



**HERNE BAY  
COASTAL COMMUNITY TEAM**

**Herne Bay Coastal Community Team CIC  
Development Plan  
2020 - 2023**

**October 2020**

## **Contents**

1.	Introduction	p1
2.	Key information	p2
3.	Local area	p3
4.	Local Community	p3
5.	Economy	p6
6.	Related Initiatives	p10
7.	Ambition	p15
8.	HBCCT Actions	p16
9.	Covid19 and afterwards	p17
10.	SWOT analysis	p20
11.	Delivering the plan/Programme of work	p21

## **Addendum**

Some grant funding sources for community projects

# 1. Introduction

Herne Bay is a seaside town in Kent. Inconsistent data and ward boundary changes make it difficult to be precise about its population size – the 2011 census gives 38,385 while the Kent Public Health Observatory puts the figure at 40,069 in September 2015. In 2018 the Kent County Council, Strategic Commissioning, Population Pyramid 2018 report (published 4 Nov 2019) reported that the population of Herne Bay had risen to 42,380. It is noted that because of current and planned house building of 3000 plus new homes in the area that this figure will increase further.

On the south coast of the Thames Estuary, Herne Bay is 7 miles (11 km) north of Canterbury and 5 miles (8 km) east of Whitstable. It neighbours the ancient villages of Herne and Reculver and is part of the City of Canterbury local government district. Herne Bay's seafront is home to the world's first freestanding, purpose-built clock tower, built in 1837. From the late Victorian period until 1978, the town had the second-longest pier in the United Kingdom.

Herne Bay's popularity as a holiday destination has declined over the past decades, due to the increase in foreign travel, economic decline and, to a lesser degree, exposure to flooding that has prevented the town's redevelopment.

As a town centre, Herne Bay is lacking investment and focus. The Canterbury District Local Plan, adopted by the City Council in 2017 states that "Herne Bay has an under-performing town centre, due to the limited range of comparison goods retailing and the strength of Canterbury. Once completed, significant comparison retail in the Central Development Area, as well as other allocations in the Herne Bay Area Action Plan, will use and indeed exceed, any available capacity for additional floorspace for the foreseeable future."

This is still awaited.

It should also be noted that at the time of writing this report Canterbury City Council are consulting residents on how the district, including Herne Bay, should be developed over the next twenty years. The work of HBCCT, while developing its own programme, will also need to reflect the outcomes of that consultation.

## **2. Key Information**

### 2.1. Name of CCT:

Herne Bay Coastal Community Team – Community Interest Company

### 2.2. Single Point of Contact:

Tom Mellish - Chair

### 2.3. Membership:

- Paul Barwick, Vice-Chair – Local Resident
- Stuart Way – Treasurer - CWW Accountants
- HB Pier Trust – Doreen Stone
- Friends of Herne Bay Clock Tower – Julian Jennings
- Gemma Witts – Kent Business School, University of Kent
- Deborah Smith – Local Resident
- Margaret Flaherty – Local Resident
- Cllr Rachel Carnac – Canterbury CC
- Cllr Joes Howes – Canterbury CC
- Garry Northwood – HB Festival

#### Other partners

- Neptune Hub
- Radio Cabin
- CCC Regeneration Team
- Mark Read – Read Business Analytics

### 2.4. Accountable Body:

Canterbury City Council

### 3. Local Area

Herne Bay is defined as the Wards -West Bay, Greenhill, Heron, Beltinge, Herne and Broomfield and Reculver

Across the six electoral wards that make up Herne Bay the total population is 42,380. The largest ward in the Canterbury district is Heron with a population of 13,640. (*Kent County Council, Strategic Commissioning, Population Pyramid 2018 - published 4 Nov 2019*)

In 2019 78% of businesses in Kent employed 4 people or fewer. In the Canterbury district the figure is 76%. There is no indication that figures for Herne Bay will be any different.

In the Canterbury District of 5,320 businesses 995 are sole proprietors, 420 are partnerships and 180 are not-for profit or mutual (this will include building societies). (*The above figures are drawn from KCC SC Statistical Bulletin October 2019*)

Any economic development plan by the HBCCT CIC will have to take in to account the very small nature of business in the area. In this respect the Neptune Hub is answering a clear need but needs to evolve by developing more support and advice for small businesses.

### 4. Local Community

#### Age Profile

The following table shows the age breakdown of residents living in Herne Bay and comparisons with other Coastal Communities and in England and Wales.

Age	Median Age	Aged 0-15	Aged 16-64	Aged 65+	Aged 85+
Herne Bay	44	19%	59%	23%	4%
Coastal Communities	N.A.	17%	63%	20%	3%
England and Wales	39	19%	65%	16%	2%

It is worth noting that while at 23% the prevalence of people of retirement age is higher than the national average, nearly 60% of the population is of working age with a median age of 44. With the new housing developments having taken place since these Nomis figures were published in 2015, the proportion of younger residents will have increased markedly. These figures show that Herne Bay is not a seaside retirement area but a town with a large working age, and younger, population. Developments in the district need to reflect this changing population.

Based on 2011 census taken from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Nomis service the following table provides a breakdown of the Household Composition in Herne Bay.

