

Kington Economic Investment Plan 2021



July 2021

Kington strives to be a town linked to vibrant rural communities where individuals, businesses, creativity and community thrive, care and work together to create an exceptional quality of life for all. We strive to be a model of a contemporary small town seamlessly touching the past while embracing the future that offers exceptional quality of life at every stage of life respecting each other and the natural environment. Deeply rooted in our history and confident of our future, we cherish each other and our unique natural environment.

Kington Town Economic Investment Plan Statement 2021

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Market Town Investment Plans

This Kington Town Investment Plan is one of five Market Town Investment Plans commissioned by Herefordshire Council. Herefordshire's market towns, including Kington, play a critical role in the county's economy, as focal points for employment; for retail, tourism, leisure and culture; for business investment and growth; for housing; and for access to services. The market towns often provide the key interface between the wider rural areas, access to employment and local services, and connectivity to and from Hereford and other neighbouring areas.

The market town investment plans identify a long term vision for the growth of the towns and a programme of potential projects to enable sustainable economic development to deliver the vision. The market town investment plans will also play a key role in the development a new long term county wide 'big plan'. The big plan will identify how we will address long term economic challenges in creating new opportunities for growth across the county, how we retain/ attract younger generations, creating great places to live, study, work and invest.

The Vision for Kington

Kington strives to be a town linked to vibrant rural communities where individuals, businesses, creativity and community thrive, care and work together to create an exceptional quality of life for all. We strive to be a model of a contemporary small town seamlessly touching the past while embracing the future that offers exceptional quality of life at every stage of life respecting each other and the natural environment. Deeply rooted in our history and confident of our future, we cherish each other and our unique natural environment.

The Main Challenges facing the town

Kington is the smallest market town in the county with a population of 3,277 (2019 Mid-Year Population Estimates ONS). It has 922 residents over the age of 65 years, 28% compared to the England average of 20%. It has 540 under 16 year olds who have limited access to activities and opportunities.

Kington has a weak visitor economy compared to the UK average. It has a smaller stock of jobs per head than the England average with low income levels and a low skills base. The town is more deprived than the England average in terms of employment, income, skills, and health. Kington suffered a loss of 280 jobs (24%) between 2015 and 2018 (1,160 to 880). Kington has a greater proportion of low value properties than the national average.

The Town's Assets and Strengths

Kington is a distinctive town on the Welsh border which has a very strong vernacular and individual character making its built environment unique and engaging for visitors. The key gateway position of the town gives it real potential to operate as a gateway into Wales (and vice versa), as a small little-known settlement it has significant capacity with the right investment to delight and surprise people as a visitor destination exploiting its position as a location on the crossroads of the A49 and A44 with access to Wales and central locations in the Marches. The visitor appeal of the town is further enhanced by its access to both a river and little known but beautiful open spaces.

The town is a key walking node in relation to major routes such as Offa's Dyke and there is real potential to build on this aspect of its location and connections and raise awareness of the walking offer. The proposals to develop AONB status provide the opportunity for the town to benefit from a

new designation. It would both help raise the profile of the centre and potentially be the spur to further interest and investment by local businesses.

Issues in Kington

Issues in Kington	Targets
Weak visitor economy	Kington becomes a more liveable place with a more effective high street repurposed around pedestrians through an innovative shared space facility within the next 5 years.
Weak visitor economy High Population of over 65s Vacant shops	A more sustainable and fully functioning town where young people have the opportunity of employment and a stake in governance and older people are enabled to live full, independent lives for longer.
Improved Food and drink Offer Weak visitor economy	Visitor numbers and tourism spend will rise to regional average within ten years.
Low stock of jobs / Employment Opportunities Income Levels	Employment opportunities in the town will rise to the county average within 5 years and the national average within 15 years
Weak visitor economy	Visitor numbers and tourism spend will rise to regional average within ten years.

Project summary

The MTIP identifies a number of potential projects that will contribute to the delivery of the town’s vision. These include:

Development of employment opportunities:

- New employment site

Improvements to support the visitor economy:

- Promotion of Kington’s role as a significant walking centre with a strong crafts sector
- Kington lighting and banners scheme
- Improved food and drink attraction/offer
- AONB Status
- Wesleyan Chapel

Civic amenities, housing, skills development and projects aimed at young people

- Shop/Building Frontage Scheme
- Kington High Street Regeneration and Kington Market Hall and surrounds
- Kington Police and Fire Station relocation and redevelopment

The MTIP shows how each of these projects contribute to the delivery of Kington’s Vision. It will provide a platform for successful funding bids as suitable funding opportunities become available.

Herefordshire Council will continue to work with Kington Town Council and other local stakeholders to identify new project and funding opportunities, carry out feasibility and foundation work, and support local organisations to apply for funding.

BACKGROUND

This Kington Town Investment Plan is one of five Market Town Investment Plans commissioned by Herefordshire Council. Herefordshire's market towns, including Kington, play a critical role in the county's economy as focal points for: employment; retail, tourism, leisure and culture; business investment and growth; housing; and access to services. The market towns often provide the key interface between the wider rural areas, access to employment and local services, and connectivity to and from Hereford and other neighbouring areas.

The market town investment plans (MTIPs) identify a long term vision for the growth of the towns and a programme of potential projects to enable sustainable economic development to deliver the vision. The MTIPs will also play a key role in the development a new long term county wide 'big plan'. The big plan will identify how we will address long term economic challenges in creating new opportunities for growth across the county and how we retain/ attract younger generations, creating great places to live, study, work and invest.

Community Including the Impact of Covid-19

The damage to the economy and to health from Covid-19 has been felt across Herefordshire. During 2020 and the early part of 2021, the pandemic reached all corners of the county and has had an impact on every community. During 2020, the UK economy contracted by 9.9%. (source: ONS¹). It remains to be seen what the long-term impact of the pandemic will be, but within many sectors we are likely to see a shift to working, learning and engaging in commerce remotely on digital platforms.

The projects proposed in this Plan have been developed through engagement with key stakeholders in Kington and will help the town to attract essential investment as the need to promote recovery opens up new funding opportunities.

Attitudes towards working from home have changed substantially since the start of the COVID pandemic and many workers will continue to work from home long after it has ended.

There could be positive implications for Herefordshire's Market Towns in what is being termed 'hybrid working'. The Centre for Towns recently reported that its research indicates "big potential for places to market themselves as online working destinations" as predictions indicate that the longer people are required to work at home, the greater the adoption of home working will be beyond the current situation.

The best performing towns are ones with a healthy mix of age groups and professions. An increase in home working would have a significant positive impact in rebalancing Herefordshire's market towns demographics and towns should therefore actively promote themselves to attract in and retain a thriving working age population.

Towns will need to work closely with Herefordshire Council to ensure that digital connectivity is adequate to support the needs of home workers. Clearly Herefordshire market towns have a significant 'quality of life' offer, with a good range of local services.

