



BOSTON TOWN CENTRE **STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN** **2023-2027**

A TOWN CENTRE FOR EVERYONE





04	Foreword
06	Introduction
12	Clean and Safe
20	Open for Business
24	Culture, Heritage, and Events
30	Transformation
36	Monitoring and Reviewing

FOREWORD

Boston Borough Council is committed to working in partnership with businesses, residents and partners to revitalise the high street and the surrounding public realm, making the town centre a place to be proud of, a place recognised for its great heritage and a place that is cherished by its diverse communities to work, live and enjoy leisure time in.

Boston Borough Council is working in partnership to deliver major regeneration projects and other important placed based initiatives in the town. Our work is locally driven and is also very much part of the wider levelling up agenda that is progressing here in Boston, within the South and East Lincolnshire sub-region, the County and at a national level.

The Council is focused on revitalising the town centre by supporting our communities' pride in the area through targeted work and regeneration activity, working hand-in-hand with businesses, residents and partners. As the Leader and Deputy Leader of Boston Borough Council and the Chair of the Boston Town Area Committee (BTAC) together with fellow Members of the Council, partners and local people, we value the importance of our town centre and recognise its significant importance as an economic hub that supports the vibrancy of this great borough and those who live within our local neighbourhoods.

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on our lives in many different ways. The pandemic has accelerated change in people's shopping habits, with an increase in online retail seeing high streets such as in Boston lose retailers and a rise in store vacancies. We have to redefine the high street as retail is no longer the dominant attraction. However, there remains an important place for face-to-face retail and hospitality services, whilst there is now space for transformation and an ability to reinvent our town centre so that it can offer the very best experience to everyone.

Through this Strategy we are challenging how the town centre was previously cared for, whilst not being critical of those who were the custodians for this space before our time in office. We believe by better aligning council service delivery and working in a more integrated way with partners, community representatives and the voluntary and community sector we can lead a programme of work which ensures that Boston Town Centre is clean and safe, open for business, a great place for culture, heritage and events and a place that is on a very real transformation journey that will ensure present and future generations enjoy the very best that Boston's town centre can bring.

The production of this Strategy (and the associated Action Plan that is contained within it) is being facilitated by Boston Borough Council through engagement with stakeholders, local businesses and communities. It is intended to further support place based regeneration within our locality and the collaboration that has attracted significant investment into Boston. To this end, the Boston Town Deal has been a catalyst to attracting external funding – providing the platform for stakeholders from across all sectors to work together to deliver projects that enable the

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We commit to ongoing engagement as a critical method to ensuring we deliver improvements in the town centre that people recognise as making a positive difference to their everyday lives. On this basis this strategy and its integrated action plan is a live document that we will keep updating and reporting on. We are seeking improvements that you can immediately see as well as those that may take a longer time to come to fruition. Our ambition is to deliver the very best a town centre can offer in this most important part of Lincolnshire.

town to kick-start economic growth and act as a catalyst for future investment to realise the undeniable potential in our area. Importantly also, this Strategy and Action Plan will complement other strategic pieces of work that are being driven locally to ensure the whole of our borough has the best opportunity to thrive and it will also provide a strategic fit with the work of the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership, recognising Boston Borough Council's place shaping role within the sub-region, alongside South Holland District Council and East Lindsey District Council.

Through our work with partners and our community we commit to ongoing engagement as a critical method to ensuring we deliver improvements in the town centre that people recognise as making a positive difference to their everyday lives. On this basis this Strategy and its integrated Action Plan is a live document that we will keep updating and reporting on. We are seeking improvements that you can immediately see as well as those that may take a longer time to come to fruition. Our ambition is to deliver the very best a town centre can offer in this most important part of Lincolnshire. To this end we ask that everyone with an interest in our town supports the ongoing development of the Boston Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan. This really is about delivering “A Town Centre for Everyone”.



CLLR ANNE DORRIAN Leader
Boston Borough Council



CLLR DALE BROUGHTON Deputy Leader
Boston Borough Council



CLLR BARRIE PIERPOINT Chair of Boston
Town Area Committee



It is one of the largest parish churches in England and is affectionately known as 'The Stump'. The church's scale and grandeur, with a cathedral-like interior, is testament to the town's previous wealth and status. The town also retains a Guildhall that was built in 1390 by the Guild of St Mary, today housing a museum and a venue for weddings and other events.

Boston's town centre has like many places suffered in recent times due to a number of factors including the COVID pandemic and an increase in online retailing, which now accounts for about 18% of all UK retail expenditure and on some forecasts will reach 30% in ten years' time. In Boston there was a 10% decrease in the number of restaurants on the high street from 2020 – 2022 and there are a third less businesses created in the town than England as an average. Whilst the town centre has a number of challenges with key shops closing in recent times, it continues to have a number of strengths and has potential to increase its non-retail offer. It is considered that the centre would benefit from a clearer focus of activities and vision for its future. This Strategy and its associated Action Plan, whilst not a planning policy document is intended to assist in driving positive change in how the town centre is managed, nurtured and developed.

The Strategy will benefit and build on the support and investment secured, including: -

- The Boston Town Deal
- The Historic England Place Panel visit and report
- The Government's High Street Task Force support
- Levelling Up funding and partnership
- Cultural Framework for Renewal and subsequent National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) funding with priority status from Arts Council England
- Partnership with Destination Lincolnshire, enabling growth and support for the visitor economy
- UK Shared Prosperity Funding and Investment Plan
- The South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Vital & Viable Programme with the Institute of Place Management
- Empowering Healthy Communities
- Boston 2030 plans (2030 marks the 400th anniversary of the founding of Boston Massachusetts in 1630, ten years following the sailing of the Mayflower Pilgrims from England).

Town centres have of course their own individual identity but the key characteristics of a town centre (According to the Association of Town and City Management) include:-

- A retailing centre that serves the needs of the local community;
- Leisure, entertainment and cultural facilities;
- Access to public and private sector services;
- An employment and business sector;
- Accessibility by a number of transport options; and
- The perception by the local community as their town centre

It is proposed that the aim of a Town Centre Strategy for Boston is to maximize all that a town centre should be for the people of Boston and those who visit our town.

INTRODUCTION

Boston Town Centre is an economic, cultural and social hub for the borough of Boston. Boston is situated at the lowest crossing point of the River Witham about four miles upstream from where it flows into the sea at the Wash. It has both a railway station and a port railhead. The Port is an international port bringing in steel and timber, with boats coming mainly from Europe. About 40,000 vehicles per day now cross the river on the Haven Bridge, making it one of the busiest stretches of road in Lincolnshire. The river through the town is tidal up as far as Grand Sluice. Boston's fishing fleet has its own Fishermen's Quay within the town.

Boston is one of the two major centres including the City of Lincoln that provide for the administrative county of Lincolnshire.

The market town has a rich heritage and is known to many people as the home of the Pilgrim Fathers, who attempted to sail from the Haven in 1607 before later sailing in the Mayflower to New England in 1620 and settled in what is now Boston, Massachusetts. Boston's sometimes little known but internationally notable cluster of heritage buildings would be the envy of many an English city. St Botolph's Church is the centrepiece. It is a magnificent landmark, soaring above the Fens and visible from more than ten miles away.



Town Deal and Levelling Up

The Towns Fund is part of the Government's plan for levelling up. In Boston the Town Deal is led by the Boston Town Deal Board with support from Boston Borough Council as the Accountable Body.

The Town Deal has provided a fantastic opportunity to attract significant Government funding to make a real difference to the local economy in Boston. It has provided the platform for stakeholders from all sectors to work together to formulate a Town Investment Plan, which is delivering projects to enable the town to kick-start economic growth and has acted as a catalyst for future investment, securing £15 million in match funding.

Delivering our vision in Boston's Town Investment Plan is built on three pillars: Skills and Aspirations, Sustainable Economic Growth and Pride in Place. The successful £21.9million Town Deal is seeing investment into the following seven projects:-

1. Mayflower: Led by Boston College – reimagines the Further Education college to provide a nature filled environment to connect businesses, enterprise and innovation, providing living learning spaces.
2. A new leisure provision connected to the Mayflower and Boston College. Led by Boston Borough Council including partnership work with Boston College.
3. Centre for Food and Logistics: Led by the University of Lincoln in partnership with Boston College, the project will develop a food trade and logistics skills, knowledge and innovation hub with local, national and global outreach.
4. Boston Train Station: A new community/retail café facility by developing the redundant unit between the ticket hall and the existing restaurant unit, providing a new welcoming hub to the centre of the station building. Led by East Midlands Railway (EMR).
5. Healing the High Street (including Shodfriars Hall): Transformation of Boston's historic town centre and key gateway to visitors through a comprehensive town centre regeneration programme – led by Heritage Lincolnshire.
6. Blenkin Memorial Hall: Repair, renovation and redevelopment for multi-purpose community use. Led by St Botolph's.
7. St Botolph's Library and Lighting: The development of the medieval library and an upgrade and redesign of the lighting of St Botolph's Church interior and exterior.