## Household Composition

	<b>Herne Bay</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>South East</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>England</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>All households</b>	16,347	100.0	3,555,463	100.0	22,063,368	100.0
One-person household	5,046	30.9	1,023,154	28.8	6,666,493	30.2
Aged 65 and over	2,653	16.2	449,969	12.7	2,725,596	12.4
Other	2,393	14.6	573,185	16.1	3,940,897	17.9
<b>One family household</b>	10,406	63.7	2,270,868	63.9	13,631,182	61.8
All aged 65 and over	1,801	11.0	318,596	9.0	1,789,465	8.1
Married or same-sex civil partnership couple	5,436	33.3	1,275,844	35.9	7,329,455	33.2
No children	2,248	13.8	471,419	13.3	2,719,210	12.3
Dependent children	2,300	14.1	608,251	17.1	3,375,890	15.3
All children non-dependent	888	5.4	196,174	5.5	1,234,355	5.6
<b>Cohabiting couple</b>	1,498	9.2	349,874	9.8	2,172,438	9.8
No children	731	4.5	194,744	5.5	1,173,172	5.3
Dependent children	698	4.3	138,651	3.9	890,780	4.0
All children non-dependent	69	0.4	16,479	0.5	108,486	0.5
<b>Lone parent</b>	1,671	10.2	326,554	9.2	2,339,824	10.6
Dependent children	1,183	7.2	216,366	6.1	1,573,255	7.1
All children non-dependent	488	3.0	110,188	3.1	766,569	3.5
<b>Other household types</b>	895	5.5	261,441	7.4	1,765,693	8.0
With dependent children	355	2.2	81,369	2.3	584,016	2.6
All full-time students	15	0.1	18,758	0.5	124,285	0.6
All aged 65 and over	56	0.3	10,667	0.3	61,715	0.3
Other	469	2.9	150,647	4.2	995,677	4.5

## Skill levels in Herne Bay

The table below shows the qualification/skills levels attained at the time of the 2011 census. There is no evidence to show that this may have changed substantially since then.

	Herne Bay	%	South East	%	England	%
All usual residents aged 16 and over	31,218	100.0	6,992,666	100.0	42,989,620	100.0
No qualifications	8,706	27.9	1,333,955	19.1	9,656,810	22.5
Level 1 qualifications	4,663	14.9	946,056	13.5	5,714,441	13.3
Level 2 qualifications	5,232	16.8	1,110,706	15.9	6,544,614	15.2
Apprenticeship	1,422	4.6	253,423	3.6	1,532,934	3.6
Level 3 qualifications	3,507	11.2	892,915	12.8	5,309,631	12.4
Level 4 qualifications and above	6,278	20.1	2,093,693	29.9	11,769,361	27.4
Other qualifications	1,410	4.5	361,918	5.2	2,461,829	5.7

As an example of qualification levels,

Level 1 is a GCSE at grades 3, 2, 1 or grades D, E, F, G.

Level 2 is a GCSE at grades 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4 or grades A\*, A, B, C.

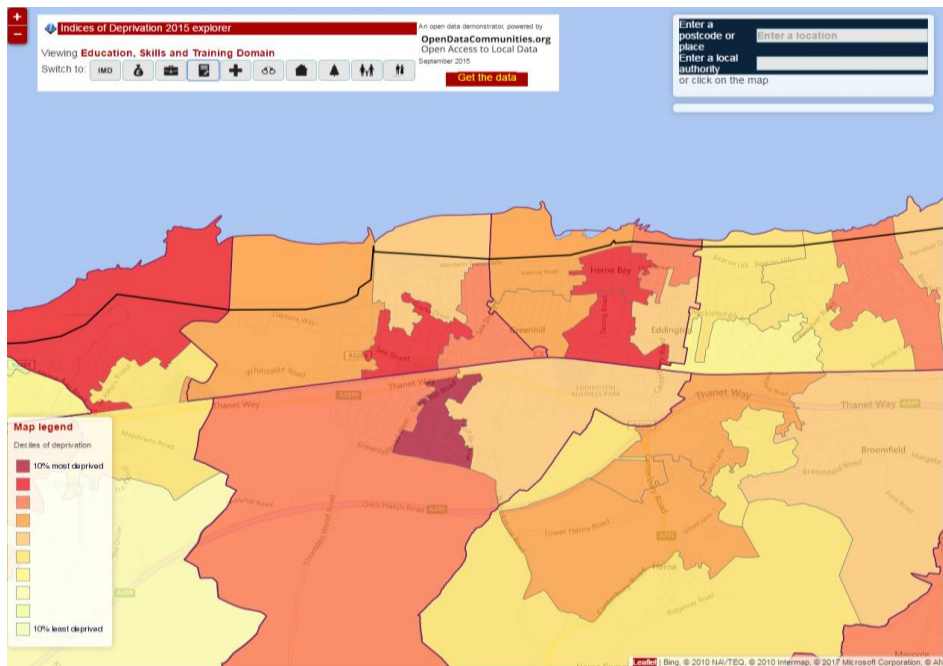
Level 3 is an 'A'

Level 4 is a certificate of higher education.

Level 5 a higher national diploma, level 6 is a degree

Level 7 is a Masters or Post graduate qualification.

Over a quarter of the Herne Bay work force has no qualification at all.



The map above shows the areas of skills and qualification attainment, with the darkest areas being the 10% most deprived educationally. These very much reflect the pattern shown in the earlier maps of deprivation.

There needs to be a significant investment in skills and training to address the clear imbalance within the town, in comparison with national attainment levels.

## 5. Economy

### Work activity

It has not been possible to find verifiable statistics on the nature of unemployment and on the occupations of Herne Bay residents other than those published in our 2017 development plan taken from the Inter Departmental Business. These give some basis on which to make general assumptions. But the onslaught of the Coronavirus and the impact of Covid 19 on lives and wellbeing of the people of Herne Bay must be taken into account.

