford's population. The core benefit of the project is to facilitate community cohesion, levelling the playing field of opportunity between the north and south of the city. The Lines Project is a collaboration between two highly energised established community organisations Growing Local CIC and Belmont Wanderers CIC and Hereford's new higher education provider NMITE, who all share a common goal to improve the future health, wellbeing, life-chances and employment skill set of the people of South Wye and Hereford. Located adjacent to Newton Farm at the end of the populous pedestrian and cycle route, known locally as 'The Lines', this frequently overlooked and deprived area of the city is the core target demographic of the project.</p> <p>The heart of the project will be the creation of a single physical building - the Lines Hub - which will accommodate all partners. Belmont Wanderers CIC's Sports and Skills Village proposal incorporates a Clubhouse, Sports Skills Centre and 4 and 3G Football and Sports Pitches. Growing Local CIC propose the establishment of a Community Market Garden, a Food and Horticultural Skills Centre and an Educational Garden. NMITE proposes to locate learning and meeting space in the Lines Hub to offer skills training and programmes. All parties envisage the employment of 8 to 10 posts.</p>		
Rationale	<p>The Lines Project will be located in Newton Farm in South Wye, all of which falls in the bottom 10 to 20% most deprived neighbourhoods nationally. There are very few opportunities to engage children, young people, families or adults in this area. The hub, sports pitches and gardens will provide a destination and will be accessible seven days a week.</p>		
Funding	<table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Total Cost: £4.183m</td> <td style="width: 50%;">Towns Fund: £3.644m</td> </tr> </table> <p>Phase 1: Prior to Towns Fund Money Release - completion of asset transfer from Herefordshire Council, planning permissions, business planning, architectural, garden and sports facility drawings, path improvement plan, surveys</p> <p>Phase 2: Year 1: Connection of services, road and car parking construction, start of educational garden and community garden builds, establishment of polytunnels, construction of packing area, secure machinery store, toilet block and staff/volunteer shelter in community garden. Sports pitch constructions and improvements, improvements to path and adjoining areas of the skatepark and nearby school.</p> <p>Phase 3: Year 2: Construction of the Lines Hub</p> <p>Phase 4: Years 2 and 3: Landscaping around centre, continued development of the gardens and growing areas, continued sports pitch construction, continued improvements to locality including skate park and play area.</p> <p>End of Year 3: Project completion</p>	Total Cost: £4.183m	Towns Fund: £3.644m
Total Cost: £4.183m	Towns Fund: £3.644m		

# Section 3: Engagement and Delivery

## GOVERNANCE

From the outset, Hereford’s Town Investment Plan has been driven by an absolute commitment to inclusivity, diversity and transparency. Hereford has a wide range of communities and constituencies and our engagement process was designed to establish a dialogue with as many different voices as possible.

That process started with the establishment of the Hereford Town Board. During February 2020, Herefordshire Council, as the accountable body, held information meetings at which participants were invited to submit their names for inclusion on the Town Board.

This resulted in the formation of a Board of fourteen members, representing a broad cross-section of interests in Hereford including the community sector, retail, hospitality, commerce, industry, media, the City Council, Hereford Business Board, Hereford City BID, the Marches LEP, the MP for Hereford and South Herefordshire and Herefordshire Council. The gender split of our Board is nine male and five female. All Board members were invited to pool their network of contacts in Hereford for inclusion in the engagement process.

### **[Insert Board Details Including List of Names and Organisations]**

Following the formation of the Board, an election process for the Chair and Vice-Chair was held resulting in the election of Lauren Rogers, Project Manager at Rural Media, as Chair and Julian Vaughan, Managing Director of the Green Dragon Hotel, as Vice Chair.

Our full Board has met on xxx separate occasions, observed by Rebecca Collings from the Government Office and representatives from Herefordshire Council.

The Board has also been supported by communications and technical sub-groups, appointed to support engagement and provide a first interface for the appraisal and prioritisation of projects.

Task and finish groups have been formed to work up the detail of the two key pillars of the bid: heritage and skills.

The long-listing of projects identified ideas with similar objectives and project proposers have been encouraged to build synergies and avoid duplication. This has resulted for example in: the City Council and Hereford Green Network being linked around their Electric Bus aspirations, the Lines Project being connected with the Skills Foundry, a cluster of landowners to the north of the River Wye with similar aspirations about its development being forged into a consortium and the Skate Park and Holmer Road Cycle Track proposals being consolidated.

A diagram setting out the governance structure for the Towns Fund is shown below:





## PARTNERSHIPS AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

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In order to achieve maximum engagement, our Board appointed Rose Regeneration in September 2020 to undertake a consultation programme with stakeholders in Hereford's future and to invite potential investment projects to submit proposals.

During seven weeks of consultation (September–November 2020), Rose engaged with more than 9,000 people in Hereford, generating more than 800 responses or suggestions and establishing a compelling evidence base of need and demand which has informed our investment strategy and the selection of investment projects in our Investment Plan.

### The stakeholder engagement programme included:

- 96 face-to-face or online meetings with 141 individual business or community leaders.
- 21 face-to-face or online meetings with organisations and groups including the Ford Foundation, Growing Local, Hereford City BID, Hereford and Worcester Chamber of Commerce, Hereford Women's Equality Group, Hereford Cathedral, Hereford City Council, Hereford Youth Council, Hereford Rowing Club, the 2 Faced Dance Company, Hinton Community Centre, Hereford Green Network, Hereford Rugby Club, Hereford Investment Partnership, the Kindle Centre, NMITE and Wye Valley Trust Hospital. These meetings engaged nearly 250 participants and generated more than 300 online comments.
- 6 online sector forums - Culture and Heritage, Education, Inclusive Growth, Skills, Sustainability and Tourism which attracted nearly 80 participants in total and which generated more than 200 online comments.
- Online survey sent to more than 8,500 recipients - 270 respondents.
- Media campaign - Hereford Times, BBC Hereford and Worcester, Sunshine Radio, Your Herefordshire.
- Website - [www.strongerhereford.com](http://www.strongerhereford.com).
- mytown portal - 112 comments.

