

Vital and Viable Louth

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



The Institute of Place Management delivered Louth's Vital and Viable workshop on 24 June 2019

Feedback from the Institute of Place Management on Louth:

"Louth is a fascinating town with an interesting history. It still has a wonderful built environment. It is more fortunate than most in that it has a strong retail offer still with an excellent range of independent shops and the presence of major banks still with branches. The market is clearly also an important feature. The workshop heard about the role of arts, culture and entertainment in the town. There is clearly a strong base but there were recognised issues and problems. Although the relative isolation of the town has perhaps meant it has not felt the full force of economic, technological or societal changes that have impacted many other centres, we do not believe that Louth can think it is exempt."

"It would be prudent to introduce changes now so that change is better understood and monitored, so that some basic things can be addressed and evidence-based plans made for the future. We think this should build on the workshop and the sense of community we experienced in Louth to ensure it is a place that best serves the needs of its residents and users and is appreciated by all its community members and those lucky enough to visit."

"To summarise what we say above, we think you should build evidence on how the town centre is performing by gathering footfall and other data, you should look to put the town on the map by reaching out more widely, improve the welcome, experience and visual appearance of the town, and keep under review how best to meet the needs of the growing catchment and incoming visitors."

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.

Journey so far...

Better communications

Over 160 community and business stakeholders engaged in workshops feedback sessions, and signed up to hear more about the project.

We've launched a Louth Vital & Viable newsletter www.e-lindsey.gov.uk/VVLNewsletter.

We have committed to hosting annual town meetings.

Food and Drink

There was significant support from businesses to develop and promote Louth's Food and Drink offer. We held a Food and Drink event on 4th February in partnership with Taste Lincolnshire and local business Bottomley Distillers. The event instigated the beginnings of a Food and Drink Forum in Louth which supported the idea of a food and drink trail for the town. The Pie Day food trail was featured in the Spring issue of Good Taste magazine (sister publication to Lincolnshire Life) with a double page spread dedicated to Louth and its independent food and drink businesses. We have also utilised

this feature to share online. In addition, we are committed to supporting Louth Pie Day again in 2021.



Love Louth website

In response to businesses requesting a better web presence for Louth, we are working on a microsite style Louth pages on our Love Lincolnshire Wolds website - www.lovelincolnshirewolds.com.

Louth will have its own URL - www.lovelouth.com - and will benefit

from additional traffic from the Love Lincolnshire Wolds marketing plan to raise the profile of the Lincolnshire Wolds.



Covid-19 Emergency Response and Recovery to date...

- Supported 740+ businesses within the Louth area with a Government Funded Grant and an additional 38 businesses through the Discretionary Grant Fund.
- Approached by HETA architects offering their services to create a Louth Regeneration Plan. We supported them with community consultation, some recommendations are incorporated within this document.
- Applied to the Government's Reopening the High Street Safely Fund. The Grant has been secured and the plans include a 'Shop Local, Stay Safe' campaign, which includes the following:
 - Banners and street graphics going up with the Shop Local, Stay Safe message on.
 - Shop Local, Stay Safe marketing / PR campaign for all four market towns which will run for six months and include printed leaflets, web content, print and radio advertisements.
 - Louth Town Council also have their own allocation of this fund.
- Supported the Louth Independent Traders to bring a small fun fair and travelling street entertainment to the market on all four Saturdays in August, which received positive feedback. This activity was covered on Calendar news and BBC Radio Lincolnshire - both as positive news stories for the town.