Most Herne Bay residents who work in the area work in the wholesale and retail trade and the repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles – 18.6%. Health and care sectors account for 15.8%. Only 5.4% worked in public administration. Cuts in central and local government since the census, the figure is likely to be much lower. Only 4.7% of residents are employed in arts, entertainment and recreation and other service activities. This is surprising given that Herne Bay is a tourist destination, but it may reflect the seasonal nature of tourism in a coastal town.



The table below is taken from the 2011 Census (Nomis) and shows occupations in Herne Bay

	<b>Herne Bay</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>South East</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>England</b>	<b>%</b>
A Agriculture, forestry and fishing	78	0.5	28,582	0.7	203,789	0.8
B Mining and quarrying	10	0.1	5,832	0.1	43,302	0.2
C Manufacturing	1,058	6.3	306,391	7.2	2,226,247	8.8
D Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	78	0.5	24,500	0.6	140,148	0.6
E Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	100	0.6	29,749	0.7	175,214	0.7
F Construction	1,819	10.8	339,761	8.0	1,931,936	7.7
G Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	3,067	18.2	662,860	15.6	4,007,570	15.9
H Transport and storage	867	5.1	222,795	5.2	1,260,094	5.0
I Accommodation and food service activities	786	4.7	214,329	5.0	1,399,931	5.6
	<b>Herne Bay</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>South East</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>England</b>	<b>%</b>
J Information and communication	425	2.5	235,081	5.5	1,024,352	4.1
K Financial and insurance activities	545	3.2	191,566	4.5	1,103,858	4.4
L Real estate activities	209	1.2	61,133	1.4	367,459	1.5
M Professional, scientific and technical activities	807	4.8	317,787	7.5	1,687,127	6.7
N Administrative and support service activities	678	4.0	219,830	5.2	1,239,422	4.9
O Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	909	5.4	255,674	6.0	1,483,450	5.9
P Education	1,950	11.6	432,119	10.1	2,490,199	9.9
Q Human health and social work activities	2,661	15.8	495,212	11.6	3,121,238	12.4
R, S, T, U Other	834	4.9	217,522	5.1	1,257,385	5.0

<b>Economic Activity in Herne Bay by gender</b>						
	Female	%	% England	Male	%	% England
Employee Full Time	3,599	25.9	30.6	5,530	42.5	46.8
Employee Part Time	3,408	24.5	21.2	807	6.2	6.1
Self employed	891	5.9	5.7	2,121	16.3	13.9

The above figures can only be indicative, but they do reflect the nature of employment in the area and show those industrial sectors which make up the economy of the Herne Bay area. In the age range of 16 to 74, 62.2% of Herne Bay residents are economically active. In the same age range 72.2% of males are economically active while it is 62.4% for women. Nearly half female employment is part time and slightly above the national average. This may reflect the precarious nature of female employment, and an indication that most of the caring and household duties is still women's work. At the time of the survey 2,184 women, or 26.8% of the female workforce, worked in the health or social care sector compared to 477 or 5.5% of male workers. A large area of employment in Herne Bay is the care sector and particularly care for the elderly. This sector is mainly staffed by women as the above figures show. This is an area greatly affected by Covid19.

Identifying these areas of employment may assist in establishing priorities in terms of investment. We can, though, be surer of the unemployment figures for Herne Bay.

### **Unemployment Rates**

As of August 2020, unemployment in Herne Bay was at 6.3% with Heron Ward registering 8.3% unemployed, 3.0% higher than the district average (KCC Statistical Bulletin – September 2020). Heron Ward remains in the lowest decile in terms of household income. The unemployment figures reflect the impact of the Coronavirus and the shutting down of most of the economic activity in the area. Herne Bay has been disproportionately hit by the effects of the Coronavirus and there is urgent need economic regeneration in the area.

<b>Economic activity</b>	<b>Unemployment rate (aged 16+)</b>
Herne Bay	6.3%
Canterbury	5.3%
Great Britain	6.6%

(September 2020 -Strategic Commissioning - Analytics, Kent County Council)

The above shows that compared nationally Herne Bay is in a slightly better position regarding unemployment claimants but above the district average. But there are pockets in Herne Bay which are of grave concern.

Heron at 8.3% is way above the Canterbury District unemployment average of 5.3%. In August 2020 Greenhill had an increase in unemployment benefit claimants of 133%, Heron 123% and West Bay 190% on August 2019 figures. Reculver had an increase of 200% but from a far lower base with an additional 40 people claiming unemployment benefit.

## Neptune Hub



Our most recent regeneration success has been, in partnership with Canterbury City Council, the opening on the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2020 the Neptune Co-working Hub.

This initiative was developed to support small businesses, homeworkers and new start-ups with the opportunity to rent affordable desk space, meeting rooms and / or offices at affordable rates and provides ultrafast Wi-Fi, ergonomic desks and chairs, networking and training events in an environment designed to maximise collaboration.

The hub was financed through HBCCT securing a grant of £212,950 from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's Coastal Communities Fund, which covered more than half of the £384,000 cost. Canterbury City Council contributed £171,050 in match funding plus help from its Local Economy, Communications, Facilities and Finance teams, as well as its engineers.

The Hub development has utilised the former empty council offices in William Street, created new jobs and was developed to minimise its environmental impact by using an energy-efficient heating system, LED lighting, on-demand water heaters, a water refill station, full recycling facilities, water-based recycled paints, remanufactured office furniture and recycled carpet tiles.