### Feedback from the engagement programme focussed on three key areas:

1. Hereford suffers from a profound skills gap, closely aligned to the profound wealth gap between postcodes north of the River Wye and those in South Wye.
2. There is "nothing to do" in Hereford, a local perception which underpins the focus of our investment in the creative, digital, visitor and heritage aspects of the City's offer.
3. Hereford's public realm has real investment potential, building on a pattern of previously modest investments with the river corridor being an area of obvious opportunity.

At each stage of the engagement process, participants and respondents were invited to submit project proposals for potential inclusion in our Investment Plan. In mid-November 2020, forty five investment project proposals were tabled with a combined value of more than £80 million.

At this time, a technical sub group of four Board members was formed to undertake a sifting process of the long list of proposals and to make recommendations to the full Board on those projects which would be included in the TIP.

As the accountable body, Herefordshire Council appointed an independent monitor to ensure that our selection process was compliant and transparent.

During a total of twelve hours of deliberation, the Board's technical sub-group (with up to fifteen observers in each meeting) evaluated each project on the basis of the four Town Fund criteria and seven local criteria and arrived at a short-list of eight stand-alone or consolidated projects with a combined value of £24.85 million. This list was subsequently endorsed by the full Board as a combination of the most necessary and powerful interventions in Hereford's economy. Project development capacity funding was allocated to individual projects and sanctioned by Board approval.

Where possible, these projects have been aligned with existing/future public and private sector initiatives to maximise their impact and return on investment.

## FUTURE PLANS

Partnership working will be crucial to the successful delivery of this Plan. The structures and networks which have been established to oversee the work to date will continue to be strengthened during the delivery phase. The Programme Management Function will provide a resource to expand our partnership working, including our links to the community and voluntary sectors. We will continue to encourage participation and maximise funding and investment for our communities, with opportunities for engagement identified below and detailed in full within our Stakeholder Engagement Plan. The Towns Fund Board will continue to meet actively and prepare the ground for the implementation of both the projects within our portfolio and the wider range of projects which we have identified through the towns fund process. It will own the Stakeholder Engagement Plan framed around networks, partnerships and private sector investment.

## NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS

We will utilize the mature partnership structure that exists in Hereford to access the skills and expertise we need to deliver specific projects and to reach out to a wider stakeholder network for all of the priority areas. In this regard the BID, City Council, Hereford and Worcester Chamber of Commerce, Hereford Women's Equality Group, Herefordshire Green Network, Herefordshire Business Board and the City's wider business networks will continue to be involved in advising, shaping and leading project delivery.

Wherever possible we will ensure stakeholders and the wider public have the opportunity to engage with and influence project proposals in person through the use of drop-in events, interactive workshops and exhibitions. Where this is not possible, consultation will be carried out by virtual means as we have done successfully in development of the Investment Plan.

Continued engagement with our via our website, will play an active role in the shaping of our plan and in testing, monitoring and evaluation of its constituent projects.

## PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT

The City has benefited from substantial private investment in recent years which has delivered strong employment and business growth. Towns Fund will build on this investment, unlock and underpin growth which has stalled, not due to the lack of market demand but rather due to infrastructure constraints and costs (digital, transport, services, site constraints). In this context, our programme will directly secure investment and co-funding from partners such as NMITE, Hereford College of Arts, Herefordshire Council and others.

The benefits of this programme will flow through to enhancing the resilience and diversity of the City's economy, strengthening investor confidence in future development opportunities. We will utilise our Plan to promote Hereford as a place to invest in order to expand and secure private sector interest working with organisations such as Invest Herefordshire and the Herefordshire Investment Partnership. We will also liaise actively with the LEP to link into its FDI portfolio of work.

Our very inclusive bid development process has established both a list of towns fund projects but also a wider portfolio of investment opportunities connected to the pipeline projects which have not been included directly in the TIP and which are listed above. We intend to work with these project sponsors and the chosen towns fund projects to develop and implement an ongoing dialogue about investment and development. Whilst some of this will be themed around relatively closed "project development activities" where possible we will communicate progress with the wider plan for Hereford to the community and more widely through the Town Board's formal Stakeholder Engagement Plan. In addition to our web presence and direct communications to the public about projects networking marketing harnessing the contacts of those involved with our board and their constituent linkages will be a core part of our methodology.

## BUSINESS CASE DEVELOPMENT

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The development of our Investment Plan has followed Government guidance in accordance with our governance documents and the detailed specifications for the programme.

A long list of proposals was developed for consideration by the Towns Fund Technical Sub-Group as set out above. The projects were the subject of a substantive and inclusive call for proposals.

The Board identified seven local criteria which fitted our local theory of change namely:

- A. Contributes towards making Hereford zero-carbon and nature-rich
- B. Contributes towards 'levelling up' i.e. improves opportunities for disadvantaged groups in particular
- C. Improves quality of life for residents
- D. Promotes innovation, creativity, & new technology
- E. Improves physical connectivity and accessibility
- F. Promotes learning and skills
- G. Attracts visitors and investors, builds on heritage

These local criteria were informed by our first stage consultation activities with the public and derived from our vision. They articulate powerfully the values and character of Hereford as a place and community and differentiate us clearly from other Towns Fund bids. They speak to our commitment to the social economy and the establishment of a net-zero post pandemic Hereford.

These criteria along with the five HMT Green Book criteria within the Towns Hub Project prioritisation tool were used to rank the bids in the long list. Details of each proposal had been previously collected using a comprehensive information gathering exercise. Project applicants were supported where practical in the completion of the paperwork.

Following the initial long listing process all applicants were given a further ten days to respond to the initial ranking of their project and to complete a first draft Towns Fund proforma.

The results of this follow-up exercise were then assessed by the Technical Sub-Group and signed off by the Board as a final list of projects. In parallel with this process, Herefordshire Council commissioned external independent advice, in its role as Financially Accountable Body, to assess the risks associated with each project in final scope for inclusion in the plan.

