



# town investment PLAN

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HEREFORD  
GREEN & FAIR

JANUARY 2021



## FOREWORD

Developing this Town Investment Plan has been the catalyst for an unprecedented conversation in our city about who we are and who we want to be.

We have engaged with our different communities as never before, to understand what they see as the biggest challenges and opportunities for Hereford in the years and decades ahead and they have responded with comments, suggestions, criticisms, complaints - and a range of exciting investment proposals.

Our Town Board has scrutinised and evaluated these proposals rigorously against an ambitious vision for our city which reflects local and national priorities, resulting in a connected programme of capital work which addresses the stark challenges we currently face - low social mobility, a debilitating skills gap, deprivation south of the river, the climate crisis, the ongoing impact of Covid - and which also creates necessary space and appetite for fair, inclusive and sustainable growth for decades to come.

The result is a bold plan for today and an exciting pipeline for tomorrow.

Community engagement during the Covid lockdowns of 2020 and 2021 hasn't been without its challenges but tapping into this little city's innate resilience and creativity has meant that we could reach thousands of people via online sessions and a digital survey.

With so many ideas on the table, prioritising investment projects wasn't easy either but our Board rose to the challenge with a process which totalled more than 16 hours of collaborative

deliberation and decision-making in addition to 14 regular Board meetings.

This extended conversation has brought us to this point: seven interconnected projects at the heart of a plan which builds on transformative developments already in train. We believe that these projects create the potential to reduce Hereford's £250 million annual GVA gap with the UK average to enhance the social mobility of its people in the years ahead and to make it a fairer and greener place to live.

This Town Investment Plan reflects our powerful collective commitment to levelling up Hereford; a commitment to the skills and inclusive futures of a unique heritage city and a commitment to a green and fair place where people, technology and enterprise will always thrive.



**Lauren Rogers - Chair**  
#StrongerHereford Towns Fund Board

# OUR PLAN IN FILM



We've created a two minute video which we feel encapsulates the essence and spirit of our plan for Hereford. In keeping with the plan itself, you'll meet just some of the passionate people who share a vision for our little city and have collaborated selflessly and with such creativity and energy.

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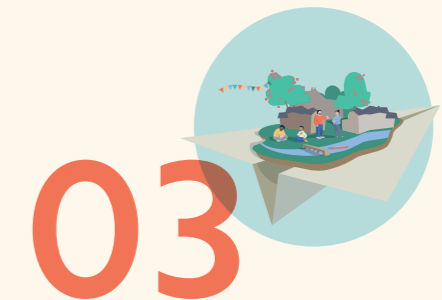
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# OUR VISION

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

"HEREFORD HAS  
SOME AMAZING  
PEOPLE DOING SOME  
FANTASTIC THINGS."

Karen Usher, Co-founder,  
NMITE



OUR PLAN IS ROOTED IN AN  
EXTENSIVE DIALOGUE WITH THE  
PEOPLE OF HEREFORD WHICH  
HAS ESTABLISHED THE PRIORITIES  
AND ASPIRATIONS OF ALL  
COMMUNITIES IN OUR CITY.







# CONTEXT ANALYSIS



## LOCATION AND PROFILE

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

Hereford makes up 25% of the population of the county and accounts for a significant proportion of its productivity. Overall, the county's GVA is low at just £20,738 per head versus the England average of £28,096<sup>[4]</sup>. This is our biggest levelling up challenge and is a function of low wages and low skills. Hereford is 5% behind the national average of people skilled to NVQ level 4 and above.

Hereford's strongest assets are its unique heritage and distinctive rural identity, with 316 listed buildings, 12% of its total footprint given over to green space, a fabulous river corridor and a globally significant collection of treasures including its Cathedral, Magna Carta, Mappa Mundi and the Herefordshire Hoard. It is also home to a thriving artisan food and drink culture and a vibrant creative community.

**62%**

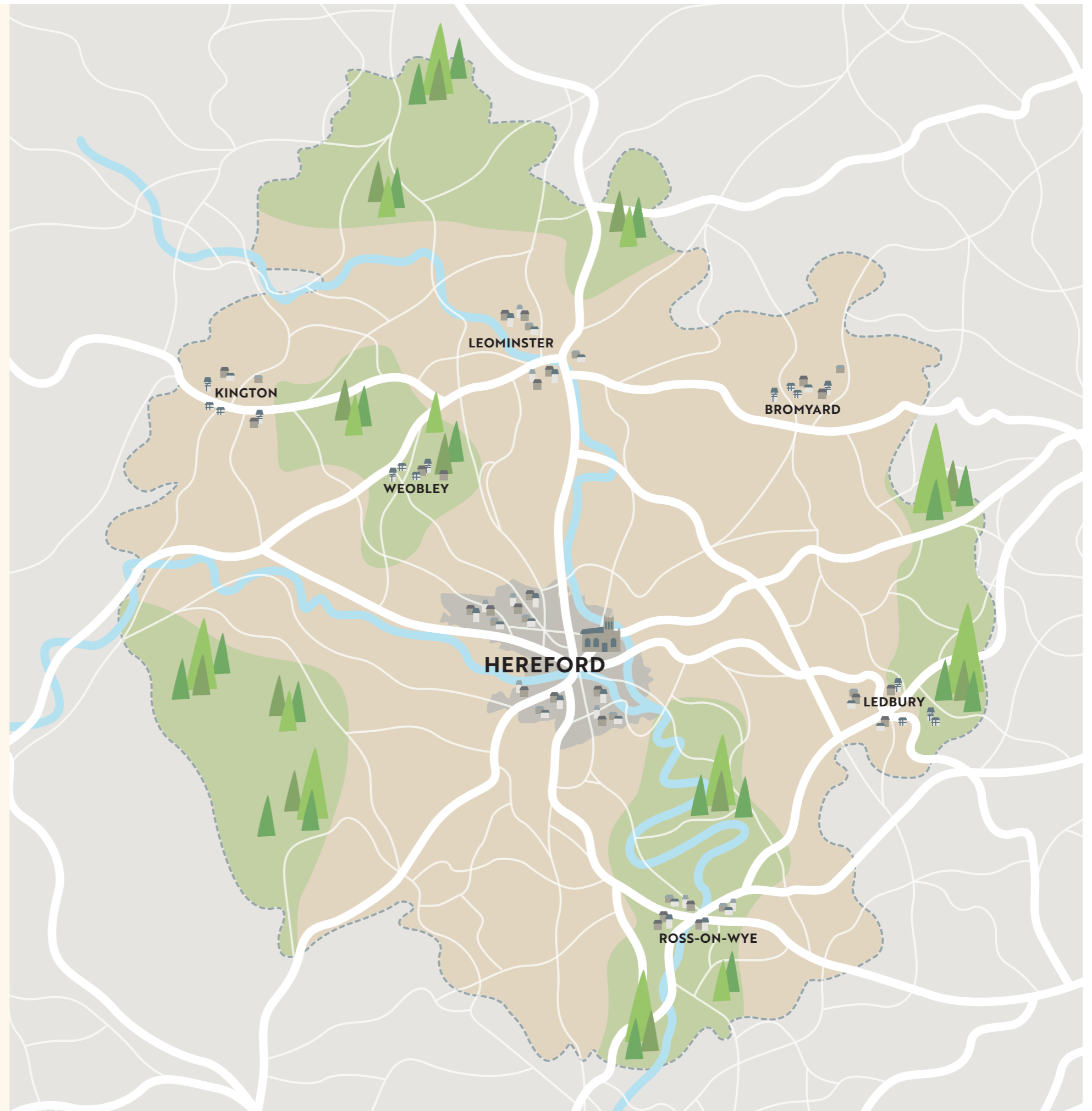
OF RESIDENTS OF  
WORKING AGE.

A POPULATION OF

**55,800**

SUB-REGIONAL DRIVER FOR

**192,000**





Hereford has a strong educational offer, with the nationally-renowned independent Hereford College of Arts (HCA), Herefordshire and Ludlow College, Hereford Sixth Form College and the Royal National College for the Blind. Hereford's reputation as a city of learning will be bolstered significantly when the New Model in Technology and Engineering (NMITE) opens in 2021.

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

The sectors with the city's highest location quotients are manufacturing, water supply, wholesale/retail, accommodation/food service activities, real estate and health/social work.

**Key employers include<sup>[6]</sup>:**



**Food and drink**

Avara, Heineken/Bulmers, Chase Distillery, Tyrrells, Weston's Cider, Ornuo Ingredients and Wye Valley Brewery.



**Advanced manufacturing and engineering**

ATN Europe, KGD, Wiggin Special Metals and S & A Group. Skylon Park in Hereford is part of the Herefordshire-Gloucestershire-Worcestershire Cyber Valley; the UK's largest cyber cluster outside London. It is also the home of the Marches Growth Hub. Cyber companies located in Hereford include Serbus and Simtech-IT. ETL Systems and Zovolt are based within the broader hinterland of the city.[DTI]



**Defence**

Three Special Forces regiments are based in Hereford, with strengths in covert reconnaissance, counterterrorism, direct action and hostage rescue.



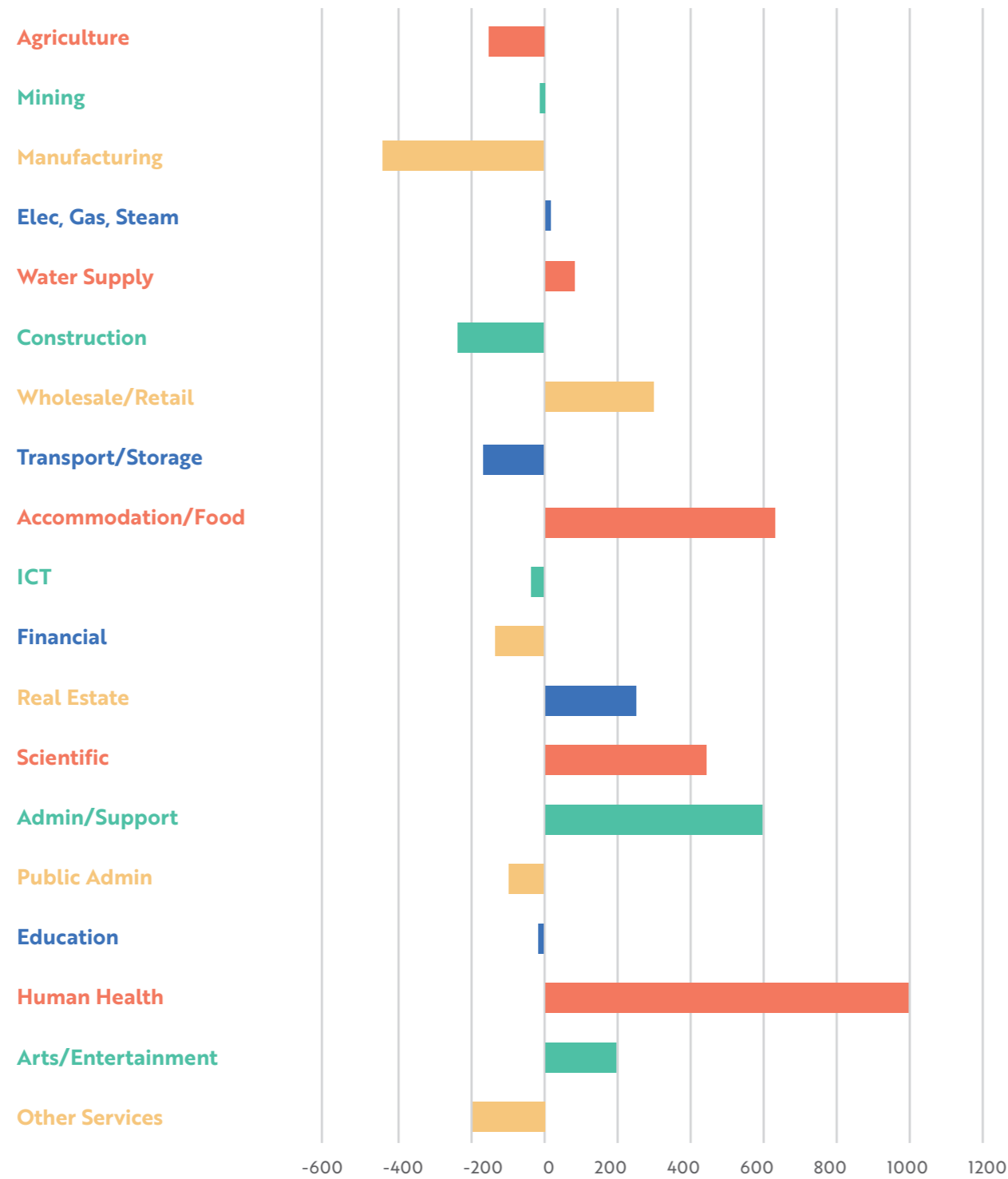
**Construction**

Companies include Rehau, Taylor Lane Timber Frame and Central Roofing.





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



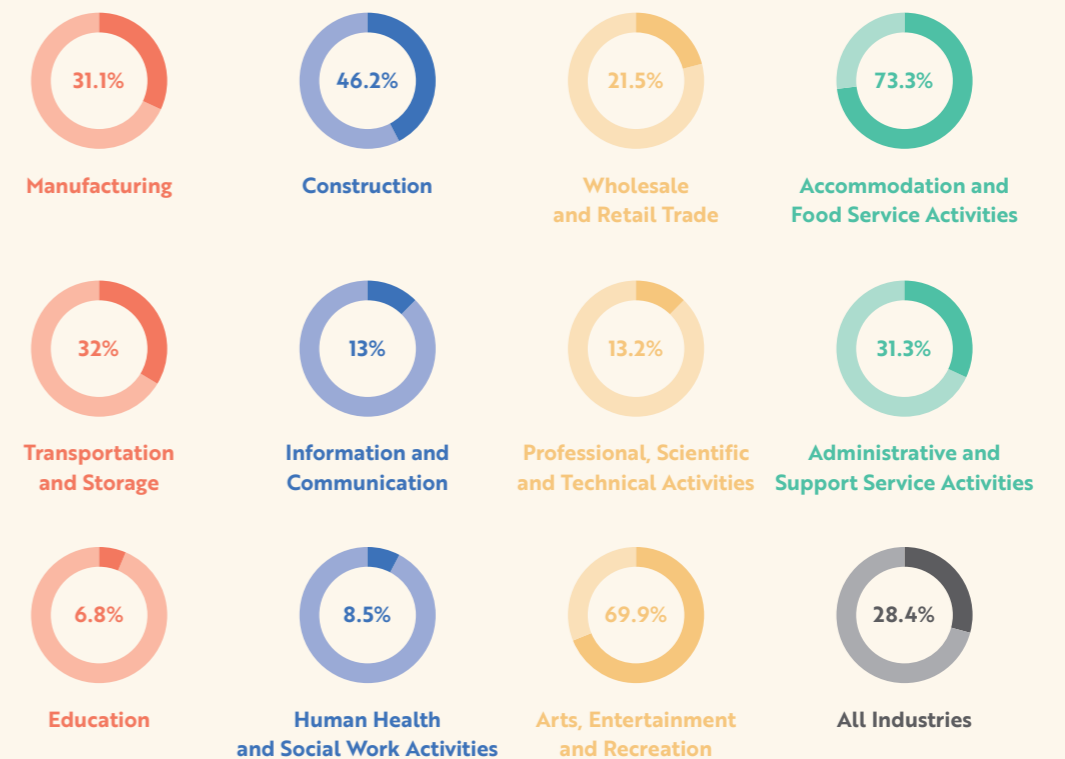
Manufacturing, construction and other service jobs have experienced the most significant adjustment due to macroeconomic change during the 2015-19 period with retail, accommodation and food services (a proxy for tourism in part) holding up particularly well.

Central to the drive to increase Hereford's productivity has been the development of Skylon Park, the city's enterprise zone. Building on this success, the Herefordshire-Goucestershire-Worcestershire Alliance LEPs are aiming to double the number of people currently employed in the sector to 10,000 by 2028.

Alongside the potential of Skylon Park, NMITE (the new Hereford based University) aims to achieve full capacity of 5,000 engineering students by 2031. NMITE was enabled by a Government start-up grant of £25 million in 2018.

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

Applying national projections for the number of employees by sector on furlough based on the diagrams below indicate 9,323 are currently on furlough in Hereford at a rate of 28%, broadly on a par with the national average.



Estimated percentage of sector workforce furloughed UK<sup>[9]</sup>

## KEY ASSETS AND STRENGTHS

Our plan will build on Hereford's core assets and develop their potential to drive a step change in economic performance, with parallel emphases on skills development and place-shaping.

### Global and national heritage assets

A world class cathedral and treasures of international significance including royal charters dating back to Richard I, the Friars Street Collections of historical objects/antiquities and 361 listed buildings<sup>[10]</sup>.

### Resilient city centre

Significant potential to repurpose the city centre re-emphasising links with its rural hinterland, with Herefordshire Council as a major landlord of key assets such as Maylord Shopping Centre and the Museum. In October 2020, Zzoomm announced that it will be providing a new full fibre network to cover the entire city.

### A signature river corridor

Providing opportunities around enhanced leisure and green transport options. More widely, the city hinterland includes outstanding landscape, food and drink and leisure assets.

### Increasingly vibrant cultural economy

Featuring the oldest classical music festival in the world, the triennial Three Choirs Festival. Also the regionally prominent Courtyard Theatre. Key initiatives include the Powerhouse Theatre Company, Encore Music Service and a growing cluster of maker and creative businesses.

### A creative social economy

Well-established organisations linked to inclusive development, including Rural Media and Pedicargo. Hereford enjoys high levels of volunteering, self-help

and participation in community activities. Leadership is provided by Herefordshire Voluntary Organisations Support Service (HVOSS) and Vennture.

### Pool of 7,000 full and part time post 16 students (14% of population) and four centres of learning

HCA and NMITE have a nationally distinctive profile. We recognise that our young people must feel that they have a stake in the future of our city; the inclusion of the Holmer Extreme Sports Hub in our investment plan reflects this.

### Platform for economic development via Skylon Park

Including new business space for early start and start-up businesses in the Shell Store business incubation centre.

### Significant defence cluster

With significant high technology capability.

### A dynamic food and drink sector

A recent survey by Legges of Bromyard identified more than 120 independent food and drink producers in the county. There is an emerging artisan food quarter in the heart of Hereford's medieval city.

### Increasing significance of health and care as a growing employer

Spearheaded by the Wye Valley NHS Trust, the core impetus for One Herefordshire, which joined the Government's One Public Estate (OPE) programme in April 2017.

"WE SHOULD CONNECT MORE WITH OUR STUNNING RURAL COUNTRYSIDE. HEREFORD SHOULD BE THE GREENEST CITY IN THE COUNTRY."

Mike Truelove, CEO,  
Hereford BID

"SINCE STARTING A RULE OF TUM IN LATE 2013, IT HAS BEEN A PRIVILEGE TO BE AT THE FOREFRONT OF THE BLOSSOMING FOOD REVOLUTION IN HEREFORD."

Dorian Kirk, Co-founder,  
A Rule of Tum restaurants

"WE WORK WITH OTHER VOLUNTEER ORGANISATIONS TO PROVIDE A WEB OF CARE FOR 5,000 VULNERABLE PEOPLE IN HEREFORD WHO FALL OUTSIDE STATUTORY SERVICES."

Rob Thomas MBE, Lead Executive  
Officer, Vennture



# EVIDENCE OF NEED, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

## 1. ENTERPRISE AND INNOVATION

Hereford sustains much of the economic dynamism of the county. It represents approaching 30% of the population of Herefordshire and its stock of jobs is 44% of the county total<sup>[11]</sup>. 24% of Hereford's jobs are in knowledge intensive sectors, on a par with the England average of 25%<sup>[12]</sup>. The city has a job density of 91% compared to the England average of 86%<sup>[13]</sup>. Origin and destination data from the 2011 census show the long-term relationship between the city and the core towns which it sustains:

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

Whilst the city performs well versus its local geography, wider statistics demonstrate the enterprise and innovation challenges that it faces. Notwithstanding the key role played by the city, wages at place of work across Herefordshire are £490 per week versus an English average of £589. At place of residence, they are £533. This demonstrates that earnings in Herefordshire are almost £100 per week lower than the national average but Herefordshire residents earn wages which are £50 lower per week than the national average<sup>[14]</sup>. The clear inference from these statistics is that residents in the county earning higher wages out-commute. This is further borne out by the fact that GVA per head in Herefordshire is 27% lower than the national average<sup>[15]</sup>, exacerbated by the relatively high proportion of workers in low-paying agricultural jobs. In parallel with this research we commissioned a socio-economic analysis of Hereford from GL Hearn and this is attached as an appendix.