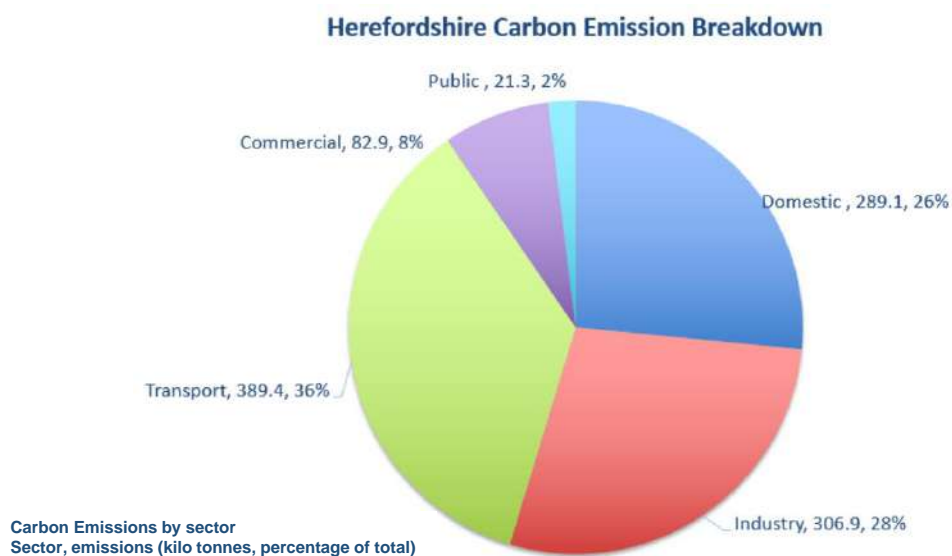
¹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/grossdomesticproductgdp/articles/coronavirusandtheimpactonoutputintheukeconomy/december2020>

Climate and Ecological Emergency

On 8 March 2019 Herefordshire Council declared a Climate Emergency following unanimous support for a climate emergency resolution at full council. This declaration was subsequently updated and strengthened on 11 December 2020 when Herefordshire Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency (CEE) following support for a climate and ecological emergency resolution at full council.

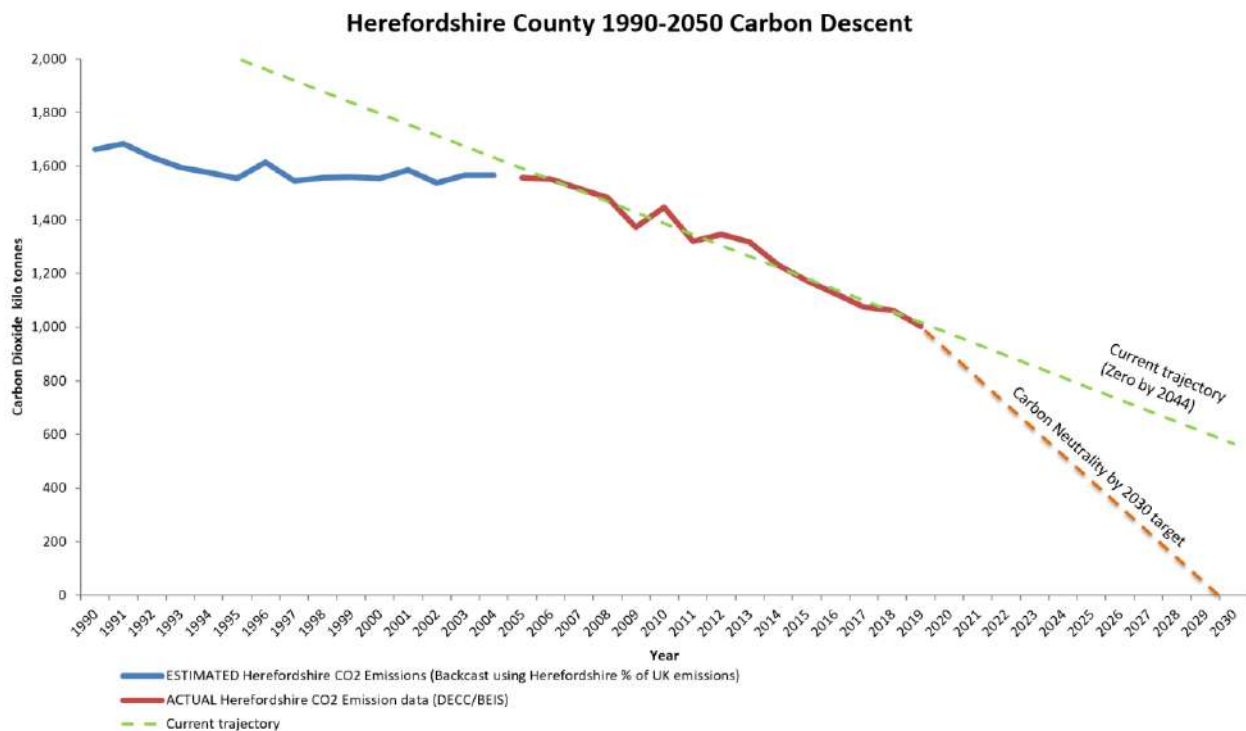
Further to these declarations the council approved the ambitious new target to become zero carbon and nature rich by 2030.

The below chart illustrates Herefordshire's current carbon emission split and the areas of focus for the Kington MTIP to support the Herefordshire's journey to net zero.



In order to achieve this target, as illustrated below, a new Herefordshire Climate & Nature Partnership and Board have been established to catalyse and coordinate new action across the County. These actions have been grouped into a series of six different action plans including: Housing & Buildings; Transport; Energy; Farming & Land Use; Waste and Food.

The details of the Herefordshire Climate & Nature Partnership, including the six themed action plans are set out: <https://zerocarbon.herefordshire.gov.uk/>



As a key strategic plan the Kington MTIP is strongly committed to delivering Herefordshire’s net zero and nature rich commitment and will work in partnership with its communities, businesses and the Herefordshire Climate & Nature Board to achieve this through the development and delivery of the plan.

Economy

Herefordshire faces a number of long term economic challenges such as the lowest level of productivity of any county in England², a low wage economy (19% below the national average³), a deficit of higher level skills (41.4% of the population has NVQ level 4 national average of 43.1%⁴), an aging population (25% over 65 compared to a 18% nationally), and a significant shortage of labour (2.9% claiming unemployment benefits⁵).

However, the county has a significant number of opportunities, including local strengths in food and drink, tourism, and agriculture, specialisms in fast growing global markets like cyber security, an outstanding quality of life, and new university (New Model Institute in Technology and Engineering). The county is also very well placed to benefit from a changing post Covid lifestyle trend, as people now look to increasingly work remotely away from populated cities to locations offering a better quality of life.

The market towns have a crucial role to play in addressing the long term economic challenges, and realising the county’s many opportunities. They are key local centres for housing, culture, access to public services, tourism, with strong local communities and identities. Establishing great vibrant places to live and meaningful employment opportunities will be key to rebalancing the aging

² [ONS Regional Differences in Productivity July 2021](#)

³ [Understanding Herefordshire ONS data 2019](#)

⁴ [ONS Population Survey 2020](#)

⁵ [ONS claimant count October 2021](#)

population by retaining/ attracting younger generations to study, live and work in the county for generations to come.

Kington is particularly well placed to realise some of these opportunities, significantly contributing the future economic success of the county as a whole. A highly attractive and popular market town, offering a great place to live, visit and work.

As people's approach to work and quality of life requirements change, Kington is well placed to benefit from an increasing transition to a digital economy, with people working from home or flexible workspaces in attractive, less densely populated locations away from city centres.

The Plan identifies a vision for growth and a programme of investment projects required to deliver the vision and support the economic development of Kington over the next fifteen years. Funding from many different sources will be needed to achieve them. The Plan identifies the timetable for delivery, lead body and potential sources of investment for each of the projects.

CONTEXT

Kington is the smallest of Herefordshire's market towns with a population of just over 3,000. Kington town is an important service centre for its rural hinterland. The Kington economy has suffered along with the fortunes of the farming industry in the area. Its rural location and lack of good transport connections means a shortage local employment opportunity, with low pay rates and many part-time occupations in small businesses including farming and the retail and service sectors.