The month of January was then used to work in detail with each individual project to address the issues identified within the risk assessment to ensure that each project is sufficiently robust for final inclusion in the investment strategy.

This process has involved at least two discussions around the long listing and short listing process of standing back and considering the financial and commercial viability of each project from a pragmatic perspective. This has been based on the involvement of successful entrepreneurs within the Towns Fund team such as Frank Myers MBE who Chaired the Technical Sub-Group. Their involvement and this aspect of the process has helped guard against the development of a process which becomes trapped in systems rather than taking a rounded and locally relevant view of the projects in scope.

**In making our final choice of projects we have also had regard to three other factors:**

1. the ability of projects to work together as part of a cohesive programme, with complementary alignment to other economic activities,
2. the alignment of our focus on the city centre and net-zero imperatives with the Marches LEP's agenda for Hereford and its investments over the last decade
3. the opportunity to bring together a package of investments which links Council and LEP interventions, with the private sector investments to create a base from which to leverage further private sector and other investment.

## INVESTMENT PLAN SUMMARY

We have set out below an overview of the final programme, including details of each project's Town Fund financial requirement alongside its overall funding package. We have been mindful that there is only scope for up to 10% of the Towns Fund to contribute to the revenue implementation of these projects in making our final allocations.

£M	Town Fund	Co-Funding	Total Cost
Powerhouse	0.3	0	0.3
Encore	0.2	0.1	0.3
Skills Foundry			
Lines Project	3.64	0.54	4.18
Digital Culture Hub	1.19	0.55	1.74
Digital Futures	0.65	0.2	0.85
Future of Work Skills Hub NMITE	2.33	0.74	3.07
Maylords	3	0	3
Greening the City	1.5	0	1.5
Museum	5	5	10
Castle Green	1.56	0	1.56
Soil from the City	1	0.5	1.5
Extreme Sports	1.18	0.78	1.96
Meadow Arts	0.09	0.07	0.16
Electric Buses	1.8	0	1.8
River Wye Infrastructure	1.5	0.11	1.61
<b>Total</b>	<b>24.94</b>	<b>8.59</b>	<b>33.53</b>

## IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY PLAN

Herefordshire Council will act as the accountable body for the implementation of the Investment Plan. Acting in this role, the Council will:

- Oversee the Heads of Terms Agreement with government and the Board
- Ensure continued good governance and transparency in decision making
- Manage, monitor and evaluate the Investment Programme, with recourse to independent expertise as required for assurance
- Support lead partners in the development of detailed business cases to secure funding
- Manage contractual arrangements with project partners to ensure delivery
- Carry out the financial management for the programme
- Be responsible for the financial management of the overall programme
- Periodic reporting to government as required

More discussion in the context of implementation is required but we currently envisage the establishment of a Programme Management Office to oversee the programme, utilising a mix of existing staff and resources within the Authority, combined with specialist expertise to add value to the proposals and to ensure independent appraisal and scrutiny as part of our assurance process.

The Office will be led by a Programme Manager, supported by Project Development and Monitoring Officers and a Programme Accountant. Specialist support will be required as follows:

- To develop our local green book assurance process
- To undertake independent project appraisal and due diligence, ensuring objectivity in decision making
- To provide skills and expertise in developing our digital and clean growth proposals, ensuring these can be transformational
- To provide specialist legal advice where required (e.g. state aid) to support contractual arrangements with government and back-to-back funding agreements with partners

Our programme management and assurance process will be prepared and adopted by the Town Board for implementation following our Heads of Terms Agreement. Our management and assurance process will set out:

- Arrangements for the Programme Management Office including its structure, resourcing and reporting
- Business case preparation and approval process, including due diligence and appraisal
- Project monitoring and evaluation templates and reporting procedures
- Preparation of project-specific funding agreements
- Setting out of procurement processes
- Performance management systems and overall programme monitoring and evaluation arrangements
- Partnership/joint-working arrangements where functions or commissioning may be shared

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## PROVEN ABILITY TO DELIVER

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To draft

## NOTES

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[1] Office for National Statistics 2019

[2] Ibid

[3] Ibid

[4] Office for National Statistics 2016

[5] Business Register and Employment Survey 2015-19

[6] Marches LEP Local Industrial Strategy and Strategic Economic Plan (2018)

[7] Business Register and Employment Survey 2015-19

[8] DWP Benefit claimant statistics April-October 2020.

[9] ONS Business Impact of Coronavirus Survey (BICS) (2020)

[10] English Heritage 2020

[11] Business Register and Employment Survey 2015-19

[12] Ibid

[13] Office for National Statistics and Business Register and Employment Survey 2019

[14] Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2020

[15] Office for National Statistics 2016

[16] Annual Population Survey 2020

[17] Hereford City Council Estimate of Visitor Numbers 2019

[18] Business Register and Employment Survey 2018

[19] Annual Population Survey 2020

[20] Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2020

[21] English Indices of Deprivation 2019.

[22] Index of Social Mobility 2020.

[23] Towns Hub Data Dashboard

[24] English Heritage 2020

[25] Hereford City Historic Area Assessment April 2018



## APPENDIX 1: ADDITIONAL INITIATIVES

Project	Description	Key Features
Gate 7 (South Wye)	Open Air (Amphitheatre and winter ice-rink) space	New community focused social space with economic potential in more deprived segment of the city. Visitor attraction potential, developing delivery capacity.
Hereford Make/ West St	Maker and Cultural Facility	New portal for community learning, innovative commercial environment, offers good learning and skills and visitor interest, reasonable delivery capacity amongst proposers.
Wye Valley Trust Education Centre	Health and Skills/Learning Hub	Regionally important. Will lead to enhanced health outcomes through workforce development/ attraction, new approaches to training, skills base, good capacity of delivery body
John Venn visitor hub	Community and Visitor Hub	Well established charity, strong community related and visitor economy outcomes, locally focused initiative an established stakeholder constituency
Agri-Food Technology Centre	Based on Rotherwas Industrial Estate	A project which speaks strongly to the overall priorities in the fund locally and green book compliant, high cost and other evidence of potential sources of funding needed.
Community Art Hub	Gallery	Strong community focus, good potential to engage the local community in Hereford's story, learning and visitor attraction strengths, good delivery capacity
Cathedral	Enhanced Mappa Mundi, Chained Library, & cafe experience	Strong visitor potential, relatively affordable, good organisational capacity, clear stakeholder constituency
Hereford City FC	Facilities Enhancement/Stadium Refit	An expensive fit with a clear agenda linked to sport and football in the City, reasonable delivery capacity within an organisation with a clear stakeholder constituency