In January 2023, £14.8Million in Levelling Up funding was also secured to kick-start regeneration and secure further investment in the heart of the town centre, creating new uses and new opportunities to live, work, and visit.

The funding will support the delivery of Boston's Rosegarth Square masterplan – this covers the area between the River Witham and the bus station – which is part of a masterplan for the PE21 area. Key points regarding the Rosegarth Square masterplan include:-

- A new public realm between the river and the Len Medlock Centre. This area will include green spaces, improved pedestrian routes, artwork, and other features to create an inviting, safe, accessible and enjoyable place for all.
- Works to convert Crown House is proposed to provide a mix of residential and other uses to support young people and families will see this building visually improved.
- The project will attract investment into Boston. To set the foundation for this, the demolition of the existing B&M building is proposed to take place with enabling works to be delivered, acting as a catalyst for further development.
- Local people will be able to get involved in the work over the coming months and years with a programme of community engagement planned – including an archaeology project that is linked to the project.

In March 2023, it was announced that Boston is set to become a new Levelling Up Partnership with the Department for Levelling Up, Housing, and Communities (DLUHC). The Government is creating twenty new Levelling Up Partnerships which will drive growth, unlock barriers to attract inward investment and receive bespoke help based on local needs. Boston will be one of these partnerships.

Through the partnership DLUHC will work with Boston Borough Council and partner stakeholders to identify ways to accelerate growth for the benefit of the town, residents and businesses.

In October 2023 the Government announced that Boston is one of fifty five towns to be given a £20 million endowment-style fund to be spent over ten years to invest in local people's priorities through a Long-Term Plan for the town. The funding will be spent on local priorities; reviving high streets, tackling anti-social behaviour, improving transport and growing the local economy. It is hoped that as the process to progress this opportunity emerges, the ambitions within this Strategy and the proposed actions are also aligned to it, noting the extensive amount of community consultation that has taken place and the Council's track record of working positively with the Boston Town Deal Board .

Boston as a visitor and cultural destination

Boston's visitor economy was impacted by the pandemic, however, it is focussing on strengthening its offer through the Town Deal and Levelling Up investment and working in partnership with the County's Destination Management Organisation, Destination Lincolnshire, to take advantage of opportunities associated with Green and Active Tourism. This is thanks to its natural environments, wildlife and waterways, as well as alignment with national tourism policy.

Working with Destination Lincolnshire, Visit England and Cultural organisations, work is underway to develop an ambitious programme of celebration to mark 2030 – the 400th anniversary of the founding of Boston, Massachusetts.

Boston currently attracts 1.3 million visitors generating £95 million worth of economic impact. It has a local market, mainly appealing to its rural hinterland. During the summer months around 70% of Boston's visitors tend to come from the nearby large coastal resorts to the open-air markets and over 50,000 visitors are welcomed into St Botolph's Church. The town benefits from other nearby assets such as Boston United Football Club and RSPB sites and in town Blackfriars Theatre. There are many opportunities to grow and diversify Boston's offer and appeal to new people and therefore attract footfall and economic growth. In order to achieve this, the Council is putting in place a number of measures to support the overall work of this Strategy. This includes:

- Providing dedicated staffing to enable the development of products to promote the Borough
- Engaging with regional partners to better promote and highlight what the area has to offer
- Securing National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status from Arts Council England with funding to develop and promote the arts, culture and heritage of the SELCP area to local people and visitors through a programme of activity. In Boston this includes using Boston Guildhall as a cultural hub
- Showcasing Boston to out of county visitors through its partnership with Destination Lincolnshire
- Engaging with partners to ensure that the Boston 2030 celebrations are appropriately marked and the most benefit can be captured from it for Boston

By engaging locally and supporting the work of the Strategy, we can increase footfall, increase prosperity and make Boston a destination people want to come to. An improved offer, greater vibrancy and better promotion are key to achieving this.





VISION

Boston town centre will be known to be a place that brings communities together to safely enjoy quality public realm and open spaces that magnify the national heritage of the town whilst supporting a vibrant retail and hospitality experience.



Boston Borough Council

The new administration at Boston Borough Council is determined to put local communities and businesses at the heart of the future success of the town centre. Their aim is to deliver an approach to public realm management that will ensure this important public space demonstrates all that you can hope can be achieved within the (approximate) 520,000 square metres of land that is called Boston town centre. To this end a new Town Centre Strategy and associated Action Plan (in the form of this document) is proposed, facilitated by the Borough Council but developed in partnership with key stakeholders, businesses and the community. The aim of this Strategy and its associated Action Plan is to seek to ensure Boston town centre is a town centre that provides services and a positive experience for everyone. That is whether they are young people, older people, people who are challenged by not having English as their first language or are disabled or face other challenges.

The proposed vision for this Strategy builds on the successful work taking place around the town in connection with the levelling up agenda and this Strategy seeks to deliver against seven key strategic objectives.

Key Strategic Objectives

- 1) To ensure residents and other visitors to the town centre **experience a clean and tidy public realm.**
- 2) To ensure **residents and visitors feel safe** whether that is during the day or when they visit the town centre at night. **Supporting a vibrant day time and night-time economy.**
- 3) To ensure businesses have every opportunity to thrive in the town centre.
- 4) To ensure residents and visitors experience the town centre as a **place for heritage, culture, events and entertainment.**
- 5) To ensure residents and visitors can **access and leave the town centre easily** and by utilising sustainable forms of transport where available.
- 6) **To support and build a cohesive community**, utilising all the benefits and opportunities a town centre can bring to achieve this.
- 7) **To work effectively with all public sector partners, businesses and the voluntary and community sector** to achieve the above.

THE STRATEGY ITSELF (AND ASSOCIATED ACTION PLAN) IS DIVIDED INTO THE FOLLOWING FOUR SECTIONS WHICH ARE DISCUSSED WITH ACTIONS PROPOSED AGAINST THE STRATEGY'S OBJECTIVES:-

Clean and Safe

Open for Business

Culture, Heritage and Events

Transformation



CLEAN AND SAFE

Keeping Our Town Clean

Boston town centre offers a public realm that requires constant care and attention. The Borough Council has a team of staff that are deployed on a daily basis to ensure litter bins are emptied and the streets are cleansed.

The Council is a Principal Litter Authority, by virtue of Sections 86 and 89 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. We are statutorily obliged to keep relevant land clear and clean of litter and refuse, as far as practical. Current work activity in the town centre area is zoned factoring high traffic areas, and includes employing nine cleansing staff including maintenance of 361 litter bins.

Cleansing activity is a seven day per week operation, deploying staff Monday to Friday. There are two members of staff deployed on litter picking duty, two litter bin emptying and two operating mechanical sweepers for three hours per day. At weekends this reduces to two members of staff on litter picking duty, one member of staff on litter bin emptying duties and one member of staff operating a mechanical sweeper. In addition to this core activity, the Council's Flyswat team is engaged in collecting fly tipped waste in the area five days per week, and there are three environmental crime enforcement officers patrolling the town to enforce against littering offences. The Council also provides a weekly refuse collection service for residual waste, paper and card and mixed dry recycling to residents. In addition to this the Council collects waste from 450 businesses.

Protecting the Public from Harm through Regulatory Services

The Council has a regulatory responsibility to ensure that the public are protected from harm when going about their daily lives. The Council's Regulatory Services Team work is across the borough whilst recognising a greater concentration of their interest can at times be in areas with a higher footfall, such as the town centre. Whether that is going to a restaurant where they understandably expect the proprietor to be complying with food safety legislation, whether they are looking to catch a taxi and quite rightly are looking for a safe and comfortable journey to their intended destination or indeed if they are just walking from a to b and want the reassurance that any skips or scaffolding they encounter are appropriately regulated and unable to harm them.



The Council's Regulatory Services/Public Protection role includes a wide remit of customer, business and community focussed services. The main aims of which are to protect legitimate business interests as well as securing the health, safety, wellbeing, environmental and economic interest of the people who work, visit and live in Boston. They provide:-

- Advice and support to **encourage business growth and sustainability through regulatory compliance** to ensure duty holders meet legal standards and statutory guidelines to protect the health, safety and welfare of their employees, customers and visitors.
- **Consultees in the planning process to ensure regulatory compliance** together with health, safety and welfare of residents and our communities is not compromised by unsuitable development.
- Provision of **advice to business on compliance**, including undertaking **proactive risk-based inspections and investigating serious accidents and complaints**. All non-compliance is followed up with proportionate, transparent enforcement action.

