

Scarborough Town Centre Strategy

Foreword – DRAFT

Range of challenges – local and national context.

With Scarborough Borough welcoming over 7m visitors each year, as well as a resident population of 108,000, the importance of the quality and management of a town centre is paramount.

The buzz a town centre gives the resident and visitor alike is important as a stimulus to encourage them to dwell longer than they might have intended to do, simply to enjoy the sense of place.

However, as in common with the national picture, Scarborough Town Centre is facing many challenges. With many choosing to shop on line and in regional out of town retail parks, the number of people visiting the centre has been declining in recent years. Therefore, we have to continually improve the experience of the centre of town through a range of ways such as investment in the public realm, broadening the offer of what is available and encouraging people to think about the place differently and not just as a place to go shopping.

Meanwhile, the visitor economy is showing encouraging signs with Scarborough listed as the second most visited place by English nationals after London between 2013 and 2015. Therefore, enhancing the visitor experience and providing them with sufficient interest and stimulation is imperative to ensuring they return, as well as encouraging local people to regularly shop locally rather than elsewhere, is our priority.

We have a good range of shops, pubs, restaurants and a vast array of other facilities in the town centre. By working with our stakeholders and partners, as well as some of our excellent community groups, we will develop a coordinated management approach that will see our town centre remain resilient and competitive through to 2025 and beyond.

XXXXX

Introduction

Successful 21st century towns need to be vibrant active spaces that are relevant to the whole community. In Scarborough that includes the millions of visitors who pass through our borough every year.

Scarborough is not a typical town by many measures, in comparison to other coastal towns we enjoy significantly greater footfall and visitor's numbers and are less seasonal than many. This is largely due to the fact that we have so much to offer throughout the calendar year, from the coastline to culture, heritage, retail, leisure and entertainment and a year round events and festivals programme.

Unlike many other towns Scarborough "Town Centre" is only one element of what Scarborough has to offer. If the Town Centre is to thrive it needs to be more relevant and attractive to those who visit and use the town for other reasons.

The town centre needs to become a thriving hub with something to offer across all generations and demographics and for both the local community and visitors.

Our Vision:

Scarborough Town Centre will re-align itself for the 21st century to become a hub of leisure, learning and living by building on its rich heritage, culture and traditional retail and leisure offer. It will become a national exemplar through dynamic, welcoming and customer / community focussed activity and intervention. This will be measured by footfall, vacancy rates, levels of investment, new business start-ups, stakeholder involvement and customer satisfaction.

Strategic Objectives:

To build the success of Scarborough Town Centre as a vibrant, mixed use centre for all stakeholders, investors and the community we aim to:

1. Be the best performing Coastal Town Centre in England by 2025 and the primary economic hub for retail, leisure, learning and living within the Yorkshire Coast Area.
2. Increase residential living within our town centre by 25% by 2025
3. Work together with public and private property owners and agencies to ensure the built environment and infrastructure exceeds the expectations of our customers and community by 2025.

The Focus of our activity.

1. Making the Town a mixed use environment:

Encouraging a diverse offer within the Town Centre through festivals and events, incentives, planning, licensing and regulation and building on the cultural and heritage assets by:

- Regenerating the town as a socio - economic and cultural hub for the Borough offering the full range of public and private sector services.
- Utilising vacant premises for alternative activity and entrepreneurship i.e. pop up shops, office and residential space, leisure, creative and cultural activity.
- Working with partners to acquire and develop town centre property in line with the strategy for residential and alternative use.
- Ensuring policy is aligned and supports changes in town centre activity including:
 - A planning policy that supports and actively encourages change of use within the Town Centre.
 - Targeted rate relief / business support for certain sectors / start-ups within the town centre.
 - Reviewing of parking fees and provision and transport routes into and out of the town centre.
- Establishing a comprehensive programme of festival and events in support of town centre activity and maximise footfall.
- Encouraging specialist and evening activities which contribute positively to the economic and social wellbeing of the community providing access to affordable quality goods which also compliments mainstream retailing.

2. An inviting public realm we can be proud of:

We will work to deliver interventions which will:

- Clearly redefine the Town Centre parameters giving a focus for investment and activity.
- Physically improve and make best use of our heritage assets by encouraging property owners to maintain, improve / reinstate shop fronts and premises in keeping with the historic nature / high quality image of the town
- Ensure accessibility to all and establish the physical linkages to the established and emerging “quarters” of the town, i.e. Cultural, harbour and beach, leisure and heritage.

- Invest and improve the public realm infrastructure and streetscape, “re-greening” our town centre and public spaces.
- Make the most of empty premises and encouraging alternative uses through incentives to landlords.
- Provide a clean and safe environment for all.

3. Developing a University Town

Building on the growing student population generated by the expansion of Coventry University, the provision of the University Technical College (UTC) and Scarborough Tech we will:

- Work with the Further Education (FE) and Higher Education (HE) providers to establish student living accommodation in the town centre and to grow the student population.
- Work to meet the needs of a student population who will in turn generate footfall and income outside of the traditional operating limits.
- Provide space within the town centre for accommodation, study and social interaction whilst creating a town centre experience that will attract students including pubs, bars, live music and cultural venues and sports and leisure facilities.