There is a small tourist industry, though concentrated in the summer months, but Kington maintains the air of an unspoilt town on the borders. There is a traditional livestock market, situated off Duke Street, on a Thursday, where farmers bring their stock to market. There is currently a weekly food and crafts market every Friday and also a W.I. market in Bridge Street on Friday morning where home cooked goods are sold. The High Street has a number of resilient and interesting independent shops.

The Town is bypassed by the A44 which was formerly a trunk road and still provides an important cross regional east/west route between England and Wales for long distance freight, commercial and tourist traffic. It is connected to Hereford by the A4111/A438 or alternatively the A480 through Lyonshall and Credenhill.

The town is identified as one of the five market towns in the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy to have a good provision of independent retailers. Kington is a primary location for food shopping for residents, but its historic environment and niche retail offer also makes it an attractive destination for visitors.

Kington has a different employment profile compared to other parts of Herefordshire – locally, there are more self-employed people and more people working in agriculture, construction, transport, accommodation and skilled trades. While a proportion work in Kington itself, many travel to other parts of Herefordshire, Powys and further afield for work.

It is widely accepted that improving the town centre and making it an attractive destination for both residents and visitors will benefit the local economy and promote future growth within the town.

For the purpose of this Plan the town boundaries are those based on the Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA's) for Kington we have used to inform the data analysis based on the 2019 Index of deprivation. The work has also been cognisant of the boundaries set out in the Kington Neighbourhood Plan and Kington Town.

THE MAIN CHALLENGES FACING THE TOWN

Rose Regeneration has undertaken a full review of all extant documents produced in the last five years relating to Kington's economic and community development (see Appendix 1). This contextual analysis has informed the selection and prioritisation of investment proposals in the Town Investment Plan.

The main challenges facing Kington:

- Weak visitor economy vs UK average;
- Low Income levels;
- Low Skills Base;
- Only less deprived than the England average in terms of Crime and Barriers to Services;
- Smallest of the market towns. Population just over 3,000 with a higher proportion of over 65s than the national average;
- Significantly smaller stock of jobs per head than the national average;
- Loss of 250 jobs 2015 -18. Key sectors: agriculture, manufacturing, construction, retail, real estate, health;
- Higher proportion of low value properties than the national average.
- Shortage of activities and opportunities for young people

- The Barriers to Housing and Services Domain measures the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services. The indicators fall into two sub-domains: 'geographical barriers', which relate to the physical proximity of local services, and 'wider barriers' which includes issues relating to access to housing such as affordability.

THE VISION FOR KINGTON

Kington strives to be a town linked to vibrant rural communities where individuals, businesses, creativity and community thrive, care and work together to create an exceptional quality of life for all. We strive to be a model of a contemporary small town seamlessly touching the past while embracing the future that offers exceptional quality of life at every stage of life respecting each other and the natural environment. Deeply rooted in our history and confident of our future, we cherish each other and our unique natural environment.

Strategic Objectives

This vision is the basis of an integrated and forward-looking development strategy which links business, industry and tourism with community, rural life and the countryside to a sustainable and green future.

Our key strategic objectives include making Kington a place that:

Celebrates its environment and welcomes visitors by:

- providing a thriving and diverse tourism economy rooted in its unique heritage and nationally-renowned walking
- providing a distinctive and high quality built and natural environment that is easy to explore
- showcasing a rich and accessible local heritage that can be shared by residents and visitors
- demonstrating the highest standard of design – respecting the scale, style and setting of the townscape/landscape.
- demonstrating that it is actively addressing climate and ecological issues to support the present and improve the future

Performs a role as an attractive and vibrant local service and employment centre:

- which provides a range of services to support the residents of the town and surrounding villages
- which promotes Kington and its hinterland as a location which encourages small businesses, supports farming
- which encourages and enhance the use of all community facilities.
- which provides an alternative and exciting independent retail and food and drink offer
- which provides a pedestrian and cycle friendly High Street and town centre shopping and visitor environment
- which provides appropriate sites and premises for local businesses to thrive

THE TOWN'S ASSETS AND STRENGTHS

We have set out below the key assets and strengths of the town

- Heritage Buildings – Kington is a distinctive town on the Welsh border which has a very strong vernacular and individual character making its built environment unique and engaging for visitors
- Visitor economy potential – the key gateway position of the town gives it real potential to operate as a gateway into Wales (and vice versa), as a small little-known settlement it has significant capacity with the right investment to delight and surprise people as a visitor destination exploiting its position as a location on crossroads of A49 and A44 with access to Wales and central locations in the Marches. The visitor appeal of the town is further enhanced by its access to both a river and little known but beautiful open spaces.
- A Walking Hub – the borderlands nature of the town makes it a key walking node in relation to major routes such as Offa's Dyke and there is real potential to build on this aspect of its location and physical connections and raise awareness of the walking offer.
- Natural Environment/ Rural Hinterland – the proposals to develop AONB status provide the opportunity for the town to benefit from a new designation. It would both help raise the profile of the centre and potentially be the spur to further interest and investment by local businesses.
- Well performing schools – in terms of residential desirability the remote and high-quality environment along with its well performing schools make Kington an attractive locale for new residents seeking the opportunity to live in a rural milieu. This is an asset for local employers and is attractive to those looking to move out of Cities to work from home and can support more local spend.

SPATIAL CONTEXT

The Herefordshire Core Strategy contains a chapter on place-shaping. This contains a vision for Kington focused upon 'the creation of new homes, new employment opportunities, delivery of and access to services, including affordable housing, reducing the need to travel to other centres, and utilising the natural and historic environment as economic assets ... Kington's role in providing facilities and services to its hinterland should be maintained and, where possible, enhanced. However, as the smallest of the market towns and with significant environmental and locational constraints, the challenges that the town faces are such that it will need to be flexible in terms of the way it both encourages and accommodates development'. A review of the Core Strategy has now been commenced which will update the evidence base particularly in relation to biodiversity and green infrastructure. This links to the Herefordshire Green Infrastructure Study of 2010.

The Core Strategy takes a spatial approach in signalling how Kington can support rural regeneration within the town itself and also for the area it serves. While Kington is expected to accommodate 200 new homes during the plan period [a mix of market and affordable sizes and types], no strategic housing locations are proposed for Kington, with new housing accommodated on small scale sites that support the business, community and visitor facilities. For example, by making available small scale employment sites, maintaining and enhancing the retail, leisure or office offer of the town, make provision for infrastructure and amenity space and enhance the historic and heritage assets (e.g. important buildings, scenic views, landscape features). In aligning with the Core Strategy, the Kington Neighbourhood Plan refers to:

Proposals which make better use of land at Hatton Gardens Industrial Estate and Arrow Court Industrial Estate as well as supporting small-scale new build or workshops or the conversion of buildings to business use (e.g. live-work units). Intensive husbandry enterprises will only be supported where any adverse impacts (e.g. environment, traffic) can be mitigated.

Kington has a conservation area, designated in 1969, which recognises the town's architectural and historical significance dating back to the 12th century and leading to a small, historic market town with a tight urban grain with burgage boundary walls. Kington includes a Market Hall and former old Wesleyan Chapel, both Grade II listed buildings. The Conservation Area is currently on the national Heritage at Risk Register and key heritage features that should be protected and taken forward within future schemes form part of the evidence base for the Plan. The Plan encourages retail, leisure, office, commercial, cultural and tourism developments.