- Enforcement of **business compliance in respect of food safety and food hygiene** requirements to ensure the protection of consumers from being harmed by food and maintaining the reputation of the area as producers and sellers of safe, high-quality food.
- **Management of matters relating to nuisance, noise and pollution control** from domestic, industrial, and commercial premises as well as delivering the regulatory regimes relating to Air Quality Management, Mitigation of Contaminated Land and the regulation of emissions to the environment from industrial processes classified for local authority control.
- **Proactive assessment and setting of noise levels from new development requiring planning consent and from licensable entertainments to avoid noise and nuisance.**

Environmental Crimes such as fly-tipping, littering and dog fouling are addressed through policy interventions, collaboration across services and agencies, education, engagement, and enforcement activity. Environmental crime can have a devastating impact on residents and communities, and it is therefore important to have an effective deterrent as well as robust enforcement. This is provided through an Environmental Crime Enforcement Contract managed through the Council's Regulatory Services team that provides proactive foot patrols and overt surveillance capability bringing a swift enforcement response and reassurance to our communities.

The Licensing teams (who again are part of the Council's Regulatory Services team) ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of the public and the prevention of crime and disorder, fraud and cruelty to animals. Licences are provided for a range of activities, businesses and people, including: alcohol and entertainment; taxis; gambling; animal welfare; street trading; charity collections; scrap metal dealers and sex establishments. Duties include developing and implementing licensing policies, processing and issuing licences, promoting best practice, ensuring compliance with licensing requirements and enforcement where it is deemed necessary.

The Council's Building Control service (who are another key service within Regulatory Services) plays a major role regarding supporting the quality and safety of our built environment by ensuring new development meets the requirements of the Building Regulations. Where built structures are found to be dangerous and the safety of the public is compromised, Building Control Officers have legal powers to 'make safe', control demolition and ensure that vacant and derelict properties are secured from unauthorised access and potential damage. Taken together with duties to ensure quality and sustainable development takes place, building control provides a vital service supporting economic growth and prosperity through quality development of the built environment.

The "Clean and Safe" agenda also provides opportunities for improving air quality and removing petrol and diesel cars from the heart of the town centre, through consideration through regulation of things like an ultra-low emission zone supported by EV charging points, etc.



Community Safety in Our Town Centre

The town centre is viewed as a safe space for people to enjoy whether that is to access hospitality and/or the retail offer provided by the many shops or to go to work. That said from time-to-time community safety concerns do emerge and there is a need to focus efforts on minimising and removing the ability for those occasions to occur.

Close working relationships have been strongly established with Lincolnshire Police and more specifically through Boston's Neighbourhood Policing Team. Work continues to identify hot spot areas for special attention by community safety agencies (the police, council etc) and activities are ongoing to reduce incidences of Anti-Social-Behaviour and crime in these areas.

Improved perceptions of safety contribute to a vibrant town, making residents feel safer and more willing to visit. The Council's Community Safety Team are currently working through a programme of work that is upgrading the town's CCTV infrastructure. This is because of a successful Home Office Safer Streets Round four funding bid.

The Role of Boston Town Area Committee (BTAC)

BTAC Membership comprises of all Members representing town wards, which exercises and performs delegated powers and duties of the Council in relation to functions in respect of the non-parished Boston Town area of the Borough. By convention it is accepted that the BTAC has the power to recommend a precept to cover items of expenditure within its area (in line with the parameters of the Council precept) and an understanding that, in practice, other committees cannot spend Boston Town Area resources or block expenditure approved by the BTAC. BTAC is authorised to appoint sub-committees or working groups, drawn from its own membership, to assist with any of its functions.

Functions directly connected to the town centre include:-

- a. The management and maintenance of Central Park.
- b. The management, maintenance, and provision of public toilets.
- c. The provision and programming of works, undertaken by the town centre operatives.
- d. The funding and delivery of the BTAC Events programme.
- e. Making community development grants to town-based organisations and events.

Building Resilient Communities - Community Connectors

Through the work of the Empowering Communities Programme, the Boston Community Leaders group is an opportunity to provide support from community anchors in the town. Community Anchors are established local organisations who share their experience, contacts, knowledge, resources and expertise with other local organisations.

Community Anchors listen to those working in communities and share information. They bring people together and help create plans to support communities. They help organisations develop, collaborate and influence the decisions that affect their communities.

REFERENCE NUMBER	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE/S	SERVICE AREA	CURRENT/PROPOSED ACTION	DETAIL INCLUDING COMMENTS TO SUPPORT DELIVERY (EG RESOURCES REQUIRED ETC)	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE FOR DELIVERY
Keeping Our Town Clean (CS1-CS8)						
CS1			Short Term Proposed Action: Seek to employ (through the appropriate decision making and procurement processes) a third party to undertake a deep clean of the Market Place area.	Quotes obtained to create an initial impact on the market place. Use as a trial to evidence any future funding bid to support work of this nature in the town.	Operations Manager	Autumn/Winter 2023/24 (subject to funding)
CS2	Experience a clean and tidy public realm		Short Term Proposed Action: Apply for funding for a partnership wide Pride in Place initiative – to include a Mechanical Hot Washer, Spot Wash and electric pedestrian, mechanical sweeper/suction units	To improve the standard and cleanliness of the street scene using suitable and effective modern equipment: Hot Washer Electric Pedestrian Sweepers Vehicle and hot box	Assistant Director – Neighbourhood Services (S&ELCP)	December 2023/January 2024
CS3			Short - Medium Term Proposed Action: Review of waste and recycling bins and collection points in the market place area	To identify alternative options for waste containment and collection to eliminate bins being presented for collection and stored in and around the market place area		January 2024
CS4	Experience a clean and tidy public realm and Businesses have every opportunity to thrive in the town centre	Environmental Services (BBC)	Short - Medium Term Proposed Action: Review of planters and options for increased planting in the market place and barriers, leading to an improved floral display in the town centre during the summer months	Building on the additional planters introduced into the market place this summer, identify a more sustainable solution such as purchasing planters and planter inserts and/or introduce additional support from volunteers (or similar). Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) has indicated that for planters within the town centre LCC can facilitate via "Structures" agreements.		Autumn 2023 (for plant procurement for 23/24 summer season)
CS5			Medium Term Proposed Action: Project to identify and tackle hot spot locations for black bag waste and flytips.	Council S113 post request submitted to use skills in SHDC to support BBC cross departmental teams to identify, target and tackle perpetrators of flytipping and dumped black bag waste	Operations Manager (BBC)	
CS6	Experience a clean and tidy public realm		Medium Term Proposed Action: Introduce street scene software to optimize litter bin and sweeper rounds, and identify bin capacity improvements	A project team is currently in place to develop this project across the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership (SHDC, BBC and East Lindsey District Council (ELDC)). This will enable the identification of locations that would support larger capacity, and compactor bins, to bring efficiencies into litter bin emptying and make the service more responsive and targeted.		TBC
CS7			Long Term Proposed Action: Annual deep clean zones areas, routine enhanced cleaning capability using new equipment.	Delivery of hybrid in-house / third party deep clean activity each spring, and appropriate equipment to maintain the achieved standard.		Every spring
CS8			Long Term Proposed Action: South and East Lincolnshire Partnership funding bid to the Keep Britain Tidy Chewing Gum Task Force to introduce measures to reduce discarded chewing gum in the town centre area	Awaiting funding pot to be opened for bids	Head of Environmental Services (S113 post)	TBC

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Protecting the Public from Harm through Regulatory Service (CS9-CS18)						
CS9	Residents and visitors feel safe -Supporting a vibrant day time and night - time economy.	Licensing (BBC)	Current Action planned in for the Medium Term: Review of taxi licensing policy for drivers, operators and vehicles to drive up standards in the sector	In the work programme for the Licensing Committee is an objective to review taxi licensing policy for drivers, operators and vehicles to propose amendments to bring Boston policies in line with national standards and standards across the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership (S&ELCP) area. Consultation with the trade will be necessary and there may be elements of policy that will need Cabinet and/or Council approval	Senior Licensing Officer (BBC)	May 2023 to March 2024
CS10	Businesses have every opportunity to thrive in the town centre.		Short Term Proposed Action: Promotion and facilitation of Pavement Licenses for town centre businesses. The applicants need to apply for Pavement Cafe licenses from Lincolnshire County Council.	Pavement licenses to enable al fresco dining are currently issued by Lincolnshire County Council. Regulatory teams will work with BBC Communications Team to share information with businesses promoting the uptake of pavement licenses to appropriate businesses to help create a 'café culture'	Lead Food Officer	September 2023 to April 2024
CS11	Residents and visitors feel safe -Supporting a vibrant day time and night -time economy and businesses have every opportunity to thrive in the town centre	Regulatory Services (BBC) and Community Safety (BBC)	Short Term Proposed Action: Support multi-agency operations to target criminality in the business sector	Working with lead agencies such as the Police and Trading Standards, Regulatory Teams will support operations with intelligence, capability and capacity designed to disrupt criminality and organized crime where associated with Boston town centre businesses – links to the intelligence led and targeted policing led by Lincolnshire Police/Lincoln University	Senior Licensing Officer (BBC) / Community Safety Manager	September 2023 to March 2024
CS12	Businesses have every opportunity to thrive in the town centre	Environmental Health (BBC)	Short – Medium Term Proposed Action: Promote food businesses that achieve a 5 star rating	The Food Standards Agency star rating scheme for food business is a nationally recognized and trusted indicator of hygiene and food safety compliance. We would like to develop a promotional package that seeks to promote and recognize those business that achieve this status, over and above the website links to national schemes currently provided.	Lead Food Officer	From January 2024 onwards
CS13	Experience a clean and tidy public realm	Regulatory Services	Short Term Proposed (ongoing) Action: Deployment of Enviro-Crime Enforcement Officers to hotspot areas	Adopt an intelligence led plan that routinely and regularly sees enviro-crime enforcement officers deployed to environmental crime hotspots to provide a visual deterrence, public reassurance and an enforcement capability and support multi-agency operations/initiatives - links to the intelligence led and targeted policing led by Lincolnshire Police/Lincoln University	Environment Supervisor	Ongoing