4. Night Time Economy

Encouraging a more diverse evening economy that appeals to a wider range of ages and interests and increase the number of people using the Town Centre during the early evening by working with partner agencies to:

- Encourage diversification, balance of uses and types of establishments
- Develop the transition process from day to night time economies
- Making use of legislative tools and powers, including the Cumulative Impact Zone (CIZ) to shape activity, improve quality and responsible activity of businesses
- Develop a programme of night time economy events

5. Introduce SMART town centre infrastructure

By capitalising and investing in the existing high speed broadband network we will work to:

- Establish a SMART town centre through the use of 4G wifi (5G may be possible in time) technology providing up to date information on everything happening within the town from one virtual platform.

- Deploy 'Internet of Things' (IOT) technology where appropriate to assist in the effective running of the town centre
- Establish the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure
- Establish a tech sector for Scarborough including the creation of a tech hub.

6. Build our identity, image and brand

Establishing a coherent and collaborative marketing and promotional platform for the town by:

- Aligning the Town Centre Strategy with the Tourism Strategy and emerging Tech and Creative Sector Strategies.
- Establishing a second home for exhibitions of national, international arts institutions and cultural activity.
- Creating a common marketing hub providing pathways to everything the town has to offer and bringing together the retail, leisure, tourism, cultural, heritage and community through one gateway.

7. Establish a collaborative and Supportive Town Centre community

To establish a culture which will:

- Create a Town Centre Commission (Town Team) with a Town Centre Champion providing a leadership and ambassadorial role for the Town.
- Be flexible, welcoming and supportive of entrepreneurs and inward investment.
- Recognise the needs of customers and the wider community and place them at the forefront of what we do.
- Clearly identify roles and responsibilities and the timeframe for action and delivery and; to secure effective working between the public and private sectors.

Draft Action Plan.

Please note the following draft action plan is a working document which represents the key findings of the consultation undertaken to date.

These are initial and in some instances aspirational actions to help create some momentum to the strategy and not an exhaustive list.

The document will form the basis of a first stage 'expression of interest' bid to the Future High Streets Fund in March 2019 which will seek funding in support of the actions where eligible.

The priority action is to establish the Town Centre Team. Refinements, additions to, adoption of and implementation of the action plan will form part of the initial activity of the Town Centre Team.

DRAFT ACTION PLAN

WHAT	TARGET DATE	WHO (Lead partners in bold)	STRATEGIC THEME						
			1. MIXED USE ENVIRONMENT	2. INVITING PUBLIC REALM	3. UNIVERSITY TOWN	4. NIGHT TIME ECONOMY	5. SMART TOWN CENTRE	6. IDENTITY, IMAGE AND BRAND	7. COLLABORATIVE & SUPPORTIVE TOWN CENTRE
(1) Establish a Town Centre Team to lead the delivery of the Town Centre Strategy.	July 2019	Public, Private and Voluntary Sector Business and Community, Residents, Scarborough Borough Council (SBC) , North Yorkshire County Council	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
(2) Establish post of Town Centre Strategy Delivery Manager.	March 2019	Scarborough Borough Council , Town Centre Team	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
(3) Publication of monthly Town Centre footfall data	March 2019	Scarborough Borough Council							X
(4) Develop new holistic spatial Masterplan for Scarborough Town Centre linking the towns assets and quarters, “re greening” our public spaces, improving lighting and signage etc.	April 2020	Town Centre Team, YNYER LEP Scarborough Borough Council, North Yorkshire County Council, All. Note Study to be undertaken in light of emerging national and local strategy. inc Arts and culture, housing, planning IT, Harbours and Tourism etc.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
(5) Establish a Property Improvement and Conversion Fund.	April 2020	Town Centre Team, Landlords, Scarborough Borough Council	X	X	X	X		X	X
(6) Promote and support the implementation of Government Business Rate relief scheme for Retail properties	March 2019	Scarborough Borough Council							X
(7) Facilitate regeneration of key sites for alternative, non-retail use	Ongoing until 2025	Scarborough Borough Council, Private Sector Landlords, Town Centre Team, All	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

WHAT	TARGET DATE	WHO (key partners)	1. MIXED USE ENVIRONMENT	2. INVITING PUBLIC REALM	3. UNIVERSITY TOWN	4. NIGHT TIME ECONOMY	5. SMART TOWN CENTRE	6. IDENTITY, IMAGE AND BRAND	7. COLLABORATIVE & SUPPORTIVE TOWN CENTRE
(8) Establish Small Business Start Up & Expansion Grants scheme for retail and leisure businesses	March 2019	Scarborough Borough Council	X					X	X
(9) Establish a fund to facilitate the regulatory enforcement action within town centre (e.g. tackling buildings in disrepair).	April 2020	Scarborough Borough Council		X				X	X
(10) Develop a programme for improvements to public realm infrastructure	Ongoing until 2025	North Yorkshire County Council, Scarborough Borough Council Town Centre Team, Huntress Row Businesses.		X					X
(11) Develop proposals for establishment of a Town Square	April 2020	Scarborough Borough Council Town Centre Team, North Yorkshire County Council, all partners + residents and community organisations	X	X					
(12) Establish bespoke student accommodation within Town Centre	By 2022	Coventry University, Scarborough Borough Council, Town Centre Team, Private Sector Landlords	X		X	X			
(13) Establishment of Town Centre wifi and IoT (Internet of Things) infrastructure	2020 onward	Scarborough Borough Council, Town Centre Team, Private businesses, Tech Sector					X	X	
(14) Establishment of 'Tech Hub' facility within Town Centre to foster tech sector within the Town and encourage start up enterprise	Pilot hub 2020	Private Sector (Tech), Scarborough Borough Council, Town Centre Team	X				X	X	X
(15) Establish year round programme of community / cultural events in the Town Centre	March 2019 onward	Town Centre Team, all	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