Like other businesses the Neptune Hub was closed during lockdown but is now open for business while strictly observing Covid19 guidance.

There is an opportunity to increase its capacity, expand its services, and entice commuting office workers to work more flexibly, something which people have taken to doing during the pandemic. The Hub is well placed to take on the challenge as we recover from the COVID pandemic.

## 6. Related Initiatives

### South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP)

In 2018, following the publication of the national [Industrial Strategy](#) in 2017, government mandated that every LEP should produce a Local Industrial Strategy (LIS). Whilst awaiting further detail and structure from government, the South East LEP continued its commitment to provide a refresh of the Strategic Economic Plan and in late 2018, it produced an [Economic Strategy Statement](#) – Smarter, Faster, Together. This document sets out the path towards developing its LIS.

The statement says:

“In addition to the link with a future Local Industrial Strategy, this Strategy Statement is underpinned by four key principles:

- **Strategic focus:** We have not attempted within this document to describe all the work that SELEP is engaged in – nor all the priorities that will be important at local level. Instead, this Statement focuses on those priorities which are shared across the South East, and whereby working together, business, universities, colleges, local and national government and the third sector can make a strategic difference
- **Partnership:** SELEP is a genuine ‘coalition for growth’ between business, government and education. We will put the role of enterprise – as the driving motor of the economy – at the heart of everything we do; and we will work in partnership with central government and its key agencies
- **Local leadership:** Key to the success of the South East LEP is the effectiveness of our ‘federated’ model (described in Chapter 9) and the strategies adopted within our four economic partnership areas (East Sussex, Essex, Kent and Medway and South Essex). By focusing on our shared priorities, this Strategy Statement aims to add value to and support activity at local level
- **Evidence-led and pragmatic:** In developing this Statement, we have looked at the economic evidence and the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that our economy faces. Some of these are long term. However, this is a strategy for growth in a dynamic free market: new opportunities and challenges will arise over time, it needs to be flexible and agile to respond to them and it must draw on continuous evaluation and evidence of ‘what works’.”

All LEPs in England have a target of completing and agreeing their strategy with government by March 2020.

The SELEP has developed five priorities. The Economic Statement says these are:

“Priority 1: Creating ideas and enterprise: Creating, adapting and adopting new ideas is at the heart of our ambition for a ‘smarter’ economy. This means supporting our innovative capacity in our ‘leading edge’ businesses – but it also means increasing the opportunities for creativity across the economy, enabling businesses with the potential for growth to expand.

Priority 2: Developing tomorrow's workforce: A skilled workforce will be vital in delivering the productivity gains that this strategy demands. But higher skills are also the route to better pay, better jobs, and better progression in work.

Priority 3: Accelerating infrastructure: To deliver our ambitions for a 'smarter', 'faster' LEP, we must ensure that we secure the right infrastructure to support future growth. Since our first SEP was published in 2014, we have developed a strong track record, although infrastructure funding gaps remain significant.

Priority 4: Creating places: The scale of growth that the South East will see over the coming decade is significant, and some of the changes facing businesses and people in work will be transformational. But greater productivity is only useful if it improves living standards and the communities within which we live: as well as delivering 'growth', we need to create places to which South East residents and businesses aspire.

Priority 5: Working together: While the South East LEP covers a large and complex geography in its own right, it is by no means isolated. Our links to London and other parts of the Greater South East are vital, and we will need to build on our wider regional connections."

The SELEP is a gateway to government funding and the wider development of the region, and the HBCCT will develop its relationship with the SELEP.

The role of Canterbury City Council is vital to the development of Herne Bay.

**Canterbury Local District Plan** (Adopted July 2017, currently under review)

## **Retail**

The Canterbury City Council has designated a Primary Shopping Area in Canterbury and Primary Shopping Frontages in Canterbury City, Whitstable and Herne Bay. These areas are intended primarily for A1 (shops) use, to ensure a competitive retail offer and accessible shopping core, which will underpin healthy and thriving town centres. Alternative retail and non-retail uses can, in most instances, be located in the Secondary Shopping Frontages or wider town centre and still contribute to vitality and viability. The Council will continue to monitor town centre vacancies. This will be a relevant consideration in the application of Policy TCL2 (? To be checked).

Where the growth of non-retail uses reduces the availability of choice for customers and creates 'dead frontages', there is a loss of vitality of the centre and attractiveness to customers. This is particularly marked in Herne Bay town centre, where strict application of the Primary Shopping Frontage policy will assist with consolidating the main shopping streets and ensure there is an accessible central core of shopping for comparison and choice and which supports the planned regeneration activities. The Herne Bay Area Action Plan includes specific development proposals for the town centre, including significant retail provision.

Retail capacity studies carried out by the consultancy DTZ in 2011 reviewed future retail trends, the vitality and viability of the Canterbury City Centre and the quantitative retail needs of the City, Herne Bay and Whitstable. The Council must provide an adequate framework to enable the retail industry to establish and maintain appropriate town centre sites to meet identified retail need and ensure the regional status of Canterbury's shopping provision is not eroded.

Herne Bay and Whitstable have localised catchments for comparison shopping and a much more limited shopping offer, befitting their respective roles in the Retail Hierarchy. While Whitstable does have a wider appeal and trades strongly its comparison capacity remains relatively modest.

In contrast, Herne Bay has an under-performing town centre, due to the limited range of comparison goods retailing and the strength of Canterbury. Once completed, significant comparison retail in the Central Development Area, as well as other allocations in the Herne Bay Area Action Plan, will use and may exceed any available capacity for additional floorspace for the foreseeable future.