Kington is described as 'a centre for walkers' and has walkers are welcome status. The Town is situated close to the Offa's Dyke Path, The Mortimer Trail, The Arrow Valley Trail, The Herefordshire Trail and The Wyche Way, all long-distance footpaths. Kington hosts an annual festival titled 'Kington Walks'. The Plan seeks to promote and develop this niche market and enhance facilities that can support this type of visitor (e.g. local food outlets). Kington also has a food, arts and crafts market and a local food market. The Kington Livestock Market holds regular sheep and cattle sales. The Plan focuses on extending the variety, choice and quality of shops and services so as to improve the overall attractiveness of the town centre.

The spatial impact of the proposed MTIP priority projects will, when aligned with Core Strategy and Neighbourhood Plan, make Kington a more attractive place to live, work, invest and visit:

- The refurbishment and repurposing of the Market Hall would reclaim one of the most attractive and important spaces in Kington, underpinning footfall and creating a visible anchor for the town's visitor economy;
- The proposed investment in the High Street will support improved footfall and encourage further investment in the town;
- The investment in the town's footpath network will provide an improved product to support the promotion of the town as a walking hub.
- AONB status would protect the natural environment surrounding the town and enhance the activity-based tourism offer.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The Plan has been developed through a dialogue with as many stakeholders in Kington's future as possible, in order to establish a solid evidence base, of demand and need. Engagement with Kington Town Council, the Local Herefordshire Council Member, local business community, voluntary sector and other key local stakeholders has played a major role in the development of this Plan.

The process of developing the Plan commenced with a town walk and follow-up meeting involving the Herefordshire Council Cabinet Member, the local Herefordshire Councillors, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Kington, Kington Town Councillors and local businesses. Kington Town Council, which played a key role in helping to identify all the key stakeholders in the Town. This was followed up by some 50 individual contacts by email, telephone and video call as well as engagement with the public and voluntary organisations.

The next significant engagement event was a town Zoom meeting to which all those identified were invited; this meeting was chaired by the Mayor and included twenty local stakeholders. The meeting identified a number of themes for the Town Investment Plan to consider and develop. A number of thematic meetings with key stakeholders were then held to consider the key themes in more detail and identify the vision, strategic objectives and project ideas for inclusion in the Plan. In addition to these themed meetings a young people's focus group was held to seek the views of young people in the town.

Following the completion of these meetings, there has been a range of consultations and discussions with potential delivery and funding partners. This has included engagement with private landowners, a number of Herefordshire Council officers, the Town Clerk, Kington Town Councillors, and others.

Throughout the process, there has been regular dialogue with representatives of Herefordshire Council.

THEORY OF CHANGE

A Theory of Change linked to the projects proposed arising from the strategy is set out below:

Project	Intervention Framework	Issues in Kington	Action	Output	Outcomes	Impact	Transformation Target
Kington High Street Regeneration	Tourism/Visitors Town/Civic amenities	Weak visitor economy High Population of over 65s Vacant shops	Invest in public realm and in active travel measures and balanced car parking provision to support improved footfall at both ends of the Town	Refurbished public realm New car parking spaces provided at bottom end of the Town	Improved safety for pedestrians and cyclists Increased footfall in the town centre	Increased tourism spend in the local economy Increased resident spend in the local economy More vibrant High street Better functioning town centre	Kington becomes a more liveable place with a more effective high street repurposed around pedestrians through an innovative shared space facility within the next 5 years
Police and Fire Station relocation and redevelopment	Town/Civic Amenities	Availability of Affordable housing	Bring forward more affordable housing	Improved and more efficient public services rationalising public estate to open up opportunities for investment new homes provided close to town centre	People of all backgrounds and means supported in living in Kington	A more sustainable and vibrant town	A more sustainable and fully functioning town where young people have the opportunity of employment and a stake in governance and older people are enabled to live full, independent lives for longer
Tourism offer/Walking and Craft Hub	Tourism/Visitors Town/Civic Amenities	Weak visitor economy	Develop and promote Walking to increase awareness of the walking and Craft	Increase in tourism footfall	More people enjoy the tourism offer of Kington, more	Increased tourism potential in Kington realised	Visitor numbers and tourism spend will rise to regional average within ten years.

Project	Intervention Framework	Issues in Kington	Action	Output	Outcomes	Impact	Transformation Target
			related tourism offer		local jobs sustained		
Shop/building frontage grant scheme	Tourism/Visitors Town /Civic Amenities	Weak visitor economy	Investment in key buildings in conservation area	Improved Built environment in the Town	More footfall and private investment	More demand to visit and invest in the town	Visitor footfall increases and the town centre has a repurposed high street within the next 5 years
Kington Market Hall and surrounds	Tourism/Visitors Town/Civic amenities	Weak visitor economy	Invest in key public building to encourage a wide range of activities to encourage more visitors and footfall in the Town	An attractive multi-purpose public space for the Town Focal space/point for key events	More people enjoy the tourism offer of Kington; more local jobs sustained	Improved tourism offer and/or town amenities	Kington becomes a more liveable place with a more effective high street repurposed around pedestrians through an innovative shared space facility within the next 5 years
Improved Food and drink Offer	Tourism/visitors	Improved Food and drink Offer	Support the development of more local food and drink related business and identify the opportunities for physical premises investment in this context	More local sourcing and selling of food	Increased dynamism of local food and drink sector	More dynamic local economy	Visitor numbers and tourism spend will rise to regional average within ten years.

Project	Intervention Framework	Issues in Kington	Action	Output	Outcomes	Impact	Transformation Target
Hatton Gardens Extension/new Employment Site	Business/Economy	Low stock of jobs/ Employment Opportunities Income Levels	Acquire and encourage the development of new employment land and/or business space	new employment land new employment space new jobs	Long term supply of employment land and growth secured and managed	Improved job opportunities and income levels	Employment opportunities in the town will rise to the county average within 5 years and the national average within 15 years
AONB Status	Tourism/Visitors	Weak visitor economy	Work actively to explore and support the achievement of AONB status	Achievement of new landscape designation	Enhanced tourism brand and offer for Kington	More dynamic and employment generating tourism offer	Visitor numbers and tourism spend will rise to regional average within ten years.
Wesleyan Chapel	Business/Economy	Run-down buildings	Investment in key buildings	Creation of a new residential or commercial space	Enhanced liveability and more commercial space in Kington	More attractive and vibrant town centre	Visitor footfall increases and the town centre has a repurposed high street within the next 5 years
Kington lighting and banners scheme	Town/Civic Amenities Tourism/Visitors	Weak visitor economy	Support the implementation of the lighting and banners scheme	Improved fittings for lighting and other decorations	More people enjoy the tourism offer of Kington, more local jobs sustained	Improved tourism offer and/or town amenities	Visitor numbers and tourism spend will rise to regional average within ten years.

Project	Intervention Framework	Issues in Kington	Action	Output	Outcomes	Impact	Transformation Target
Accessibility , improved Bus and Car parking offer	Town/Civic Amenities	Weak visitor economy High Population of over 65s Vacant shops	Holistic investment in the civic, employment and visitor infrastructure make Kington a more balanced place in terms of its demography	Refurbished public realm New car parking spaces provided at bottom end of the Town	Improved safety for pedestrians and cyclists Increased footfall in the town centre	Increased tourism spend in the local economy Increased resident spend in the local economy More vibrant High street Better functioning town centre	A more sustainable and fully functioning town where young people have the opportunity of employment and a stake in governance and older people are enabled to live full, independent lives for longer

SUGGESTED PROJECTS

The following projects and ‘investment themes’ emerged through the stakeholder engagement process. These projects and themes were validated through a wider stakeholder meeting in late December 2020 and subsequent group and one to one discussions in the first quarter of 2021.