Project	Description	Key Features
Station Approach Public Realm	Essex Arms Wetlands Reserve	A reasonable match to the local criteria, linkages to a key site within the regeneration area of Hereford, limited evidence of stakeholder engagement, good affordability with Herefordshire Council support.
Community Inclusive Growth	St Nicholas. Church, Youth drop in zone, Youth Zone. Library of Things	A cluster of projects which deliver on the social agenda but which do not meet the harder edged objectives of the Towns Fund, potentially significant delivery capacity support required for the organisations involved.
Hereford Green Network Projects	Full Circle, New Guildhall, Solar Atrium	Ostensibly strong projects in terms of fit with local criteria, limited information about the delivery capability of the project proposers, as a cluster a relatively expensive set of proposals, some evidence of a stakeholder constituency.
Bartonsham Meadows Nature Reserve	Green Space	A limited fit to most of the local criteria and limited impact when vfm and affordability viewed through the lens of the Towns Fund.
City walls illumination	Son et lumiere	Strong visitor potential, narrow focus, no evidence at this stage in application of significant local demand
Eign Gate to Eign Street overbridge	Public Realm/Bridge	A modest match to the local priorities, more work needed to demonstrate the link with the towns fund key rationale. Limited economic outputs.
Urban Tree-planting	Public Realm	A modest fit with the overall local themes, no detailed explanation on which to base the delivery capacity assessment, no significant indicator of a strong stakeholder agenda.



## APPENDIX 2: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Hereford through the Towns Fund has the potential to secure up to £25m to support proposals which will deliver long-term economic growth.

It has assembled a multi-agency Town Deal Board to develop and approve a Town Investment Plan which identifies a clear vision for the economy and opportunities to drive growth, based on evidence and stakeholder engagement.

We set out here the governance, partnership and wider engagement strategy which has been followed in support of the Investment Plan and the proposals for future engagement post Heads of Terms.

Its purpose is to outline key stakeholders and target audience that we wish to engage with, what we want to know, our approach to engagement and the key stages of engagement and communication in the development of our plan.

The plan takes account of the Covid-19 pandemic which has limited any face-to-face engagement, public meetings and events. The engagement programme will be reviewed on an ongoing basis as we exit the current pandemic and this third lockdown period.

### Ownership

As set out in the core text of the TIP this plan will be owned (in the sense of responsibility for delivery and the wider context of accountability) by the Board and its day to day development and monitoring will be delegated to the communications sub-group which we have established.

### Stakeholders/Partnerships

We have set out below the key representative groups and interest bodies which align with the key themes in our strategy:

Theme	Group
Greenest	Hereford Green Network, Hereford City Council, Herefordshire Council, Herefordshire Wildlife Trust
Fairest	Marches LEP Skills Board (Herefordshire Skills Board in Development), Herefordshire Voluntary Organisations Support Service (HVOSS), NMITE, Hereford Diocese
Creative	Herefordshire Cultural Partnership, Herefordshire Bid, Herefordshire Business Board
Digital	Herefordshire BiD, Marches LEP, Herefordshire Business Board
Connected	City Council, Rail and Bus Herefordshire, Herefordshire Council

### Content

The development of the Town Investment Plan has several stages and these are identified in the table below. At each stage, we have set out what it is that we have sought to understand to support our evidence of need and opportunities for growth within the Investment Plan, as well as what we will seek to understand as we move forward with the delivery of the plan.

Stage	Purpose
Evidence and Data	Pulling issues together and setting the parameters for the soliciting of bid ideas
Vision and long listing	Developing a vision for the plan that solidifies its focus and provides a means of testing and engaging with the public. Generation of a long list of projects to support the establishment of the TIP
Draft TIP	<p>Following the initial long listing process all applicants were given a further 10 days to respond to the initial ranking of their project and complete a first draft Towns Fund proforma.</p> <p>The results of this follow up exercise were then reapplied by the Technical Group and finally signed off by the Board to give a final list of projects.</p>
Final TIP	The month of January was then used to work in detail with each individual project to address the issues identified within the risk assessment to ensure that each project is sufficiently robust for final inclusion in the investment strategy. Working intensively with the Board and Herefordshire Council as the accountable body.
Heads of Terms Process	<p>This process will involve</p> <p>Engagement in developing detailed project cases with particular recourse to lead partners and specialist interest groups</p> <p>Communications regarding progress, next steps, timescales</p> <p>Engagement in development of detailed project proposals and Delivery</p> <p>Engagement in evaluating the final outcome/benefits of projects and overall programme</p>

## Approach

The pandemic has significantly restricted our ability to undertake face-to-face consultation and engagement. We have however been able to follow a range of intensive online group and individual stakeholder engagements. These have included:

- 96 face-to-face or online meetings with 141 individual business or community leaders.
- 21 face-to-face or online meetings with organisations and groups including the Ford Foundation, Growing Local, Hereford City BID, Hereford and Worcester Chamber of Commerce, Hereford Women's Equality Group, Hereford Cathedral, Hereford City Council, Hereford Youth Council, Hereford Rowing Club, the 2 Faced Dance Company, Hinton Community Centre, Hereford Green Network, Hereford Rugby Club, Hereford Investment Partnership, the Kindle Centre, NMITE and Wye Valley Trust Hospital. These meetings engaged nearly 250 participants and generated more than 300 online comments.
- 6 online sector forums - Culture and Heritage, Education, Inclusive Growth, Skills, Sustainability and Tourism which attracted nearly 80 participants in total and which generated more than 200 online comments.
- Online survey sent to more than 8,500 recipients - 250 respondents.
- Media campaign - Hereford Times, BBC Hereford and Worcester, Sunshine Radio, Your Herefordshire.
- Website - [www.strongerhereford.com](http://www.strongerhereford.com).
- mytown portal - 112 comments.