### **The Herne Bay Area Action Plan**

The Canterbury City Council Area Action Plan for Herne Bay was first published in 2010 and is presently under review. Development plans for parts of the town have also been published under the broad heading of the Action Plan.

The 2010 HBAAP states that -

“Although growing in popularity as a place to live, Herne Bay town centre needs to become more attractive for new development, and more viable for existing businesses. Fortunately, many of the ingredients are already in place to address the problems noted above and to turn around recent economic decline and develop a vibrant centre linking Herne Bay's park, shopping streets and seafront. These include a number of centrally located under-used or vacant redevelopment sites; a strong built character; streets suitable for enhancement; a seafront that continues to be popular with visitors and residents; and above all a strong community spirit and will to improve the town's image by those who live and work here.”

The AAP aims and objectives are:

- a) To deliver the redevelopment of Key Opportunity Sites as catalysts for the regeneration of Herne Bay
- b) To create a thriving and commercially successful town centre for the benefit of the town's residents and visitors
- c) To provide improved recreational, leisure and community facilities in the town centre for residents and visitors
- d) To enhance Herne Bay's Conservation Area and streetscapes through design and comprehensive high-quality public realm improvements
- e) To create an alternative sense of place with clear pedestrian and cycle routes linking the seafront, shopping streets and parks.

The AAP seeks to address:

- A poor town image locally, regionally and nationally
- High levels of social deprivation
- Lack of a coherent, visually attractive centre, or heart, to the commercial area of the town
- Little to draw visitors from the seafront into the shopping areas
- Limited retail offer and weak town centre with high level of leakage of consumer spending out of the town
- Pier Sports Centre in poor condition, nearing end of its lifespan Strong demand from consultation exercises for improved recreational and leisure facilities
- Rundown streetscapes and Conservation Area, with poor and out-dated public realm elements and landscaping in the shopping streets
- Few clear links between the seafront, shopping areas and the Memorial Park
- Insufficient pedestrian and cycle-friendly routes
- Missing link in national coastal cycle route runs through town centre
- Under-utilised Memorial Park, including poor playground, drained boating lake and disused park pavilion
- Parking issues in the town centre on Saturdays as a result of town's weekly market
- Declining tourism product
- Presence of European designated offshore marine sites in proximity to town centre seafront. Herne Bay is part of the Thanet Coast Special Area of Conservation with reefs and submerged or partially submerged sea caves. The coastline is also a designated site of scientific interest.

Some of these points have been answered. The Pier Sports Centre no longer exists and has been replaced by a retail and leisure village. The Playground in Memorial Park has been updated and the boating lake now supports wild fowl and is used during the town summer festival. The park pavilion has been revamped.

Parking issues have been partly resolved by the large central car park adjacent to Wimereux Square but the two hours free parking in the square, paid for by Sainsbury, has been withdrawn and there are radical increases in parking charges being proposed. All of which will have a detrimental effect on the town centre and the retail outlets.

Access from the railway station to the town centre during events such as the summer festival is problematic.

### **Tourist Accommodation**

In October 2019 Visit Kent released the interim findings of a review of accommodation in Kent. While a copy of the interim report is not available and the full report is yet to be published, it is interesting to note that according to the interim findings –

“Canterbury - which includes Kent’s only city and coastal towns Whitstable and Herne Bay - also leads for holiday bed nights with over 1.4m stays per year followed by the coastal Folkestone and Hythe district (909,000) and Dover district (875,000). Thanet – which includes hip Margate hosting this year’s Turner Prize exhibition – meanwhile saw Airbnb properties increase by 450% over the past three years - according to Airdna data - to meet the demand created by an 8.6% growth in visitors.”

Airdna shows that there are approximately 60 Airbnb’s in the CT6 area. The last survey of hotels in Herne Bay was by Visit Kent in 2011 which showed only the Premier Inn with 50 rooms. There appears to be only seven bed and breakfasts in Herne Bay. This indicates that, despite the remodelling of the Premier Inn, there are approximately only 200 beds available in the town.

Looking at the preliminary results from the research, Visit Kent said that “this report highlights the unmet demand for hotel accommodation that, when put together with the identification of key sites, provided a unique calling card for the hotel industry to consider Kent and Medway.”

Visit Kent has identified business travel, meetings and conferences as a growth sector that will deliver strong year-round occupancy.

“We recognise the need to provide quality accommodation at all levels and so we commissioned new research to assess the current and future supply and demand across Kent,” David Curtis-Brignell, Deputy Chief Executive, Visit Kent.

“The results show that there are clear growth hotspots across the county which present an opportunity to address the lack of quality serviced accommodation and higher capacity properties to provision in rural locations. This represents a clear opportunity for developers to look at Kent as a priority investment location.”

A key to development in Herne Bay must be the provision of further tourist accommodation and tourism support.

HBCCT will work with organisations like Visit Kent and the UK Hospitality Association to promote Herne Bay as a destination not just for tourists but for conference guests. There is nothing in the CT6 area except the Kings Hall, which could accommodate a sizeable conference event. But the town could provide accommodation and transport to venues in the area.