The tables below provides a short form summary by way of an overview of projects and themes, those projects that could be considered appropriate for Herefordshire Employment Land and Incubation Space capital programme funding (below) and individual descriptions of those projects that are considered strategically significant, with the potential to attract alternative funding outside of the council. It is supported by a theory of change table, showing our aspirations for impact.

The package of projects identified in this Town Investment Plan will need to access a range of funding sources in order to be delivered.

Herefordshire Council has earmarked some £20 million for Employment Land and Incubation Space capital programme as an investment pot for capital projects in the county’s five market towns.

This funding can be used by the council to invest in projects which can demonstrate an appropriate business case which show the ability of the projects to generate capital receipts or income which can be used to payback the initial investment over time. Some of the projects in the Plan may secure funding through this route subject to detailed business cases being developed and considered by the council.

The majority of the projects identified will need to explore alternative funding options which could include private investment including , Heritage Lottery, charitable trusts, other public sector funding such as the capital programmes of the West Mercia Police Service, the Hereford and Worcester Fire service, the Herefordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, the Marches LEP, Homes England etc. In addition to these sources of funding there are a range of Government funding opportunities already in place and more will be announced going forward. Some of the projects in the Plan will require revenue funding as well as capital investment. There may be opportunities to package projects together to bid for funding as well as to bid for funds in phases on the larger projects. Different funders will requires different information and governance arrangements which will need to be considered on a bid by bid basis. The evidence base and supporting information produced to support this Plan will be a useful information and policy context to help inform bids for funding.

In May 2021 the Town Council and wider stakeholders met to consider the relative priority to allocate to each project. A scoring matrix based on the good practice methodology identified by the Town Hub which supports the implementation of the Town Fund was used to assess the relative merit of each project. Within the matrix there are 8 themes chosen, identified and validated through local stakeholder consultation.

For Kington the key criteria agreed with local stakeholders were: contribution to net zero; attraction of more visitors/inward investment; increased GVA (a measure of the productivity of businesses); increased business diversity (an increase to the range and variety of businesses operating locally); higher skills; better population balance (supporting a wide demographic spread of age groups); greater equity (supporting fairer access to all determinants of quality of life) and equality agenda (eliminating any form of discrimination). Each project was scored by the group on a scale of 1-5 where one is lowest to provide a group composite score. These scores then used to rank the project as set out in the summary table below. A summary of the process is set out at Appendix 2

Summary Table

Project	Summary	Potential Funding Source
1. Shop/Building Frontage Scheme	A public sector grant scheme is proposed to encourage investment in the frontages of shops and other town centre buildings to make the town a place to visit and spend time in. Elsewhere in the country grant schemes have been successfully used to encourage property owners to invest in town centre properties. Provisional budget - £75,000	Government Grants/Private Sector/ Historic England
2. Kington High Street Regeneration	The main shopping street in Kington is narrow making it difficult to visit, shop and spend time in the town centre. The proposal is that the High Street should be refurbished to make it more pedestrian friendly whilst maintaining vehicle access throughout the day. Provisional budget - £2 million	Future capital grant programmes such as Levelling Up

Summary Table

Project	Summary	Potential Funding Source
=3. Tourism Offer	<p>Kington's role as a significant walking Centre with a strong crafts sector should be promoted and developed. Investment is proposed in the local footpath network as well as in interpretation material, signage with a focus on walking and possibly crafts and the development of walking App for use on smart phones.</p> <p>Provisional budget - £50,000</p>	<p>Herefordshire Destination BID Private Sector Herefordshire LCWIP – Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan /</p>
=3. Kington Market Hall and surrounds	<p>The proposal is to renovate/refurbish Kington Market Hall and surrounding area and to utilise the market hall as a focus for crafts and associated activities. There is also an opportunity to add more interpretative material about the town to promote its key attractions including the walking routes.</p> <p>Provisional budget - £250,000</p>	<p>Herefordshire Council potential asset transfer to Kington Town Council Plus, range of external grants Private sector</p>
=3/new employment site	<p>There is the opportunity to explore a small extension to Hatton Gardens or a new site along the Bypass A range of small-scale employment uses and start up units could be accommodated on land near or adjacent to the existing Estate.</p> <p>Provisional budget - tbc</p>	<p>Private sector Marches LEP, Government Grant Herefordshire Council,</p>
6. Kington lighting and banners scheme	<p>This project aims to light up key elements of the Town throughout the year and at the same time make a significant improvement to the Christmas lights. It will ensure key buildings and streets are lit and or decorated with banners etc to support key events and activities including walking and crafts.</p> <p>Provisional budget -£50,000</p>	<p>Kington Town Council</p>
=7. Improved food and drink attraction/offer	<p>Kington and the surrounding villages home to a number of food and drink manufacturing businesses which would support the development of the town's visitor economy. A small-scale food and drink manufacturer such as a brewery/distillery and associated visitor facility could attract significant additional footfall to the Town. There are also a number of old and rundown pubs/former pubs in the town which would benefit from refurbishment and could be used to further improve the existing food and drink offer. Provisional budget - £1 million</p>	<p>Private sector/ Government Grant</p>

Summary Table

Project	Summary	Potential Funding Source
=7. AONB Status	The proposal is to include Kington and surrounding area in England and Wales in the designation of a new AONB. Such a designation will significantly enhance the profile of Kington as a walking town. Provisional budget - £200,000	Central Government Natural England CPRE
9. Wesleyan Chapel	This iconic listed building is in a key location near to the hub of the town centre. The building is in disrepair and needs significant investment it has potential for a range of uses. It has just changed ownership and the new owners should be supported in reviewing the future of the building. Provisional budget- £2 million	Private Sector
10. Kington Police and Fire Station relocation and redevelopment	There is an opportunity to relocate the Police and Fire Stations from their current location in Churchill Road to provide new modern facilities with lower maintenance costs, better access and potentially faster response times. This could also allow the existing sites to be redeveloped for housing. Provisional budget - £2 million	One Public Estate, Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service West Mercia Constabulary

The project below has been adjusted to reflect the views of the group so that it addresses wider access issues and electric charging points for cars as well as car parking

Accessibility, improved Bus/Car parking offer	A full review of the location, quantity and demand for car parking and bus services in the town is required to consider improved public transport links and car parking to serve the southern end of the Town. The current Livestock Market site provides an opportunity to improve car parking in the Town.	Herefordshire Council
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Suggested Projects

Investment Proposal Form					
Project Name: Kington High Street Regeneration					
<i>Intervention Framework</i>	<i>Economy and business</i>	<i>Tourism & the Visitor Economy</i>	<i>Town & Civic amenities</i>		
<p><i>Description:</i> Over the years several ways of improving the High Street have been considered but there is only one which allows all the constrains to be met and that is combine the space with pedestrians ensuring that it is predominately pedestrian and the vehicles are secondary.</p> <p>The road and pavements of Kington High Street are a public asset owned by Herefordshire Council. Herefordshire Council will therefore need to agree, design and implement any regeneration proposals for the Street. To inform a possible design for the regeneration scheme, it is recommended that Herefordshire Council commission a Transport study for Kington in line with similar studies completed in each of the other market towns. Such a study will be able to consider the nature of the scheme in the context of wider transport needs and can be used to inform a bid to the Council's Highways capital programme as well as other potential funding schemes</p>			<i>Indicative Cost</i>	<i>Timescale</i>	<i>Outputs</i>
			£2 million	3 years	A new public realm and high street offer for Kington
<i>Demand Analysis</i>	Chamber of Trade and stakeholder feedback				
<i>Potential funding sources</i>	Public sector grants/ investment				
<i>Exit (Sustainability) Strategy</i>	The ongoing maintenance responsibilities will stay with the current property owners.				

