

Vital and Viable Alford

High Street Recovery 2020 and Beyond



We understand the important role our market towns play in our local economy and attracting visitors to the area. Our aim is to work with all aspects of our local communities to protect, promote and preserve our market towns as attractive places to live, work and visit.

In 2019 we commissioned the Institute of Place Management (IPM) to deliver their Vital and Viable workshops in each of our inland chartered market towns. Each workshop was well attended by a variety of volunteers, businesses and community organisations who offered insight into their town centres. Taking this into consideration, and looking at other data related to each town, the IPM have created reports for each with recommendations for regeneration and ways to future proof our high streets.

To read Alford's report in full please visit www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/vitalandviable



The Institute of Place Management delivered Alford's Vital and Viable workshop in September 2019.

The follow up meeting took place in February 2020.

Feedback from the Chartered Institute of Place Management on Alford:

"Many of the global trends that are impacting town centres will have only a minimal impact on Alford, but the ageing population, technology changes, and undoubtedly economic change may well. The workshop identified good things about the town as well as things people were concerned with. To respond to this means the establishment of a new process that can involve those who are concerned and want to make things happen - a town leadership group. This should be inclusive but comprised of people willing to make change happen. The size of the town and current trends makes major intervention unlikely but small-scale initiatives can make a difference."

"Look to build on things already existing and initiatives that people see as strengths. Think carefully about whether the trading hours of the town are serving the needs of the catchment or passing customers. Remember the added benefit of social media networks that can increase access to markets and customers and keep people informed about how Alford is changing."

This document sets out actions taken from the Institute of Place Management's report, as well as issues highlighted in subsequent community meetings and business feedback generated from our emergency response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Vital and Viable Alford

Alford Activity	Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
Gather footfall information				X
Place Promotion – using arts & crafts and heritage as a hook				X
Develop Alford social media and web presence				X
Town marketing plan and coordinated approach to promoting events				X
Regular newsletters and annual town meetings				X
Support for cultural / heritage activity and events which provide an economic boost, i.e. themed markets and festivals				X
Support annual town tidy day				X
Initiatives to support empty shop fronts				X
Identify ways to link into cycling initiatives				X
Support promotion of Ann Hutchinson				X
Support the Mill Wright project				X
Support Alford Town Promotions (ATP) initiatives				X
Identify ways to link into cycling initiatives				X
Encourage environmental awareness and better use of green spaces				X
Link to the Ageing Better initiative				X
Cleaning of town signs and painting road signs & bollards	X			
Purchase a Trailer and Road Sweeper	X			
Alford reopening video	X			
Christmas footfall support	X			
Shop Local, Stay Safe PR and Marketing campaign	X			
Retail focused business support	X			
Offer free Wi-Fi in the town centre	X			
Launch of community gardens		X		
Rejuvenation of row of shop fronts which face the market place		X		
Develop a market towns leaflet or bespoke one for town		X		
Explore ways to link Alford and Spilsby as a day trip and promote to coastal visitors		X		
Market Town Public Realm Strategy to include a signage and accessibility audit		X		
Improved signage and interpretation		X		

Alford Activity	Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
New directional sign at T-Junction on outskirts of town		x		
Conservation Area Appraisals		x		
Create a condition report on town centre shops to include second floor usage and identify any need for shop signage improvements		x		
Encourage key shops to return to a traditional shop frontage / signage		x		
Support the development of St Wilfred's Church new visitor centre				x
The long term development of Alford Manor House				x
The long term development of Alford Windmill				x
The long term development of the Corn Exchange				x

Ongoing support to be provided by ELDC for a minimum of 5 years

Action	Next Steps	Lead Organisation	Cost Estimate
Gather footfall information	Coordinate a volunteer group to support with footfall counting on specific dates throughout the year	ELDC	Volunteer contribution
Place Promotion – using arts & crafts and heritage as a hook	Link in with tourism marketing plans	ELDC	Tourism budget
Develop Alford social media and web presence	Link with Alford Town Promotions social media, Town Council is looking at town website	ELDC / ATP / Town Council	£5,000 per year to support PR contract
Town marketing plan and coordinated approach to promoting events	Annual plan to be circulated to V&V stakeholders for sign-off and idea contributions	ELDC	£5,000 per year to support town marketing activity
Regular newsletters and annual town meetings	Monthly newsletters to all stakeholders, exploring idea of virtual town meeting until we can meet in person	ELDC	Officer time
Support for cultural / heritage activity and events which provide an economic boost, i.e. themed markets and festivals	Work with Alford Town Promotions to support their events.	ELDC	£10,000
Support annual town tidy day	Neighbourhoods Service support	ELDC	Neighbourhoods Service budget / Volunteer contribution
Initiatives to support empty shop fronts	Gather landlord information for long term empty shops	ELDC	£5,000
Support promotion of Ann Hutchinson	Tourism team in contact with Town Council	ELDC	Officer time
Support the Mill Wright project	Place Team in contact with project leads	ELDC	Officer time