## CHALLENGES

### Availability of skilled workers

35.8% of Herefordshire's population is qualified at NVQ4 and above, compared to a GB average of 40.3%<sup>[16]</sup>

### Underperformance of the tourism sector

Hereford's tourism performance is modest. It only has the same proportion of jobs in accommodation and food services and a lower proportion of jobs in arts, entertainment and recreation than the England average. It would not be unreasonable for a city with the potential of Hereford in this context to have 3-5 times more employees in these sectors than the national average<sup>[17]</sup>. Hereford Business Improvement District (BID) track footfall and they identified 743,000 unique visitors (a proxy for tourists) to Hereford in 2018. This compares to 4 million visitors to Lincoln, a broadly similar heritage city<sup>[18]</sup> and 3.4 million visitors to Worcester<sup>[19]</sup>. Visitor numbers for the whole of Herefordshire in the last published STEAM report (2015) were just 5 million suggesting considerable underperformance<sup>[20]</sup>.

### Location and access

Hereford is relatively isolated. It has poor rail and road links to major economic centres, which limit the scale of our markets and access to a wider workforce. New thinking is essential to overcome these challenges, addressing the development of local assets including land, capital and people. Covid has been a disruptor in this context, creating opportunities to repurpose the city centre and to move to a more sustainable and diverse model of e-enabled and higher value employment.

### Support for innovation and development

The lack of a dedicated higher education presence in Hereford (until the creation of NMITE) has led to the need for external agencies to lead the R & D process for businesses development in the city.

### Physical connectivity

Poor connectivity between the less prosperous south of the city and the north. The need for congestion reduction. The need for improved active travel infrastructure. The need for the city to transition from a single-driver-car mode to a different default to address the climate crisis.



## OPPORTUNITIES

### Wider Impact

The development of Hereford will support the wider sustainability of the county, particularly the five other towns of scale. Additionally, Hereford already attracts people for retail and education from mid-Wales and there are opportunities to extend this to employment and other services.

### Sectoral Growth

There are opportunities to expand key sectors, including tourism, food and drink and the environmental and social economy sectors which sustain Hereford's unique character. We are committed to addressing the climate and ecological crisis.

### Digital Connectivity

Zzoomm is committing private investment to create a full fibre network which will e-enable the city and its business growth potential more widely.



## 2. PEOPLE

Hereford has a higher proportion of part-time jobs (42.6%) than the national average (32%)<sup>[21]</sup>. It has a projected 9,300 workers on furlough as a result of Covid. The city also has 15% fewer workers qualified to NVQ level 4 and above than the national average<sup>[22]</sup>. At a county level, wages earned in Hereford make up 44% of all incomes, with the county average salary almost exactly £100 per week lower than the national average<sup>[23]</sup>.

Hereford scores lower than the England median in relation to income, education and living environment domains within the English Indices of Deprivation 2019<sup>[24]</sup>. Herefordshire is a cold spot for social mobility; it is one of the worst 20% of local authorities in England in terms of school achievement for disadvantaged children who go on to get a good job and secure housing<sup>[25]</sup>.



**£100**  
PER WEEK LOWER  
THAN NATIONAL  
AVERAGE

**9,300**  
WORKERS ON FURLOUGH

**42.6%** PROPORTION  
OF PART-TIME  
JOBS



"GETTING AND KEEPING  
GOOD PEOPLE IN  
HEREFORD IS A  
NIGHTMARE."

John Reed, Director, Avara Foods

"YOU TRAIN THEM UP  
FOR SIX MONTHS AND  
THEY LEAVE AFTER  
TWO YEARS."

Debbie Gittoes, Managing  
Director, Arctic Circle

"WE ARE AN AMBITIOUS AND  
HIGHLY CREATIVE PRODUCT DESIGN  
CONSULTANCY BASED IN HEREFORD  
AND WE WORK ALONGSIDE SOME  
OF THE UK'S BIGGEST HOUSEHOLD  
NAMES AND STRATEGIC GROWTH  
ORGANISATIONS. WE ARE LIVING PROOF  
OF THE POTENTIAL OF THIS CITY."

Kristo Shivachev, Founder and Managing Director,  
Simple Design Works



## CHALLENGES

### Skills and training

The low level of skills (as evidenced by the Annual Population Survey and the English Indices of Deprivation) represents the biggest challenge to the economic development of our city. Until recently, the lack of a higher education offer has been a key challenge in terms of meeting the needs of employers.

### Employment and wages

The ratio between part and full time jobs needs to be addressed to ensure that people in Hereford are able to achieve their full potential in the labour market and to increase the productivity of the city and county. The Government's "Good Work Plan" is important in this context: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/good-work-plan>. Wage levels need to increase to fuel the sustainable economic development of the city and wider area.

### Social mobility and deprivation

The area south of the River Wye has the poorest outcomes in the city in terms of deprivation, social mobility and skills attainment. South Wye must be a key focus of long-term strategic thinking and intervention.



## OPPORTUNITIES

### Skills Development

The operational inception of NMITE and the regionally outstanding offer of HCA (which has an objective to double its HE numbers) both have potential to stimulate the development of a highly distinctive workforce in Hereford. Work is currently underway to develop a skills board in Herefordshire and we have engaged with this initiative to ensure that all learning providers can contribute to our skills agenda.

### Quality of Place

Post-Covid shifts in commuting and working patterns present an opportunity to attract skilled talent to Hereford on the basis of its rural appeal and relative affordability in terms of living costs.

### Partnership Working

There is a track record of collaboration between public and voluntary sector organisations through initiatives such as Building Better Opportunities Herefordshire. This is one of two such projects in the Marches LEP area, in which nine partner organisations are working together to help those aged 19+ furthest away from employment. Other programmes include In2 and No Wrong Door which focus on different age groups.

### Social Economy

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



### 3. PLACE

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

Overall, the number of jobs in wholesale and retail in the city rose by over 300 between 2015 and 2019. 12% of the city area<sup>[26]</sup> is given over to green space and it has 361 listed buildings<sup>[27]</sup> and a world class heritage offer.

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

There is still space for consolidation at Skylon Park where the establishment of a food and drink research facility has been identified as the next stage of its development.

There have been significant investments by the Marches LEP in Hereford, including £16 million in the city link road, £1 million for an integrated wetlands project, and £1.6 million to accelerate the NMITE Skylon Campus.

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

Projects being funded by Herefordshire Council in Hereford include £5.5 million of city centre improvements. This project builds on temporary measures for walking and cycling implemented during Covid, with the aim of increasing footfall and the economic potential of businesses, improving active travel opportunities and air quality and promoting private investment in property in order to create a modern city centre environment.

"WITH THE REMOVAL OF SO MANY FACILITIES, SOUTH WYE HAS LOST SOME OF ITS COMMUNITY SPIRIT. WITH TARGETED INVESTMENT, WE COULD BRING IT BACK."

Chris Tipping, Co-founder The DM Lab, CEO of Belmont Wanderers, lifetime South Wye resident

"I CAME FROM DENVER TO HEREFORD TO WORK AT NMITE. I DIDN'T COME TO NMITE SO THAT I COULD LIVE IN HEREFORD. NOW THAT I'M HERE, I'VE DISCOVERED THERE'S NOTHING MUCH MORE TO DO AT WEEKENDS BEYOND SITTING IN PUBS AND GOING FOR WALKS."

Sarah Jayne Hitt, Professor of Liberal Studies, NMITE

"SINCE THE EMERGENCE OF OUR FANTASTIC LOCAL, ARTISAN FOOD/ DRINK SCENE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A NEW 'VISIT HEREFORDSHIRE' WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN, WE ARE BEGINNING TO SEE A REAL CHANGE IN FORTUNES."

Kath Hey, the current Mayor of Hereford





## CHALLENGES

### Unrealised tourism potential

Hereford is an important heritage centre with assets that have significantly underperformed their potential as tourist attractions. Our current museum and art gallery, along with aspects of the Cathedral visitor offer, are in urgent need of contemporary refreshment and updating.

### Covid

Following national norm projections, furlough levels equate to 21.5% of wholesale and retail jobs, 73% of accommodation and food jobs and 70% of arts, entertainment and recreation jobs. This level of disruption has significantly increased the structural challenge to the viability of our city centre.

### Dislocation between north and south of the city

The River Wye acts as an economic barrier between the north and the south of the city, with the south manifesting significant differential deprivation compared to the north. This is also a challenge in terms of connecting the "out of town" economic growth potential of Skylon Park to the south of the city and the city centre.

### Inhibiting road Infrastructure

The road layout of the city centre, particularly the A49 and A439 and only one viable river crossing, effectively split the city into different, relatively disconnected segments which inhibit synergy and complementary development within its built core. They also introduce significant city centre pollution<sup>[28]</sup>.



## OPPORTUNITIES

### Globally and nationally significant heritage

Scope to build a powerful heritage and visitor offer linked to the very high number of treasures and listed buildings in the city centre. There is real local enthusiasm to build on this as a driving force.

### River Wye

Opportunities to improve tourist access to the river and wider recreational activities, increasing the value of riverside properties and enhancing the scale of leisure activities in the city.

### City centre redevelopment

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

### Alternative transport options

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



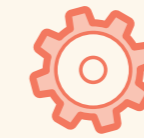
## 4. TRANSPORT AND CONNECTIVITY

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

On the one hand, studies have found that improvements to the public realm can boost local trading by up to 40%. Schemes which increase levels of physical activity, such as additional walking and cycling, have been found to generate 'very high' value for money when assessed against HM Treasury criteria.

On the other hand, engagement with Herefordshire businesses has highlighted how traffic delays lose them time delivering products and costs them money putting them at a competitive disadvantage.

Translating this analysis to deliverable policy proposals, Herefordshire Council has proposed various sustainable approaches to the long-term future of transport in Hereford. These involve reducing the impact of the private motor car by promoting walking, cycling, electric buses and public spaces and moving away from the provision of a western bypass for the city. Their work in relation to connectivity has informed the development of this theme in the Town Investment Plan.



### CHALLENGES

#### Reducing severance and rebalancing movement towards sustainable travel

The need to reprioritise key city centre routes in favour of pedestrian movements to enhance connectivity between the city centre, historic core, South Wye and Skylon Park, which will also improve air quality.

#### Supporting regeneration

Enhancing the environment and open spaces in key areas to improve quality of life, unlock sites and enable development.



### OPPORTUNITIES

#### Transport strategy and traffic management

Investments in sustainable, low carbon transport, enhancing the effectiveness of the key public transport nodes such as Station Approach, promoting the development of new walking and cycling options in the city centre, reducing the impact of pollution and increasing the economic connectivity of key sites.





## 5. CLEAN GROWTH

Clean growth is core to our vision and was our first project assessment criterion. Our Town Investment Plan (TIP) demonstrates our commitment to transitioning Hereford to carbon neutrality by 2030 and this is reflected throughout our TIP, including building standards for construction projects; emphasis on quality of life; connectivity through public transport; and the Soil from the City, food recycling project.

This commitment echoes the approach of Herefordshire Council. In September 2019, elected members agreed to accelerate the reduction of emissions and to aspire to become carbon neutral by 2030-2031.

"HEREFORD  
SHOULD BE A  
GARDEN CITY."

Alexis Patterson, CEO, Three Choirs Festival







## CHALLENGES

### Net zero innovation

There is a pressing need to trial, test and develop potential solutions to achieve this target as an integral part of the delivery of the Towns Fund in Hereford.

### Delivering clean growth

We have recognised the imperative to embed the principles of clean growth across our portfolio of investment projects and to utilise the skills and expertise of our climate commission professionals in order to meet the clean growth aspirations for the city.



## OPPORTUNITIES

### Scale and form

Hereford's compact form makes it an ideal location for sustainable growth. More creative thinking is needed to ensure a cohesive set of connections with development opportunities in the most challenged economic area, south of the River Wye.

### Social economy

We have identified a number of highly innovative proposals linked to the social economy of the city. They include a retail waste recycling project and the provision of electric vehicles alongside the development of new greenways.

### Digital and fibre opportunities

The proposals to increase the scale of fibre and digital connections, driven in part by Covid, provide scope to reduce the use of the internal combustion engine and to enhance the e-enabled reach and economic development potential of the city.

### Transport Strategy

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

## CLIMATE FOR INVESTMENT

Our investment landscape in the last decade has been dominated by a number of transformational capital projects, all of which have achieved or are fast approaching sustainable forward velocity.



British Land's £90 million landmark investment in the Old Market retail and leisure complex was the first significant retail development in Hereford in 25 years and has enabled Hereford to recapture regional retail market share [source: British Land]. It opened in 2014 with 32 tenants and annual footfall expectations of 3.5 million visitors; in the ensuing five years, footfall consistently exceeded 5 million.



Skylon Park has attracted 38 new companies, creating more than 350 new jobs. Herefordshire Council committed £16 million to Skylon in 2013, establishing the required infrastructure and remediating the site. The Marches LEP has provided a further £5.4 million in 2020/21 to develop the North Magazine site, home to the Shell Store, Midlands Centre for Cyber Security and NMITE.



NMITE is our most ambitious investment. So far, it has attracted £50 million of public and private sector funding support (£31 million cash and £19 million in-kind) and has a well-established fund raising arm.



One Herefordshire is a consortium of public sector organisations, comprising Herefordshire Council, Herefordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Wye Valley NHS Trust, West Mercia Police and Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service. One Herefordshire joined the Government's One Public Estate (OPE) programme in April 2017.



In addition, there has been around £20 million of private sector entrepreneurial investment in the last five years, principally in the city's hospitality sector and aimed at establishing a world-wide brand identity for independent food and drink producers.

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



# O2

STRATEGY



# VISION

Notwithstanding the longstanding and current challenges facing our city, we see real opportunities to build on its potential, identified and developed through an extensive programme of engagement with stakeholders in its future. This consultation process, undertaken during the pandemic through predominantly online meetings with more than 600 individuals and an online survey which reached 8,500 people, has driven the development of a vision of Hereford as a pioneering rural city empowered by a new model of inclusive and sustainable growth which embraces the structural challenges to the high street accelerated by Covid.

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



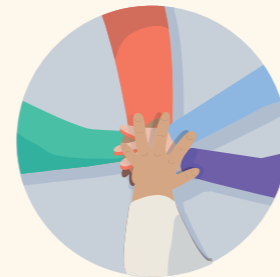
## GREENEST

Hereford is a green and sustainable city, always working towards zero carbon as it grows.



## DIGITAL

Hereford is a digitally smart and ambitious city that always embraces emerging technologies.



## FAIREST

Hereford is always levelling up with opportunities for all, fair wages, and social and economic regeneration that improves the lives of all residents.



## CONNECTED

Hereford is an integrated city; our people, places and projects always connect to each other.



## HERITAGE

Hereford's individuality always shines through. With our rich history, unique landmarks and assets and our rural legacy, there is no other city in the country like Hereford.



## HIGHLY SKILLED

Hereford is a city of learning and skills for all ages, a place where highly skilled people and businesses always thrive and come together to ensure that skills are shared.



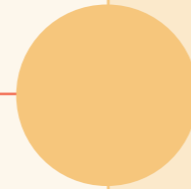
## CREATIVE

Hereford is a city where innovation and creativity always flourish across all sectors.



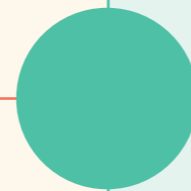
## STRATEGIC CONTEXT

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



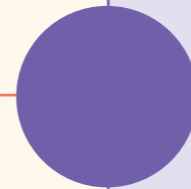
### NATIONAL

Industrial Strategy: Ideas, people, infrastructure, place, business, levelling up, liveable, connected



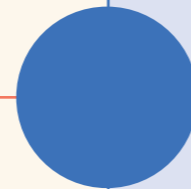
### WEST MIDLANDS

Midlands Engine: Growth, sector clusters, enterprise and innovation, trade, quality of life



### MARCHES LEP

Local Industrial Strategy and Strategic Economic Plan: Inclusive growth – through supporting concrete actions that will create more jobs, export more goods and grow productivity. Getting Building, Cyber Alliance, NMITE investment, Covid recovery plan



### CITY

County Plan, Health and Well-being Strategy, Skylon Park LDO, Fastershire Broadband Strategy, Transport Strategy Review, Unitary Plan, One Herefordshire, Historic Area Assessment, Cultural Strategy, Re-Energising Herefordshire, Carbon Management Plan, Herefordshire 2030

A high level summary of the key themes which are relevant to this plan is set out below:



### NATIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

- Levelling up - by enabling places to develop ambitious plans to drive productivity and economic growth (Industrial Strategy 2017)
- Build Back Better – the UK Government’s COVID-19 recovery strategy is considering how to protect and restore people’s livelihoods and improving people’s living standards and, where possible, seeking new economic opportunities
- Planning reform – simplifying the system by moving to a rules-based system and giving more emphasis to quality design and the environment (National Policy Planning Framework and Planning for the Future White Paper 2020)
- Environment – A Green Future: The 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment



### REGIONAL POLICY CONTEXT

- Government strategy for the Midlands (Midlands Engine) is focused on growth, connectivity, skills, enterprise and innovation, trade and quality of life
- Regional bodies including the Marches LEP are focused on supporting Government to deliver inclusive growth – Key objectives in the Local Industrial Strategy are: (1) improving connectivity to raise productivity; (2) strengthening skills to make the Midlands a more attractive location for businesses; (3) supporting enterprise and innovation to foster a more dynamic regional economy; (4) maximising trade and investment in the region; and (5) enhancing quality of life to attract and retain skilled workers and foster the local tourist industry
- The LEP is producing a plan to set the Marches on the road to economic recovery following COVID



### LOCAL POLICY CONTEXT

- Many of the key documents focus on Herefordshire as a great place to live, work and visit
- Many of the strategies reviewed are cross-council, cross-partner and cross-sectoral rather than single sector or silo based in their development and/or implementation. This joining-up provides a good foundation and track record for the Towns Fund and the city’s response to recovering from Covid
- There is clearly untapped potential and assets and strengths that could be developed further. Documents cover ‘way finding’ in identifying heritage and cultural assets in Hereford ‘through the ages’, making more of the city’s Area of Archaeological Importance status, and having an ‘attract and disperse’ approach with Hereford as a base to explore market towns and countryside. Making better use of high-quality assets such as the River Wye, City Walls and historic buildings has been identified. The emphasis is on protecting the viability of the city centre in addressing the need for any required additional land uses. There are also proposals to build on existing networks and markets (e.g. creative workspace, visual arts).
- The importance of retaining young people through further/higher education, skills and training, volunteering and work placements is recognised – as well as finding ways of engaging younger people in the development and implementation of strategies. The importance of creating high-quality highly skilled jobs against a backdrop of a traditional low-skill low-wage economy is also indicated
- Connectivity – There is a view that the transport infrastructure is poor, traffic congestion needs to be reduced and the city is divided by roads and river



## INVESTMENT PLAN FOCUS

We have committed very significant group time to identifying our priorities. This has involved an extensive consultation process with the people of Hereford; comprehensive desk research and engagement with strategic agencies; almost 600 direct stakeholder responses; a survey which reached 8,500 people; over 16 hours of collegiate Board and Technical Sub-Group meeting time dedicated to assessing and evaluating proposals arising from our engagement. This is in addition to an extensive range of straightforward board and sub-group meetings and group briefings with key interest groups.

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

- **Greenest**
- **Fairest**
- **Creative**
- **Digital**
- **Connected**

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

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

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

A summary of the interwoven themes are set out on the next set of pages...