Project	Delivery Model	Rationale
<p>The works could cost in the order of £2million.</p>	<p>Whilst not a perfect fit with the mechanics of the capital budget this opportunity does provide scope for engagement with a number of commercial owners of properties in relation to joint venture work and capital investments (below the state aid threshold) in the fabric of key premises. There is also scope to provide enhanced and charged for public and market space.</p> <p>Next Steps Council to consider preparing a transport plan for Kington and commission feasibility work to inform its future Highways Capital Programme</p>	<p>As a consequence of current market failure it is unlikely that normal development equations would lead to this level of key high street investment. This is particularly true in view of the need to think about long term re-visioning of the High Street. Many of the approaches proposed to redeveloping commercial space, which supports commercial development do not fit traditional investment models. A local authority is equipped to borrow at lower commercial rates and take a very long view in the way it approaches regeneration, having regard to social value alongside commercial returns</p>

Investment Proposal Form				
Project Name: Kington Shop/ building frontage grant scheme				
Intervention Framework	Economy and business	Tourism & the Visitor Economy	Town & Civic amenities	
<p>Description: Investment in the public realm needs to be complemented by investment in the frontages of shops and other town centre buildings to make the town a place to visit and spend time in. A grant scheme is required to encourage property owners to invest in town centre properties. It is suggested that any grant from the scheme would need to be 50% matched by the private property owners making the application.</p> <p>It is recommended that grants should be dependent on the property condition and private sector match would need to be between £1000 and £5000 per property.</p>		Cost	Timescale	Outputs
Demand Analysis	Chamber of Trade and stakeholder feedback – cost based on consultation with Leominster Heritage Action Zone for comparison	£75,000	1 year - A quick win opportunity to support post-covid recovery	At least 30 properties improved
Potential funding sources	Private Sector, Government Grants, Heritage Lottery, ,			
Exit (Sustainability) Strategy	The ongoing maintenance responsibilities will stay with the current property owners.			

Investment Proposal Form

Project Name: Kington Hatton Gardens Extension/new employment site

Intervention Framework	Economy and business	Tourism & the Visitor Economy	Town & Civic amenities		
<p>Description: The adopted Herefordshire Core Strategy confirms that the Hatton Gardens industrial estate will continue to serve the employment needs of Kington. Whilst not the only employment site in the town it is the best located in a strategic position off the A44.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to bring forward land near to the existing Hatton Gardens Industrial Estate for small-scale B1 and B8 uses or along the Kington Bypass. Herefordshire Council could seek to acquire a site to ensure an improved supply of employment land and premises to serve the town.</p> <p>Without an intervention the current owners of the land are unlikely bring forward any development and future employment opportunities in the town will be limited.</p>			Indicative Cost	Timescale	Outputs
			Demand Analysis	Evidence base for revised Core Strategy/ Future proposed draft Neighbourhood Plan	
Potential funding sources	Herefordshire Council Employment Land and Incubation Space capital budget, (refunded through land sales and income), Marches LEP, Central Government, Private sector,				
Exit (Sustainability) Strategy	Sell developed sites to private sector or retain as an income stream.				

Investment Proposal Form

Project Name: Food and drink offer

Intervention Framework	Economy and business	Tourism & the Visitor Economy	Town & Civic amenities					
<p><i>Description:</i> Kington and its environs are home to a number of food and drink manufacturing businesses which could potentially further support the development of the town's visitor economy. A town centre distillery and or brewery with an associated visitor centre such as the Ludlow Brewery in Shropshire could generate significant visitor numbers.</p> <p>It is recommended that Herefordshire Council and Kington Town Council may work with local businesses and other interested parties to find a suitable site/building which could further develop existing operations and support a new visitor attraction and potentially other associated activities. There are also a number of old and rundown pubs/former pubs in the town which would benefit from refurbishment and could be used to further improve the existing food and drink offer as well as arrange community events and activities such as film nights and could include community owned and run models.</p>			Cost	Timescale	Outputs			
			<p>Up to £1million to be borne by private sector / charitable trusts</p>	<p>Within 5 years</p>	<p>Visitor numbers and spend Jobs</p>			
						<i>Demand Analysis</i>	Based on business planning of individual businesses	
						Potential funding sources	Private Sector, Heritage Lottery, adhoc grants and Charitable Trusts depending on the governance model.	
						Exit (Sustainability) Strategy	None required to be managed by private or other independent entities	

Investment Proposal Form					
Project Name: Kington Police and Fire Station relocation and redevelopment					
Intervention Framework	Economy and business	Tourism & the Visitor Economy	Town & Civic amenities		
Description There is an opportunity to relocate the Police and Fire Stations from their current location in Churchill Road This will also allow the existing site to be redeveloped as a mixed retail/housing scheme. It should also improve operational efficiency, make revenue savings and deliver an improved service to the public. Herefordshire Council could acquire the existing sites for redevelopment to deliver new homes for the Town. Alternatively, the sites could be sold to a private developer.			Cost	Timescale	Outputs
Demand Analysis	A feasibility study has recently been completed by consultants Jacobs - for land acquisition and development		Estimated £2million	5 years	New joint Police and Fire station New homes
Potential funding sources	Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, West Mercia Police One Public Estate,				
Exit (Sustainability) Strategy	New facility to be managed jointly by Police and Fire Service				

Investment Proposal Form

Project Name: Accessibility: Improved Bus / Car Parking Offer linked to Kington High Street Regeneration												
Intervention Framework	Economy and business	Tourism & the Visitor Economy	Town & Civic amenities									
<p>Description: In order to maintain its role as a service and employment centre in north Herefordshire, Kington has to provide sufficient public transport links and car parking in the right locations and with an affordable and attractive charging regime to attract both visitors and local residents from surrounding villages and towns.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to supplement the Tourism offer and could include a community bus for walkers, as well as improved links to Hay and Hereford.</p> <p>Whilst Kington is well provided with readily available car parking to serve the top end of the High Street there is a strong view from local stakeholders that car parking needs to be improved to support footfall from the lower end of the High Street.</p> <p>There is an opportunity to address this issue by providing more low cost long term car parking on the McCartney's Livestock market site. The introduction of charging points for electric cars will also be important to support carbon reduction and reduce emissions in the town.</p>			<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 33%;">Cost</th> <th style="width: 33%;">Timescale</th> <th style="width: 33%;">Outputs</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">£50,000 Depending on nature of charging and provision (signage)</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">One to five years</td> <td style="padding: 5px;">New car parking spaces provided</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="padding: 5px;">Some ongoing subsidy will be required for new bus routes or services</td> <td></td> <td style="padding: 5px;">New bus routes/more frequent services</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Cost	Timescale	Outputs	£50,000 Depending on nature of charging and provision (signage)	One to five years	New car parking spaces provided	Some ongoing subsidy will be required for new bus routes or services		New bus routes/more frequent services
Cost	Timescale	Outputs										
£50,000 Depending on nature of charging and provision (signage)	One to five years	New car parking spaces provided										
Some ongoing subsidy will be required for new bus routes or services		New bus routes/more frequent services										
Demand Analysis	Proposed Kington Transport Study, Chamber of Trade											
Potential funding sources	External bids including Levelling Up Fund											