## 7. Ambition

### Action Plan

This action plan incorporates four overarching Themes to regenerate the Coastal Community of Herne Bay:

#### Creating an attractive place to work, visit and live

- Enhancing the pedestrian experience
- Making the most of green spaces and the unique coastline for the enjoyment of all
- Improving the public realm and street scene
- Delivering quality community and visitor activities

#### Celebrating the town's heritage and culture

- Protecting and enhancing our historic built environment
- Revitalising historic buildings
- Improving and marketing the heritage and cultural offer
- Engaging residents and visitors in local heritage and culture

#### Diversifying the offer within the town centres

- Encouraging growth of existing businesses and establishment of new ones
- Developing leisure, education and community opportunities
- Refurbishment of key buildings for community and commercial usage
- Celebrating our unique & independent businesses
- Growing the creative sector

#### Improving connectivity of the town

- Improving wayfaring and wayfinding into and within the town
- Realising the 'A string of Pearls' concept – connecting key elements in the area
- Strengthening the recreation and leisure capacity of coastal corridor
- Refurbishment of the station and visitor entry points:

#### Delivering the Plan

Key Projects/Bodies of Work

- **Small Entrepreneurs Encouragement** – develops an environment that nurtures and encourages entrepreneurship within the town
- **Our Retail Centres** – focuses on improving the appearance of the retail areas: street furniture, litter, parking, flower beds, lighting and working with businesses and volunteers to improve the appearance and offer through festivals and events to attract visitors - working with existing festival organisers.
- **Creative Cluster** – recognizes the importance of the creative sector to the continued regeneration of Herne Bay. It supports the development of the

existing 'creative complexes' and will work with design and art schools to develop a sustainable art and design incubator in Herne Bay. Work with Beach Creative and local artists and designers to be able to offer post-graduate study, apprenticeships, short courses, and incubation facilities.

- ***Coastal Highlights and Seafront Upgrade*** – supports the creation of a strong spine of attractions running from Reculver through to Hampton and perhaps through to Whitstable. It focuses, where necessary, on the restoration of key properties associated with the history of Herne Bay and using them to create vibrant and economically active hubs that will support economic activity around them.

In addition Herne Bay is blessed with fantastic coastal scenery from the site of the Roman fort through areas of Special Scientific Interest, along a good coastal path past the Kings Hall and in to the town along Central Parade and on to the pier at the Hamptons.

- ***Wayfaring and Wayfinding*** – develops schemes for pedestrians that encourages visitors to explore the town beyond the seafront. It also addresses road signage, the poor signage into and around the town and the need to declutter and repair current signage. This links through to developing the retail centres.

## **8. HBCCT Actions**

HBCCT's first function is to act as a strategic body carrying out those functions which enable a programme of work to progress and to oversee the work of the CIC. The HBCCT acts as the management board of the CIC and to whom the CIC directors report.

The Team is aware that we may have missed out on funding opportunities during the year. Government funding streams, and other sources, come on-line, and we are unaware of new initiatives. There will now be new funding opportunities in relation to Corvid19 and various national and local regeneration programmes. The Team become involved in discussions that affect Herne Bay and at various levels. For that reason, in 2020 we should prioritise.

- Expand the membership of the Team to accurately reflect the nature of the town and to enable the work of the Team to be carried out.
- Draw up the Business Plan based on the key elements given above - Small Entrepreneurs Encouragement; Retail Centre; Creative Cluster; Coastal Highlights and Seafront Upgrade; and Wayfaring and Wayfinding
- The HBCCT's relationship and input to the LAAP, the District Plan and the work of SELEP.
- Establish working group with CCC Regeneration Unit to identify joint projects related to the LAAP
- Ensure HBCCT's relationship to the Cities and Local Growth Unit.
- HBCCT and the role of the Coastal Community Alliance

- Relaunch the HBCCT reflecting its CIC status with the Development Plan 2020-2023. Develop the Business Plan and a comprehensive communications strategy.

We also need to prioritise this year:

- Identifying grant streams. (See addendum)

The Programme of Work will identify projects suitable for the CIC to undertake and a programme of work suitable for the HBCCT. The PoW will identify short, medium- and long-term programmes for both under the above headings.

Actions to include:

- Developing a relationship with the Neptune Co-working Hub as part of our programme to support local small businesses
- Identifying ways to promote local shops and businesses – New Tech Design (Geek) Fair, Fashion Show
- Establishing and supporting a new central community/cultural centre
- Developing tourist information through on-line media and office as well as continuing the ambassadors programme.

There are also a number of projects which would be undertaken by the CIC. These could include:

- Getting involved with helping shape and improve Bayfest. An example of this could be breaking the event down in to several mini-festivals e.g. sports, culture, music, business and coastal fest
- Year of the coast initiative
- Work with Canterbury CC on the development of Beach Street and the development of the seafront
- Work with Kent CC and CCC on the Library development
- Improving the High Street realm

## **9. Covid19 and afterwards**

Many seaside resorts that were built to serve domestic tourism began struggle in the 1970s, when international travel became a more affordable option for British holidaymakers.

Some towns have since been able to reinvent themselves and diversify their local economies, such as Brighton, while others have struggled to shake off the perception of decline. In both cases, the result is a lack of dynamism in the local economy, pockets of deprivation, and a sense of isolation – the feeling of being at the ‘end of the line’ and overlooked by central and local government.

It is important to point out that this is not true of all coastal towns or seaside resorts, however when grouped together coastal communities seem to suffer from these social challenges to a greater extent than other areas of the country.

While they may share a common geographical trait, coastal communities are not uniform in the structure of their local economies. Seaside resorts, such as Herne Bay, are a clearly identifiable group of places because of their history of tourism and its continuing presence as the anchor of the local economy. They also generally share characteristics that differentiate them from inland areas, such as specialist tourist infrastructure (e.g. promenades and piers), holiday accommodation, and a distinct 'resort' character built into the local environment. They also share socio-economic characteristics like in-migration, an older population and a higher proportion of seasonal employment.