With the new lockdown, we plan to maximise the opportunities to engage with people and key interests' groups including revisiting each of the sector forums identified above to discuss implementation once we have a Heads of Terms agreed.

In the longer term it is hoped that post-submission we will be able to resume face-to-face engagement in order to consult on the overall programme and on individual project proposals.

Our approach which will be kept under review is set out in the table below:

Media	Approach
Digital - text	<p>Dedicated Town Deal Website – Developed as the main hub of online information for engagement, consultation and information sharing: see <a href="https://strongerhereford.co.uk/">https://strongerhereford.co.uk/</a></p> <p>Social Media – Used for key messaging and to provide information and updates, encouraging comments through the website and directing stakeholders to surveys</p> <p>Email Updates and Key Messages - Communicated through existing networks/venues/organisations, facilitated by Town Deal Board</p> <p>E-Survey – to collect resident views shared with 8,500 consultees and still running</p> <p>#Mytown – Utilised to collect feedback and comments to inform Plan in combination with wider survey work and engagement</p>
Digital – face to face	<p>Virtual Meetings and Workshops – using platforms such as Zoom and Teams to conduct Board meetings and facilitate virtual workshop sessions with the Board and wider stakeholders</p> <p>1-2-1 Consultations – Facilitated one-to-one consultations and focus group meetings with key groups to develop project ideas</p> <p>Stakeholder Networks – Presenting to various networks at scheduled meetings to gain feedback and share information</p>
Physical	<p>Board Meetings and Workshops – Board meetings are currently taking place in a virtual environment but some smaller meetings have and will be possible face-to-face post lockdown</p> <p>Telephone – interviews and engagement with key stakeholders via telephone has supplemented virtual engagement and will continue to offer a means of engaging stakeholders during the next phase of delivery</p> <p>Events and Exhibitions – We are currently considering the development of a Towns Fund seminar series as part of the awareness raising and development of the Heads of Terms</p>
Print	<p>Press Releases - Issued to cover key milestones and to reach out to stakeholders to inform/invite them to engage in surveys and consultation exercises. This will continue during the delivery phase. The Hereford Times has been engaged directly to ensure strong local exposure in this context.</p> <p>Published Material – The Investment Plan will be available in digital format; published material will be utilised to support specific consultation events and project-specific engagement (e.g. plans and maps) as relevant</p>

## Key Stages Looking Forward

We have set out below the next stages in the development of the Plan and transition through the Heads of Terms to delivery:

Stage	Method of Engagement
Final Plan end of Jan 2021	Detailed Liaison with individual projects and accountable body. Board to consider final submission
Post Submission Feb -April 2021	Website and updating of key messages Town/Delivery Board to review Programme Management/assurance processes Publication of Investment Plan (subject to approval) Engagement with project leads to mobilise for business case/ project development
Heads of Terms April 2021 – March 2022	Engage with project leads to develop business cases Project specific consultation and engagement Continuation of key messages/portal and engagement through website Continuation of engagement through Delivery Board and partnership networks New baseline survey Reintroduction of face-to-face consultation methods
Delivery April 2022 onwards	Continual engagement with networks and project leads to develop, monitor and evaluate schemes Project specific consultation and engagement Continuation of key messages/portal and engagement through website

The results of the stakeholder engagement carried out to date are included below. Results from this process have been reported to the Town Board as part of the overall evidence base at key stages throughout the development of the Investment Plan.

The proposals for future engagement and findings from this process will continue to be reported to the Town Board and taken into account as part of the development of this programme going forward, as summarised in the table above. Action will be taken to encourage and expand involvement, using different methods as is possible in the future.

Key documents which capture the responses to the consultation are the analysis of the online survey responses and the notes from the workshop meetings.

## Survey Responses

A survey has been widely distributed to collect key narratives and views from individuals. 227 responses have been analysed. We present below the grouped responses of those replying to the key priorities they have identified against each of the three core themes for the Towns Fund:

### Urban Regeneration

Issue	Number of Respondents
Museum	73
Traffic	23
Retail	20
Green Agenda (urban fabric and transport)	18
Parking	10
Cycling	10
Housing	9
University Branding	6
Library	5
Connections to the Wider Hinterland	4

### Skills and Enterprise

Issue	Number of Respondents
Business Friendly City – making Hereford attractive to learners and businesses	22
University (Enhanced Activities and Presence)	20
Better Prospects for Young People	18
City as a cultural destination attracting businesses and learners	13
More Community Learning Opportunities	11
More support for Small Business	10
Green Employment Agenda	7
More Start Up and Business Development Space	6
More FE Engagement	6
Workforce Development	6
Digital Operating Enhancement	5

### Connectivity

Issue	Number of Respondents
Better Broadband/Digital	32
Cycling Enhancements	31
Better Bus Services	31
Bypass	17
More Attention to Pedestrians	12
Park and Ride	12
More Rail	10
Better Public Transport	9
Tram Development	7
Road Improvement	4