## GREENEST

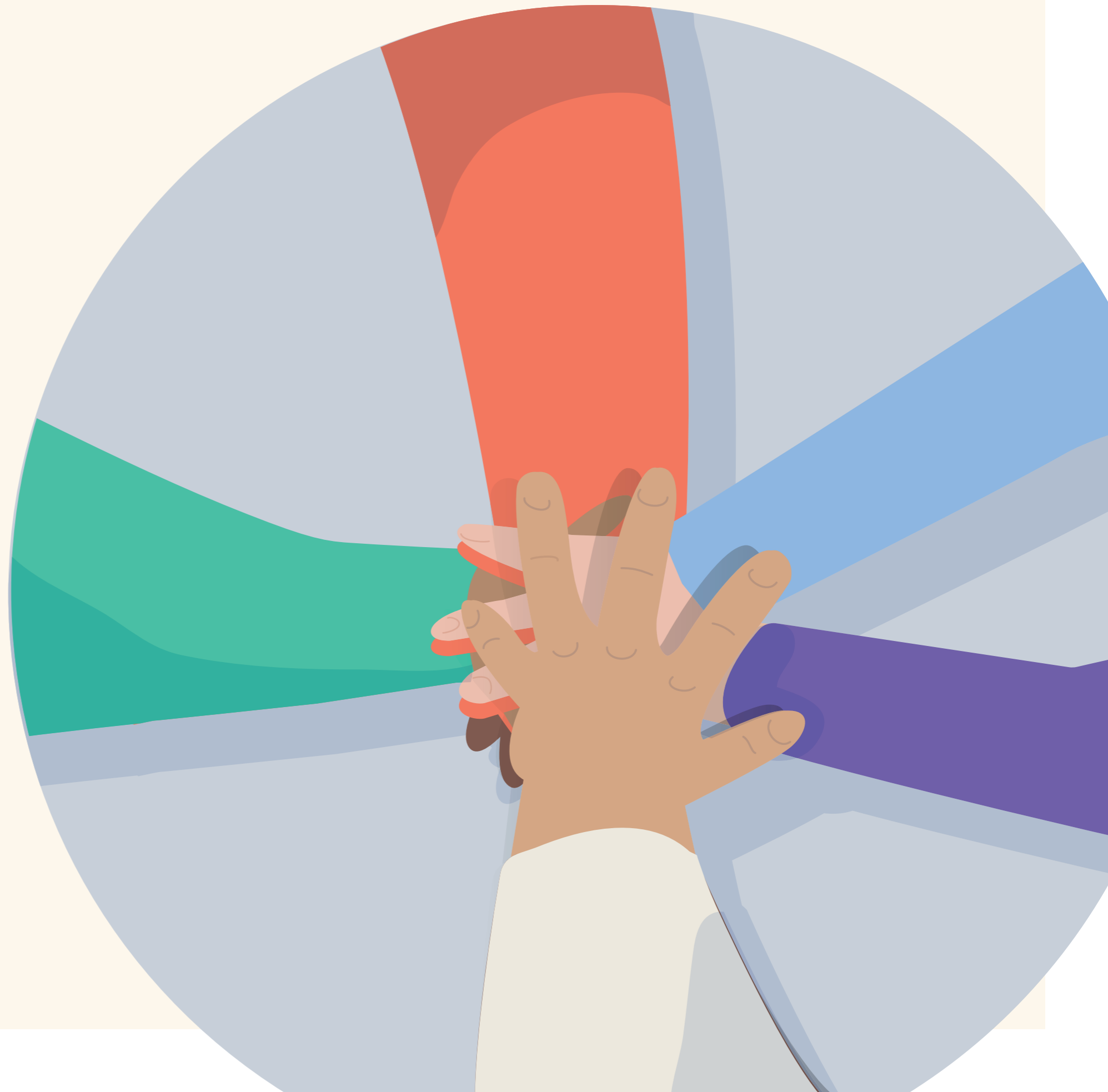
There are clear post-Covid opportunities to repurpose our city centre as a sustainable living and working organism. This involves harnessing new modes of transport, shrinking distances and finding new ways of earning/learning through digital technologies and enhancing our local bio-diversity. This has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



# FAIREST

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

It will provide multiple progressive access points to engage learners of all ages, with a particular emphasis on digital skills. We are also committing to support Hereford's social economy and to making the city fairer through the Soil from the City, Powerhouse, Encore and Castle Green Pavilion projects.





# CREATIVE

With the long tradition of its distinctive HCA, Hereford has a significant track record of creative achievement. A number of the Fairest categorised initiatives mentioned above have a creative component.

We will complement them through physical investment in key portals to the Hereford story. These investments will include a new landmark Museum, a Library and Digital Learning centre, repurposed performance and community space at Castle Green and the development of a programme of major public art installations at the Station Approach, the main public transport node. We will also support capital investments to enhance the operational capacity of two significant creative initiatives: Powerhouse and the Encore Music Hub.





## DIGITAL

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

# CONNECTED

Towns Fund guidance emphasises the economic importance of connectivity. We have built on the commitment to sustainable transport in the refined Herefordshire Transport Strategy with our Electric Buses initiative. We have also sought to free up the economic potential of the River Wye as a key connector linking the north and south of the city and underpinning a key component of its tourism offer through our River Wye Infrastructure proposals. In the context of our Greenest agenda, this investment also enhances the economic potential of one of the city's greatest natural assets. We have interpreted improved connectivity as a means to draw the city into a more cohesive working whole across its diverse communities.

The Southside Project is a key South Wye element of this strategy, through its incorporation in the broader envelope of the Skills Foundry. Spatially, we have emphasised the inter-connection of all projects, creating a skills corridor running from HCA campus in the north of the city, via the Station Approach art programme through the city centre to the Southside project and a skills/sports corridor running from the north of the city through the Extreme Sports cluster to the city centre.





## POST-COVID HEREFORD

This ecosystem of inter-connected projects stakes out a transformational post-Covid future for our city. It repurposes the Maylord Shopping Centre at the heart of the city as the base for a new Library and Learning Centre, a new Digital Culture Hub, and an enhanced creative and performance space linked to the Powerhouse and Encore initiatives which will attract footfall in its own right. NMITE's developing city presence will begin to repopulate High Town's empty retail units and complement its Rotherwas campus. The Electric Buses initiative, Southside project, Soil from the City and Greening the City projects will connect with our rural hinterland, knitting the city into a new model of economic sustainability. Enhanced River Wye infrastructure will provide a natural corridor opening up leisure opportunities in the city centre supported by the Castle Green project.

A landmark investment in the museum will create a step change in the potential of the city's visitor economy creating an impetus for collaboration with the Cathedral in terms of its assets and property holdings.

## CLEAN GROWTH HEREFORD

Our Plan has been conceived through the lens of the city's commitment to addressing the climate emergency. In addition to emphasising the importance of the natural assets of the city through our Greening and River Wye investments, our plans for Electric Buses and the highly innovative Soil from the City and Southside projects all create the structural framework for clean growth. Moving further up the technical and greening agenda, the NMITE clean growth agenda around advanced engineering and the development of our media related learning facilities linked to the HCA and Rural Media provide new sustainable routes to economic development, supporting a future model for Hereford.

## A FEW WORDS ABOUT HERITAGE

Hereford has punched well below its weight as a visitor destination for many years. Our strong conviction that Hereford's heritage offer and cultural ecology is a core element of our strategy to regenerate Hereford, informing our plans to develop a new landmark Museum and to develop ripple-out connections with the Cathedral and its treasures, with the River Wye, more widely with the built form of the city and its many listed buildings and independent food and drink culture.

## THE SKILLS FOUNDRY AND SOCIAL MOBILITY

We have positioned the Skills Foundry, our signature skills initiative, in the Fairest theme within our strategy. It is a very potent levelling up initiative. In essence, the Foundry will provide access to cutting-edge skills, improved employment and cultural opportunities to build resilience for Hereford's citizens and economy. This will mean better jobs and improved workforce readiness for the ever-changing nature of work. It will provide support to individuals by providing life, technical and digital skills, guiding Herefordians as they seek to acquire new skills to prepare them for better jobs, start proto-businesses, while always promoting well-being, social mobility and economic growth. By enhancing the population's skill base, the Skills Foundry will inspire and support enterprise and entrepreneurship, raising the average wage and standard of living in the city. To achieve this levelling up with the rest of the country, the Skills Foundry partners each offer distinct yet complementary initiatives.

The consortium literally and figuratively connects the city, with sites offering varied, transformative training and facilities that bridge the relatively affluent north and the deprived south of the city in a way never before proposed in Hereford.

## A FINAL NOTE ABOUT OTHER PROJECTS

Our process of engagement initiated proposals for more than forty individual projects. Although we are only able to support a limited number of initiatives through the Towns Fund, we have uncovered a highly compelling pipeline of ideas for the longer-term development of the city. Details of the most robust additional initiatives are set out in Appendix 1.

"THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A BETTER TIME TO INVEST IN HEREFORD'S NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL TOURISM INFRASTRUCTURE. OUR VISITOR ECONOMY IS A VITAL PART OF THE CITY'S FUTURE".

**Julian Vaughan, MD,  
The Green Dragon Hotel.**

# HEREFORD STRONGER TOWNS BID

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

## GREENEST

- 1. Soil from the City
- 2. Electric Buses
- 3. Greening the City

## FAIREST

- 4. NMITE Future of Work Hub
- 5. HCA School of Creative Digital Futures
- 6. Maylord Library and Learning Resource Centre
- 7. Holmer Extreme Sports Hub

## CREATIVE

- 8. Castle Green Pavilion
- 9. The Marches Experience (Museum)
- 10. Meadow Arts (Station Approach)
- 11. Encore Music Hub
- 12. Powerhouse

## DIGITAL

- 13. Digital Culture Hub

## CONNECTED

- 14. River Wye infrastructure
- 15. Southside



### CONNECTIVITY

Electric Buses | Soil from the City | Greening the City  
River Wye Infrastructure | Southside

### URBAN REGENERATION

The Marches Experience (Museum) | Castle Green Pavilion | Greening the City  
River Wye Infrastructure | Meadow Arts (Station Approach)  
Maylord Library and Learning Resource Centre | Holmer Extreme Sports Hub

### SKILLS AND ENTERPRISE

NMITE Future of Work Hub | Digital Culture Hub | Powerhouse | Encore Music Hub  
Maylord Library and Learning Resource Centre | HCA School of Creative Digital Futures



## DEVELOPMENT OF OUR BUSINESS CASES

We have considered the physical location and thematic nature of the projects identified above. This has led to a number of project groupings for the purpose of the development of business cases. They are as set out below. These groupings have been used in the development of the TIP Part 2 document which accompanies our strategy:

### Grouped TIP Part 2 Forms:

1. Skills Foundry: Southside, Digital Culture Hub, HCA School of Creative Digital Futures, Future of Work Skills Hub NMITE
2. Access and Greening - Castle Green Pavilion, Meadow Arts, River Wye, Greening the City (the rationale here is the strong fit by way of improving movement around and perception of the city/public realm improvements)
3. Cultural Assets Package: Maylord, Powerhouse and Encore (the rationale here is place-based. There is a strong alignment by way of location.)

### Individual TIP Part 2 Forms:

4. The Marches Experience (Museum)
5. Electric buses
6. Soil from the city
7. Extreme Sports





## OUTCOMES AND TARGETS: THEORY OF CHANGE

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

Project	Intervention Framework	Issues in Hereford	Output	Outcomes	Impact
<b>The Skills Foundry:</b> Southside Digital Culture Hub Digital Futures Future of Work Skills Hub NMITE	Skills Infrastructure Enterprise Infrastructure Digital Connectivity	1. Low Skills 2. Poor Social Mobility	1. Increase in capacity and accessibility to new or improved skills facilities 2. Increased and closer collaboration with employers 3. Increase in the breadth of the local skills offer that responds to local skills needs 4. Increased benefit for the public education over the long term 5. Availability of new specialist equipment 6. Provision of specialist digital technologies to meet the needs of specific sectors 7. Remediation and/or development of dilapidated sites	1. Increased share of young people and adults who have relevant skills for employment and entrepreneurship 2. Increased number of start-ups and/or scale ups utilising business incubation, acceleration and co-working spaces	Improved social mobility and economic productivity in Hereford
<b>Access and Greening:</b> River Wye (including Castle Green Pavilion) Greening the City Meadow Arts	Urban Regeneration Planning and Land Use Local Transport Skills Infrastructure	1. High Carbon Footprint 2. Climate Challenges to Infrastructure 3. Poor Road and Rail Infrastructure	1. Delivery of quality residential or commercial space in key locations (town centres, gateway areas, employment sites) 2. Delivery of new public spaces 3. New or upgraded cycle or walking paths 4. Wider cycling infrastructure such as cycle parking. 5. Digital connectivity – specialist technology with signage 6. Skills Infrastructure - increase in capacity and accessibility to new skills facilities	1. Enhanced townscape that is more attractive and more accessible to residents, businesses and visitors 2. Improved affordability, convenience, reliability and sustainability of travel options to and from places of work 3. Enhanced high street and town centre experience that prioritises the health, safety and mobility of pedestrians	Enhanced residential and commercial viability of Hereford realising the leisure and economic potential of the River Wye



Project	Intervention Framework	Issues in Hereford	Output	Outcomes	Impact
<b>Cultural Assets Package:</b> Powerhouse Encore Music Hub Maylord	Arts Culture Heritage and Urban Regeneration  Planning and Land Use	1. Scope to Enhance Retail Engagement and Footfall  2. Limited Utilisation of Heritage Assets "USP"  3. Underperforming Visitor Economy	1. New, upgraded or protected community centres, sports or athletics facilities, museums, arts venues, theatres, libraries, film facilities, prominent landmarks or historical buildings, parks or gardens  2. Delivery of quality residential or commercial space in key locations (town centres, gateway areas, employment sites)  3. Delivery of new public spaces  4. Skills Infrastructure - increase in capacity and accessibility to new skills facilities  5. Increased benefit for the public education over the long term	1. Improved arts, cultural and heritage offer that is more visible and easier for residents/visitors to access  2. Enhanced townscape that is more attractive and more accessible to residents, businesses and visitors	A stronger music component to the cultural economic development of Hereford and repurposed City Centre asset making Hereford more economically resilient
<b>The Marches Experience:</b> Museum	Arts  Culture  Heritage	1. Scope to Enhance Retail Engagement and Footfall  2. Limited Utilisation of Heritage Assets "USP"  3. Underperforming Visitor Economy	1. New, upgraded or protected community centres, sports or athletics facilities, museums, arts venues, theatres, libraries, film facilities, prominent landmarks or historical buildings, parks or gardens  2. Increase in capacity and accessibility to new or improved skills facilities  3. Increased benefit for the public education over the long term	Improved arts, cultural and heritage offer that is more visible and easier for residents/visitors to access	A stronger performance component to the cultural economic development of Hereford

Project	Intervention Framework	Issues in Hereford	Output	Outcomes	Impact
Electric Buses	Local Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. High Carbon Footprint</li> <li>2. Climate Challenges to Infrastructure</li> <li>3. Poor Road and Rail Infrastructure</li> </ul>	More frequent bus services or infrastructure upgrades	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Enhanced townscape that is more attractive and more accessible to residents, businesses and visitors</li> <li>2. Improved affordability, convenience, reliability and sustainability of travel options to and from places of work</li> <li>3. Enhanced high street and town centre experience that prioritises the health, safety and mobility of pedestrians</li> </ul>	Reduced carbon footprint for Hereford and enhanced residential and commercial viability of Hereford
Soil from the City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Urban Regeneration</li> <li>Planning and Land Use</li> <li>Local Transport</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. High Carbon Footprint</li> <li>2. Climate Challenges to Infrastructure</li> </ul>	Internationally significant, sustainable city waste recycling initiative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increased number of enterprises utilising high quality, affordable and sustainable commercial spaces</li> <li>2. More sustainable City Centre with lower carbon footprint</li> </ul>	Reduced carbon footprint for Hereford
Extreme Sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arts</li> <li>Culture</li> <li>Heritage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Underperforming Visitor Economy</li> <li>2. Scope to Enhance Retail Engagement and Footfall</li> </ul>	New, upgraded or protected community centres, sports or athletics facilities, museums, arts venues, theatres, libraries, film facilities, prominent landmarks or historical buildings, parks or gardens	Improved sports offer that is more visible and easier for residents/visitors to access	A stronger sports component to the economic development of Hereford



## A NOTE ON MARKET FAILURE

The issues in Hereford in the table above, which have been identified directly from a combination of our evidence base and our consultation activities, particularly in relation to business investors have surfaced the following challenges which underpin market failure in the city:

- **Low skills**
- **Poor social mobility**
- **High carbon footprint**
- **Climate challenges to infrastructure**
- **Poor road and rail infrastructure**
- **Scope to enhance retail engagement and footfall**
- **Limited utilisation of heritage assets "USP"**
- **Underperforming visitor economy.**

In common with many other rural service centres, a number of these issues are linked around a low population base, distance from markets and relatively low returns on traditional models of investment. Our concentration on digital, learning and green initiatives will all provide a contemporary and highly relevant post-Covid climate which sets Hereford apart as a new and different proposition for investors.

We have shown in the Theory of Change above how we believe our approach will address these challenges founded very strongly on the principles of local growth which realises the full indigenous potential of the city and its hinterland.

The Transformation Table on the next set of pages shows how the key economic impacts arising from the Theory of Change are aimed to play out over the next 5, 10-15 and 30 years.



Issue	Current Situation	Action	Transformation Targets: 5, 10-15, 30 years
Skills	Hereford is in the lowest 40% of settlements within the English Indices of Deprivation in terms of its education outcomes.	Increase the targeting of learning interventions at those areas of the community where the greatest gap exists between local and national levels of qualifications and skills.	<p><b>5 years</b> Effective interventions close the skills gap between Hereford and the national average bringing the city into the fifth decile in terms of the Index of Multiple Deprivation.</p> <p><b>10-15 years</b> Hereford exceeds parity with England for the proportion of population with higher skills outcomes, and employers indicate limited skills shortages. Recognition as a national centre of learning around the digital economy, manufacturing economy, the learning economy and the heritage sector.</p> <p><b>30 years</b> Creation of a nationally significant cluster of high value skilled workers particularly in relation to the manufacturing sector, and the heritage, culture and arts sector, which is a key driver of sustainable new businesses and jobs growth.</p>
<p><b>Job Density:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. High Carbon Footprint</li> <li>2. Climate Challenges to Infrastructure</li> <li>3. Poor Road and Rail Infrastructure</li> </ol>	Hereford has good job density 91% compared to the Great Britain average of 86%. This does reflect the relative isolation of the city as a jobs centre with a sparse hinterland. The challenge is to attract higher paid jobs in view of the low in the county particularly at workplace.	Increase the number of jobs per head of population in Hereford to increase the range of skills and increase the scale of wages available in the city.	<p><b>5 years</b> Through an increase in the range and quality of jobs in strategic sectors, particularly digital, manufacturing, learning and heritage. Hereford increases its performance compared to the England average for the stock of jobs per head of population.</p> <p><b>10-15 years</b> Through a continuing trend around the activities set out above Hereford has 10% more jobs per head of population than the national average.</p> <p><b>30 years</b> Hereford builds on its sectoral strengths and supply chains, which enable it to outstrip the national number of jobs by over 10% on an on-going basis.</p>



Issue	Current Situation	Action	Transformation Targets: 5, 10-15, 30 years
<p><b>Employment:</b></p> <p>Social mobility</p>	<p>Hereford is just behind the national average in the fourth decile in terms of the English indices of deprivation and has scope for improvement. This is accounted for mainly by neighbourhoods to the south of the Wye with a third of the population of the city living in neighbourhoods in the bottom two deciles of the IMD.</p>	<p>Increase the number and range of job opportunities in Hereford. There needs to be a specific focus on those who are most excluded within the local labour market.</p>	<p><b>5 years</b> Hereford has employment outcomes, on a par with the national average, with the reduction delivered through very clearly focused targeted interventions in key neighbourhoods of deprivation in the south of the city. These interventions are particularly targeted on giving young people a stake in the community through work.</p> <p><b>10 – 15 years</b> Hereford has a diverse range of sustainable employment opportunities, with no neighbourhood hotspots of unemployment and disadvantage. This enables it to have an unemployment level, which is 10% less severe than the national average.</p> <p><b>30 years</b> Hereford has levels of employment, without an overheating jobs market, which are considerably better than the national average and are statistically counted as representing zero unemployment. This sustains the skills needs of its key sectors particularly manufacturing, heritage and learning.</p>
<p>Underperforming Visitor Economy</p>	<p>Hereford currently significantly underperforms in terms of realising the economic potential of its world class heritage offer. This compares to 4 million visitors to Lincoln, a broadly similar heritage city<sup>[18]</sup> and 3.4 million visitors to Worcester<sup>[19]</sup>. Visitor numbers for the whole of Herefordshire in the last published STEAM report (2015) were just 5 million suggesting considerable underperformance<sup>[20]</sup>.</p>	<p>Realise the full heritage potential of the city leading to a step change in visitor numbers.</p>	<p><b>5 years</b> Hereford closes the gap in tourism performance with Worcester as a near neighbour with a visitor economy increase to £50 million p.a.</p> <p><b>10 -15 years</b> Hereford achieves parity with Worcester and becomes regionally significant as a visitor location with a visitor economy worth £200 million p.a.</p> <p><b>30 years</b> Hereford is nationally recognised as a world class visitor attraction with a visitor economy worth £500 million p.a.</p>