There are four specific characteristics of coastal towns – and seaside resorts in particular – that have particularly exposed them to the economic impact of this pandemic.

**Reliance on a single industry:** many seaside resorts depend on tourism as a key employer and driver of economic activity – in these cases the sector essentially sustains the local economy. Coastal towns were found to be the most vulnerable to the economic impact of the lockdown – the Centre for Towns did an analysis of the four sectors most at-risk due to the lockdown (accommodation, arts and leisure, non-food retail, pubs and restaurants) and found that coastal towns were most exposed with on average 28% of the population employed in shutdown sectors, but this went as high as 56% in Newquay and 55% in Skegness. Figures are not available for Herne Bay, but these are indicative of what could be happening in the Bay.

The crisis began at the end of winter when cash reserves for tourism businesses are generally at their lowest levels. As such the pandemic could not have happened at a worse time for the tourism sector, with a lockdown beginning just before Easter weekend, which usually provides the income boost needed to stabilise finances and repay debts built up over the previous winter. It is now increasingly likely that much of the summer season will be lost – especially for much of the retail, tourism and hospitality sector that can only operate at reduced capacity under social distancing guidelines. The seasonality of the local economy means that this is equivalent to the loss of a whole year.

**Low local purchasing power:** In 2019, research carried out by Social Market Foundation found that there was a 'coastal community wage gap' which has widened in recent years – average employee annual pay was around £4,700 lower than the rest of the UK. Coastal towns also top lists of places with the highest numbers of people getting into difficulties with debt. Having more money circulating within a local economy can help support an economic uplift in the recovery, but the low purchasing power in coastal towns means that these places will have a harder time bouncing back than more affluent areas.

### **A new kind of investment**

There will be a crucial need for investment to rebuild and regenerate local economies after the pandemic – this is especially true of coastal towns which have been hit hardest due to high concentration of businesses and employment in

shutdown sectors. Coronavirus has exposed the need for a fresh approach to how we invest in places. Given the scale of challenge ahead, there is no space for extractive investment that siphons profits out of an area to private shareholders, often at the expense of local people who need jobs. According to the Resolution Foundation, employment fell by 430,000 in April, economic inactivity is rising, and job vacancies have fallen by half.<sup>19</sup> Seaside resorts that had a seasonal economy, heavily reliant on tourism (and hospitality), faced a persistent set of socioeconomic issues before the pandemic. The same is true of those ex-industrial coastal towns which have struggled to adapt to the UK's increasingly deindustrialised, service-based economy. The social economy, with its commitment to putting people first, can play an essential role in the recovery, while tackling some of the underlying issues facing these areas. Now is the time to focus investment on developing resilient local economies in coastal areas. Supporting businesses with a social conscience that put income and employment as their most important outcomes, over profit-maximisation.

(This information comes from the Social Investment Business (SIB) report 'COVID-19 & Coastal Communities, July 2020')

Undoubtably the Coronavirus will have had a significant effect on the economy of the town but the rebuild also gives HBCCT an opportunity to play a major part in the regeneration of the town.

All the projects identified so far in this paper will assist the town to recover. The major addition that should be made is the provision of assistance to local businesses in identifying recovery grants and ensuring that Herne Bay is included in any district, county, regional or national programmes. Working with CCC and the LEP, and ensuring a voice at KCC level, will be important in this respect. Working with SIB may also be crucial with SIB having taken over the funding once managed by the Dept for Local Government and Communities.

In light of the current crisis, the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) Strategic Board has agreed on an economy support package that will see the LEP's Growing Places Funding repurposed to help employees and businesses adapt and thrive in a post-COVID economy.

SELEP's Growing Places Fund (GPF) is a revolving loan fund that currently has a pot of £22 million available for investment. At its meeting on the 12th June 2020, the Board agreed to repurpose part of the GPF to allocate:

- £2 million to establish a COVID-19 Skills Fund;
- £2.4 million to establish a COVID-19 SME Business Support Fund; and
- £1 million to extend SELEP's existing Sector Support Fund programme to 2022.

HBCCT needs to be able to access these funds as well as advise local businesses on their availability.

HBCCT will work with these agencies, employers, and local authorities, to encourage and develop economic support and investment in Herne Bay.

## 10. SWOT analysis

A brief SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses Threats and Opportunities) analysis has been carried out on our current position. A similar analysis will need to be done on each of the projects the Team wishes to adopt.

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community</li> <li>• Attractive coastline with underwater conservation areas</li> <li>• Resilient unemployment levels</li> <li>• Resilience of existing shops</li> <li>• Increasing attractiveness as an investment area</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of a coherent vision as to what Herne Bay should be - family seaside resort?</li> <li>• Public perception of Herne Bay</li> <li>• Social deprivation</li> <li>• Declining tourism product</li> <li>• Lack of a coherent centre</li> <li>• Poor shopping choice &amp; experience leads to leakage of the spend out of the bay</li> <li>• Poor public realm &amp; signage</li> <li>• Lack of tourist accommodation</li> <li>• Lack of tourist information (office &amp; web site)</li> <li>• Lack of infrastructure</li> <li>• Under utilised memorial park</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase networking (SELEP, council, Coastal Communities Alliance, Cities &amp; Local Growth Unit, other voluntary groups, doctors)</li> <li>• Increase use of Neptune hub</li> <li>• Improve tourist signage</li> <li>• Create tourist information office</li> <li>• Improve shopping experience</li> <li>• Improve public realm</li> <li>• Increase tourist attractions on seafront</li> <li>• New builds / new expectation</li> <li>• Renew derelict seafront areas</li> <li>• Increase use of memorial park</li> <li>• New sports hub at Redrow Fairways</li> <li>• Expansion of ambassadors</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of funding</li> <li>• Corvid19 aftermath</li> <li>• Lack of council / public &amp; voluntary groups support</li> <li>• Parking charges</li> </ul>

## **11. The Programme of Work**

The programme of work needs to be developed which will implement this plan.