## #STRONGER HEREFORD STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP NOTES

Workshop area	Education
Attendees	Peter Cooper David Williams Alexia Heath Elise Cummings David Langley Hereford Cathedral School Toby Kinnaird
Moderator	Katrina Michel on behalf of Rose Regeneration
Can you think of something that has happened in Hereford in the past five years that you feel personally has improved the city?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broadband connectivity</li> <li>• NMITE</li> <li>• Old Market development</li> <li>• The fact that over 4000 16-18 year olds now choose to come to Hereford for their education is a vote of confidence</li> <li>• Beryl Bikes</li> <li>• Rotherwas development</li> </ul>
What's wrong with Hereford? (if you are 17)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nothing to do but maybe more importantly nowhere to go. Colleges are more than a course; they fulfil a really important role in simply being a safe place to go where you can meet people of your own age. They facilitate togetherness for young people. Not sure if that can be replicated in other buildings. Even worse to invest in the wrong things to do.</li> <li>• Reliance on people for transport as trains and taxis are too expensive. People without mum and da transport are disadvantaged. Herford feels and maybe is an hour and a half from everywhere</li> <li>• Rural broadband is poor and young people outside the city are disadvantaged</li> </ul>
One thing that you feel could be transformational and additional for Hereford in the next five years?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>County of Learning and Skills:</b> A holistic approach to learning that aims to lift ambition, address both future skills needs and to specifically tackle the skills disadvantage brought about by rural worklessness. Ideally the approach would in itself be transformational but would also trigger further transformation. Match skills to employer needs e.g. Stansted Airport College which is multidisciplinary but aligned to airport employer needs. Engage SME in a visioning exercise to help them see the future and to educate them about the needs for and value of graduate opportunities <a href="http://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/10/5-thing-to-know-about-the-future-of-jobs/">www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/10/5-thing-to-know-about-the-future-of-jobs/</a></li> <li>2. <b>The River Quarter/Destination River</b> – food and drink, night-time economy and possibly some culture. Bring the area alive, upgrade the food offer. Turn the city towards the river. Also ensure the young are catered for not just people with money.</li> <li>3. <b>A specific strategy that runs through every project</b> – get more people living in the city, identify the business you want, encourage the right retail and hospitality – don't assume it will happen automatically</li> </ol>
Other areas to address/opportunities	
What could prevent progress in this area?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rushed timescales</li> <li>2. Too conservative with a small c, risk and change averse</li> <li>3. Not thinking enough about the structure that underpin the projects so they can survive beyond the fund</li> <li>4. Need to understand the future funding and demands on FE</li> </ol>

## #STRONGER HEREFORD STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP NOTES

Workshop area	Skills/HE/Lifelong Education
Attendees	<p>Alexia Heath Herefordshire Council            Frank Myers Marches LEP            David Langley NMITE            Duncan Campbell DWP            Stephen Weller Hoople Ltd</p> <p>Brandon ? Numachine            Kristo Shivachev SimpledesignWorks            Lauren ? Rural Media            Nigel Morgan            Tony Kinnaird NMITE            Christian Dangerfield Rose            Regeneration</p>
Moderator	Katrina Michel on behalf of Rose Regeneration
Can you think of something that has happened in Hereford in the past five years that you feel personally has improved the city?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NMITE</li> <li>• Enterprise Zone</li> <li>• College of Arts</li> <li>• Cattle Market</li> <li>• Skylon Park/Cybersecurity Centre</li> <li>• Old Market Re-Development</li> <li>• Green Dragon "quarter"</li> <li>• No Wrong Door partnership</li> <li>• Beryl Bike scheme</li> <li>• New builds at hospital</li> <li>• New provision for SEN 16+</li> <li>• Advent of creative businesses such as SimpleDesignWorks</li> <li>• Creation of a CEO group to develop apprenticeships</li> </ul>
One thing that you feel could be transformational and additional for Hereford in the next five years?	<p><b>The Skills Foundry</b>            Strong because it is <b>both</b> a building and an attitude</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could be a newbuild or renovation but needs to be central and accessible for young people. Also located to generate footfall for surrounding businesses</li> <li>• A statement about Hereford (and Herefordshire) as a "county of learning" and a signal to employers that a strong talent pool is being created</li> <li>• Addresses skills gap and skills retention</li> <li>• Focus on the skills of the future and reskilling and upskilling all through life. Giving the right advice not out of date advice</li> <li>• Relevant to the local labour market</li> <li>• Image changing for the area</li> <li>• A focal point/one stop shop for all skills and advice, delivered via relevant channels</li> <li>• Delivering skills and life skills</li> <li>• A cool place to train</li> <li>• Potentially on-site accommodation</li> </ul>
Other areas to address/opportunities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inward investment strategy – lack of corporate HQs leading to short career paths and few graduate jobs and those that do exist have poor retention</li> <li>2. Low value perceptions when the reality is that there are actually a number of companies offering high value jobs</li> <li>3. Lack of attention to the image of Hereford – need better collateral to promote lifestyle and to "recruit the whole family"</li> <li>4. Cultural strategy for younger people – music, animation. events, festivals, outdoor activities, easy access. Currently a place where there is "nothing to do"</li> <li>5. Facilitation and encouragement of new small businesses - low red tape, partnerships with landlords, incubators, mentorships, friendly and welcoming vibe</li> <li>6. Better coordination of the existing business community</li> <li>7. Expansion of bike scheme into electric vehicles/mopeds to improve accessibility for everyone</li> <li>8. Improvement and acceleration of fibre internet delivery</li> </ol>
What could prevent progress in this area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Needs to be business led</li> <li>• Devoid of local politics</li> <li>• Physically easy to access by everyone especially the most disadvantaged</li> <li>• Needs to feel cool and exciting</li> </ul>