Issue	Current Situation	Action	Transformation Targets: 5, 10-15, 30 years
<p><b>Industrial Structure:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Scope to Enhance Retail Engagement and Footfall</li> <li>2. Limited Utilisation of Heritage Assets "USP"</li> <li>3. Underperforming Visitor Economy</li> </ol>	<p>Hereford is on a par with the national average when it comes to workers involved in Knowledge Intensive Businesses (KIBS) – 24% in Hereford compared to 25% in the England average.</p>	<p>Increase the number of people working in KIBS and maximise the range and quality of jobs in the High Street and heritage sectors and the number of digital and learning sector jobs.</p>	<p><b>5 years</b> An increase in the stock of Knowledge Intensive Businesses, increasing local productivity and driving up the number of KIBS to at least parity between Hereford and the national average.</p> <p><b>10-15 years</b> Hereford exceeds parity with the national average in terms of Knowledge Intensive Business jobs, with distinctive strengths in manufacturing, heritage, and retail.</p> <p><b>30 years</b> Hereford has a more diverse economic base whilst having maximised the number of Knowledge Intensive Businesses in its area through activities, which draw strength from the business opportunities arising from its character as a heritage, learning and retail centre. It will be in the top 33% of places in England in terms of the number of jobs provided by KIBS related businesses.</p>
<p><b>Wages:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social mobility</li> <li>2. Skills</li> </ol>	<p>Herefordshire, for which Hereford is the key economic driver, has a weekly salary at workplace of £490 compared to the English average of £589. Its weekly average salary for residents is £533. In both regards it is significantly lower than the national average and the difference between workplace and residence based salaries indicates that a proportion of higher earning individuals travel outside of the area to generate their incomes. The industrial structural information below shows that the wages lag is not accounted for by the number of high quality jobs (expressed as KIBS) in Hereford. It is clear however if Hereford can increase its share of KIBS jobs it will help the whole county perform more effectively and raise levels of prosperity.</p>	<p>Increase the number of better paid jobs in Hereford particularly in KIBS sectors.</p>	<p><b>5 years</b> An increase in the skills base and range of job opportunities enables Hereford to approach parity with the average wage at a national level.</p> <p><b>10-15 years</b> Hereford is in the top 50% of settlements in terms of the Indices of Deprivation income measure. It has a weekly wage based on the growth of high value components of its industrial base, which is on a par with the national average.</p> <p><b>30 years</b> Hereford is in the top 33% of settlements in terms of the Indices of Deprivation income measure. It has a self-sustaining number of economic sectors operating at an international level, which provide it with the ability to achieve wage levels which are better than the national average.</p>



Issue	Current Situation	Action	Transformation Targets: 5, 10-15, 30 years
<p><b>Health Outcomes:</b></p> <p>Social mobility</p>	<p>Hereford is almost on a par with England in terms of its health outcomes in terms of the English Indices of Deprivation.</p>	<p>Reduce the number of people with poor health outcomes particularly in relation to sustaining levels of economic activity which are currently better than the national average 17.3% compared to 20.6%</p>	<p><b>5 years</b> Hereford is on a par with the national average in terms of health outcomes as measured by the English Indices of Deprivation. Through a series of targeted employment focused interventions, including self-employment options and through an increase in the range and diversity of local jobs levels of economic activity fall to comfortably below the national average.</p> <p><b>10 -15 years</b> Hereford maintains levels of economic inactivity below the national average. It is perceived as a healthy town with a dynamic and adaptable workforce.</p> <p><b>30 years</b> Hereford has better overall levels of health and well-being than similar towns in terms of size and functionality.</p>
<p><b>Demography:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social mobility</li> <li>2. High Carbon Footprint</li> <li>3. Climate Challenges to Infrastructure</li> </ol>	<p>Hereford has a moderately higher stock of over 65s; 20% compared to the national average 18%.</p>	<p>Find new and innovative ways to make an ageing population a strength rather than a weakness.</p>	<p><b>5 years</b> A digital revolution gives more people a stake in staying in Hereford as a location of choice to work. The stock of jobs and businesses increases. This leads to the start of a new demographic balance with the working age population rising by 2%</p> <p><b>10-15 years</b> The creation of more net jobs increases the working population to 5% above the national average.</p> <p><b>30 years</b> Hereford is a location of choice for economically active people seeking employment in key sectors for which it has an international reputation. With the growth of the digital sector as its key “enabler” it has a higher proportion of people in the 16-64 age range and lower levels of economic inactivity than the national average.</p>



## SPATIAL STRATEGY AND PROJECT PLAN

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

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

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

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







HEREFORD PROJECT LOCATIONS MAP



GREENEST



FAIREST



CREATIVE



DIGITAL



CONNECTED





Soil from the city



Electric Buses



Greening the city



NMITE Future of Work Hub



HCA School of Creative Digital Futures



Maylord Library and Learning Resource Centre



Holmer Extreme Sports Hub



Castle Green Pavilion



The Marches Experience (Museum)



Meadow Arts (Station Approach)



Encore Music Hub



Powerhouse



Digital Culture Hub



River Wye Infrastructure



Southside

## PROJECT PROFILES

The projects address key policy areas for the economic development of Hereford and seek to drive the collective aspiration of the public, private and community sectors to deliver sustainable growth and create a cleaner, more inclusive city. The rationale for investment is clearly articulated in each case, linking back to the need, opportunity and strategic fit.



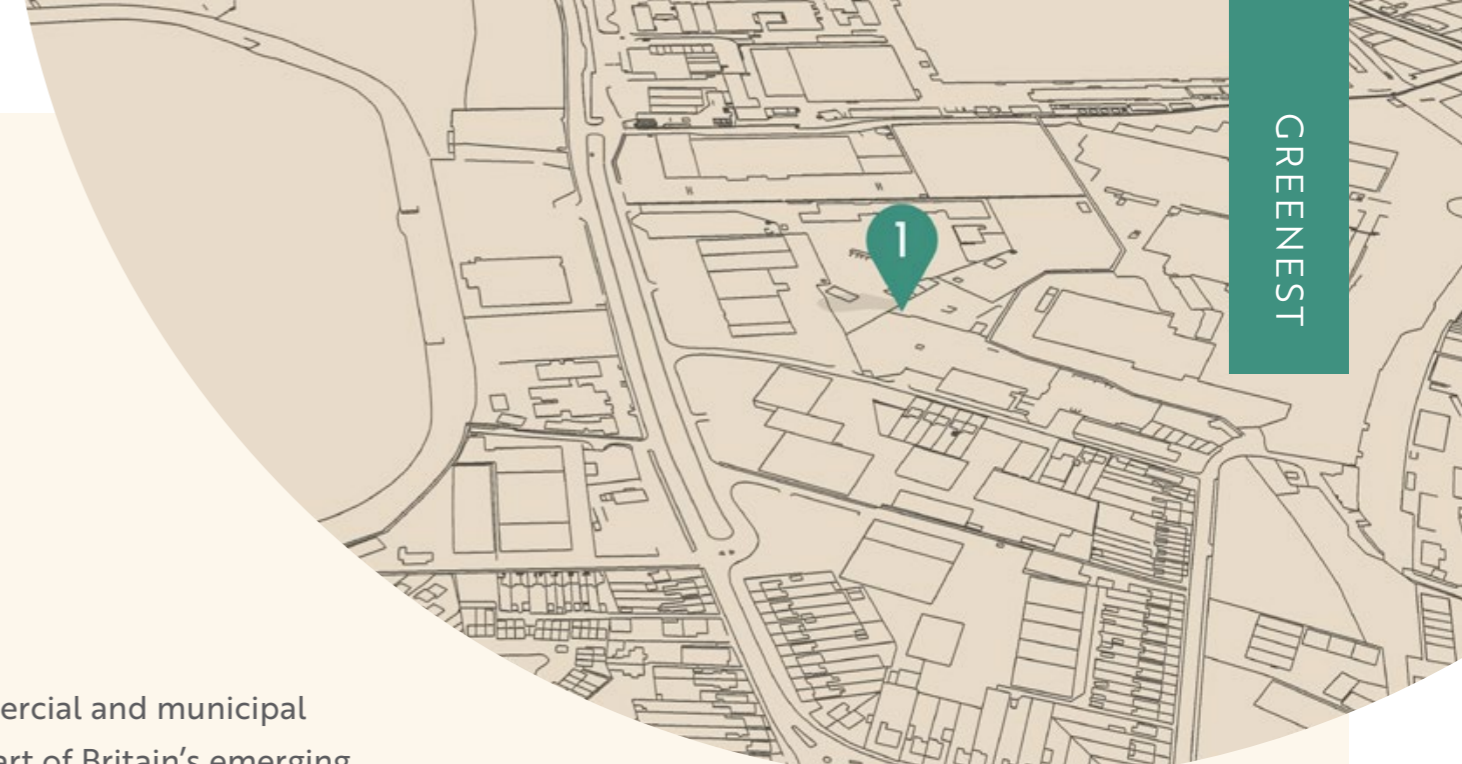


PROJECT NO: 1

# Soil from the City

Soil from the City is a highly innovative, ambitious and achievable project, planning to divert commercial and municipal food waste from landfill and turn it into a resource to benefit the city. It will put Hereford at the heart of Britain's emerging green technology sector and will contribute meaningfully to levelling up the city.

By using emission-free modes of transport, reducing vehicles on the road and reducing emissions by recovering resources, Soil from the City will contribute directly to the national Government's 25 Year Environment Plan 'Clean air' target to reduce harmful emissions by 2030





## RATIONALE

By using emission free modes of transport, reducing vehicles on the road and reducing emissions by recovering resources, Soil from the City will contribute directly to the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan 'Clean air' target to reduce harmful emissions by 2030.

By developing a brown-field site, generating jobs in the green sector and using zero emission transport, this project aligns with the Government's Ten Point Plan goals for green industrial growth.

This project will help achieve our priorities around a sustainable green agenda for Hereford and deliver the following Towns Fund Intervention Framework outcomes:

1. Increased number of enterprises utilising high quality, affordable and sustainable commercial spaces
2. More sustainable city centre with lower carbon footprint

## FUNDING

Total Cost: £1,500,000 | Towns Fund: £1,000,000

Matched Funding: £500,000

Towns Fund will support the acquisition of a bank of high tech aerobic composters which can transform food waste into a soil improver and biomass within 24 hours from collection. The Towns Fund will also be funding specialist vehicle purchase and app development.



Soil from the CITY

pedicargo

EUROPEAN CYCLE LOGISTICS FEDERATION







## PROJECT NO: 2

# Electric Buses

Hereford "City Zipper" is an electric bus service connecting Hereford's transport hubs with its cultural, retail and hospitality quarters as well as the city's principal health facilities.

The "City Zipper's" aim is to showcase quality zero-emission public transport which, through its accessibility and convenience, will encourage people not to use their cars when accessing the core of the city. A 'request', turn up and go service will minimise the need for users to consult a timetable.

The service will be for a diverse ridership: residents (as 75% of trips into town are from other parts of Hereford), scholars and students, visitors seeking out the cultural sites, and those accessing retail and hospitality venues. A person arriving on a rural or inter-urban bus would find it easy to interchange for the hospital, saving time and avoiding parking hassle. Visitors arriving by train would hop on and off the service to reach attractions, shops, inns and cafés in different parts of the city.

By targeting several markets the service will not only deliver real social value but also increase footfall and visitor spending without contributing to congestion and CO2 emissions. The bus service's bespoke brand

will promote the city's core values and heritage on its vehicles, in its literature and through its city stops. Driver training will include a thorough knowledge of the city and customer care. The "City Zipper" will be part of the welcome, adding to the urban fabric of Hereford.

The route will include the Station Medical Centre, Hereford Transport Hub and Railway Station, student accommodation, County Hospital, the Country and City Bus Stations, the Town Hall, St Owen Street (for Castle Green and Riverside), Maylord Shopping Centre, High Town, Broad Street (for cathedral and library), Hereford leisure pool and Old Market retail complex.

## FUNDING

Total Cost: £2,400,000  
Towns Fund: £1,800,000  
Matched Funding: £600,000

Towns Funding will support four electric buses including energy supply, design and marketing, training, bus stops and shelters plus real time information.



## RATIONALE

This project will help achieve our priorities around a sustainable green agenda for Hereford and provide access to key tourism and retail assets in the City Centre and enhance the travel options for residents. It will deliver the following Towns Fund Intervention Framework outcomes:

1. Enhanced townscape that is more attractive and more accessible to residents, businesses and visitors
2. Improved affordability, convenience, reliability and sustainability of travel options to and from places of work
3. Enhanced high street and town centre experience that prioritises the health, safety and mobility of pedestrians







PROJECT NO: 3

# Greening the City

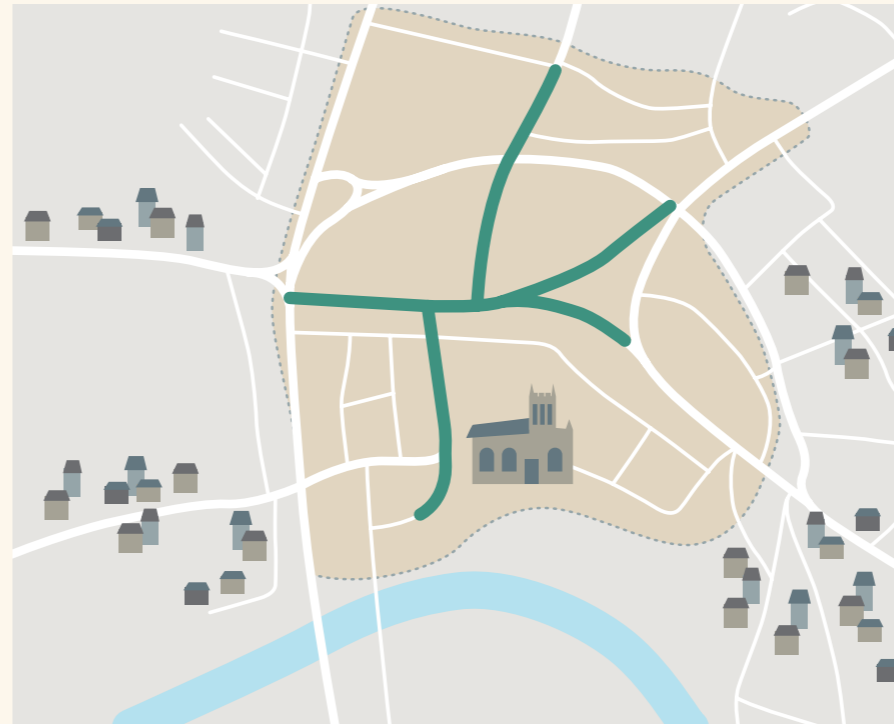
This project will seek to change the face of Hereford and significantly improve the appearance and attractiveness of the city, linking it to its rural hinterland. Key elements include interrelated greening, public realm, and cycling/walking and digital connectivity initiatives, significantly enhancing Hereford as a place to visit, learn, live, work and invest.

## RATIONALE

The overall physical appearance and public realm of Hereford has been neglected, contributing to the long-term underperformance of its visitor economy, and needs urgent contemporary refreshment. The project seeks to improve perceptions of Hereford city for visitors and to instil pride of place for residents.

This project will help achieve our priorities around a sustainable green agenda for Hereford and deliver the following Towns Fund Intervention Framework outcomes:

1. Enhanced townscape that is more attractive and more accessible to residents, businesses and visitors
2. Improved affordability, convenience, reliability and sustainability of travel options to and from places of work
3. Enhanced high street and town centre experience that prioritises the health, safety and mobility of pedestrians

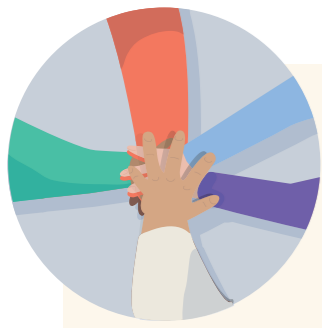


## FUNDING

Total Cost: £1,500,000 | Towns Fund: £1,500,000

Towns Fund will support a number of interventions such as improved access to the city at key gateway locations, improved navigation and orientation within the town through digital signage and green focal points and improved public open spaces and greening of the city (planting, green walls etc).





PROJECT NO: 4 | SKILLS FOUNDRY 1

## NMITE Future of Work Hub

NMITE Future of Work Skills Hub will be located in a technology-rich, flexible site in High Town and will support Hereford residents, from school leavers and NMITE learners to businesses and mid-career shifters. It will help individuals to understand and identify career opportunities as well as offering flexible support to enable them to reach their full growth potential. Young people transitioning into the labour market will be given help to secure high-quality, meaningful work placements, whilst employers will be empowered to develop structured, age-appropriate content with SMART learning objectives. NMITE will work with the award-winning Skills Builder Partnership who have supported over 700 organisations to build high quality support and training.



FAIREST





## RATIONALE

The Future of Work Skills Hub is a core element in our mission to address Hereford's skills gap. Even prior to Covid, Herefordshire was a cold spot in the social mobility index, with wages below the national average. With a weak economy and high competition for jobs (particularly in South Wye), Hereford's young people have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic.

This project will help achieve our objective to make Hereford a fairer city and will deliver the following Towns Fund Intervention Framework outcomes:

1. Increased share of young people and adults who have relevant skills for employment and entrepreneurship
2. Increased number of start-ups and/or scale ups utilising business incubation, acceleration and co-working space.



## FUNDING

Total Cost: £2,867,000

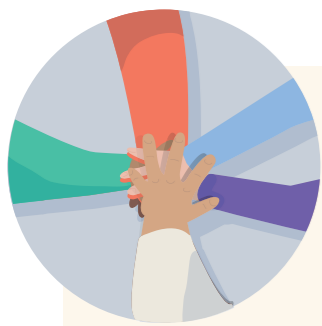
Towns Fund: £2,331,000

Matched Funding: £536,000

Towns Fund will support acquisition and refurbishment of redundant building(s) in High Town.





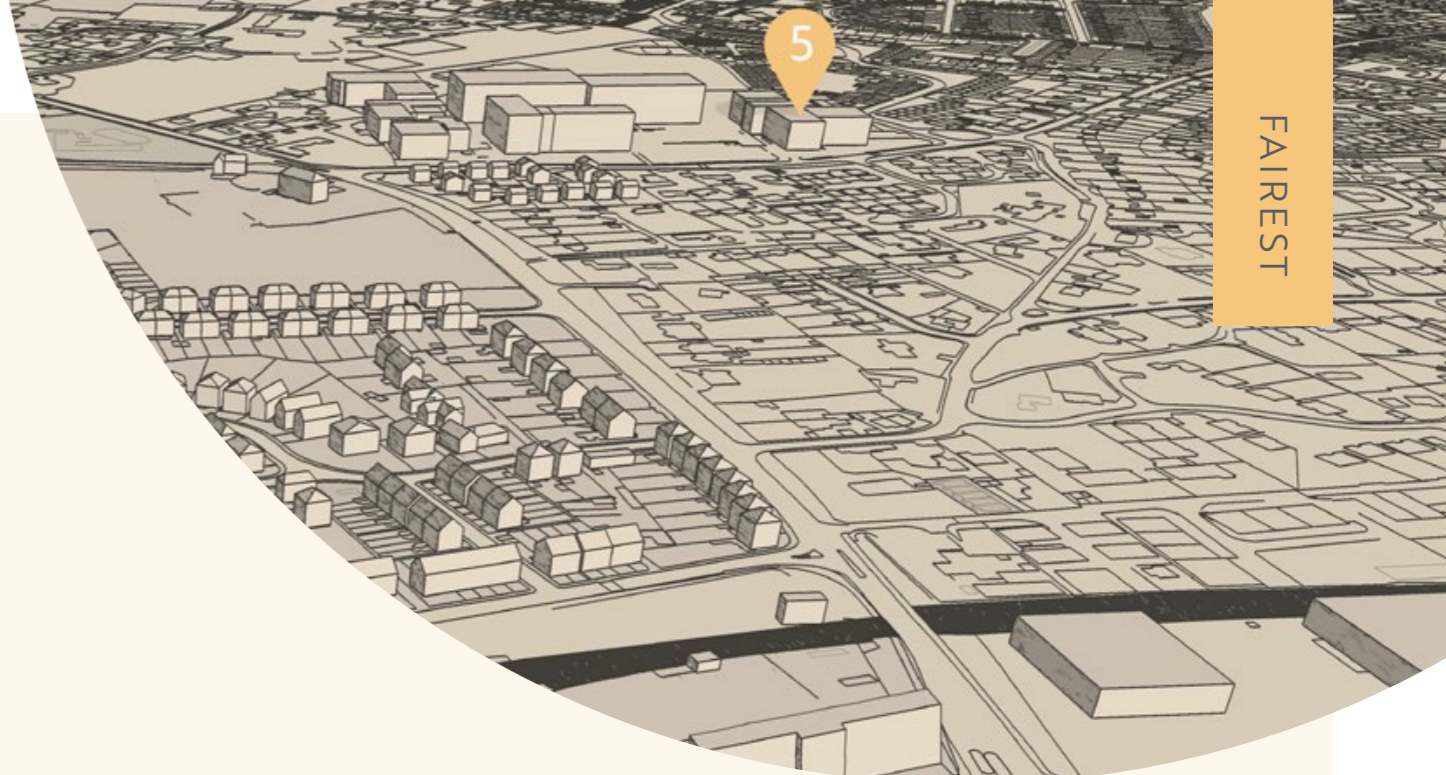
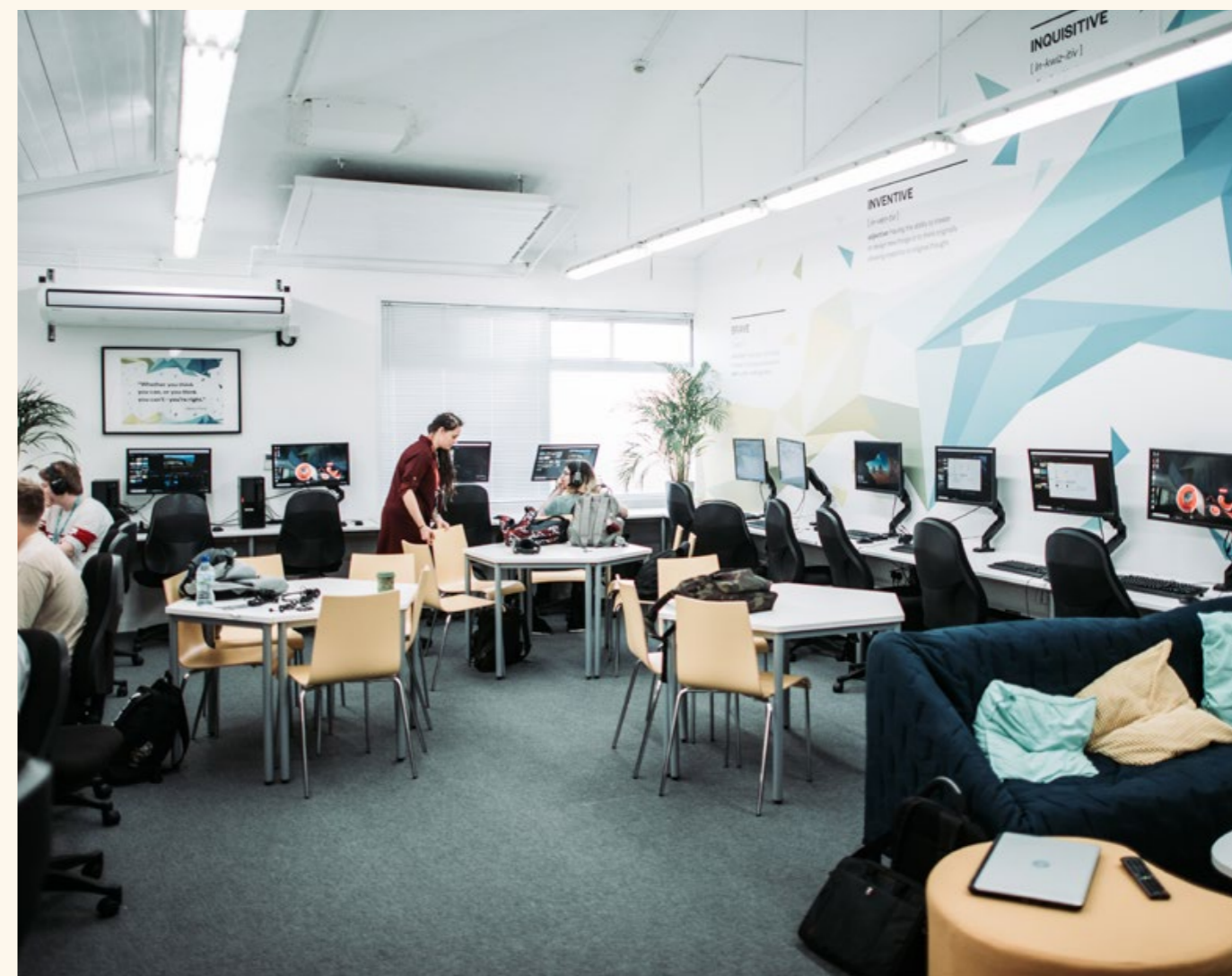