Investment Proposal Form

Project Name: Herefordshire Marches AONB				
Intervention Framework	Economy and business	Tourism & the Visitor Economy	Town & Civic amenities	
<p>Description: Natural England has already registered a proposal for an AONB to include Kington and the surrounding area. They are currently will reviewing and prioritising proposals received for new and extended National Parks and AONBs, and new landscape designation approaches. They aim to identify an initial programme of designation priorities which they can begin in 2021/22, the scope of which will be subject to available resources. They have confirmed that they will update proponents, partners and stakeholders on our proposed programme as soon as possible this year.</p> <p>Wider support from key local stakeholders could assist this proposal in coming to fruition.</p>		Cost	Timescale	Outputs
Demand Analysis	Report and proposal developed by CPRE	Approx. £200,000 per annum based on discussions with proposer – revenue projects fund	Up to 5years to establish	Increased visitor numbers Enhanced natural and built environment
Potential funding sources	Natural England, Central Government,			
Exit (Sustainability) Strategy	New dedicated entity established to take forward			

Investment Proposal Form

Project Name: Visitor Economy- Walking Hub

Intervention Framework	Economy and business	Tourism & the Visitor Economy	Town & Civic amenities		
<p>Description Herefordshire’s visitor economy has suffered from a lack of investment and marketing for many years and Kington has been no exception. The new town vision identifies the development of tourism as a key strategic objective.</p> <p>The potential launch of the Herefordshire BID in January 2022 should theoretically address the marketing issue and the repurposing of the town centre would significantly enhance the town’s appeal as a visitor attraction. Kington could also benefit from a county-wide strategy to integrate festivals and events while the regeneration of the High Street would directly address the aspiration to position the town as a gateway for walking and cycling holidays and other rural activities. The main opportunity for the Town is develop itself as a walking centre.</p> <p>Investment is needed in interpretive and promotional material such as a local walking App, signage etc. Investment is also required in the local footpath network.</p>			Cost	Timescale	Outputs
			£50,000 (to ensure accessibility for all)	One year onwards	Increased visitor numbers and tourism spend
Demand Analysis	Significant and well-tested demand for strategic support for Kington’s visitor economy				
Potential funding sources	Central government grant funding. Marches LEP, Herefordshire Destination BID				
Exit (Sustainability) Strategy	One off initial investment will require some ongoing maintenance				

Investment Proposal Form

Project Name: Kington Market Hall

Intervention Framework	Economy and business	Tourism & the Visitor Economy	Town & Civic amenities		
<p>Description: Kington Market Hall is the most prominent public building in the town serving as the town's market hall and as a key hub/ focus for the town centre. The proposal is to renovate and refurbish the market hall, Place de Marines and associated buildings including toilets. The core building is a Victorian red brick market hall dating back to 1885.</p> <p>A refurbished building could provide a real focal point for the town centre and could be used to hold a wider range of regular markets as well as other events and activities including craft fairs, events and festivals. The primary focus should be more regular and wide ranging markets etc. There is also an opportunity to include interpretive material about the Town in the form of a large plan in the Places de Marine.</p> <p>Herefordshire Council could consider a Community Asset Transfer of the building to encourage local use and engagement with what is a currently underutilised asset.</p>			Cost	Timescale	Outputs
			£250,000	Up to 5 years	More visitors and local spend
			Demand Analysis	Work being undertaken by Town council to confirm demand	
			Potential funding sources	Range of external grants and contributions.	
			Exit (Sustainability) Strategy	To pass ownership to Town Council or other local entity	

Project Name: Kington Wesleyan Chapel				
Intervention Framework	Economy and business	Tourism & the Visitor Economy	Town & Civic amenities	
<p>Description: The former Wesleyan Chapel in Harp Yard is a square, stone building with a hipped corrugated iron roof. The building consists of two storeys and a cellar and associated land. It is thought that Harp Yard was the site at which John Wesley, the great Methodist leader, preached when he visited Kington in August 1746. In 1801. The building and associated land are located in a central position just off the top end of the High Street.</p> <p>The building has been derelict for a number of years and has been in a number of different ownerships but no viable scheme has yet come forward. The building and associated site have the potential to be converted into a number of commercial, office, residential or other uses.</p>		Cost	Timescale	Outputs
Demand Analysis	Work being undertaken by private owners to confirm demand	Up to £2million Depending on scheme	Up to 5 years	More visitors and local spend
Potential funding sources	Private sector, Heritage Lottery plus range of external grants			
Exit (Sustainability) Strategy	To stay in private ownership			

Project Name: Kington lighting and banners scheme					
Intervention Framework	Economy and business	Tourism & the Visitor Economy	Town & Civic amenities		
Description: The proposal is to purchase and install multi-purpose brackets, light fittings and seasonal decorations in key locations in and around Kington High Street. Once installed the brackets/fittings can be used to light and decorate the Town as appropriate during key activities and events throughout the year. The fittings will be multi-purpose to allow bunting, flags, banners and Christmas lighting to be added to the streetscape to make the Town more attractive as well as to help promote key events and other activities.			Cost	Timescale	Outputs
			Demand Analysis	Work being undertaken by Town Council to confirm demand	
Potential funding sources	Kington Town Council, plus range of external grants and possible section 106 funding				
Exit (Sustainability) Strategy	Town Council or other local entity to maintain				

Next Steps

This is one of five Market Town Economic Investment Plans commissioned by Herefordshire Council for each of Herefordshire's market towns.

Herefordshire Council has identified a number of projects which could be funded by them. As a result, in addition to this Market Town Investment Plan, Rose Regeneration has completed outline business cases (OBCs) and Project Mandates for the following projects for the Council's consideration.

- OBC's have been developed and submitted for:
- New Employment Site Project/ Extension to Hatton Gardens
- Project Mandates have been developed and submitted for:
- Kington High Street Regeneration and Shop Front Grant Schemes

Once the Plans, OBC's and Project Mandates have been considered by Herefordshire Council it is recommended that the council works with the five Market Town Councils to establish an appropriate delivery mechanism to oversee, secure funding for and monitor the delivery of the Market Town Economic Investment Plans. This delivery mechanism should be led and supported by Herefordshire Council and should involve representatives from each Town Council.