## #STRONGER HEREFORD STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP NOTES

Workshop area	Sustainability
Attendees	Will Vaughan Kate Gathercole Patricia Gordon Nigel Higgs Ellie Chowns
Moderator	Katrina Michel on behalf of Rose Regeneration
Can you think of something that has happened in Hereford in the past five years that you feel personally has improved the city?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Beryl Bike scheme – 80k journeys, accessed by everyone, great metrics</li> <li>• Installation of cycle pathways</li> <li>• Café culture – food, sociability, business</li> <li>• River Carnival</li> <li>• Poppies – weeping window</li> <li>• h-Art – really good but maybe a bit taken for granted</li> <li>• Things that impact lots of people not just niche audiences</li> </ul>
One thing that you feel could be transformational and additional for Hereford in the next five years?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Soil from The City</b> – a scheme designed to deliver a fully integrated zero emissions food waste disposal service which regenerates into nutrient rich compost and which can make Hereford more flood resilient and provide biomass for a heat network</li> <li>2. <b>Hereford: Market Garden City</b> – a garden close to the city which connect people back to the land and provide fresh fruit and vegetables to around 200 deprived “cropshare” families. Site would also have an education centre and be in itself an attraction. Ideally scalable to other places across the county</li> <li>3. A safer cycleway programme to provide safe routes for unconfident riders</li> <li>4. A Repair Trail – a network of shops and educators who can both repair and instruct people on how to repair things. Might even have some repair art!</li> <li>5. Power the city: Clever solar power – use latest generation solar to green the City and grow edibles</li> </ol>
Other areas to address/opportunities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. An extension of the cycle network to encourage cyclist into new areas of the town – parklets near coffee shops. Cyclists make more trips and spend more on average per trip – so valuable footfall.</li> <li>2. An extension of footpaths to encourage walking and exploration with interpretation and signage</li> <li>3. A project that brings the river more into the city and allows more people and businesses to get close to it and enjoy it</li> <li>4. Subsidised environmentally friendly bus travel</li> </ol>
What could prevent progress in this area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resistance to change – need to engage as many constituencies as possible</li> <li>• A story well told with all aspects linked and joined up</li> <li>• Putting a ceiling on ambition – need to aim high, think big and be world class – your city can be the capital of the world!</li> <li>• Finding the right easily accessible site</li> </ul>



## #STRONGER HEREFORD STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP NOTES

Workshop area	Culture/Heritage	
Attendees	Nic Millington Judy Stevenson Clare Purcell Chloe Garner Colin Hamilton Jon Chedgzoy Jo Henshaw Nigel Higgs Richard Curtis Cliff Woollard	Tamsin Fitzgerald Paddy Nugent Daniel Pryde-Jarman Delyth Done Estelle vanWarmelo Jane Adams Katie Bott Tim Evans Abigail Dakin
Moderator	Katrina Michel on behalf of Rose Regeneration	
Can you think of something that has happened in Hereford in the past five years that you feel personally has improved the city?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Old Market development</li> <li>• Box of Delights</li> <li>• Lego exhibition</li> <li>• Poppy Weeping Window Exhibition</li> <li>• Yinka Shonibare/Mappa Mundi collaboration</li> <li>• Maylord creative placemaking</li> <li>• The Labyrinth</li> <li>• Ferrous</li> <li>• River Carnival</li> <li>• Foodie Scene/Green dragon quarter/Indie scene and vibe</li> <li>• The return of artists and craftspeople</li> <li>• The Cycle bridge</li> <li>• The advent of a new political leadership that “gets” culture</li> <li>• The Cultural Partnership and new cultural strategy</li> <li>• Events and exhibitions that garnered national and international attention</li> </ul>	
One thing that you feel could be transformational and additional for Hereford in the next five years?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The redevelopment of the Museum and Art Gallery to provide better exhibition space (and potentially some workspace and studios)               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would extend access to wider audiences</li> <li>• Would drive day visits and tourism</li> <li>• Provide a “cultural hub”</li> <li>• Would allow exhibitions of a bigger scale and with more national and international relevance</li> <li>• (Probably more expensive that fund could contribute, and ongoing costs could be significant)</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. The development of Castle Green               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A community space for all generations with green space around</li> <li>• Strategically situated between different communities but also very central</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Skills Foundry #Creative skills and entrepreneurship               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A build on the Skills Foundry concept but with a focus on developing creative and digital skills and teaching people how to commercialise them into successful creative businesses</li> </ul> </li> </ol>	
Other areas to address/opportunities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Station Road – a screen based project that with more funding could become a gallery for exhibitions and works by new and young artist and also a space for groups to enjoy big events e.g. watch Wimbledon</li> <li>2. The amphitheatre – a town centre outdoor performance, exercise and meeting space with small commercial units for artists and crafts people round about NB post Covid outdoor could become very important to engagement</li> <li>3. A local strategy of making it easy to repurpose unused units for creative businesses</li> <li>4. A permanent place for people to learn and practice music</li> </ol>	
What could prevent progress in this area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Duplication - the Courtyard already exists so no point in creating a rival that will effectively make it less viable</li> <li>• Lack of interpretation and joined upness “connect the dots” – new elements need to be joined up to exiting sites, maybe via an actual trail to encourage use of all assets. Ideally everything shouldn’t happen in one space</li> <li>• Focus needs to be on mixed art forms and diversity of offer to minimise risk</li> <li>• Tick off local, regional, national and if possible international</li> </ul>	