PROJECT NO: 5 | SKILLS FOUNDRY 2

# HCA School of Creative Digital Futures

This flagship, industry-standard, teaching base on the Hereford College of Arts' College Road Campus will turbo-charge the expansion of HCA's new School of Creative Digital Futures. Curriculum areas will include film, animation, interface design, games design, social media content and creative digital marketing, Adobe training, app design and build, website creation, motion graphics, projection mapping, virtual and augmented reality and all other areas of digital innovation.

Capital investment will include hardware, software, upgraded campus connectivity, a new motion capture studio, and portable equipment such as free-range Virtual Reality equipment. There are Multiple connections between the partners within the Skills Foundry but in particular the School of Creative Digital Futures will have a fundamental collaborative partnership with the Foundry's new city-centre Digital Culture Hub.



FAIREST



## RATIONALE

The School of Creative Digital Futures will offer a ladder of progression to a wide range of Herefordshire learners as well as attracting FE and HE students into Herefordshire from outside the county and creating a pipeline of new digital talent for the benefit of the city and region.

This project will help achieve our objective to make Hereford a fairer city and will deliver the following Towns Fund Intervention Framework outcomes:

1. Increased share of young people and adults who have relevant skills for employment and entrepreneurship
2. Increased number of start-ups and/or scale ups utilising business incubation, acceleration and co-working space.

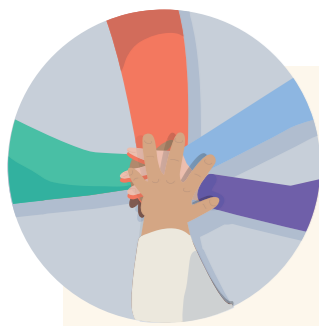


## FUNDING

Total Cost: £850,000 | Towns Fund: £650,000

Matched Funding: £200,000

The project will refurbish circa 350 square metres of HCA's historic building addressing condition issues and redesign to modernise and reduce inefficiency. Capital investment will include hardware, software, upgraded campus connectivity, a new motion capture studio, and portable equipment such as free-range Virtual Reality equipment.



PROJECT NO: 6

# Maylord Library and Learning Resource Centre

Maylord Shopping Centre is a strategically significant site, with a footprint of 145,000 sq ft in the heart of Hereford's city centre. Herefordshire Council secured control of the site through a £4.0 million acquisition in June 2020 to enable its redevelopment to support the regeneration and the diversification of the city centre as a whole. The project will provide a master location for the relocated library which will evolve into a resource centre, creation of a new community re-use café and it will host expanded performance space for Powerhouse and a new Digital Culture Hub.

## FUNDING

Total Cost: £7,000,000 | Towns Fund: £3,000,000

Matched Funding: £4,000,000

Resources will be allocated to provide:

Refurbishment and re-use of the existing shopping centre through structural changes including the adaptation of the current atrium area.

- A learning centre
- The creation of a new public and university library space
- The development of refurbished space to accommodate a new community re-use café.

## RATIONALE

This initiative will provide:

- Re-purposed mixed use development at the heart of the city centre, regenerating the city by diversifying reasons to visit and encouraging visitors to spend time and money in Hereford (hosting the Powerhouse and Digital Culture Hub).
- A Learning Resource Centre that includes a new public/higher education library. Located in a prominent city centre location will provide the whole community with a wide range of services to support the development of their skills, advice and support in seeking new career or personal development opportunities. We are also exploring opportunities for alignment of activity with the other related projects such as Skills Foundry and the Digital Culture Hub.
- A community re-use café that would generate an income to support the Learning Resource Centre and other social value activities. The not-for-profit community enterprise would provide facilities for visitors and students. This could, for example, provide opportunities for young people (such as through the Kickstart scheme) and/or those with learning difficulties to gain work experience working in the café.

It will deliver the following Towns Fund Intervention Framework outcomes:

1. New, upgraded or protected community centres, sports or athletics facilities, museums, arts venues, theatres, libraries, film facilities, prominent landmarks or historical buildings, parks or gardens
2. Delivery of quality residential or commercial space in key locations (town centres, gateway areas, employment sites)
3. Delivery of new public spaces





Existing Building



Existing Building



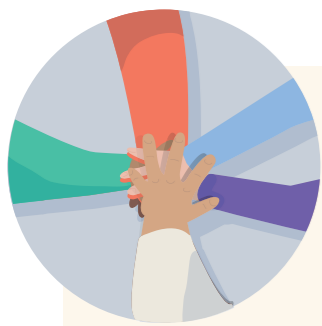
Proposed ground floor



Proposed first floor





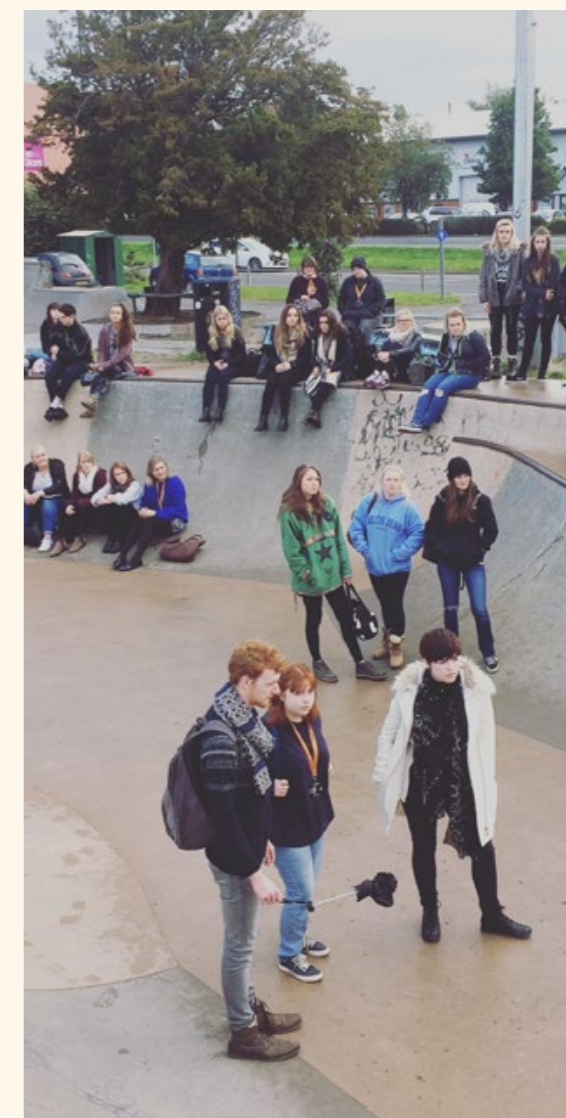


PROJECT NO: 7

# Holmer Extreme Sports Hub

To create and improve the current outdoor sports facilities located on Hereford's Holmer Road.

Access to the hub will create a focus for a number of wheeled sports in the city and wider county and will be almost entirely free of charge, optimising accessibility and community physical and mental health benefits and employment opportunities and wheeled based businesses in the area.



FAIREST



## RATIONALE

The skate park is regularly at full capacity and needs expansion to service growing local, regional and national demand.

The cycle track will significantly enhance Hereford's sports offer creating a local, regional and national visitor attraction, supporting the city's tourism offer.

This project will address Hereford's underperforming visitor economy, providing scope to enhance retail engagement and boosting the city's footfall.

It will also help to deliver the Towns Fund Intervention Framework outcome by creating a stronger sports component to the economic development of Hereford that is more visible and easier for residents/visitors to access.

## FUNDING

Total Cost: £1,959,000 | Towns Fund: £1,184,000

Matched Funding: £775,000

The cycle track will cost £1.4 million to deliver, of which £500,000 has been committed as a grant from Sports England/British Cycling and a further £250,000 from Herefordshire Council and Hereford City Council. The extension of the skate park facilities will cost a further £500,000.







PROJECT NO: 8

# Castle Green Pavilion

This project will enhance a much-loved but neglected community asset, open up access to the River Wye and add significantly to the infrastructure of Hereford's visitor economy. The refurbished pavilion will provide a revitalised home for the Youth Canoe Club, cafe facilities, a multifunctional and flexible community meeting space and a gallery celebrating local arts and heritage. The Pavilion has the potential to become the heart of creative and innovative youth development in the city.



CREATIVE

Image credit to Errand Studio





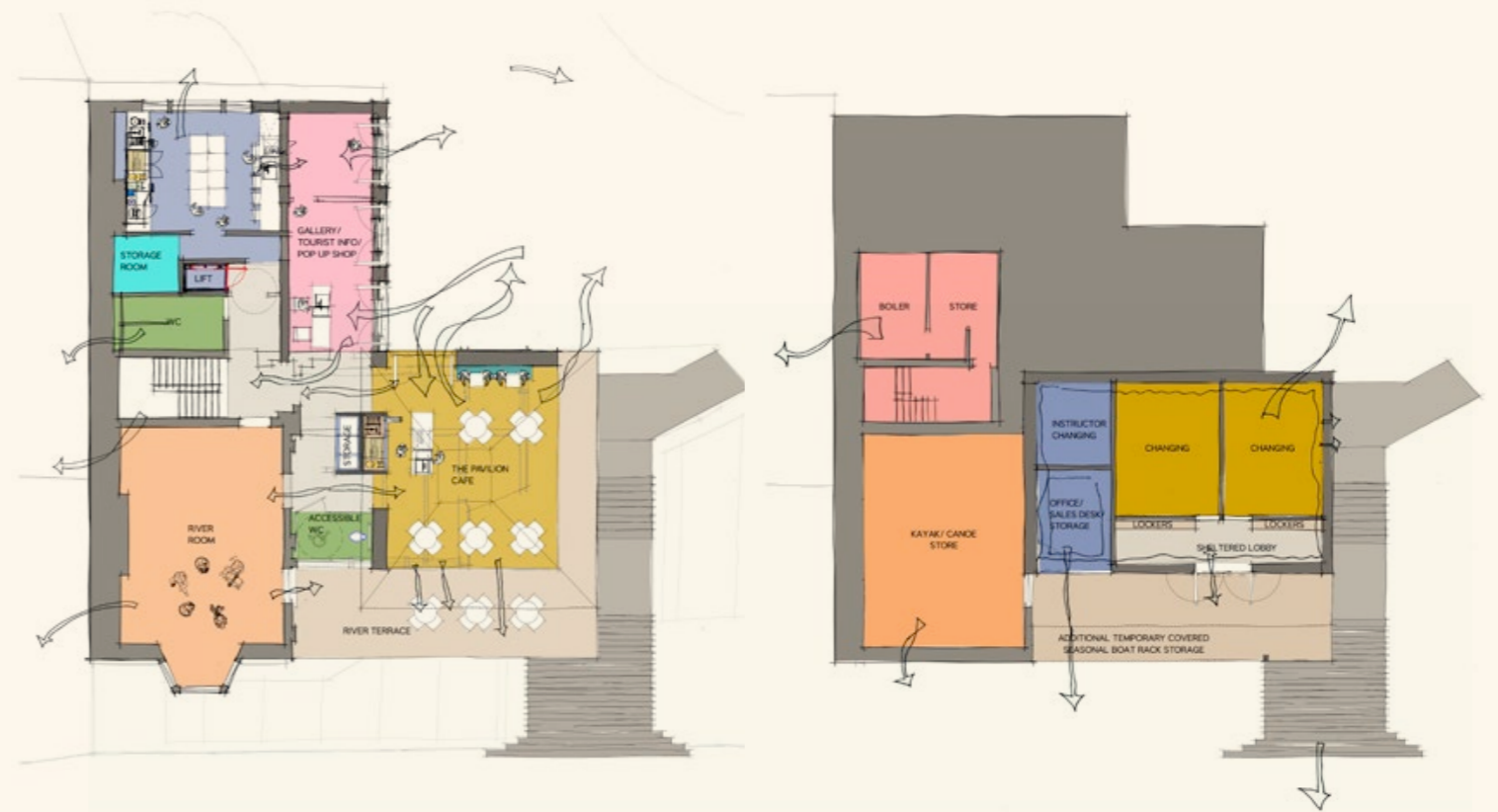
## RATIONALE

Developing the Pavilion brings a “whole day offer” to people visiting Hereford. We will add to commercial developments in the city by balancing the strong retail development on the north-west of the city with an art and heritage offer on the south-east side; all in walking distance, giving visitors a chance to enjoy the essence of the city’s rural/urban feel.

There is also huge potential for Castle Green to become the Festival Village for Hereford, having successfully hosted large scale events with up to 3,500 people on site. The green is a natural amphitheatre and with the transformed Pavilion as the anchor point, Castle Green can become nationally recognised as a vibrant space of culture, commerce, and community activity.

This project will support Hereford’s creative sector and underperforming visitor economy, delivering the Towns Fund Intervention Framework objective of:

Improved arts, cultural and heritage offer that is more visible and easier for residents/visitors to access.



## FUNDING

Total Cost: £1,560,000 | Towns Fund: £1,560,000

Towns Fund will facilitate the full refurbishment of the Pavilion.





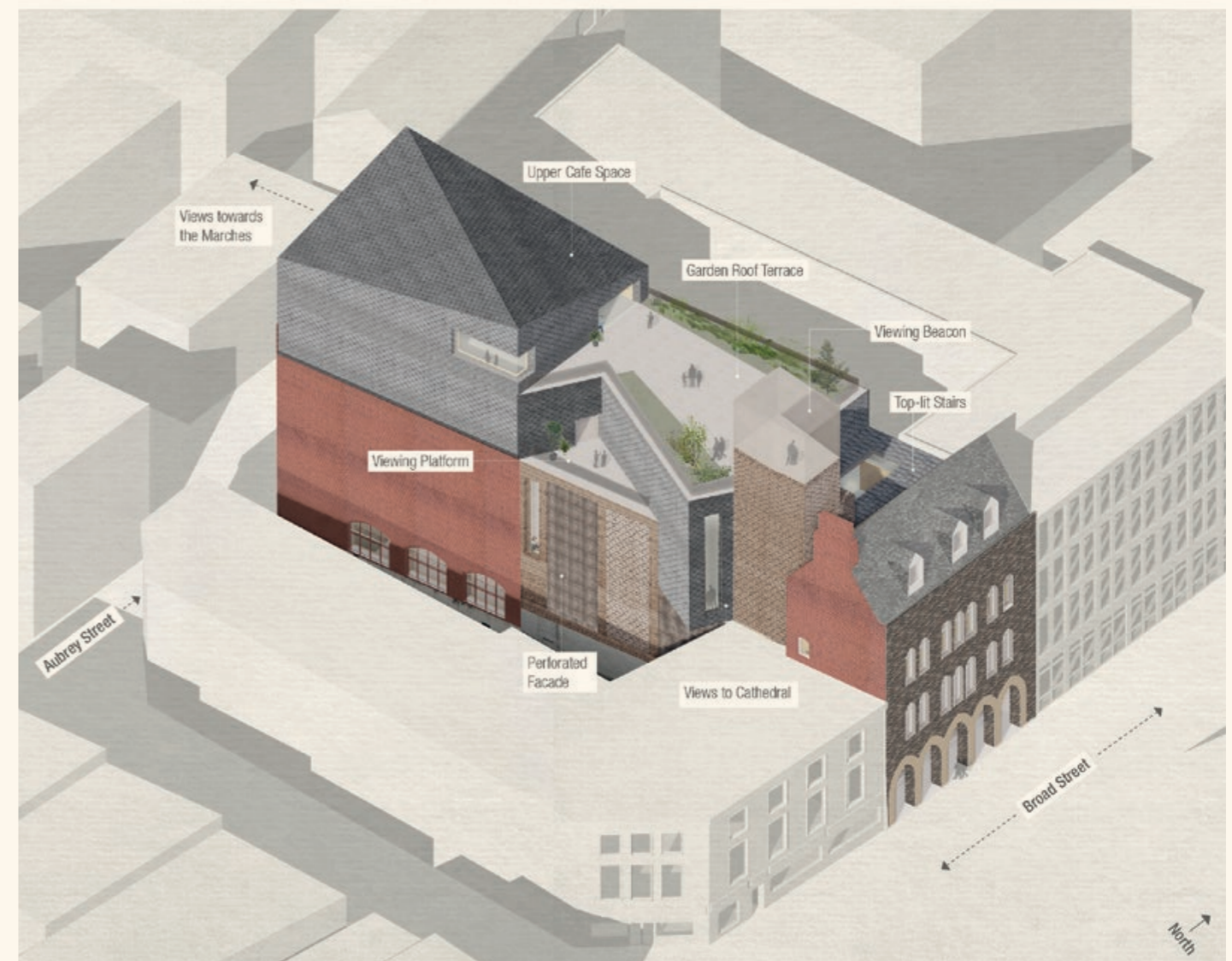
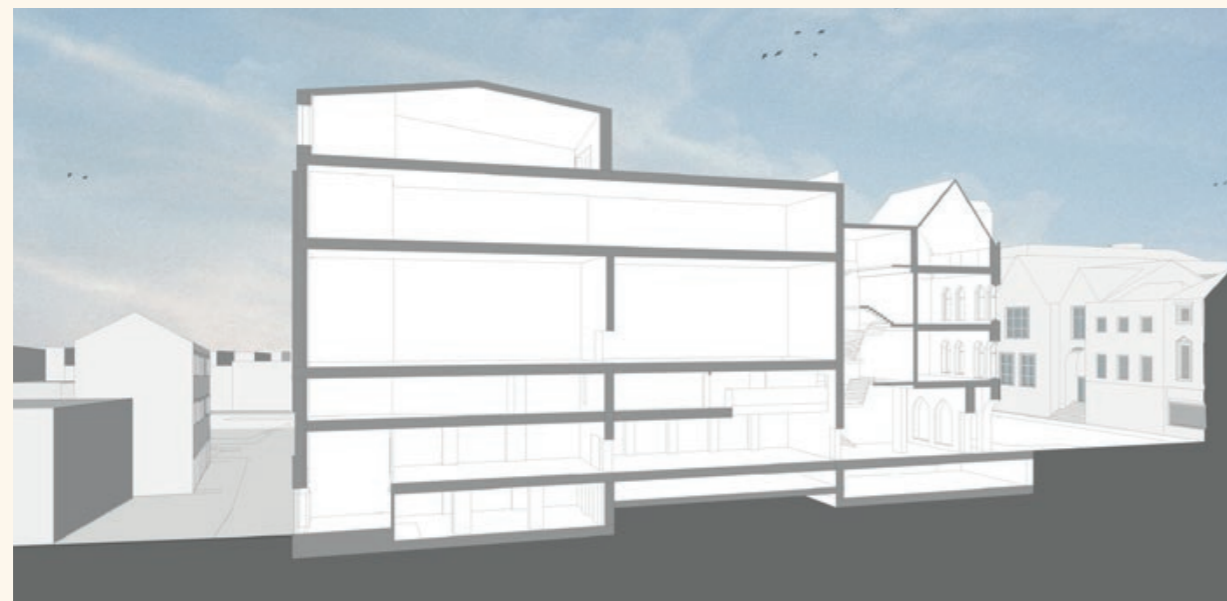
PROJECT NO: 9

## The Marches Experience (Museum)

The project will establish a transformational world-class contemporary facility in the heart of Hereford with the capacity to accommodate our globally and nationally significant heritage assets such as the Magna Carta, Herefordshire Hoard and collections of antiquities dating back to the Ice Age, in addition to hosting national and international exhibitions.