Vital and Viable Louth

Louth Activity	Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
Gather footfall information				x
Place Promotion – using Food and Drink as a hook				x
Dog Friendly promotions				x
Develop a Louth Food and Drink forum				x
Develop 'Love Louth' microsite and social media				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
Encourage environmental awareness and better use of green spaces				x
Link to the Ageing Better initiative				x
Identify ways to link into cycling initiatives				x
Painting of bollards in the town centre	x			
Christmas footfall support	x			
Shop Local, Stay Safe PR and Marketing campaign	x			
Develop a market towns leaflet or bespoke one for town		x		
Develop a Heritage Trail for the town		x		
Develop a Food and Drink Trail for the town		x		
Meridian Line promotions		x		
Bus Station improvements and signage		x		
Trial pedestrianising Cornmarket for outdoor seating		x		
Market Town Public Realm Strategy to include a signage and accessibility audit		x		
Improved signage and interpretation		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		
Improvements to Louth's existing art trail – prioritising wooden leaves in Westgate Fields		x		
Encourage key shops to return to a traditional shop frontage / signage		x		
Explore opportunities to work with Historic England through their Partnership Scheme in Conservation Areas (PSICA)			x	

Louth Activity	Short	Medium	Long	Ongoing
Explore different uses for the old Market Hall			x	
Development of 19 & 21 Upgate			x	
Development of old Telephone Exchange site			x	
Coordinate improvements to Engine Gate			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 Food and Drink as a hook	Link in with tourism marketing plans	ELDC	Tourism budget
Dog Friendly promotions	Link in with tourism marketing plans	ELDC /Louth Independent Traders	Officer time
Develop a Louth Food and Drink forum	Investigate ways for this to be run virtually until it is possible to meet in person	ELDC	£1,000 per year for room hire and speakers
Develop 'Love Louth' microsite and social media	Site is currently being developed and business engagement taking place	ELDC	£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 annual town tidy day	Neighbourhoods Service support	ELDC	Neighbourhood Service budget / Volunteer contribution
Support for cultural / heritage activity and events which provide an economic boost, i.e themed markets and festivals	Committed to support Louth Pie Day, Zero Degrees Festival and Louth Independent Traders events, budget should also be set aside for new emerging events to support the economy	ELDC	£20,000
Initiatives to support empty shops	Gather landlord information for long term empty shops	ELDC	£5,000

Action	Next Steps	Lead Organisation	Cost Estimate
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
Identify ways to link into cycling initiatives	Tourism Team in contact with LCC	ELDC	Officer time

Short term actions

Action	Next Steps	Lead Organisation	Cost Estimate
Painting of bollards and gas lamp in the town centre	Discuss works with ELDC property team	Louth Town Council / ELDC	£1,000
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 Fund

Medium term goals

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
Develop a Heritage Trail for the town	Tourism Team to make contact with LTC	ELDC	Officer time
Develop a Food and Drink Trail for the town	Explore the idea of a virtual trail	ELDC	£5,000
Meridian Line promotions	Explore ways to better promote Louth being on the Meridian Line	ELDC	Officer time
Bus Station improvements and signage	Work with Property Team who have a list of outstanding maintenance	ELDC	£15,000
Trial pedestrianising Cornmarket for outdoor seating	If Covid-19 restrictions are still in place Spring 2021 support LIT to apply for road closure for Cornmarket	Louth Independent Traders	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
Conservation Area Appraisals	To be led by ELDC Historic Environment Officer	ELDC	Officer time

Action	Next Steps	Lead Organisation	Cost Estimate
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
Improvements to Louth's existing art trail – prioritising wooden leaves in Westgate Fields	Get quotes to repair leaves and to improve interpretation. Work with Co-op to maintain grass area where The Wave sculpture is situated	ELDC	£5,000
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
Explore opportunities to work with Historic England through their Partnership Scheme in Conservation Areas (PSICA)	Historic Environment Officer to meet with Historic England	ELDC	An significant element of match funding will be required
Explore different uses for the old Market Hall	Commission a feasibility study for use of old Market Hall	ELDC	£15,000
Development of 19 & 21 Ugate	Support property owners to explore uses of the buildings. Owners are already making use of the Council's Shop Front Grant Scheme	ELDC	£15,000
Development of old Telephone Exchange site	Commission a feasibility study for the site	ELDC	£15,000
Coordinate improvements to Engine Gate	Get quotes for repairs to brick work	ELDC	£10,000

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.