Action	Next Steps	Lead Organisaaton	Cost Estimate
Support Alford Town Promotions (ATP) initiatives	Place Team in contact with ATP	ELDC	Officer time
Identify ways to link into cycling initiatives	Tourism Team in contact with LCC. Work with Town Council to reprint previous cycling leaflets.	ELDC	Officer time
Encourage environmental awareness and better use of green spaces	Ensure regular updates with ELDC's Climate Change and Environment Manager	ELDC	Officer time
Link to the Ageing Better initiative	Link to Age Friendly Business Awards and work with T.E.D on Public Realm Strategy	T.E.D	Officer time

Short term actions

Action	Next Steps	Lead Organisation	Cost Estimate
Cleaning of town signs and painting road signs & bollards	Meet with Town Council to decide a way forward	Town Council	£1,000
Purchase a Trailer and Road Sweeper	Research costs for a shared piece of equipment in market towns	ELDC / Town Council	£5,000
Alford reopening video	Communications Team to support Alford Town Promotions in making a video	ELDC / ATP	Officer time
Christmas footfall support	Commission cultural interventions to encourage shoppers into town centres in a safe way during the festive season	ELDC	£5,000
Shop Local, Stay Safe PR and Marketing campaign	Social media, press articles, radio advert and leaflet to build confidence in shopping local	ELDC	RHSS
Retail focused business support	Going through procurement process	ELDC	RHSS
Offer free Wi-Fi in the town centre	Meeting with Wi-Fi provider. Look for ways to obtain funding. Develop ideas around launching a website grant for town centre businesses at the same time.	ELDC	£25,000 +

Medium term goals

Action	Next Steps	Lead Organisation	Cost Estimate
Support launch of community gardens	Town Council to keep ELDC in the loop about project and any support which may be required	Town Council	Officer time
Rejuvenation of row of shop fronts which face the market place	Repair and reinstate three shop fronts in market place	ELDC	£60,000

Action	Next Steps	Lead Organisation	Cost Estimate
Develop a market towns leaflet or bespoke one for town	A joint leaflet is included in the outcomes for the Shop Local, Stay Safe campaign	ELDC	Officer time
Explore ways to link Alford and Spilsby as a day trip and promote to coastal visitors	Tourism Team to take forward	ELDC	Officer time
Market Town Public Realm Strategy to include a signage and accessibility audit	Agree an approach for all market towns, use a consultant and volunteers to develop the strategy, must include public consultation.	ELDC	£7,500 per town
Improved signage and interpretation	Use results from public realm strategy to identify areas for signage and interpretation	ELDC	£50,000 per town
New directional sign at T-Junction on outskirts of town	Town Council to establish location and permissions	Town Council	£5,000
Conservation Area Appraisals	To be led by ELDC Historic Environment Officer	ELDC	Officer time
Create a condition report on town centre shops to include second floor usage and identify any need for shop signage improvements	To be led by ELDC Historic Environment Officer with volunteer support	ELDC	Officer time
Encourage key shops to return to a traditional shop frontage / signage	Explore funding options to support delivery	ELDC	Officer time

Long term aspirations

Action	Update	Lead Organisation	Cost Estimate
Support the development of St Wilfred's Church new visitor centre	Support may be required from Historic Environment Officer and Tourism Team	Alford Civic Trust	Possible match funding required
The long term development of Alford Manor House	Support may be required from Historic Environment Officer and Tourism Team	Alford Civic Trust	Possible match funding required
The long term development of Alford Windmill	Support may be required from Historic Environment Officer and Tourism Team	Alford Civic Trust / Town Council	Possible match funding required
The long term development of the Corn Exchange	Support may be required from Historic Environment Officer and Tourism Team	Alford Corn Exchange Community Group	Possible match funding required

These actions and aspirations sit in line with East Lindsey District Council's 10-year commitment within the corporate strategy to **'Support our town centres to remain vital and viable as shopping habits change'**. We will produce an annual review document at the end of each financial year to show our progress. The annual reviews will be available on the Vital and Viable pages on the Council's website, and will also be shared through our Vital and Viable newsletter mailing lists.