The redevelopment will embrace the latest technologies such as Virtual Reality to tell the story of Herefordshire and the wider Welsh Marches region.

The new museum will aim to attract progressive funding for heritage, culture and the arts to facilitate educational and cultural activity in the city and county, to strengthen community cohesion and engagement and to support the development of job opportunities in Hereford's cultural sector.





## RATIONALE

Hereford's visitor economy has significantly underperformed for decades, at great opportunity cost to the city and the existing museum is an asset with huge unrealised potential. Development of the city's heritage offer is a core element of our levelling strategy and this project will create ripple-out benefits across the city centre and enhance physical connectivity between the high street and the River Wye.

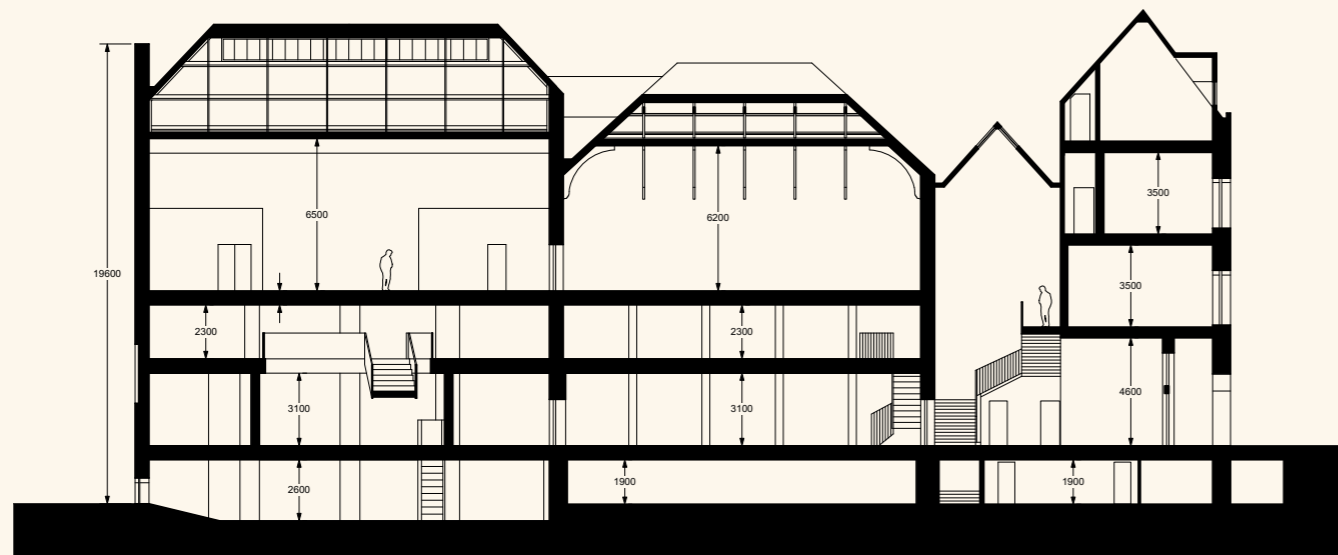
This project will support Hereford's creative sector and underperforming visitor economy, delivering the Towns Fund Intervention Framework objective of improved arts, cultural and heritage offer that is more visible and easier for residents/visitors to access.

## FUNDING

Total Cost: £15,000,000 | Towns Fund: £5,000,000

Matched Funding: £10,000,000

Towns Fund and match-funding will support the full refurbishment of the current Broad Street Museum and Library building to EnerPHit design standards to minimise its carbon footprint.



form vs character



old vs new massing

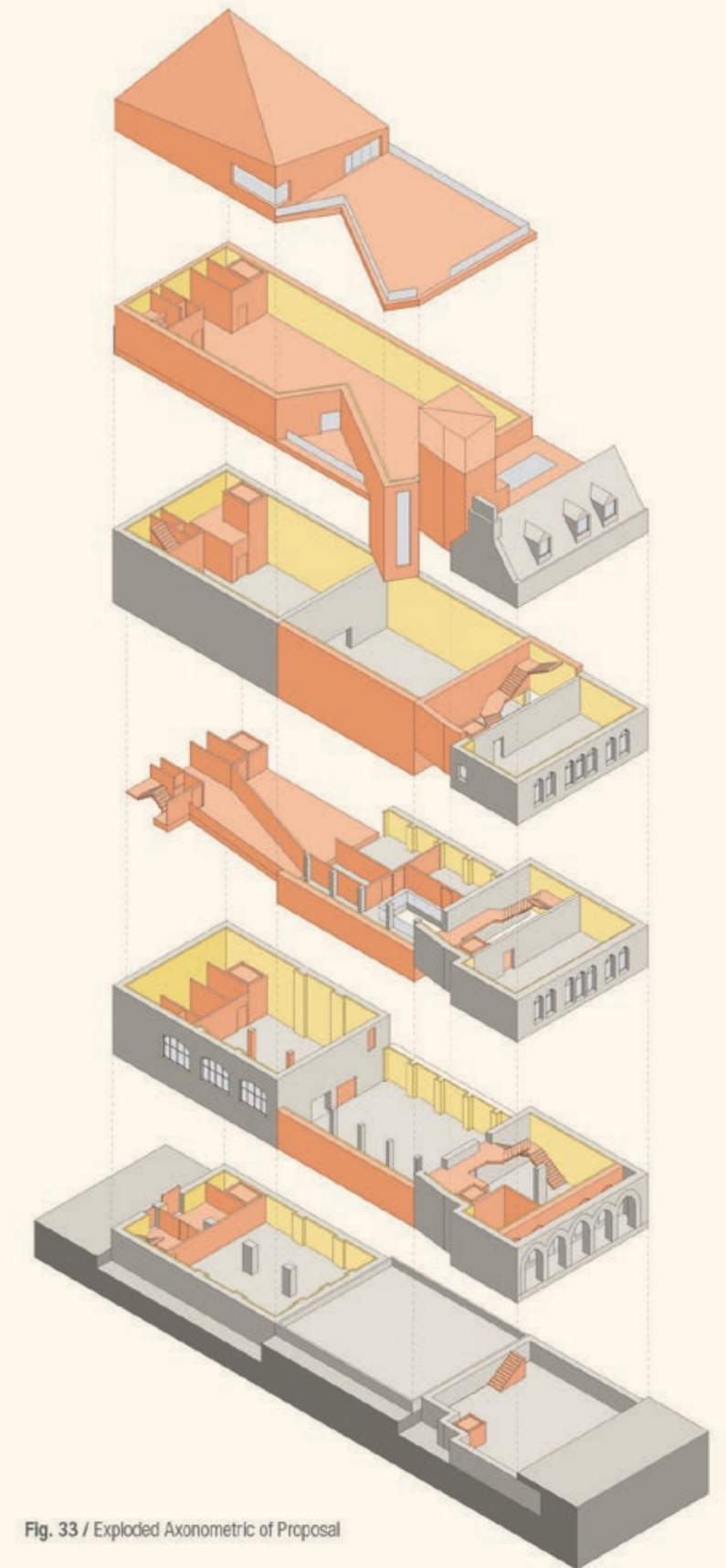
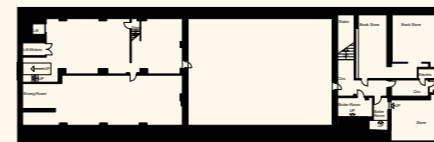
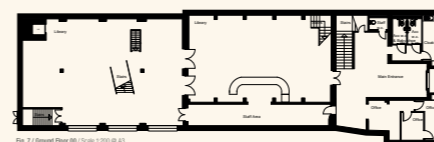
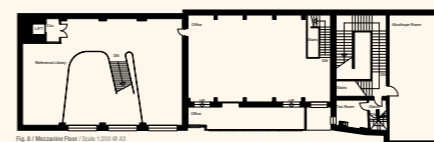
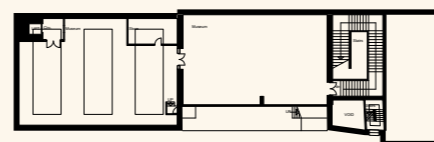
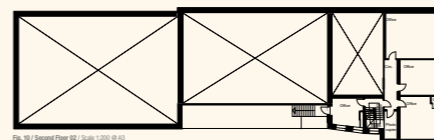
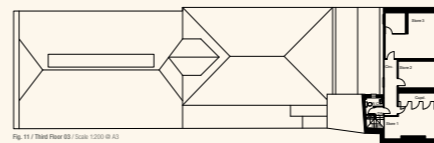


Fig. 33 / Exploded Axonometric of Proposal





PROJECT NO: 10

# Meadow Arts (Station Approach)

A new gateway programme of contemporary public art commissions to animate the Hereford College of Arts' student accommodation building in Station Approach. This bold project will act as a vibrant statement of intent, signalling the city's commitment to creativity and innovation. Significant commissioned artworks from high calibre artists will be generated, produced and installed on and around the building, potentially reaching into the city itself.

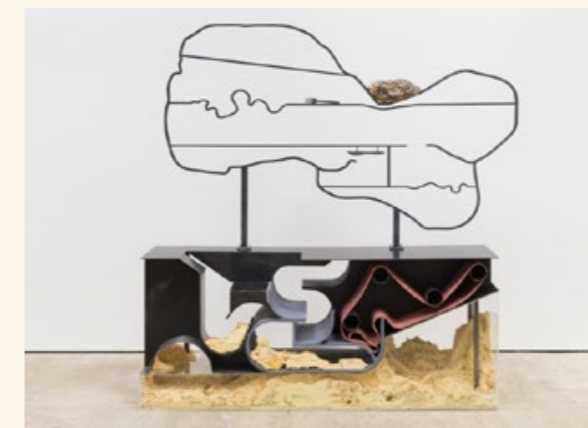


Image credit: Lothar Götz, courtesy Domo Baal



Image credit: Holly Hendry, courtesy Stephen Friedman Gallery



## RATIONALE

Our Town Investment Plan is committed to repurposing Hereford as a creative and connected city. This highly original approach to public art, delivered by a respected Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation, will contribute to Hereford's identity as a cultural destination. Station Approach is ideally situated between Hereford College of Arts' two existing sites at the College Road/Folly Lane Campus, and its new presence in the city centre, enabling the community of students and staff to more easily connect with the wider community and social and cultural resources of Hereford.

This gateway project will significantly improve the access experience of visitors to Hereford and will deliver the Towns Fund Intervention Framework commitment to:

1. Enhanced townscape that is more attractive and more accessible to residents, businesses and visitors
2. Improved affordability, convenience, reliability and sustainability of travel options to and from places of work
3. Enhanced high street and town centre experience that prioritises the health, safety and mobility of pedestrians

## FUNDING

Total Cost: £160,000 | Towns Fund: £90,000

Matched Funding: £70,000

Towns Fund will support annual animation of the site of Station Approach's Hereford College of Arts' students' accommodation building.



Image credit: Hilary Jack, No Borders, courtesy the artist and Division of Labour



Image credit: Nicky Hirst, courtesy Danielle Arnaud





PROJECT NO: 11

# Encore Music Hub

A Music and Skills Hub in the heart of Hereford meeting the needs of the whole community, including those with disabilities or those who do not engage with music and the wider arts. Encore delivers an extensive range of services to the community. These include a County Music Service, a wide range of well-established music ensembles and a developing range of adult services.

The Music and Skills Hub will regenerate a large retail unit in the city centre, giving opportunities for skills development and qualifications, and creating apprenticeships and jobs and attracting footfall. The project is low risk, as 60% of the services are already well-established and it offers the opportunity for significant growth.





## RATIONALE

Hereford has no centre for community music and these proposals will fill that void, as well as expand the broader and under-developed cultural offer in the city. Although it has never had a permanent base, Encore provides activities for nearly 5,000 people and a new home will meet unfulfilled demand from our young people and adult community.

This project will strengthen Hereford's cultural landscape and will deliver the Towns Fund Intervention Framework commitment to:

1. Improved arts, cultural and heritage offer that is more visible and easier for residents/visitors to access
2. Enhanced townscape that is more attractive and more accessible to residents, businesses and visitors.

## FUNDING

Total Cost: £800,000 | Towns Fund: £200,000

Matched Funding: £600,000

Towns Fund will support acquisition/refurbishment costs of city centre facility.







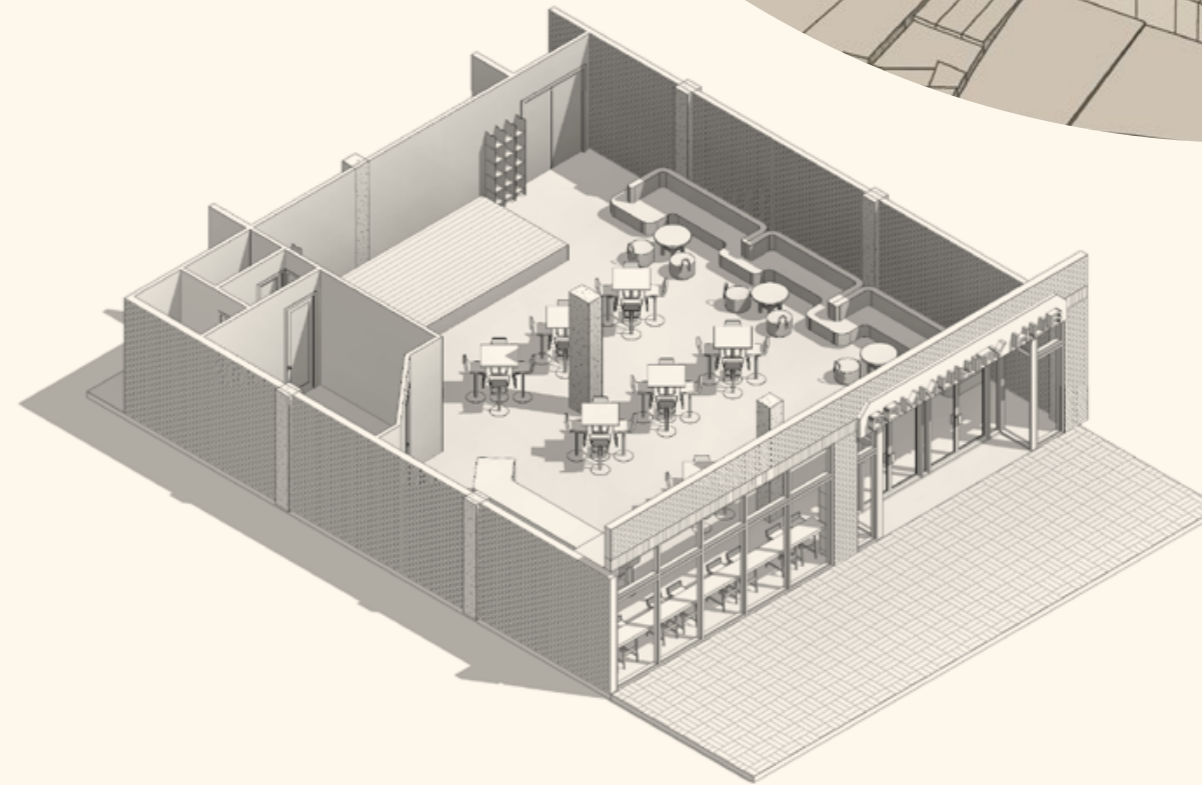
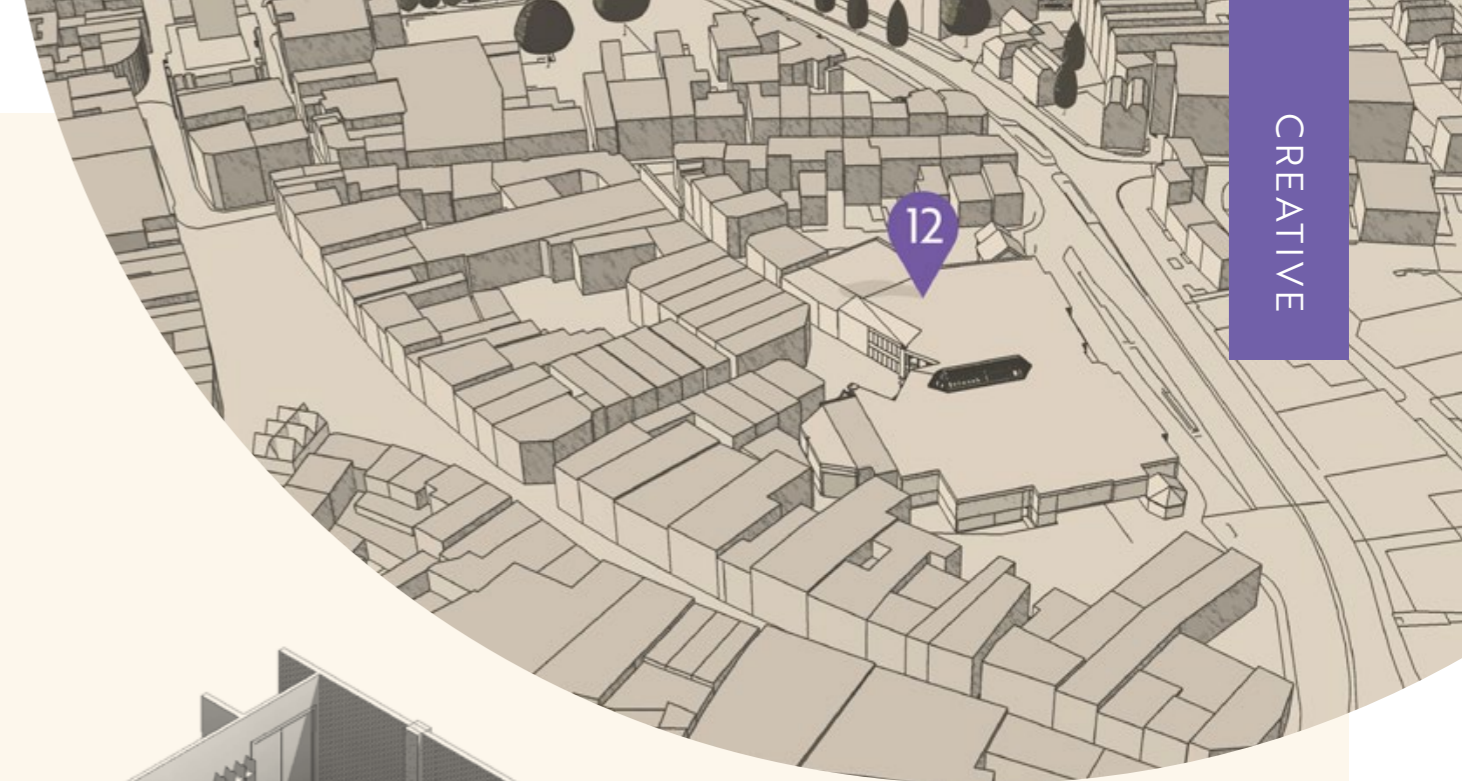
PROJECT NO: 12

# Powerhouse

Transforming under-utilised space at Maylord Shopping Centre will result in the creation of Powerhouse: A centre for culture and the creative industries. The redeveloped space will stimulate creative, heritage and visitor economies, and connect community through live experiences and cultural programming, contributing to a renewed and reshaped city centre in a way that drives footfall and economic growth, through tourism and community engagement. Powerhouse, a theatre-making company, has developed cross-sector partnerships with local independent businesses, Dakin Events and The Beefy Boys, to generate footfall and economic growth to the area.