The programme will need to identify those elements that should be carried out by the HBCCT and those more relevant to the CIC. It should include:

Delivering the plan

- Key projects – based around the headline areas identified above
- Short term goals/ actions for the first 6 months
- Medium term goals/actions
- Performance measures
- Barriers
- Resources
- Costs
- Value
- Funding

## **Addendum**

### **Some grant funding sources for community projects**

#### **Funding Central**

This is a free resource for charities, voluntary organisations and social enterprises. It lists thousands of funding and finance opportunities, plus a wealth of tools and information to support and develop a sustainable income strategy.

[www.fundingcentral.org.uk](http://www.fundingcentral.org.uk)

#### **The National Lottery Community Fund**

Responsible for distributing money raised for good causes by the National Lottery. This totals around £6 billion since 2004.

[www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/](http://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/)

#### **The National Lottery Heritage Fund**

Sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage through innovative investment in projects with a lasting impact on people and places. With around £375million a year to invest in new projects and a considerable body of knowledge, they are a leading advocate for the value of heritage to modern life.

[www.heritagefund.org.uk/](http://www.heritagefund.org.uk/)

#### **The People's Postcode Lottery**

Offers funding of between £500 and £250,000 for good causes in England, Scotland and Wales.

[www.postcodetrust.org.uk](http://www.postcodetrust.org.uk)

#### **Comic Relief**

Funds work that aims to achieve at least one of its five themes –better futures, healthier finances, safer lives, stronger communities, fairer society.

[www.comicrelief.com/funding/funding-opportunities](http://www.comicrelief.com/funding/funding-opportunities)

#### **UKCF**

This is the umbrella organisation for all community foundations, providing philanthropic advice to clients and delivering UK-wide grant-making programmes.

[www.ukcommunityfoundations.org/](http://www.ukcommunityfoundations.org/)

#### **The Landfill Communities Fund**

This fund enables operators of landfill sites to contribute money to enrolled Environmental Bodies to carry out projects that meet environmental objectives contained in the Landfill Tax Regulations.

[www.entrust.org.uk/landfill-community-fund/](http://www.entrust.org.uk/landfill-community-fund/)



## **Housing associations**

Many housing associations have charitable foundations that support projects that will benefit the people and places close to properties they manage.

Examples include

[www.myclarionhousing.com/advice-and-support/clarion-futures-communities/grants/](http://www.myclarionhousing.com/advice-and-support/clarion-futures-communities/grants/)  
[www.sanctuary-housing.co.uk/about-the-grand-ideas-fund](http://www.sanctuary-housing.co.uk/about-the-grand-ideas-fund)

## **The Community Shares Unit**

Community shares are sold to finance enterprises serving a community purpose. They have been used to finance shops, pubs, community buildings, renewable energy initiatives, and local food schemes, along with other community-based

[www.ventures.communityshares.org.uk/](http://www.ventures.communityshares.org.uk/)

## **Major banks**

All have charitable foundations that fund local and national charities. One example is the Lloyds/TSB Foundation, which supports organisations that are working to tackle disadvantage across England and Wales. Our bank Unity Trust has a community programme which offers competitive loans for community schemes, some quite major investments.

[www.lloydsbankfoundation.org.uk/](http://www.lloydsbankfoundation.org.uk/);  
[www.unity.co.uk/?s=Unity+in+the+Community](http://www.unity.co.uk/?s=Unity+in+the+Community)

## **KnowHow NonProfit**

This is the place for non-profit people to learn and share what they have learnt with others. Whether you work in a large charity, are setting up your own social enterprise or are helping out your local community group, this site is for you.

[www.knowhownonprofit.org/funding](http://www.knowhownonprofit.org/funding)

## **Crowdfunding**

A system in which an organisation makes a pitch and, hopefully, people become interested and enthused enough to make a financial pledge, but this is only redeemed if the total is achieved. It probably works best for fairly small (capital) projects e.g. up to £25,000.

[www.spacehive.com](http://www.spacehive.com)

## **Natural Flood Management**

This fund is available for community projects to help fund natural flood management schemes across England. Projects that aim to reduce flood risk, improve wildlife habitats and biodiversity and support the development of partnership working in communities are invited to apply. Funding can also be used as match funding alongside other grant programmes.

[www.catchmentbasedapproach.org/resources/tools-and-casestudies/deliver/nfm](http://www.catchmentbasedapproach.org/resources/tools-and-casestudies/deliver/nfm)

## **The Arts Council**

The Arts Council states that 'the South East is home to 103 National Portfolio Organisations and between 2018-22, they will receive a combined investment of more than £167 million. We also invest in many more artists, creative practitioners, and arts and cultural organisations through our Arts Council National Lottery Project Grants.' Grants are currently suspended due to the pandemic but there are Covid19 support programmes which may be applicable. The Coastal Communities Association works with the Arts Council on a number of projects.

[www.artscouncil.org.uk/](http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/)

documents/hbcct development plan 2020-23/hbcct development plan - second draft.docx