

GEDCCC District Visits Programme

Highlights of the visit to Folkestone & Hythe District Council and the key economic development and regeneration issues and priorities:

A map and information pack were provided to all Members attending the visit.

Ambitions

- 13,000 new homes by 2037
- Target of 737 homes annually
- Accelerated delivery on key strategic sites
- Infrastructure Delivery Plan setting out an ambitious strategic road network
- Key brownfield regeneration sites at Folkestone Seafront and Shorncliffe Garrison
- High quality homes, including ambitious standards for space, water and energy efficiency, sustainable drainage, self-build and custom-build plots

Key asks made of KCC:

Highways

- Better transport modelling based on future trends not past trends
- Take a long-term view up to 40 years
- Provide creative and imaginative solutions

Broadband

- Connectivity very important and especially for communities on Romney Marsh

Lorry Park

- Consider and support a network of parking facilities across the county and country
- Better KCC/HA working on this

Lydd Airport

- Potential for expansion will need KCC support for improvements to the road infrastructure

Opportunities to work together:

1. Support the examination in public for our Core Strategy Review –outlining policy for our new garden town.
2. Continued investment into the district's No Use Empty scheme.
3. Support Gypsy & Traveller site provision required by Places and Policies Local Plan
4. Progress the district's need for new, modern, flexible business space as part of the business rates retention pool.
5. Continue to improve the appearance of our district–joint working on road signage and road markings.
6. Enable district-based Occupational Therapists through Better Care Funding, minimising hospital stays and helping people stay in or return to their own home.

District Headlines over the last 10 years including:

- 2973 homes built and 536 No Use empty properties returned to use
- 5700 jobs created and 560 new businesses started, 7 business incubation centres
- 6000 employed in tourism sector
- 111, 400 residents
- 445,000 to the Triennial Arts festivals

- 35 minutes to France on Eurotunnel and 53 minutes to London on High Speed One
- 3 Green Flags (Coastal Park, Radnor Park, Royal Military Canal) and 7 beaches with good/excellent water quality
- £1.7m invested in restoring the heritage of the Old Town and 914 listed buildings being preserved

Planning & Housing

- Core Strategy Review underway along with Places & Plans Local Plan
- Employment land target of 8 hectares
- New settlement proposed at Otterpool for 10,000 homes
- Housing target now doubled to 737 per year to 2037

Strategic Development sites:

- Folkestone Town Centre
- Otterpool Park
- Folkestone Seafront
- Princes Parade, Hythe
- Nickolls Quarry
- New Romney

New Accelerated Delivery Board set up with range of partners represented and chaired by Damian Collins MP

Purposes

- Place—providing the homes and other infrastructure needed to meet the demands of our growing population and business base, with high quality town centres that attract business investment and foster community engagement.
- Communities—Creating new jobs and breaking down barriers to employment.
- Business—reinforcing our commercial centres, promoting Folkestone & Hythe as an investment location, addressing skills shortages and supporting new business start-ups.

Examples of direct delivery:

- An ambitious development programme
- Otterpool Park and Princes Parade
- Town Centre Regeneration programme; regenerating homes and communities
- Working to bring empty homes back into use
- Challenging infill and town centre new build sites
- Working with the Homes England, Kent County Council and other partners to deliver significant public sector land for housing.
- Innovative, flexible and open for business: housing company, direct development, leasing arrangements and land swaps all considered.

Economic Development Strategy:

Priorities:

- Build on current and emerging economic strengths by supporting our key sectors including tourism & leisure and the creative and cultural industries
- Boost productivity and support business growth

- Encourage investment –maximise the value of our assets and stimulate investor confidence -to attract inward investment
- Improve education and skills attainment
- Transformational projects:
- Bring forward quality business accommodation–Otterpool Park, Biggins Wood, Mountfield Road, New Romney
- Develop Folkestone Town Centre and Harbour

Support for business:

Key Employers Engagement Programme:

- Folkestone & Hythe Business Advisory Board
- Folkestone & Hythe Tourism Board

Support for business – financial support:

- Folkestone Community Works CLLD Programme -Focuses on East, Harbour & Central running to 2022:
 - SME Business Grant Scheme £225k ERDF; 50% IR
 - Business support programme £350k ERDF; 50% IR
 - Business accommodation refurbishment projects £225k ERDF; 50% IR

Scale-Up Folkestone & Hythe

- 6 businesses commenced on programme April 2019
- 4 to increase GVA by 15%; at least 10 new jobs created

District Place brand campaign

The new place vision and brand will promote why we are proud and passionate about the regeneration of the district. A five-year project that will create a unified voice reinforcing the district as THE place in Kent to live, work, play, visit and invest. Stakeholder ‘discovery’ workshops held in May –what the district means to them today and their aspirations for its future. Brand Folkestone & Hythe to cover:

- Currently 8th most visited Kent town
- In 2017 visitors contributed £252m to the district’s economy
- Connected
- Less than an hour from London, 35 mins to Europe
- Coastal and urban connectivity
- People Friendly, Life/work balance on the coast
- Culturally on the map
- Clean, green, coastal, urban spaces
- Great brand names Saga, Eurotunnel Le Shuttle, Holiday Extras, Church and Dwight
- Property primed, up to 60% lower rates than London
- Established arts and culture hub
- Developing digital hub
- Tourism and leisure led

Next steps for the campaign:

- Cabinet engagement session on 19 June
- Agree brand vision, content and identity
- Brand Ambassadors -stakeholders have expressed interest to harness this opportunity to stand behind the new place brand identity

- Develop a brand toolkit - encourage the 'place brand' to be used by partners, who have a stake in securing the district's success and integrating into their own marketing and promotional strategies
- Website development
- Visual campaign – online and print

Further details can be found in the presentation by F&HDC which is available from Rob Hancock.