## #STRONGER HEREFORD STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP NOTES

Workshop area	Inclusive Growth
Attendees	<p>Angela Martin Louisa Foti Robert Thomas Kath Hey Nic Millington Richard Betterton</p> <p>Dave Tristram Angela Martin Lauren Rogers Elise Cummings Christian Dangerfield Rich Nicklin</p>
Moderator	Katrina Michel on behalf of Rose Regeneration
Can you think of something that has happened in Hereford in the past five years that you feel personally has improved the city?	<p>Ciderlands festival – put Hereford on the map and had international engagement</p> <p>The Skatepark – 3rd best in Britain, hundreds of visitors on a weekend, has unique feature that people will travel to experience. Also managed by young people and increasingly well commercialised.</p> <p>Coffee culture in Hightown – creates a friendly noise</p> <p>The foodie scene – from nowhere to go to an embarrassment of riches</p> <p>Young Entrepreneurs Forum – to fed Create Fuel event. Revealed that young businesses have some simple practical asks: contacts, seed funds, business support, promotion and recognition, access to empty centrally located premises</p> <p>Cyber Security Centre/Shell Store Incubator</p> <p>The Green Network</p> <p>Accessibility projects that remove barriers for certain groups to access places and services</p> <p>Team Hereford – cross sector and includes public, business and faith groups. Puts power on the front line and is action oriented</p>
Thinking about inclusive growth who needs most to be included and what sort of growth would deliver the most benefit?	<p>The bottom 2% i.e. 400/500 most disadvantaged families who are trapped and virtually excluded from the employment market even when jobs are available in places like Hightown</p> <p>In work but in poverty – regular food bank users</p> <p>Starter homes for young people – more benefits and opportunities flow when people are properly housed</p> <p>Access to low or rent free workspaces e.g. James Baker project</p> <p>Transport and other infrastructure that can physically facilitate bridging the North Hereford/South Hereford divide</p> <p>Minority communities – Polish, Roma, travellers, Muslim, autism</p>
One thing that you feel could be transformational and additional for Hereford in the next five years?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A golden thread strategy that deliberately engineers inclusive growth into any project selected for funding, with a target of x inclusive growth jobs per project. No one project will “solve” the issue but if every project addresses it, progress will be made especially among the bottom 2%</li> <li>2. Hereford: Market Garden City – a garden close to the city which connect people back to the land and provide fresh fruit and vegetables to around 200 deprived “cropshare” families. Site would also have an education centre and be in itself an attraction. Ideally scalable to other places across the county</li> <li>3. Community Cycle Track – an important addition in an area (Holmer Road) where there are already some successful sport and leisure facilities e.g. the Skatepark – drives health and wellbeing, links with Beryl Bikes</li> <li>4. The Marches Family Network Hub to bring together their services in one place. (Little detail)</li> <li>5. City centre Youth Zone – one stop shop of hub for young people to socialise and get support and advice – ideally in a regenerated building</li> </ol>
Other areas to address/opportunities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Should the council be encouraged to hand over certain contracts which require only moderate levels of skills to local organisations committed to ensuring inclusive growth e.g. cutting the grass? It doesn’t all have to be about digital although we must not underestimate the potential impact of digital over the next 10 years, especially in access to basic services</li> <li>2. Should there be a specific attempt to address cheap transport for young people to take away accessibility barriers– electric hoppa?</li> <li>3. Should the inclusive growth agenda be grafted on to exiting assets and programmes more forcefully</li> </ol>
What could prevent progress in this area?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The structure of some local authority contracts</li> <li>2. Not speaking to the right people</li> <li>3. Assuming we know what communities want or need when we aren’t like them and neither is our social milieu</li> <li>4. Not trying to mix things up and get diverse opinions to arrive at new solutions – challenge our processes, culture and behaviours</li> <li>5. Lack of business acumen by delivery bodies</li> <li>6. Not addressing sustainability</li> <li>7. Not aligned across or with other Towns Fund projects</li> <li>8. Too small or could be funded by other means</li> </ol>

## #STRONGER HEREFORD STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP NOTES

Workshop area	Entrepreneurs
Attendees	<p>Heidi Chamberlain-Jones Helen Bowden Ben Corbet Nic Millington Phil Taylor</p> <p>Frank Myers Christian Dangerfield Edward Kowal Phil Taylor</p>
Moderator	Katrina Michel on behalf of Rose Regeneration
Can you think of something that has happened in Hereford in the past five years that you feel personally has improved the city?	<p>Old Market development – lends a continental feel to the city</p> <p>Covid – will engender a massive behavioural and attitudinal change</p> <p>Food and artisan scene</p> <p>Development of a number of high quality drinks businesses which in turn offer great experiences – tastings, tours etc</p> <p>More exposure to production companies leading to more awareness via TV programmes</p> <p>Development of Wye Valley NHS and the forging of links between health and business</p> <p>Box of Delights</p> <p>Left Bank – although not at the moment</p> <p>A generally more positive attitude towards culture and creativity – especially with the current administration</p> <p>Digital space development – where will it go?</p>
What's wrong with Hereford?	<p>Recurring themes: nothing to do and skills gap</p> <p>Lack of development and imagination around the river – other places e.g. Ross, Worcester and Shrewsbury are doing more</p> <p>Everything far too slow and takes too long</p> <p>Access routes are poor</p> <p>Empty shops – why can't something constructive be done about this – young entrepreneurs need places to bounce ideas e.g. Silicon Valley. Shell store too expensive for young and first time businesses</p> <p>Maybe just a bit too negative (but that is probably true everywhere) but should take more of a just do it even if it isn't perfect stance</p> <p>Not so much is wrong – somethings have really improved</p> <p>The bloody traffic</p> <p>The North/south gap/divide is morally wrong</p> <p>Not a great culture of track record of collaboration</p> <p>Talent leaves – little to keep them.</p>
One thing that you feel could be transformational and additional for Hereford in the next five years?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Skills Foundry both</b> a building and an attitude <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Could be a newbuild or renovation but needs to be central and accessible for young people. Also located to generate footfall for surrounding businesses</li> <li>o A statement about Hereford (and Herefordshire) as a "county of learning" and a signal to employers that a strong talent pool is being created</li> <li>o Addresses skills gap and skills retention</li> <li>o Focus on the skills of the future and reskilling and upskilling all through life. Giving the right advice not out of date advice</li> <li>o Relevant to the local labour market</li> <li>o Image changing for the area</li> <li>o A focal point/one stop shop for all skills and advice, delivered via relevant channels</li> <li>o Delivering skills and life skills</li> <li>o A cool place to train</li> <li>o Potentially on-site accommodation</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>The River Quarter/Destination River</b> – food and drink, night-time economy and possibly some culture. Bring the area alive, upgrade the food offer</li> </ul>
Other areas to address/opportunities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Repurpose the Town Hall</li> <li>2. Move coach drop off so visitors have to experience more of the city</li> <li>3. Small accessibility and transport improvements that address the N/S divide, open the door for more people and other parts of the city</li> <li>4. More support for expansion of food and drink</li> <li>5. Better public realm in side streets so whole of city is attractive – more art, more walkability</li> <li>6. Renovate the Buttermarket for artisan food producers</li> <li>7. Take cars out of the city centre by building edge of town car parks</li> <li>8. Plant many more trees in the city</li> <li>9. Invest in digital signage for information and as art</li> <li>10. Attack the plaza in front of the station – trees, art</li> </ol>
What could prevent progress in this area?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Negativity</li> <li>2. Too much focus on getting it right, not enough on doing it</li> <li>3. Not having a high enough quality threshold</li> <li>4. Not cool enough or not enough attention to creating the right vibe</li> </ol>