REFERENCE NUMBER	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE/S	SERVICE AREA	CURRENT/PROPOSED ACTION	DETAIL INCLUDING COMMENTS TO SUPPORT DELIVERY (EG RESOURCES REQUIRED ETC)	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE FOR DELIVERY
CS14		Regulatory Services / Community Safety (BBC)	Current Action: Revision of the Public Space Protection Order as it applies to Dog Controls	The current regime of dog controls under the Public Space Protection Order require renewal. Public consultation will need to be undertaken and revised controls approved by BBC Cabinet.	Environment Supervisor / Community Safety Manager	October 2023
CS15			Short Term Proposed Action: Education and Enforcement programme around domestic bin contamination	Carry out a full education programme to address contamination and recycling. Once this is complete introduce enforcement around bin contamination and bins being left on streets. This is crucial in reducing fly tipped bagged waste specifically in and around residential areas of the town.	Environment Supervisor	To Commence October 2023
CS16	Experience a clean and tidy public realm	Regulatory Services	Short Term Proposed Action: Support groups, community champions and volunteers carrying out litter picks/clean ups.	This project has already proved to be very successful with the help and initiatives of groups like the Wombles and other individuals. Voluntary assistance has been crucial in keeping areas litter free. The establishment of self-sustaining social action groups would benefit not only the removal of litter etc but would also support community cohesion.	Environment Supervisor	ongoing
CS17			Short Term Proposed Action: Enviro-crime Enforcement Officers to undertake educational activities	Helping to shape and inspire the next generation to be more aware and environmentally focused supporting the citizenship agenda/curriculum within schools providing education environmental crime.	Environment Supervisor/ L A Support	Ongoing
CS18			Current Action: Maintain a robust, zero tolerance approach to Environmental Crime	Ensuring that enforcement action is taken around environmental crime both as a punishment and as a deterrent, thus encouraging people not to commit criminal offences around environmental Crime.		Ongoing
Community Safety in Our Town Centre (CS19-CS22)						
CS19		Community Safety (BBC)	Short and Medium Term Proposed Action: Explore funding bid opportunities, for example through the Office for the Police Crime Commissioner, in respect to further enhancing the CCTV system, extending associated infrastructure and other associated activities	Ongoing dialogue with the PPC's Office and the police regarding funding opportunities.	Community Safety Manager (BBC)	TBC
CS20	Residents and visitors feel safe -Supporting a vibrant day time and night -time economy	Community Safety (BBC/ CSP)	Long Term Proposed Action: Completion of activity within the action plan for the South and East Lincolnshire Safety Partnership Community Safety Strategy targeting:- 1) Safer Streets and Night Time Economy 2) Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour 3) Hate Crime 4) The Safety of Women and Girls 5) Vulnerability and Safeguarding	This action is associated with the Borough Council's role in the South and East Lincolnshire Community Safety Partnership	Community Safety Manager (BBC)	March 2024 onwards

REFERENCE NUMBER	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE/S	SERVICE AREA	CURRENT/PROPOSED ACTION	DETAIL INCLUDING COMMENTS TO SUPPORT DELIVERY (EG RESOURCES REQUIRED ETC)	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE FOR DELIVERY
Keeping Our Town Clean (CS1-CS8)						
CS21	Residents and visitors feel safe -Supporting a vibrant day time and night - time economy	Community Safety (BBC/ CSP)	Long Term Proposed Action: Purple Flag attainment (or similar) for Boston Town Centre	The Purple Flag is the national accreditation scheme by the Association of Town Centre Management that recognises excellent management of city centres at night	Assistant Director -Well-Being and Community Leadership (S&ELCP)	During the plan period.
CS22			Current Action: Designing out crime throughout the public realm where possible by working with Lincolnshire Police.	Ongoing work with the Lincolnshire Police and the Police Crime Reduction Officer.	Community Safety Manager (BBC)	Ongoing
Boston Town Area Committee (CS23-CS25)						
CS23	Experience a clean and tidy public realm and a place for culture, events and entertainment	Environmental Services	Long Term Proposed Action: Attainment of a Green Flag standard for Central Park	BTAC has asked for a report on the potential to attain a Green Flag award for Central Park to go to its 8 February 2024 meeting.	Operations Manager	During the Plan period.
CS24	To support and build a cohesive community	Delivery Directorate	Current Action: Instillation of Changing Places Toilets	Changing Places Toilets are being installed in Lincoln Lane and the Cattle Market Car Parks and Central Park.	Deputy Chief Executive (Delivery)	2023/24
CS25		Leisure and Cultural Services	Current Action: Playground Investment	Redevelopment of Central Park Playground and following a Boston Big Local grant, the addition of a statement ship to the St Johns Playground	Play and Physical Activity Officer	2023/24
Building Resilient Communities - Community Leaders (CS26-CS28)						
CS26	To support and build a cohesive community	Community Leadership	Proposed Short Term Action: Develop a group to support ongoing engagement regarding the Boston Town Centre Strategy and associated action plan, linking to the Boston 400 project..	Community based group with an interest in improving the town centre to be supported.	Community Leadership Manager	Autumn 2023
CS27			Proposed Long Term Action: Development of a Voluntary and Community Sector programme/ Trusted Volunteer Scheme that will benefit the town centre.	This work will link in with Lincolnshire Community and Voluntary Service and the wider not for profit sector.		2023/24
CS28			Proposed Long Term Action: Consideration of Boston Town Centre working towards dementia friendly status.	Lincolnshire County Council's Public Health Team has indicated interest in supporting this work. This status has been achieved in Skegness.		2025





OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Shopping in Boston's town centre is an excellent way to also explore the history and heritage of the area. However, despite its prominent location, the town centre is widely acknowledged to have seen better days; having been blighted in recent decades by a proliferation of uncontrolled signage and development. At its core the area has many buildings of historic value and which could be made more attractive and inviting and there is a growing appetite to see this brought to the fore.

The Healing the High Street programme has the potential to make the town centre more attractive, less cluttered and more coherent, to the benefit of locals and visitors and to the wider economy.

The project is bringing about change by engaging with owners, the public and with wider stakeholders (e.g. local authority, local community groups) to increase appreciation of the town centre and its potential to offer a beautiful and welcoming environment for the many thousands who use it each year.

Waterfall Plaza is a shopping mall situated off Strait Bargate in the centre leading on to Pescod Square which is a shopping precinct in the heart of Boston. It links together Wide Bargate and Mitre Lane and incorporates the historic Pescod Hall. There are eighteen stores which cover in excess of 93,000 square feet of retail space and a 377-space car park. The Pescod Square team are always trying to think of fun and exciting events that visitors and shoppers will enjoy.

In addition, the area boasts a selection of out-of-town retail parks including Boston Shopping Park and Alban Retail Park.

Boston has a variety of shopping lanes a stone's throw away from the market square including the newly restored Dolphin Lane, one of the places you can enjoy coffee and the newly developed heritage mural, celebrating the rich history of the town.

Boston's Famous Market

Boston's famous Wednesday and Saturday open-air markets are the largest in Lincolnshire and have been held for hundreds of years in the fabulous medieval large open market place in the centre of town. The Wednesday market also boasts an open air auction and additional market stalls on Bargate Green. Trading fairs or "marts" have been held in Boston since at least the 12th Century, with the earliest historic record of a fair or "mart" being held in 1132.

In 1545 Boston obtained its Charter of Incorporation from Henry VIII, via his son Edward VI.

Boston's Market is supported by a Markets Manager and Market Officer.