The ground floor will consist of bookshop and social hub.

The upper floor will be a large multipurpose space, allowing community classes and workshops, rehearsals and creative development resources, including breakaway digital studios and workspace.





## RATIONALE

An improved Hereford cultural offer. An urgent re-imagining and repurposing of long-abandoned retail-centric assets addressing the 'nothing to do here' complaint. Space that brings people into the city centre for cultural experiences, learning and leisure. Opportunity for experiential and cultural tourist programming of national and international status. High Street regeneration through a new model of community, commerce and culture.

More visibility and access of learning, with increased cultural interactions with harder-to-reach groups. Growing employment opportunities and halo-effect for surrounding businesses.

This project will strengthen Hereford's cultural landscape and will deliver the Towns Fund Intervention Framework commitment to:

1. Improved arts, cultural and heritage offer that is more visible and easier for residents/visitors to access
2. Enhanced townscape that is more attractive and more accessible to residents, businesses and visitors.



## FUNDING

Total Cost: £1,004,000 | Towns Fund: £300,000

Matched Funding: £704,000

Towns Fund will support refurbishment of the existing Powerhouse building.





PROJECT NO: 13 | SKILLS FOUNDRY 3

# Digital Culture Hub

The Digital Culture Hub (DCH) led by Rural Media in partnership with Hereford College of Arts (HCA) will create an ecosystem of digital creativity and innovation, marking the city/county out as a cultural leader in rural regeneration and social mobility. The DCH will aggregate in a single, contemporary space the creative technologies, tools and expertise to inspire and raise the skill levels in the county, to take advantage of the booming, post-Covid digital economy.

## RATIONALE

Capitalise on the growth (turbocharged by Covid) of creative industry micro-businesses choosing to locate outside urban conurbations.

Benefit public, private and VCSE sectors and the county's zero-carbon targets by building digital skills. Inspire and transform the way residents and visitors experience Herefordshire, and businesses reach out to new markets and investors. Attract start-ups from further afield to relocate to Herefordshire.

Address the critical issue of ex-migration of young people.

This project will help achieve our objective to make Hereford a fairer city and will deliver the following Towns Fund Intervention Framework outcomes:

- 1. Increased share of young people and adults who have relevant skills for employment and entrepreneurship
- 2. Increased number of start-ups and/or scale ups utilising business incubation, acceleration and co-working space



## FUNDING

Total Cost: £1,745,000 | Towns Fund: £1,195,000  
Matched Funding: £550,000

Towns Fund will facilitate centralised resources, e.g. broadcast-standard TV, radio and interactive studios and equipment, together with access to experienced industry professionals and their networks, it will underpin and drive Herefordshire's national and international brand and profile.

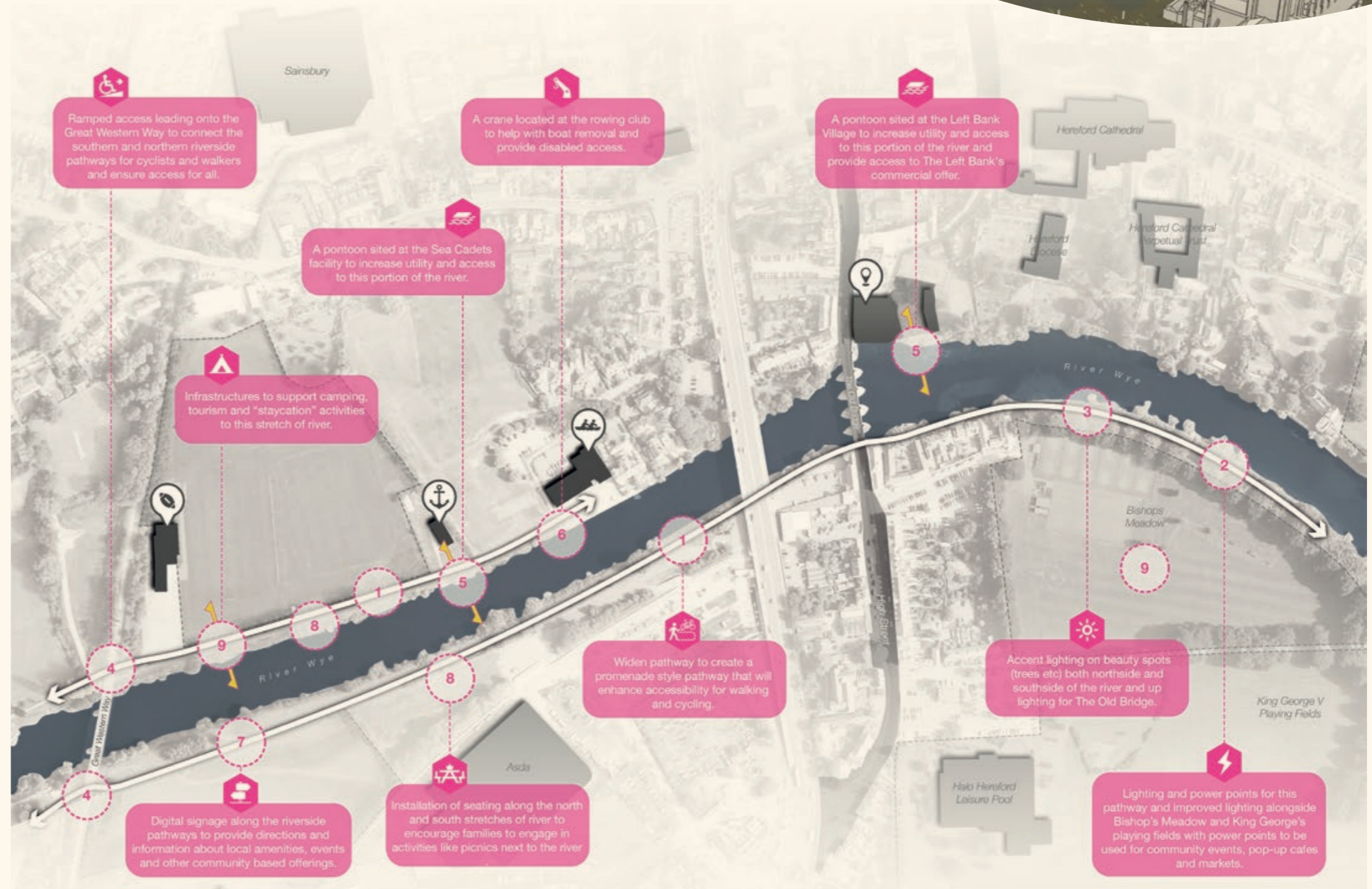




PROJECT NO: 14

# River Wye Infrastructure

Enhancement of the river and its surrounding infrastructure. This will include wide promenade style pathway that will enhance accessibility for walking and cycling. Lighting and power points alongside Bishop's Meadow and King George's playing fields for community events, pop up cafés and markets. The project will involve a ramp leading onto the Great Western Way to connect the south and northside pathways for cyclists and the disabled. Pontoon at the Left Bank Village and Sea Cadets facility to increase utility and access, will provide a crane based at the Rowing Club/Sea Cadets for disabled access to vessels and boat removal from the river. Digital signage will be provided, giving directions and information about events, local amenities and other community based offerings. Installation of seating along the north and south stretches of the river will encourage family engagement. This project will provide infrastructure that will support camping, tourism and "staycation".





## RATIONALE

Transformation of key tourist attraction, building on the heritage offer. Enhancing a key site in Hereford and the beauty of the most visually accessible section of the river. Increase local business opportunities. More footfall into Hereford. Contributes towards levelling up i.e. improves opportunities for disadvantaged and quality of life for residents. Towpath improvements creating better access and connectivity. Pontoon enables river cruiser access. Better connections between north side and south side of the river. Mobilisation of outstanding riverside "staycation" camping and caravanning offer.

This project will support the Towns Fund Urban Regeneration Intervention agenda and will lead to:

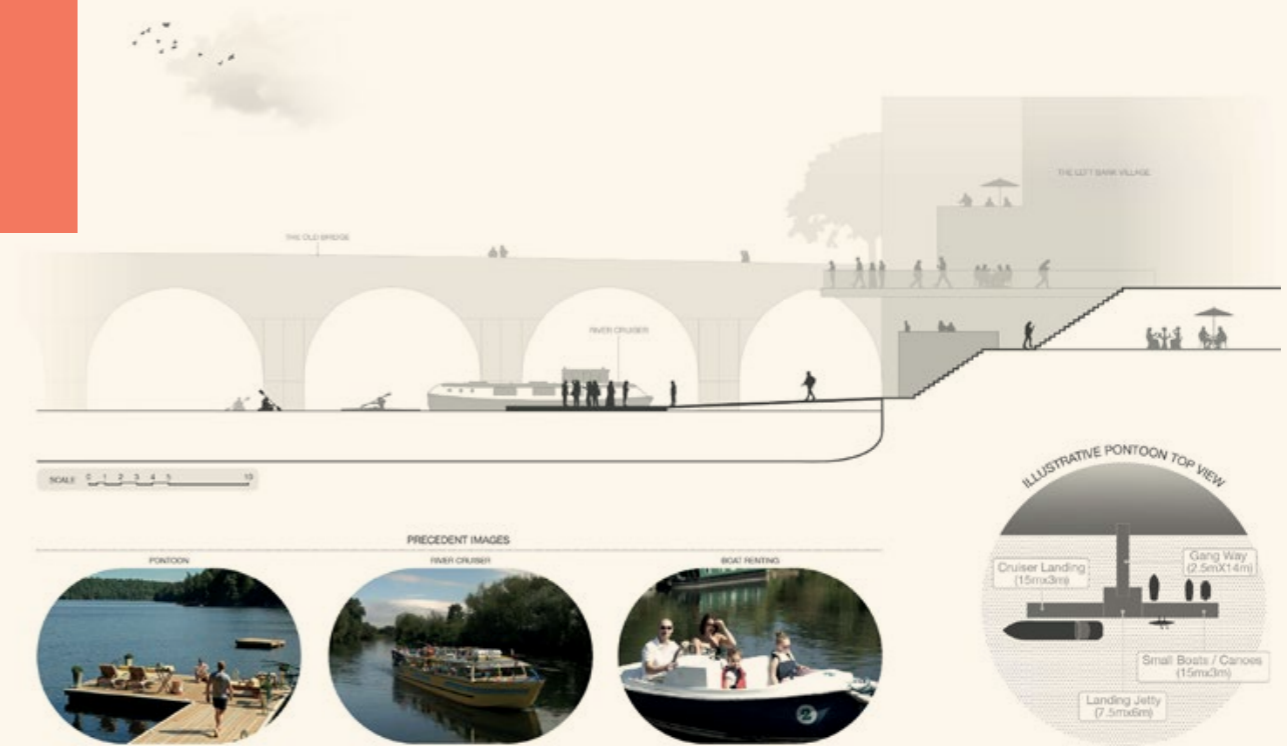
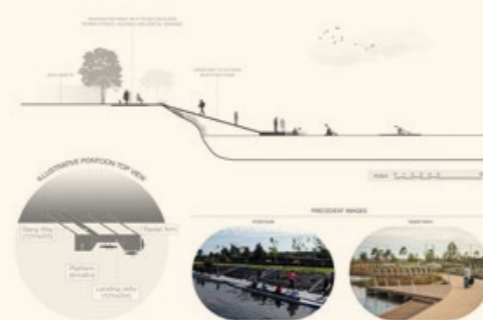
1. Enhanced townscape that is more attractive and more accessible to residents, businesses and visitors
2. Improved affordability, convenience, reliability and sustainability of travel options to and from places of work
3. Enhanced high street and town centre experience that prioritises the health, safety and mobility of pedestrians



## FUNDING

Total Cost: £1,612,000 | Towns Fund: £1,500,000 | Matched Funding: £112,000

Towns Fund will support the suite of river infrastructure investments.







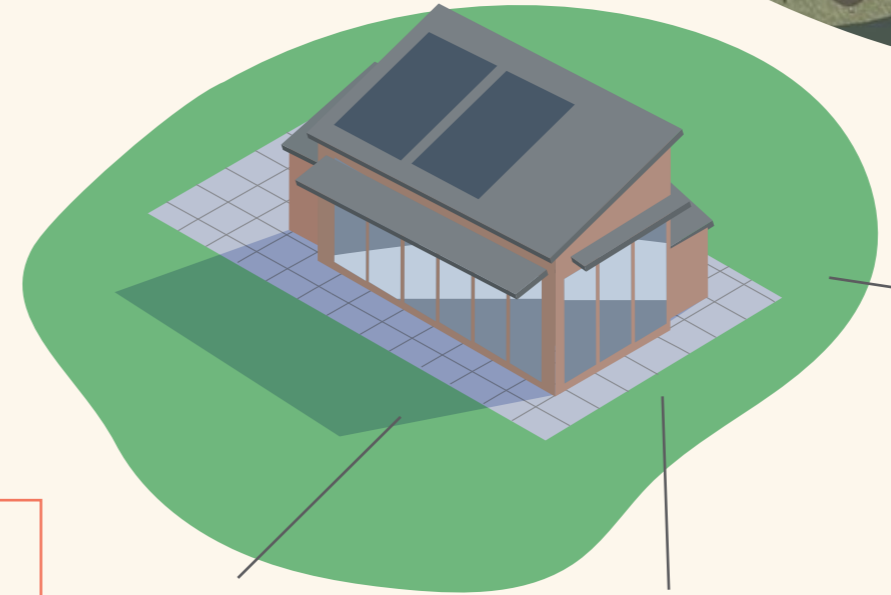
15

CONNECTED

PROJECT NO: 15 | SKILLS FOUNDRY 4

# Southside

Southside will provide a vibrant, inspiring and inclusive sports, food and skills community focal point for the people of South Wye, the most deprived element of Hereford's population. Southside is a collaboration between two highly energised established community organisations Growing Local CIC and Belmont Wanderers CIC, and NMITE, all of whom share a common goal to improve the future health, well-being, life-chances and employment skillset of the people of South Wye and Hereford. The heart of the project will be the creation of a single physical building - Southside - which will accommodate all partners.



Growing Local CIC

NMITE

Belmont Wanderers CIC

## RATIONALE

The Southside project will be located in Newton Farm in South Wye, all of which falls in the bottom 10 - 20% most deprived neighbourhoods nationally. There are very few opportunities to engage children, young people, families or adults in this area. The hub, sports pitches and gardens will provide a destination and will be accessible seven days a week.

This project will help achieve our objective to make Hereford a fairer city and will deliver the following Towns Fund Intervention Framework outcomes:

- 1. Increased share of young people and adults who have relevant skills for employment and entrepreneurship
- 2. Increased number of start-ups and/or scale ups utilising business incubation, acceleration and co-working space

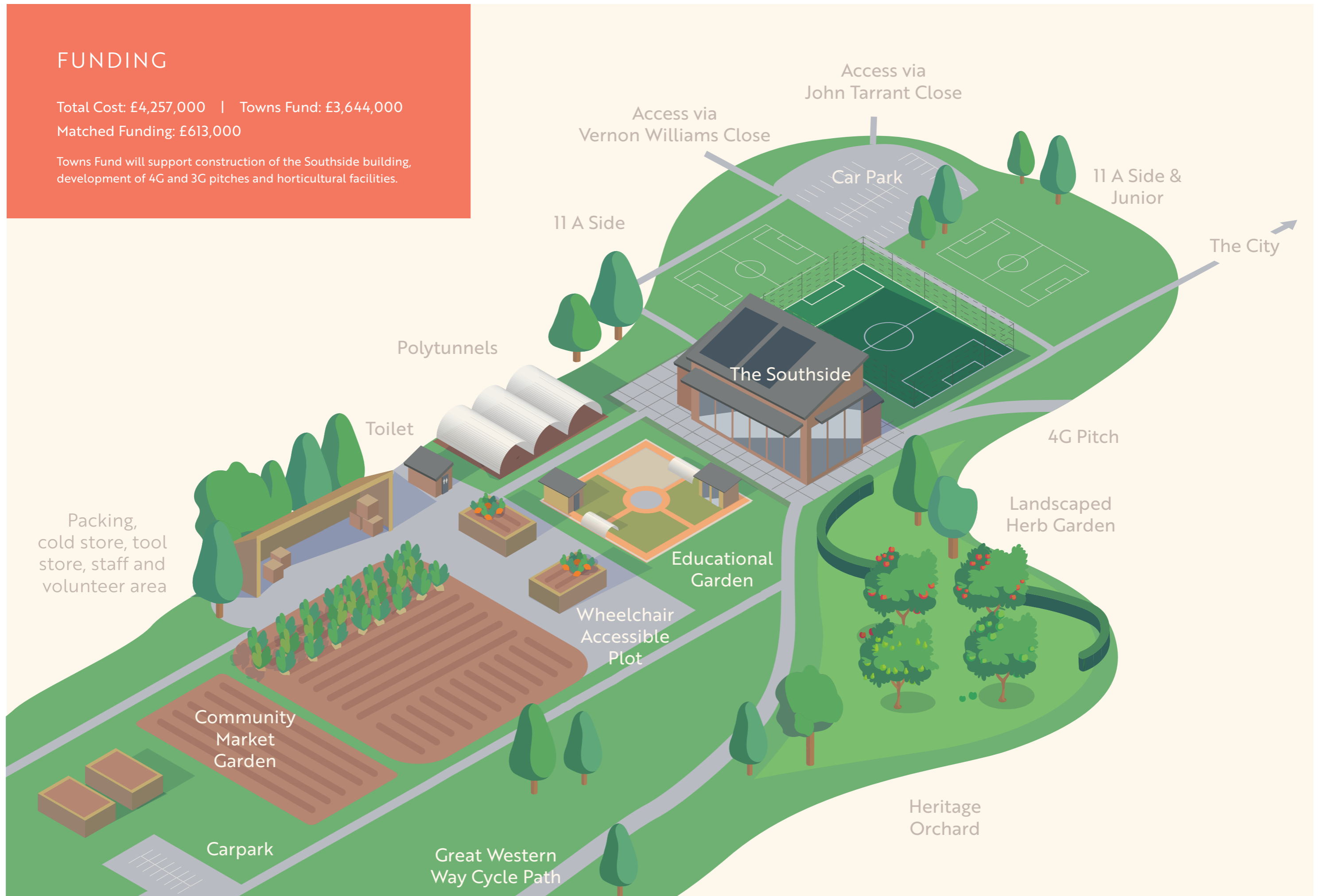


# FUNDING

Total Cost: £4,257,000 | Towns Fund: £3,644,000

Matched Funding: £613,000

Towns Fund will support construction of the Southside building, development of 4G and 3G pitches and horticultural facilities.