APPENDIX 1 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT SUMMARY

National context	Regional Context	Herefordshire Context	Kington Context
<p>Industrial Strategy – ‘places’ foundation: tackling entrenched regional disparities.</p> <p>Industrial Strategy Productivity Evidence Review – some cities and rural county areas have been falling behind, including Herefordshire. County Councils Network analysis of GVA in 36 county areas found Herefordshire to be experiencing the smallest economic growth 5.3% between 2014 and 2018).</p> <p>A low carbon future in a changing climate – UK obligations under the 2015 Paris Agreement - setting a net zero target for carbon emissions by 2050.</p> <p>HM Treasury/Government department resources - levelling up economic opportunity across all nations and regions of the country by investing in infrastructure, innovation and people.</p> <p>Build Better, Build Greener, Build Faster - reforming the planning system (NPPF, Planning for the Future White Paper) to give more emphasis to quality, design and the environment.</p> <p>COVID-19 recovery measures - protecting and restoring livelihoods, improving living standards and new economic opportunities.</p>	<p>Local Industrial Strategy and Strategic Economic Plan – inclusive growth, connectivity, skills, enterprise and innovation, trade and investment. Herefordshire’s sectoral specialisms: food and drink, education, advanced manufacturing and engineering, defence and construction. Growth opportunities for (i) manufacturing and engineering, (ii) food supply chain/agri-tech innovation, and (iii) cyber security and resilience.</p> <p>Skills Plan and Skills Sectors Deep Dives – the provision of Higher Education provision and Further Education courses relevant to these growth opportunities in Herefordshire.</p> <p>Cyber Resilience Alliance / Science and Innovation Audit – the largest cluster of cyber security activity outside of London: growth in direct jobs, wider investment in products and processes and acting as a regional testbed.</p> <p>Growth Hub and Enterprise Zone with specialisms in defence and security at Skylon Park, Hereford.</p> <p>Economic recovery plan – investment in infrastructure and jobs: Hereford city streetscape improvements and NMITE Skylon campus development.</p>	<p>Herefordshire is a cold spot for social mobility – it is in the bottom 20 list of Local Authorities in England in terms of the chances that disadvantaged children will do well at school and get a good job.</p> <p>The importance of creating high-quality, highly skilled jobs against a backdrop of traditional low-skill, low-wage economy.</p> <p>County Plan – improving sustainability, connectivity, wellbeing and becoming carbon neutral by 2030-2031: Talk Community (hubs), community wealth building (increasing the amount of money that stays in the local economy); and Sustainable Food County (a whole system approach to tackling obesity, diet related ill health, food poverty, waste and climate change).</p> <p>Hereford Town Investment Plan – intended to deliver urban regeneration, a stronger skills base, and improved connectivity in the city. Under the strapline ‘green and fair’ the TIP recognises Hereford’s connectivity to market towns and countryside (e.g. tourism – attract and disperse approach). Telling stories about place, identifying and implementing a vision, strong partnership working and securing funding/investment are all needed for pandemic Recovery and Transformation.</p> <p>Skylon Park – Enterprise Zone for defence and security, advanced manufacturing, food and drink processing and sustainable technologies. Local Development Order to simplify planning arrangements. Weaving old industrial landscape with future proofing to allow for growth and change. Intended to act as a catalyst for economic growth across Herefordshire.</p> <p>Hereford Transport Strategy describes tragic flows, delays and congestion schemes which increase physical activity (e.g. cycling, walking) generate high value-for-money.</p>	<p>Herefordshire’s Economic Vision – enabling market towns to maximise their role in building thriving, distinctive, service centres that support their communities and rural hinterlands is a countywide ambition.</p> <p>Place-shaping for Kington is focused upon ‘the creation of new homes, new employment opportunities, delivery of and access to services, including affordable housing, reducing the need to travel to other centres, and utilising the natural and historic environment as economic assets’.</p> <p>Kington has more self-employed people and more people working in agriculture, construction, transport, accommodation and skilled trades compared to the rest of Herefordshire. The Kington Area Neighbourhood Plan supports better use of existing industrial estates and small-scale new build or the conversion of buildings to business use.</p> <p>Kington is described as ‘a centre for walkers’ and has Walkers are Welcome status. The KANP focuses on extending the variety, choice and quality of shops and services so as to improve the overall attractiveness of the town centre for residents, businesses and visitors.</p> <p>Kington sits in an area which is seen as a candidate for being designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)</p>

APPENDIX 2 – PROJECT PRIORITISATION

A detailed project scoring matrix showing the working for the prioritisation process is set out below:

Project	Theme	Description	Indicative Cost (,000)	Contribution to Zero Carbon	More Visitors and Inward Investment	Increased GVA	Increased Business Diversity	Higher Skills	Leads to Better Population Balance	Greater Equity	Equality Agenda	Score
Shop/Building Frontage Scheme - Kington	Commercial Development	A public sector grant scheme is proposed to encourage investment in the frontages of shops and other town centre buildings to make the town a place to visit and spend time in. Elsewhere in the country grant schemes have been successfully used to encourage property owners to invest in town centre properties.	£75	3	5	5	4	3	2	3	3	70%
Kington High Street Regeneration	Public Realm	The main shopping street in Kington is narrow making it difficult to visit, shop and spend time in the town centre. The proposal is that the High Street should be refurbished to make it more pedestrian friendly whilst maintaining vehicle access throughout the day.	£2,000	3	5	5	4	0	2	4	4	67.5%
Tourism Offer/Walking Hub	Tourism	Kington's role as a significant walking Centre with a strong crafts sector should be promoted and developed. Investment is proposed in the local footpath network as well as in interpretation material, signage with a focus on walking and possibly crafts and the development of walking App for use on smart phones.	£50	5	5	3	3	2	2	3	3	65%
Kington Market Hall and surrounds	Commercial Development	The proposal is to renovate/refurbish Kington Market Hall and surrounding area and to utilise the market hall as a focus for crafts, events / festivals, café etc. There is also an opportunity to add more interpretative material about the town to promote its key attractions including the walking routes.	£250	4	4	4	4	2	2	3	3	65%
Hatton Gardens Extension – Kington	Employment Space	There is the opportunity to explore a small extension to the existing Hatton gardens Industrial Estate. A range of small-scale employment uses and start up units could be accommodated on the site.	£1,000	3	5	5	4	3	2	2	2	65%

Project	Theme	Description	Indicative Cost (,000)	Contribution to Zero Carbon	More Visitors and Inward Investment	Increased GVA	Increased Business Diversity	Higher Skills	Leads to Better Population Balance	Greater Equity	Equality Agenda	Score
Kington lighting and banners scheme	Public Realm	This project aims to light up key elements of the Town throughout the year and at the same time make a significant improvement to the Christmas lights. It will ensure key buildings and streets are lit and or decorated with banners etc to support key events and activities including walking and crafts.	£50	5	5	4	2	3	2	2	2	62.5%
AONB Status - Kington	Green Infrastructure/Tourism	The proposal is to include Kington and surrounding area in England and Wales in the designation of a new AONB. Such a designation will significantly enhance the profile of Kington as a walking town.	£200	4	5	2	3	2	2	3	3	60%
Improved Car parking offer - Kington	Public Realm	A full review of the location, quantity and demand for carparking in the town is required to consider improved car parking to serve the southern end of the Town. The current Livestock Market site provides an opportunity to improve car parking in the Town.	£50	4	5	3	3	0	2	3	4	60%
Food and Drink Offer	Commercial Development	Kington and the surrounding villages home to a number of food and drink manufacturing businesses which would support the development of the town's visitor economy. A small-scale food and drink manufacturer such as a brewery/distillery and associated visitor facility in the Town could attract significant additional footfall to the Town. There are also a number of old and rundown pubs/former pubs in the town which would benefit from refurbishment and could be used to further improve the existing food and drink offer.	£1,000	4	5	3	3	3	2	2	2	60%
Wesleyan Chapel - Kington	Commercial Development	This iconic listed building is in a key location near to the hub of the town centre. The building is in disrepair and needs significant investment it has potential for a range of uses. It has just changed ownership and the new owners should be supported in reviewing the future of the building.	£2,000	3	4	3	3	2	2	2	2	52.5%

Project	Theme	Description	Indicative Cost (,000)	Contribution to Zero Carbon	More Visitors and Inward Investment	Increased GVA	Increased Business Diversity	Higher Skills	Leads to Better Population Balance	Greater Equity	Equality Agenda	Score
Kington Police and Fire Station relocation and redevelopment	Housing	There is an opportunity to relocate the Police and Fire Stations from their current location in Churchill Road to provide new modern facilities with lower maintenance costs, better access and potentially faster response times. This could also allow the existing sites to be redeveloped for housing.	£2,000	3	0	2	2	0	5	4	3	47.5%