Town Centre Management

Town Centre Management is supported by a Place Team at Boston Borough Council (that also works within the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership). Strategic town centre support for BBC is provided by the Place Manager (as required) and a Place Officer (based at BBC) alongside support from other relevant officers with an input into all aspects of town centre management.

Current activities include: -

- The South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership (SELCP) Heritage Manager provides oversight of heritage issues, engages with and manages the contract with Heritage Lincolnshire to provide support, including projects in the Towns Deal. The Healing the High Street programme is directly assisting businesses in transforming their premises, improving public spaces and installation of new signage.
- Leading on the Cultural Framework and the subsequent National Portfolio Organization (NPO) work on behalf of the South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership. This identifies the Boston Guildhall as a key location for arts, culture and heritage delivery over the period to March 2026. The exact nature of this programme is yet to be determined.
- Partnership with Destination Lincolnshire (DL) to support growth in the visitor economy. DL has also developed and manage the Discover Boston website, which is not Council controlled: <https://boston-england.co.uk/>
- Support existing business networks, including Cultural Quarter meetings and the Boston Heritage Forum
- Broadening the Visitor Information availability through the Guildhall, St Botolph's and Pescod Square, to provide better facilities and information for visitors and local residents.
- Producing the 'Town Deep Dive' to better understand its offer, compilation of data/research, what opportunities and attractions there are and how these can be best packaged to promote the town to encourage visitors – linking to existing work streams and support. For example, the High Street Task Force support and enabling monitoring and performance effectively.
- Leading the UK Shared Prosperity Funded (UKSPF) Boston 400 project.

In the future an area of work to consider could include opportunities for pop-up shops and seasonal provision (e.g., a Halloween shop followed by a Christmas shop) to encourage short-term entrepreneurship and link with the events schedule that is proposed.

REFERENCE NUMBER	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE/S	SERVICE AREA	CURRENT/PROPOSED ACTION	DETAIL INCLUDING COMMENTS TO SUPPORT DELIVERY (EG RESOURCES REQUIRED ETC)	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE FOR DELIVERY
Town Centre Management (OFB1-OFB14)						
OFB1	A place for heritage, culture, events and entertainment	Place	Long Term Proposed Action: Seek to commission Boston Conservation Area Appraisal	Budget has been identified for this work	Heritage Manager	Late 2024
OFB2			Current Action: Deliver the Healing the High Street programme through the Town Deal	Currently ongoing.		2025
OFB3			Long Term Proposed Action: Establish a Partnership Agreement with Destination Lincolnshire.	DL oversee the Discover Boston Website, which they are starting to develop. The site is not owned by the Council and currently there is no agreement to put any Council content on it (other than good will). This site will become a key component of promoting the offer of Boston. A Partnership will support the new national policy from Visit England (LVEPs) and provide a good strategic fit. DL role is also linking product to local business, making sure businesses in the town centre understand they are part of the visitor / tourism activity (on-boarding businesses).	Place Manager	Subject to a future Council decision for funding 2024
OFB4			Long Term Proposed Action: Develop Town Centre specific Promotional material	Information about Boston Town Centre (and its environs) would be beneficial in small print runs to promote the area. In taking this forward it will be important to have a distribution strategy to drive footfall (outside in).	Place Development Officer	
OFB5			Long Term Proposed Action: Promote the Town Centre at shows and events	Seek to promote the town centre at key events/shows (e.g. Lincolnshire County Show, Heckington Show).	Place Team/ Communications/ other Council services	
OFB6			Long Term Proposed Action: Seek Travel Trade involvement for Boston 2030	Use Boston 400 to identify and engage with potential travel trade and tour operators. Longevity – need to be developing travel trade work in 2024 onwards. It will take years to build relationships, link product, marketing, etc.	Place Manager (Destination Lincolnshire)	Subject to a future Council decision for funding 2024
OFB7			Long Term Proposed Action: Deliver outcomes of Historic England Places Panel Review	Review and identify relevant actions from the review to deliver in Boston and identify officer/budget to undertake this work	Heritage Manager	Subject to funding being agreed 2024-2025
OFB8			Long Term Proposed Action: Explore creating Tourist Information facilities in partnership with St Botolph's, Pescod Square and the Guildhall	Provide comprehensive visitor information within the Stump. Seek to also ensure the model works through a wider lens than just the immediate vicinity in order to provide a wider tourist offer.	St Botolph's and Place Manager	TBC subject to a budget being confirmed
OFB9			Long Term Proposed Action: Update, clean and increase if appropriate the number of visitor totem poles and fingerposts	These are useful visitor information and wayfinding signs in and around the town centre. However, they need updating and possibly changing to link to new locations and remove old ones. The map would be linked to other publications in the town, drawing them together in a cohesive way.	Place Officer	TBC subject to identifying a budget/resources

REFERENCE NUMBER	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE/S	SERVICE AREA	CURRENT/PROPOSED ACTION	DETAIL INCLUDING COMMENTS TO SUPPORT DELIVERY (EG RESOURCES REQUIRED ETC)	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE FOR DELIVERY
Town Centre Management (OFB1-OFB14)						
OFB10	Experience a clean and tidy public realm.	Place	Long Term Proposed Action: Conduct a Street sign and furniture audit to then seek to reduce street clutter	Undertake an audit of street furniture and signage to then seek to reduce street clutter and make the area look and feel better. Lincolnshire County Council suggests a list of assets is developed of items for potential removal to see what can be removed. This would be considered by the County Council's 'Signs and lines' team.	Place Manager/ LCC Highways	TBC subject to funding, BBC Place Officer resource and LCC support
OFB11	To ensure businesses have every opportunity to thrive in the town centre	Strategic Growth	Current: Deliver Grants 4 Growth opportunities for businesses.	Small capital and revenue grants (up to £25,000) available to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) trading more than 12 months. Investment must be linked to growth.	G4G Team/SHDC	Current – up to end March 2025
OFB12			Current: Deliver the Micro Business Grant Fund	Investment up to £5,000 for micro businesses.		
OFB13		Investment and Growth	Current/ongoing: Seek to secure funding to build on existing opportunities and support ongoing development and business support for Boston businesses	Apply for and source appropriate funds that support Boston aspirations.	Head of Investment and Growth/Place Manager/Place Development Officer	2024 onwards
OFB14		Place	Medium Term Proposed Action: Deepen the Boston Town Deep Dive report	Seek to add new themes such as building ownerships, opportunities for promotion to investors, alternative uses	Economic Growth Directorate (incl. Economic Development, Place and Planning)	2024 onwards
Markets (OFB15-OFB17)						
OFB15	Businesses have every opportunity to thrive in the town centre	Markets	Current Action: Review and update the Markets Policy	Review and update the Markets policy and seek out alignment within the South and East Lincolnshire sub-region.	Markets Manager	2023/24
OFB16			Current/ongoing: Review the town's Market Service ensuring Best Value.	Review the Market Service, working towards a breakeven model. The stalls and trailers are now coming to an end of their useful life, and the review will include invest to save options for future delivery of the Markets Service.	Markets Manager	2023/24
OFB17			Short Term Proposed Action: Deliver a Markets Development Plan for Boston Market	Work is ongoing to expand the markets offer, with the addition of events (subject to funding) including the developing Teen Markets, the potential for a Farmers Market, further Artistic interventions and street performances and Heritage based activity and events, such as the Hansa Day (May) working in partnership with Transported, the Hanseatic League etc. A Development Plan would tie in a strategic approach looking at elements including strands of activity, marketing, modernisation, financial savings and growth.	Markets Manager /Assistant Director Leisure and Culture	2023/24



CULTURE, HERITAGE AND EVENTS

A Focus on Culture and Heritage – A Strategic Approach

In July 2022 Boston Borough Council agreed a new joint Cultural Framework/Strategy with East Lindsey District Council that seeks to build on significant progress to support cultural activity in the town (and across the borough/Districts), build capacity, and demonstrate commitment to excellence and innovation in cultural infrastructure, partnership and programming within the locality.

The Framework aligns with the Government's Levelling Up agenda and funding opportunities for cultural investment through the Town Deal and Levelling Up Funds.

Both Boston and East Lindsey have been designated Arts Council Priority Places – areas where there is significant potential but also one where multiple barriers have historically stood in the way of system-wide cultural renewal. These localities have attracted National Portfolio Organisation funding which is to support a programme of art and culture as well as enabling an education, research and skills programme to be developed. This work is being taken forward by the Communities and Growth Directorates within the Council.