## ALIGNED INVESTMENTS



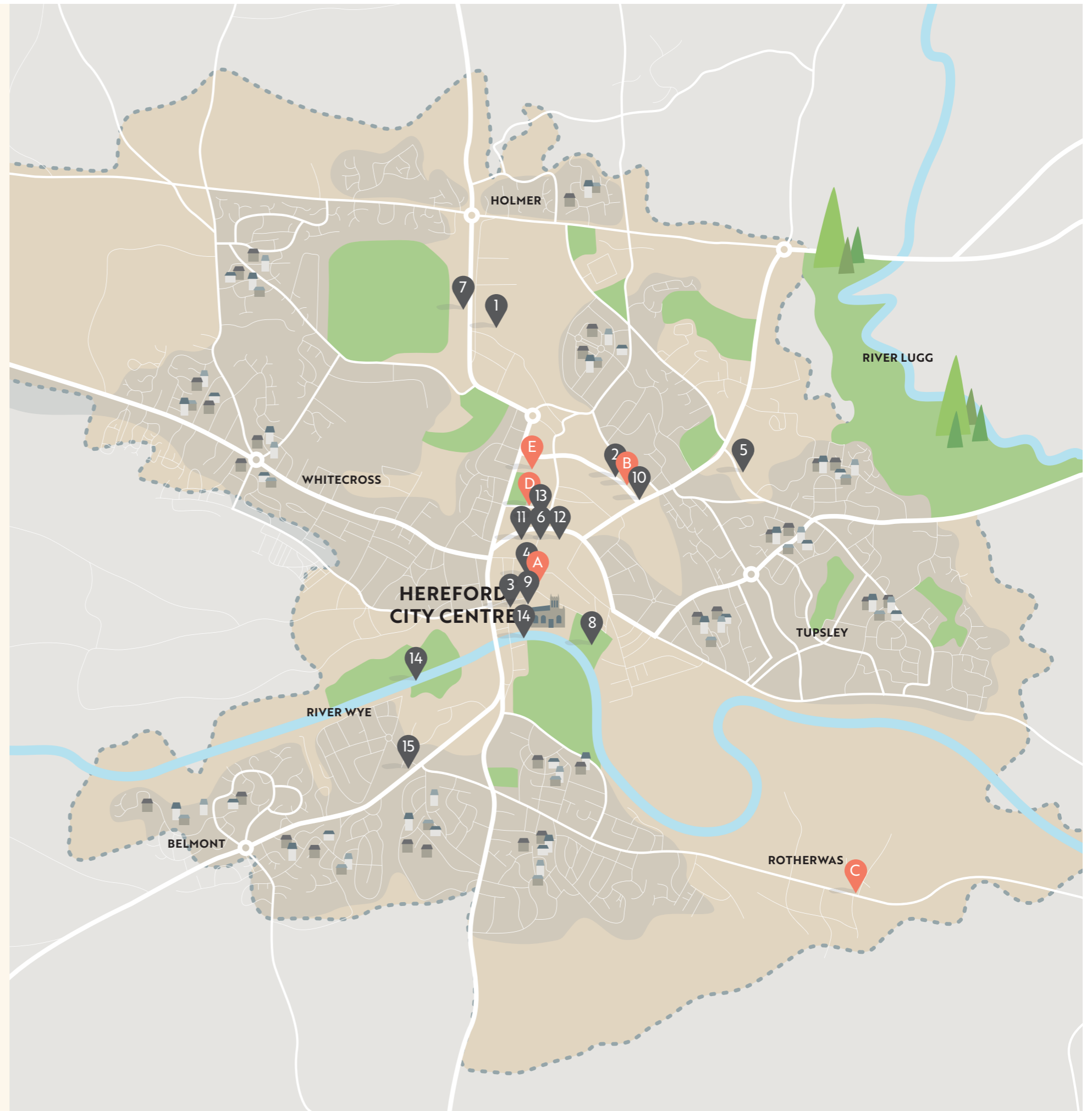
### TOWNS FUND PROJECTS

1. Soil from the City
2. Electric Buses
3. Greening the City
4. NMITE Future of Work Hub
5. School of Creative Digital Futures
6. Maylord Library and Learning Resource Centre
7. Holmer Extreme Sports Hub
8. Castle Green Pavilion
9. The Marches Experience (Museum)
10. Meadow Arts (Station Approach)
11. Encore Music Hub
12. Powerhouse
13. Digital Culture Hub
14. River Wye infrastructure
15. Southside



### EXISTING PROJECTS

- A. City Centre Improvement Package
- B. Integrated Transport Hub
- C. Hereford Enterprise Zone
- D. NMITE University
- E. Urban Village Development



# 03



ENGAGEMENT AND DELIVERY



## GOVERNANCE

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

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

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

Our full Board has met on 14 occasions, observed by Rebecca Collings from the Town Hub and Clare Hannah from BEIS.

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

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

As a collective, the Board and Technical Sub-Group have devoted over 16 hours of detailed group meeting time to establish a final consensual and impactful list of projects.

The Board has also initiated and closely monitored the implementation of the extensive engagement process associated with the development of the Town Investment Plan. They have set the important tone of converting bids which did not fully fit the criteria for inclusion in the bid into a key pipeline for the longer term regeneration of Hereford.

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



Name	Company
Lauren Rogers (Chair)	Rural Media
Alan Anderson	British Land
Cllr Ellie Chowns	Herefordshire Council
Ian Christie	Dwr Cymru Welsh Water
Elise Cummings	Younger Persons Representative
Kath Hey	Hereford City Council
Prof. David Langley	NMITE
Will Lindesay DL   Judith Faux	HVOSS
Frank Myers MBE	Herefordshire Business Board/Marches LEP
Jesse Norman	MP for Hereford and South Herefordshire
Ruth Parry	Simple Design Works
Paul Stevens	Hereford Business Improvement District
Julian Vaughan	The Green Dragon Hotel
Will Vaughan	Hereford Pedicabs and Pedicargo

## PARTNERSHIPS AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

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

### The stakeholder engagement programme included:

- 96 face-to-face or online meetings with 141 individual business or community leaders
- 21 face-to-face or online meetings with organisations and groups. These meetings engaged nearly 250 participants and generated more than 300 online comments
- 6 online sector forums - Culture and Heritage, Education, Inclusive Growth, Skills, Sustainability and Tourism which attracted nearly 80 participants in total and which generated more than 200 online comments
- Online survey sent to more than 8,500 recipients - 270 respondents
- Publicity and media campaign including Hereford Times, BBC Hereford and Worcester, Sunshine Radio, Your Herefordshire and Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce
- Dedicated website [www.strongerhereford.co.uk](http://www.strongerhereford.co.uk) with online survey - 167 survey respondents and 103 subscribers
- Dedicated Facebook and Twitter social media channels
- 272 comments submitted online via MyTown portal and dedicated website

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

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

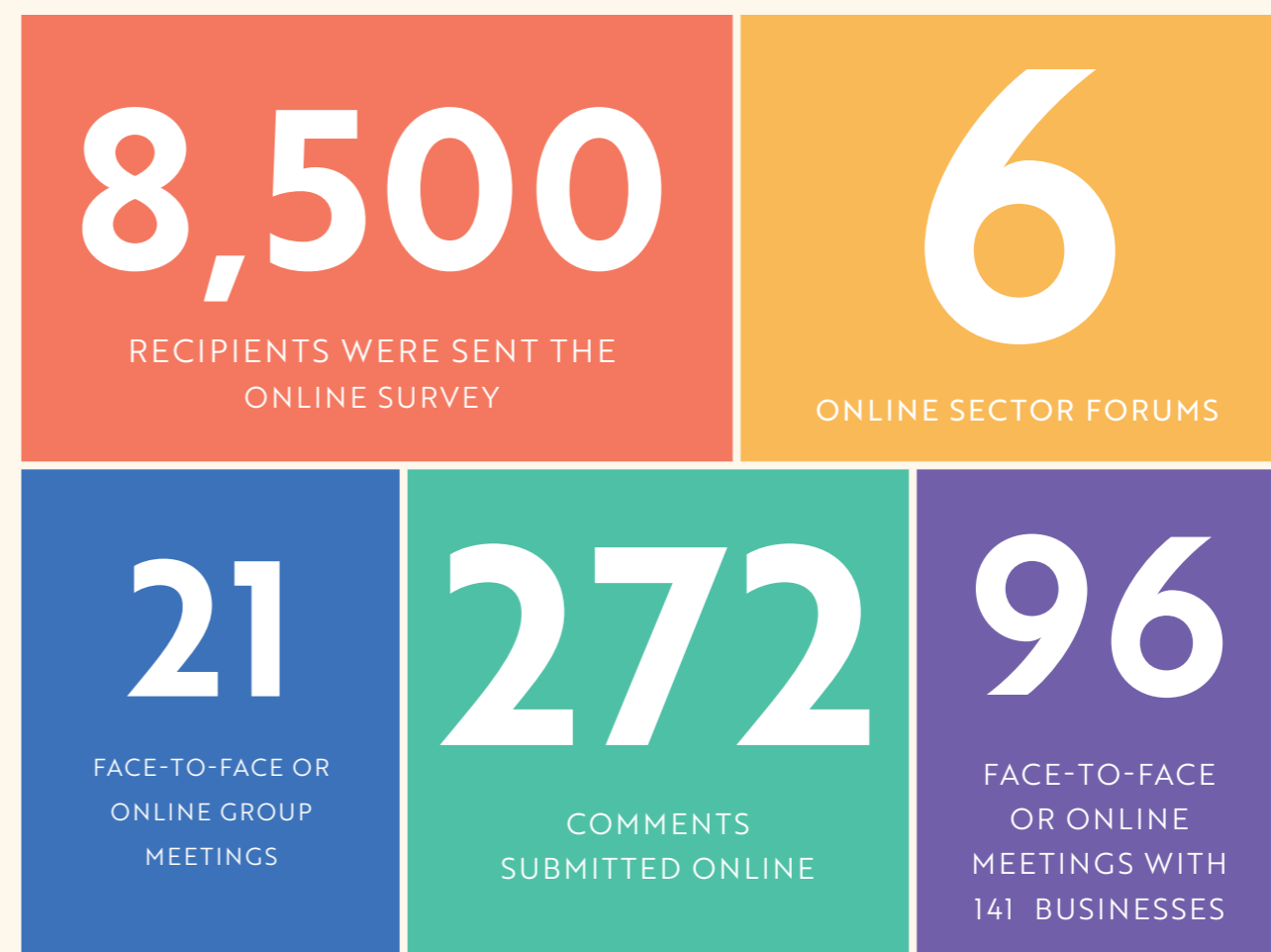
At each stage of the engagement process, participants and respondents were invited to submit project proposals for potential inclusion in our Investment Plan. In mid-November 2020, forty five investment project proposals were tabled with a combined value of more than £80 million.

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

Throughout the process Herefordshire Council have provided officer support to assist the Board in preparing the TIP and managing the governance arrangements. The Board and council have shared aspirations for the TIP and officers and Members have forged a good working relationship with the Board. In January the council cabinet endorsed the TIP submission due to its clear alignment with, and ability to help deliver, the council's County Plan objectives. Herefordshire Council appointed an independent technical assessor to ensure that our selection process was compliant and transparent.

During a total of 16 hours of deliberation, the Board's technical sub-group (with up to fifteen observers in each meeting) evaluated each project using the Towns Fund Project Prioritisation Tool on the basis of the four pre-loaded Green Book criteria and seven local criteria and arrived at a short-list of eight stand-alone or consolidated projects with a combined value of £24.954 million. This list was subsequently endorsed by the full Board as a combination of the most necessary and powerful interventions in Hereford's economy. Project development capacity funding was allocated to individual projects and sanctioned by the Board.

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







## FUTURE PLANS

Partnership working will be crucial to the successful delivery of this Plan. The structures and networks which have been established to oversee the work to date will continue to be strengthened during the delivery phase.

The Programme Management Function will provide a resource to expand our partnership working, including our links to the community and voluntary sectors. We will continue to encourage participation and maximise funding and investment for our communities, with opportunities for engagement identified below and detailed in full within our Stakeholder Engagement Plan.

The Towns Fund Board will continue to meet actively and prepare the ground for the implementation of both the projects within our portfolio and the wider range of projects which we have identified through the Towns Fund process. It will own the Stakeholder Engagement Plan framed around networks, partnerships and private sector investment.



## NETWORKS AND PARTNERSHIPS

We will utilise the mature partnership structure that exists in Hereford to access the skills and expertise we need to deliver specific projects and to reach out to a wider stakeholder network for all of the priority areas.

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

Continued engagement through our website and social media channels will play an active role in the shaping of our plan and in testing, monitoring and evaluation of its constituent projects.



## PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT

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

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

## BUSINESS CASE DEVELOPMENT

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

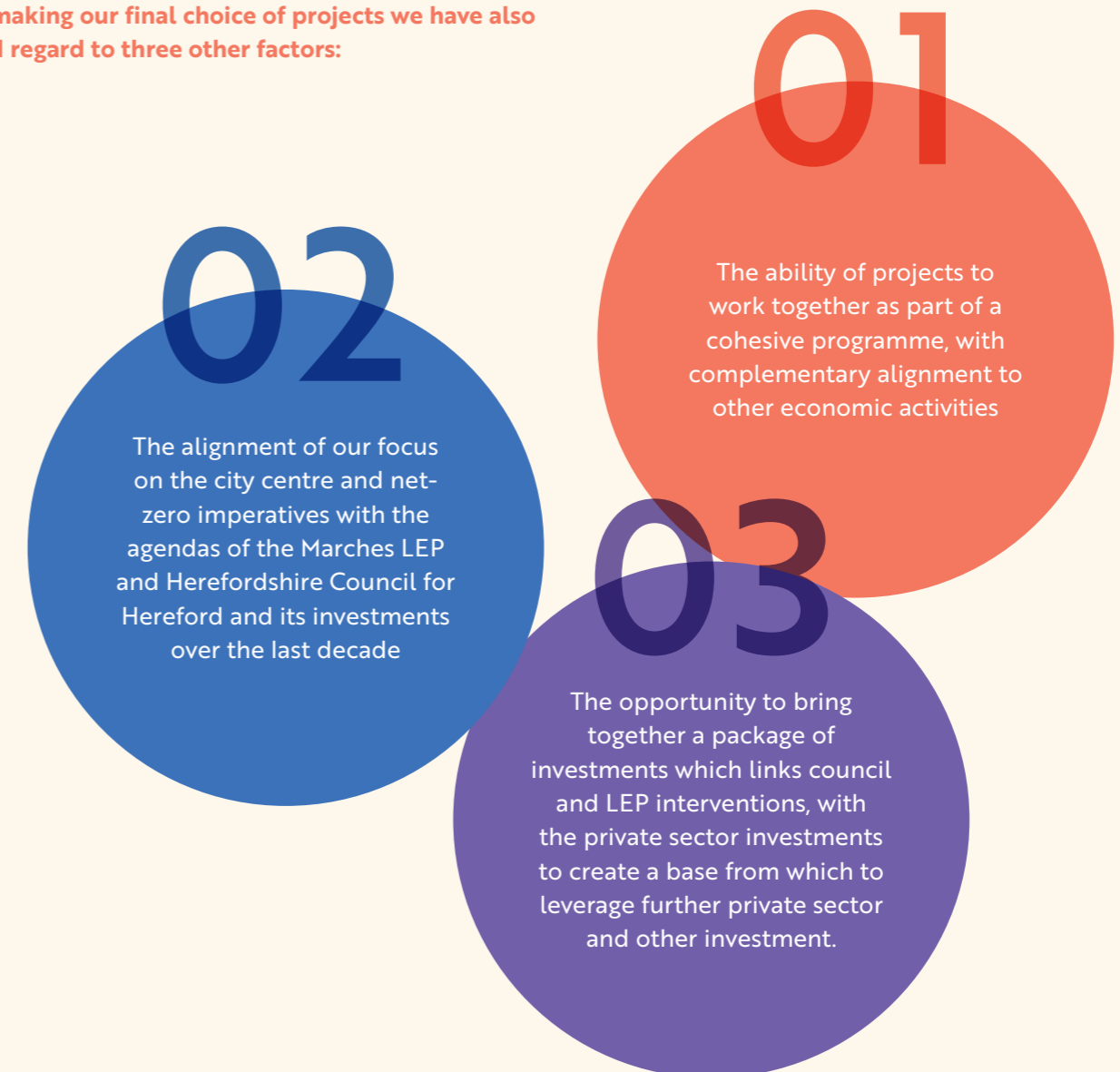
The results of this follow-up exercise were then assessed by the Technical Sub-Group and signed off by the Board as a final list of projects. In parallel with this process, Herefordshire Council commissioned external independent advice, in its role as Financially Accountable Body, to assess the risks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

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

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

Following collection of the information on each project, we commissioned a technical assessment of a number of projects from Mace who are physical and structural development consultants. The outcomes of their work have helped us to provide a very robust set of projects and details of their contribution are attached as an appendix.

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





## INVESTMENT PLAN SUMMARY

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

The table on the below sets out the proposed start and finish dates for each project within the programme:

£M	Town Fund	Co-Funding Status				Co-Funding	Total Cost	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
		Private	Secured	Public	Secured								
<b>Skills Foundry</b>													
<i>Southside</i>	3.644	0.19	✓	0.423	✓	0.613	4.257						
Towns Fund													
Matched Funding													
<i>Digital Culture Hub</i>	1.195	0.139	x	0.411	✓	0.55	1.745						
Towns Fund													
Matched Funding													
<i>Digital Futures</i>	0.65			0.2	✓	0.2	0.85						
Towns Fund													
Matched Funding													
<i>Future of Work Skills Hub NMITE</i>	2.331	0.126	x	0.41	✓	0.536	2.867						
Towns Fund													
Matched Funding													
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>7.82</b>	<b>0.455</b>		<b>1.444</b>		<b>1.899</b>	<b>9.719</b>						
<b>Access and Greening</b>													
<i>River Wye Infrastructure</i>	1.5	0.112	✓			0.112	1.612						
Towns Fund													
Matched Funding													
<i>Greening the City</i>	1.5						1.5						
Towns Fund													
Matched Funding													
<i>Meadow Arts (Station Approach)</i>	0.09			0.07	✓	0.07	0.16						
Towns Fund													
Matched Funding													
<i>Castle Green Pavilion</i>	1.56						1.56						
Towns Fund													
Matched Funding													
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>4.65</b>	<b>0.112</b>		<b>0.07</b>		<b>0.182</b>	<b>4.832</b>						

£M	Town Fund	Co-Funding Status				Co-Funding	Total Cost	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26
		Private	Secured	Public	Secured								
<b>Cultural Assets</b>													
<i>Maylord</i>	3					4	7						
Towns Fund				4	✓								
Matched Funding													
<i>Powerhouse</i>	0.3			0.704	✓	0.704	1.004						
Towns Fund													
Matched Funding													
<i>Encore</i>	0.2	0.6	x			0.6	0.8						
Towns Fund													
Matched Funding													
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>0.6</b>		<b>4.704</b>		<b>5.304</b>	<b>8.804</b>						

<b>Individual Projects</b>												
Marches Experience: Museum	5	5	x	5	✓	10	15					
Towns Fund												
Matched Funding												
Soil from the City	1	0.5	✓			0.5	1.5					
Towns Fund												
Matched Funding												
Electric Buses	1.8			0.6	✓	0.55	2.4					
Towns Fund												
Matched Funding												
Extreme Sports	1.184	0.025	✓	0.75	x	0.775	1.959					
Towns Fund												
Matched Funding												
<b>Total</b>	<b>24.954</b>	<b>6.692</b>		<b>12.568</b>		<b>19.210</b>	<b>44.214</b>					

 Starting year       Year of completion





## IMPLEMENTATION AND DELIVERY PLAN

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

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

More discussion in the context of implementation is required but we currently envisage, subject to the availability of funding, the establishment of a Programme Management Office to oversee the programme to ensure independent appraisal and scrutiny as part of our assurance process.

We will ensure that the office is staffed by sufficiently qualified staff to discharge the programme management, monitoring and other accountable body functions.

**Specialist support will be required as follows:**

- To develop our local Green Book assurance process

- To undertake independent project appraisal and due diligence, ensuring objectivity in decision making
- To provide skills and expertise in developing our digital and clean growth proposals, ensuring these can be transformational
- To provide specialist legal advice where required (e.g. state aid) to support contractual arrangements with government and back-to-back funding agreements with partners
- Our programme management and assurance process will be prepared and adopted by Herefordshire Council in partnership with the Town Board for implementation following our Heads of Terms Agreement.

**Our management and assurance process will set out:**

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



## PROVEN ABILITY TO DELIVER

**The Towns Fund partnership comprises a number of key players with a significant track record of delivery. These include:**

- British Land who delivered the £90 million investment in the Old Cattle Market retail site
- Herefordshire Business Board and Herefordshire Investment Partnership which have supported a number of key public private sector initiatives including the recent acquisition of Maylord Shopping Centre by Herefordshire Council
- NMITE – Hereford’s new University which brokered an investment package of over £25 million to become established
- Powerful and well established social enterprise companies which have carved out a regionally significant niche in a number of key themes including Rural Media and the highly innovative recycling and delivery business Pedicargo
- The VCS Sector are represented through HVOSS which has delivered a number of inclusive and innovative social enterprise and employment schemes both on its own and in partnership with the sector more broadly
- Hereford Business Improvement District which has successfully supported the building of the resilience, in extremely challenging times, of the city centre retail and visitor offer

This grouping of key private and third sector bodies is supported by both Hereford City Council and Herefordshire Council. Herefordshire Council has successfully managed and initiated a range of major regeneration initiatives in the Towns Fund area including the development of Skylon Park and the procurement of the Maylord Shopping Centre. Herefordshire Council has provided the principle interface with the LEP in terms of the development of the city and this has been amplified in terms of the activities of the Town Board through the engagement of key individuals such as Frank Myers MBE who sits on the Board of the LEP. The Council has also led the implementation of the Government response to Covid engaging with local businesses in its pivotal role as an intermediary to provide them with Government support in the context of national Coronavirus business support package.

We have set out above how our implementation plan will provide a focus not just for the implementation of the Towns Fund projects but the scope to maintain, through the ongoing meeting of the Board and its sub-groups, a holistic development of the wider economic potential of the City and its hinterland. The process of engagement and monitoring which will accompany this process is set out in more detail in our Stakeholder Engagement Plan.







A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO  
SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTORS  
OF PHOTOGRAPHY INCLUDING  
HEREFORD BID AND RURAL MEDIA.  
ALL PROJECT SPONSORS AND  
REPRESENTATIVES HAVE ALSO  
CONTRIBUTED IMAGES AND FOR  
THAT WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL.

## NOTES

[1] Office for National Statistics 2019

[2] Ibid

[3] Ibid

[4] Office for National Statistics 2016

[5] Business Register and Employment Survey 2015-19

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

[7] Business Register and Employment Survey 2015-19

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

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

[10] English Heritage 2020

[11] Business Register and Employment Survey 2015-19

[12] Ibid

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

[14] Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2020

[15] Office for National Statistics 2016

[16] Annual Population Survey 2020

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[25] Index of Social Mobility 2020.

[26] Towns Hub Data Dashboard

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