The market town has a rich heritage and is known to many people as the home of the Pilgrim Fathers, who attempted to sail from the Haven in 1607 before later sailing in the Mayflower to New England in 1620 and settled in what is now Boston, Massachusetts. Boston's sometimes little known but internationally notable cluster of heritage buildings would be the envy of many an English city. St Botolph's Church is the centrepiece. It is a magnificent landmark, soaring above the Fens and visible from more than ten miles away. It is the largest parish church in England and is affectionately known as 'The Stump'. The church's scale and grandeur, with a cathedral-like interior, is testament to the town's previous wealth and status. The town also retains a Guildhall that was built in 1390 by the Guild of St Mary, today housing a museum and a venue for weddings and other events.

In terms of other valuable community assets the town also benefits from a library that is run by Lincolnshire County Council. The Library Service's current lease expires in March 2026 and so further consideration of this is required, noting also that the service contributes to LCC's statutory service provision.

Building Community Cohesion and Economic Development through Culture, Heritage and Events

The Boston Borough Council Events Team delivers an events programme for the Borough of Boston which includes the historic May Fair and working with the Council's Community Leadership Team a four day Boston Yuletide Celebratory Festival, which includes the Illuminate event supported by Transported Arts and working with the community the Santa Fun Run. In liaison with the Boston Town Area Committee (BTAC) they also lead events such as the Classic Car Show, Vintage Festival and Halloween.

The Events Team supports external event providers to develop events and to interact with Boston Borough Council's Safety Advisory Group. They also work with numerous external partners such as Fydell House, Blackfriars, St Botolph's, Boston Community Runners, Transported Arts, community groups and others in order to develop events and the cultural offering across the Borough. The events programme can be accessed on the Council's website.

Events in Boston are mainly funded through: -

- Boston Borough Council's Events Budget – Mayfair (900 year anniversary 2025), four day Christmas event
- BTAC Events Budget – Programming year round in Town Centre locations.
- Healthy Activities Budget – Supported through BTAC and External Funding streams.

Events are also delivered through the Council's Sports Development Team including the Beach Events and Skate Jam and there are smaller events such as: Fairy Door Hunts; Pirate Treasure Hunt; and cultural interventions in the Central Park, Market Place and Guildhall Museum.

In the future it is hoped to further develop events that are linked to local history in partnership with organisations such as Heritage Lincolnshire.

Arts Development

The Council's Leisure and Culture Division is also responsible for the management, development and delivery of public realm art initiatives and programming in liaison with partners; including the significantly impactful Boston Buoy scheme, the 'Structures on the Edge' contemporary sculptural installation at the Pilgrim Memorial site and ongoing public realm interventions such as the Wings project. This work is also managed in support and liaison with the Transported Arts programme including the origination, curation and development of heritage place themes that underpin the development of inclusive community arts programmes. This work incorporates participative programmes, performance and visual arts initiatives.

The Christmas period in Boston is a fantastic opportunity to build engagement and cohesion amongst the local community, with many community and third sector led initiatives focussing on empowering people to have an active role within the town. Through a four day event planned for the first time in 2023, there is an opportunity to celebrate Boston's uniqueness at Christmas through its diverse community whilst providing opportunities to capitalise on Boston's history and heritage.



Cultural Groups

The Council's Leisure and Culture Division supports a range of groups with regards to promoting arts and culture in key locations such as the town centre:-

a. Transported Creative People and Place Programme

The Leisure and Culture Division deliver its arts development work in partnership with Transported Arts, which is a strategic, community-focused programme that aims to get more people in Boston Borough and South Holland enjoying and participating in arts activities. This programme is targeted at areas where arts participation is particularly low within communities, and Transported Arts core team costs are funded by a grant from Arts Council England as part of the Creative People & Places strand in the National Portfolio of arts organisations, but project delivery costs need to be supported by additional income. Originally launched in Holbeach in May 2013, it was initially one of only seven areas of greatest need that was successful in the first round of applications. The programme is now in its fourth period of three year funding phases and is hosted by the Centre for Culture and Creativity at the University of Lincoln. The Creative People and Places fund is focusing investment in parts of the country where people's involvement in the arts is significantly below the national average, with the aim of increasing the likelihood of participation. Following an application and interview process, South Holland and Boston Borough were awarded funding from Arts Council England under the initial Transported consortium.

This investment will encourage long-term collaborations between local communities and arts organisations, museums, libraries and local authorities. It aims to empower them to experiment with radically different approaches and develop inspiring, sustainable arts programmes that will engage audiences in those communities. Boston's heritage has paid an integral part in engaging communities with artistic interventions. This relationship is reflected in Boston's 2017 Heritage Strategy, and recent town centre projects and interventions have included the station to Stump project including the arts installations in and around the 'B&M' garden, the Woodcarvers memorial to lost fishermen, the Boston Buoys project, and the Dolphin Lane Mosaic.

b. Cultural Quarter Group

A group of town centre cultural venues and organisations that are working collaboratively for the benefit of heritage and culture in Boston, including Fydell House, the Guildhall, Blackfriars, and the Stump. The Boston History Group and the Hanseatic League are also represented.

c. Public Realm Group

This group meets to work on priority projects associated with the Public Realm. The Group includes a mix of Council Officers, representatives from Heritage based organisations, Boston in Bloom and Transported, to develop Public Realm and Arts interventions in Boston:

Projects have included: -

- Boston in Bloom supported projects, including Central Park sculpture garden.
- Boston Barrier walkway and interpretation.
- Street scene projects including Boston Town Centre clean-up of signage, furniture etc. finger posts, wayfinding Monoliths, arts based trails and replacement street furniture.
- Public Art installations.

Complementary Strategies, Plans and Policies

- 2017 Boston Heritage Strategy
- 2017 Conservation Area Management Plan
- Boston/ELDC 2022 Cultural Strategy
- Graffiti & Street Art Policy – ADP

Guildhall

The Leisure and Culture Division is also responsible for the Guildhall whose operational team offer a breadth of activity across the theme of culture and heritage as well as the operational management and delivery of the Arts Council England accredited Guildhall museum service. The Guildhall in the town centre being a Visit England accredited visitor attraction that offers a tourism information service and additionally operates as a private hire and wedding venue.

The museum incorporates professional standards in the care of a 5,000 item collection and the management and care of a Grade 1 listed building (built in the 1390's) and visitor attraction. Its research, development and delivery of exhibitions programmes and historic narratives also support the wider historic visitor experience and visitor economy including the 2020 development of a new narrative for the Pilgrims and the direct link into the foundation of Boston Massachusetts in 1630, not told before. Work is also underway to develop a partnership wide 1630 narrative for the 2030 foundation of Boston Massachusetts (Boston 400).

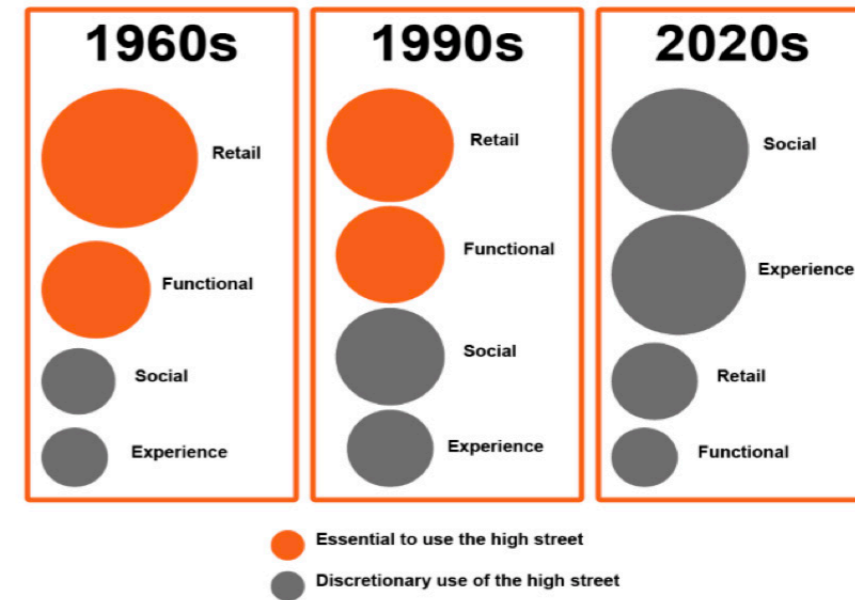
The Guildhall service managed the development and delivery of historic interpretation schemes throughout the town and surrounding areas to reinforce the visitor experience from a heritage perspective.

REFERENCE NUMBER	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE/S	SERVICE AREA	CURRENT/PROPOSED ACTION	DETAIL INCLUDING COMMENTS TO SUPPORT DELIVERY (EG RESOURCES REQUIRED ETC)	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE FOR DELIVERY	
Events (CHE1-6)							
CHE1	A place for heritage, culture, events and entertainment and businesses have every opportunity to thrive in the town centre	Events Team	Current Action: Deliver the Mayfair event annually.	Delivery of the week long Mayfair (900 year anniversary 2025).	Assistant Director Leisure and Culture	Late April/ Early May Annually	
CHE2		Community Leadership/ Leisure and Culture	Short Term and Long Term Proposed Action: Deliver a four Day Christmas, illuminate and yuletide event	Deliver a four day Christmas, illuminate and yuletide event in partnership with Transported Arts and the Council's Community Leadership Manager to deliver an events programme around the arts, music, markets, entertainment and fairground rides. Plan with partners for the event to evolve into an annual festival.	Community Leadership Manager working with the Assistant Director for Leisure and Culture	2023/24 and ongoing	
CHE3		Events	Current Action: Deliver a Car Show /Continental Market/Vintage Festival	Deliver an expanded Classic Car show, with a wider vintage element focusing on the 40's and 50's and the 60's and 70's in Central Park.	Play and Physical Activity Officer/ Events Officer	2023/24	
CHE4			To support and build a cohesive community	Current Action: Deliver the Beach in the Park Summer Events Programme	Installation of a beach, and delivery of a beach event with free family activities and donkey rides that people can get involved in: Messy hands and feet painting, storytelling, fairy door hunts, picnics in the park, pirates and princess day with community groups providing information and advice. Further events focussing on dementia, sand carving etc. operating around the Beach are also delivered.		Play and Physical Activity Officer/ Events Officer
CHE5			A place for heritage, culture, events and entertainment and businesses have every opportunity to thrive in the	Current Action: Deliver a town centre Halloween Event	An expanded event centered around the Guildhall and Fydell House with day time events for children and an event for adults with ghost walks tied to the 'real' history of the town.		Events Officer
CHE6			businesses have every opportunity to thrive in the	Current Action: Deliver a varied range of events in addition to core events such as Christmas and Halloween	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October Fair – Central Park • Holi Festival – Central Park • Skate Jam – Central Park • Slacklining demonstration and participation – Market Place 		Play and Physical Activity Officer/ Events Officer
Arts and Cultural Development (CHE7-CHE10)							
CHE7	A place for heritage, culture, events and entertainment	Cultural Services	Current Action: Deliver a Street Art Policy that covers the town centre	Development of a Street Art Policy in the 2023/24 Annual Delivery Plan.	Interim Cultural Services Manager	2023/24	
CHE8			Current Action: Deliver against the Boston/East Lindsey Culture Strategy that provides a focus in the Borough on the town centre	Deliver against the Boston/East Lindsey Culture Strategy that provides a focus in the Borough on the town centre	Place Manager and Interim Cultural Services Manager	2023/24	
CHE9			Current Action: Deliver an Arts programme with a focus on Boston Town Centre	Deliver an Arts Programme with a focus on Boston Town Centre	Interim Cultural Services Manager with Transported Arts		
CHE10		Lincolnshire County Council Library	Proposed Long Term Action: Support library provision in the town centre	The Library Service's current lease expires in March 2026 and so further consideration of this is required going forward.	Head of the Library Service at Lincolnshire County Council	Term of the Plan	

REFERENCE NUMBER	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE/S	SERVICE AREA	CURRENT/PROPOSED ACTION	DETAIL INCLUDING COMMENTS TO SUPPORT DELIVERY (EG RESOURCES REQUIRED ETC)	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE FOR DELIVERY
Boston Guildhall (CHE11-CHE15)						
CHE11	A place for heritage, culture, events and entertainment	Cultural Services	Current Action: Deliver a Business Plan for the Guildhall that promotes the Guildhall and the town centre.	Review the Guildhall Museum service and develop a business plan to incorporate the 2022 review for commercial enterprise and heritage.	Assistant Director Leisure and Culture	2023/24
CHE12			Current/Proposed Action: Deliver the National Portfolio Guildhall Hub	Development of NPO Guildhall Hub programme in partnership with the Council's Place Team, and any associated requirements to redevelop the museum's exhibition space. Arts Council England funding will be community led, but it will also be important to consider the role that events have for the visitor economy.	Assistant Director Economic Growth and Assistant Director Leisure and Culture	2023/24
CHE13			Current/Proposed Action: Develop plans for Boston 2030	Work to include development of programming of American history milestones that were influenced by people from South and East Lincolnshire leading towards the 2030 Boston, Massachusetts Anniversary, including: Boston Tea Party, working with Transported Arts/ illuminate. 250th Anniversary of the formation of the United States, 2026. Stories include Anne Hutchinson (Alford) and Rhode Island, John Smith and Jamestown. Stories associated with religious intolerance etc.	The Assistant Director for Economic Growth and Assistant Director for Leisure and Culture	2023-2026
CHE14			Long Term Proposed Action: Develop a project of New World Connections	Develop New World stories to cover countries like Australia: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matthew Flinders, 2024. 	Principal Museum Arts and Heritage Officer	2024/25
CHE15			A place for heritage, culture, events and entertainment and businesses have every opportunity to thrive in the town centre and to work effectively with all public sector partners, businesses and the voluntary and community sector	Long Term Proposed Action: Develop and cultivate collaborative partnerships with Town Centre Cultural Facilities and Organisations	Develop and cultivate collaborative partnerships with Town Centre Cultural Facilities and Organisations, including:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Quarter Group A group of town centre cultural venues and organisations that are working collaboratively for the benefit of heritage and culture in Boston, including Fydell House, the Guildhall, Blackfriars, and the Stump. The Boston History Group and the Hanseatic League are also represented. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Realm Group This group meets to work on priority projects associated with the Public Realm. The Group includes a mix of Council Officers, representatives from Heritage based organisations, Boston in Bloom and Transported Arts, to develop Public Realm and Arts interventions in Boston.	Interim Cultural Services Manager



Fig 1 Source; creating resilient and revitalised high streets in the 'new normal'



TRANSFORMATION

The role of high streets and town centres has evolved over the decades in response to current and past trends, resulting in the changing needs and demands of local consumers (fig 1) and employers.

Businesses Have the Opportunity to Thrive

To reflect current consumer needs we will look to transform and pivot the town centre away from just a retail centre to one which supports a whole family experience and the diversification of business opportunities.

Working Effectively With All Public Sector Partners and the Business and Community Sector

A town centre has a complex economic ecosystem made up of shops, pubs, cafes, business services, and health and community service providers such as dentists, libraries, gyms and cinemas. To really unleash the sustainable power of this ecosystem there needs to be strong collaboration, partnerships and engagement across these sectors to enable shared understanding how together they support one another within the ecosystem.

Investment and Growth

Through Boston's Town Deal transformation of the town centre has already started with projects such as 'Healing the High Street' where grants are being offered to building owners so that they can invest in repairing and restoring historic features to their buildings. Improvements to the surrounding public area and green spaces will also take place as part of this project. This project is being carried out by Heritage Lincolnshire and will return Boston's town centre back to its former glory. It follows on from previous schemes such as the Boston Townscape Heritage Project.

The second of the three Town Deal projects, the refurbishment of Blenkin Memorial Hall is now complete on the repair, renovation, and redevelopment of the Memorial Hall which plays an important role as a community hub for Boston.

The third Town Deal project of relevance to the town centre is the 'Rejuvenation of Dolphin Lane'. This project will see the current pedestrian footway along Dolphin Lane replaced with Yorkstone paving setts creating a more attractive retail environment leading to higher footfall and a consistent appearance between Dolphin Lane and Market Place.



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Investment and Growth (T1-T9)						
T1	Businesses have every opportunity to thrive in the town centre and a place for heritage, culture, events and entertainment	Investment and Growth	Current Action: Support the Healing the High Street Project with a focus on transformation	Building owners can invest with support from this project in repairing and restoring historic features to their buildings. Improvements to the surrounding public area and green spaces will also take place as part of this project.	Head of Investment and Growth/Town Deal	2025
T2	A place for heritage, culture, events and entertainment		Current Action: Support the Memorial Hall Project	Work is now complete on the repair, renovation, and redevelopment of the Memorial Hall which plays an important role as a community hub for Boston.	Assistant Director Economic Growth/ Town Deal Board	2023
T3	Businesses have every opportunity to thrive in the town centre and a place for heritage, culture, events and entertainment		Current Action: Support the rejuvenation of Dolphin Lane	This project will see the current pedestrian footway along Dolphin Lane replaced with Yorkstone paving setts creating a more attractive retail environment leading to higher footfall and a consistent appearance between Dolphin Lane and Market Place.	Lincolnshire County Council/ Town Deal Board	October 2023
T4	Businesses have every opportunity to thrive in the town centre		Current Action: Establish 'Stakeholder' or 'business' group	Look at developing a town centre 'stakeholder' or 'business' group to enable and accelerate better communication allowing better and more constructive decision making, greater opportunities for participation for shared initiatives or projects, including consultation on transport, planning and crime reduction policies. The 'stakeholder' or 'business' group can also act as functioning support mechanism when applying for suitable funding streams.	Head of Investment and Growth (BBC)/ Assistant Director Economic Growth	March 2024
T5	Businesses have every opportunity to thrive in the town centre and to work effectively with all public sector partners, businesses and the voluntary and community sector		Long Term Proposed Action: Deliver Mixed use opportunities in the town centre	Look at mixed use opportunities utilising empty voids and create alternative uses to improve the economic environment and functionality such as; mini factories where businesses can make/ produce goods either for 'on site' resale or distribution.	Head of Investment and Growth (BBC)	Plan to be developed in 2024
T6	Businesses have every opportunity to thrive in the town centre		Current Proposed Action: Enhance Boston's leisure, food and beverage offer within the town centre	Through more relaxed planning regulations we are looking at how best to enhance our leisure, food and beverage offer including cafes and restaurants with outdoor space.	Head of Investment and Growth	2024/25

REFERENCE NUMBER	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE/S	SERVICE AREA	CURRENT/PROPOSED ACTION	DETAIL INCLUDING COMMENTS TO SUPPORT DELIVERY (EG RESOURCES REQUIRED ETC)	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE FOR DELIVERY
Investment and Growth (T1-T9)						
T7	To work effectively with all public sector partners, businesses and the voluntary and community sector	Planning	Long Term Proposed Action: Work with the private sector, investors and other statutory and not for profit partners such as Community Housing Associations and charities to develop residential accommodation in the town centre seeking to deliver an increased number of high quality, affordable Town Centre accommodation for people to live and thrive.	This may include the potential to repurpose retail units to residential and this could also include working in collaboration with the private sector, investors, and other statutory and not for profit partners such as Community Housing Associations and charities to develop residential accommodation on underutilised privately owned car parking space. More town centre living accommodation could include units specific to vulnerable cohorts (e.g. older people and adults with learning disabilities and autism) and help address issues such as homelessness and rough sleeping through provision of temporary accommodation.	Assistant Director -Planning and Strategic Infrastructure	Ambition to Progress in the Plan Period
T8	Businesses have every opportunity to thrive in the town centre, to also support and build a cohesive community and to work effectively with all public sector partners, businesses and the voluntary and community sector		Long Term Proposed Action: Seek to deliver 5G Wi-Fi networks within the town centre	Look at delivering a 5G town centre-wide broadband network to support digital connectivity. This would also help local retail improve 'in store' technology.	Head of Investment and Growth	Ambition to progress in the Plan Period
T9	Experience a clean and tidy public realm and to work effectively with all public sector partners, businesses and the voluntary and community sector		Long Term Proposed Action: Deliver the PE21 project	Project to regenerate a ten acre underutilized economic area now called Rosegarth Square	Assistant Director - Planning and Strategic Infrastructure	Ambition to progress in the Plan Period
T10	Businesses have every opportunity to thrive in the town centre	General Fund Assets	Short Term Proposed Action: Replacement of Boston's entire car parking ticket machine fleet totaling 26 units.	New car park ticket machines have been ordered for all of Boston's on and off-street chargeable parking. The contract has been awarded to International Parking Systems (UK) Ltd T/A IPS Group UK through the ESPO 509/23 Framework.	Assistant Director - General Fund Assets	Installation is due to commence and complete in October 2023.



REFERENCE NUMBER	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE/S	SERVICE AREA	CURRENT/PROPOSED ACTION	DETAIL INCLUDING COMMENTS TO SUPPORT DELIVERY (EG RESOURCES REQUIRED ETC)	LEAD OFFICER	TIMESCALE FOR DELIVERY
Clean and Safe (T11 – T13)						
T11		Environmental Services	Long Term Proposed Action: Depending on proposals for removing vehicles/bus routes in Market Place, work with partners to develop pedestrian shared space including tree planting, floral decoration etc.	This activity is a long-term cultural transformation possibility.	Head of Investment and Growth working with the Assistant Director – Leisure and Culture / Assistant Director – Neighbourhood Services/ Operations Manager	TBC
T12	Experience a clean and tidy public realm and businesses have every opportunity to thrive in the town centre	Growth	Long Term Proposed Action: Consider ideas for transforming the bus station in Boston and bus infrastructure with Lincolnshire County Council	LCC has fed back that they would encourage ideas about transforming the bus station in Boston as this is prime territory for an infrastructure upgrade to make it a more desirable place to access bus services. Wider considerations regarding town centre bus stops and electric vehicles should also be considered for town centre centric buses.	Head of Investment and Growth	TBC subject to considerations regarding this proposal.
T13	Businesses have every opportunity to thrive in the town centre and a place for heritage, culture, events and entertainment		Long Term Proposed Action: Seek alignment of the Government's £20 million Long Term Plan ten year funding opportunity to the Boston Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan working with the Town Deal Board for Boston	In October 2023 the Government announced that Boston is one of fifty five towns to be given a £20 million endowment-style fund to be spent over ten years to invest in local people's priorities through a Long-Term Plan for towns. The funding will be spent on local priorities; reviving high streets, tackling anti-social behaviour, improving transport and growing the local economy. It is hoped that as the process to progress this opportunity emerges, the ambitions within this strategy and the proposed actions are also aligned, noting the extensive amount of community consultation that has taken place and the Council's track record of working positively with the Town Deal Board.	Assistant Director Economic Growth/ Town Deal Board	Ongoing throughout the term of this plan.



MONITORING AND REVIEWING

How Delivery Against this Strategy will be Monitored and Reviewed

A Town Centre Management Steering Group has been established at Boston Borough Council. The role of this group is to develop the Boston Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan and provide the governance required to support its implementation. This group is to meet quarterly once the Strategy is adopted/agreed. At each meeting actions will be reported on as appropriate alongside information relating to key performance indicators, such as number of void retail properties, footfall data etc.

Monitoring and reporting will also be undertaken as appropriate through Cabinet and Scrutiny Committee/s.

The Membership of the Town Centre Management Steering Group includes:-

- Deputy Leader - Chair
- Chair of Boston Town Area Committee
- Deputy Chief Executive (Communities)
- Assistant Director Neighbourhoods
- Operations Manager
- Assistant Director Well-Being and Community Leadership/ Community Leadership Manager
- Communications Team Lead
- Assistant Director Economic Growth/Place Manager
- Head of Investment and Growth
- Assistant Director Regulatory Services
- Assistant Director Leisure and Culture/Interim Cultural Services Manager

Recognising the importance of partnership work the following are key partners that have been identified amongst others to be engaged in the ongoing development and delivery of this Strategy and its associated Action Plan:-

- Police Inspector – Lincolnshire Police
- Chief Executive of Lincolnshire Community and Voluntary Service
- Lincolnshire County Council eg Highways
- Chief Executive YMCA Lincolnshire
- Boston Town Deal Board
- Business, Market and Community Representative/s TBD
- Head Verger Boston Stump
- Representative from Destination Lincolnshire
- Representative from Heritage Lincolnshire
- Representative from the Environment Agency
- Governor North Sea Camp
- Transported Arts

Consultation on this Strategy and Action Plan

The consultation on the Boston Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan 2023-2027, “A Town Centre for Everyone” took place between 15th September and 15th October 2023. The consultation consisted of:-

- 1) Online Community Consultation
- 2) Online Business Consultation
- 3) Social Media Surveys
- 4) Market Stall Consultations on 27th September 2023 and 14th October 2023
- 5) Consultation work at Boston College, Boston High School, Nacro, and Parish Council liaison meeting on 5th October 2023.
- 6) Directed contact to key organisations such as Lincolnshire County Council, Lincolnshire Police etc.
- 7) Business Consultation meeting on 12th October 2023

The vision, strategic objectives and key thematic areas for actions to be developed from were largely supported by those participating in the consultation. The key issues that emerged related to: -

- Street cleanliness, fly tipping, enviro-crime, toilet infrastructure
- Community safety, anti-social behaviour, street drinking and people loitering, greater police presence
- Transport into and around the town centre, with reference to the need for a by-pass, improved bus service, improved opportunities for sustainable travel eg cycling
- Empty shops and the need to support businesses
- The cost of parking
- Improvements required to the town’s market
- The need to support community cohesion and to support younger and older people, including those with a disability
- Improvements to key locations such as the Market Place and Central Park
- Enhancement of the tourism offer, utilising arts, culture, events and the town’s heritage assets.
- Improved promotion of the town centre
- Business and community involvement in terms of how the town centre is improved/operated

Further information regarding the feedback received during the consultation can be found at Agenda for Cabinet on Wednesday, 25th October, 2023, 6.30 pm | Boston Borough Council.

It is intended throughout the life of this Strategy there will be ongoing consultation and engagement with local communities and businesses to help support accountability and to continue to shape and develop actions that provide progress towards the Strategy’s vision, strategic objectives and thematic work streams, in order to seek to ensure Boston town centre is a “Town Centre for Everyone”.



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