Braintree District Council
Halstead Town Centre Strategy

February 2014
Contents

HALSTEAD TOWN CENTRE STRATEGY – A SUMMARY OF KEY INTERVENTIONS .......... 1
1. INTRODUCTION ................................................................................................................ 1
2. AN APPRECIATION OF HALSTEAD ................................................................................ 3
3. THE STRATEGY .............................................................................................................. 24
4. INTERVENTION PLAN .................................................................................................... 41
5. NEXT STEPS ................................................................................................................... 63
Halstead Town Centre Strategy - A Summary of Key Interventions

The core purpose of the Halstead Town Centre Strategy is to deliver a range of improvements that can make Halstead a more attractive place to visit and spend time. Alongside identifying new projects and interventions it seeks to add value to existing proposals and initiatives, ensuring their benefit to the whole town is maximised.

The Strategy and intervention approach therefore identifies projects across the town that will contribute to raising the quality, increasing footfall and broadening the town centre offer. Each in tum is directed at addressing the weaknesses identified through the Spatial Framework analysis.

The key focus is to improve the vitality and viability of Halstead as a market town by increasing footfall and spend in the town centre through an increase in the town centre catchment via new development and improvements to access and movement. This will build upon a number of opportunities:

- Realisation of development opportunities to benefit the High Street
- Improvement of the river corridor
- Enhancements to the town centre ‘circulation’
- Public realm and highway improvements

To remain a vital and viable centre Halstead must evolve, refocusing its role and function to ensure it continues to provide a range of services and amenities that attracts footfall. We have to recognise that Halstead will not compete with the ‘big centres’ in terms of attracting large scale retail activity or major ‘destination’ shopping.

As a retail centre Halstead’s future lies in its ability to provide a convenient ‘top up’ shop location alongside the unique offer of independent retailers and by co-ordinating events to draw more people to the town. By focussing on Halstead’s smaller retail and physical assets alongside an evolution of activities and other uses Halstead can retain its role and vibrancy as a key centre for local residents.

To achieve this the future focus will need to be upon:

- Expanding the local catchment
- Providing a range of ‘top up’ and local shopping opportunities to meet the needs of each element of the catchment
At the heart of the Halstead Town Centre Strategy is the desire to work with the assets the town already possesses. Whilst facing certain challenges Halstead remains an attractive and relatively vibrant town centre, in seeking to improve its vitality in the future the strategy should not lose sight of what makes it successful today.

The Strategy has identified 5 key packages of projects that, together, can deliver on Halstead’s potential. They provide a portfolio of interventions that seek to combine and maximise both public and private sector investment to deliver key policy aims and increased trade within the town centre. They focus on physical and non-physical interventions in order to provide a boost to the look, feel and functionality of the town centre:

**PACKAGE 1 – Public Realm Enhancements**

Improving the quality and consistency of the public realm across the whole town centre, with a particular focus on creating an improved space at Market Hill to accommodate the market itself and provide a public space on non-market days

**Key Projects**

- Enhancements to the High Street – Hedingham Road roundabout
- Reinforcement of key primary and secondary gateways/arrival points
- Improvements to the area around Jubilee Fountain
- Shop front improvements

**PACKAGE 2 – Pedestrian Movement**

Deliver improvements to the pedestrian network to make circulation around the town easier, delivering at least one new crossing point to the north. Wider improvements would enhance access to the High Street.

**Key Projects**

- New crossings at the north of the High Street
- Improvements to wider network of pedestrian and cycle routes including:
  - Enhanced access to the Park,
  - Wayfinding from car parks to High Street,
• links to the River Corridor footpaths and
  o improved cycling facilities in the town centre.
• Improved signage and wayfinding through The Centre and Weavers Court.

**PACKAGE 3 - Land East of the High Street**

Delivery of an integrated mixed use development on land to the east of the High Street. Including provision of new pedestrian routes. It should be noted this development is being brought forward via a specific initiative led by the Council.

**Key Projects:**

- Delivery of a mixed use scheme at land east of the High Street, including redevelopment of the Centre
- Connect The Centre and Factory Lane East
- Integration through new pedestrian links from the site to the High Street
- High Street building improvements
- Town wide signage strategy

**PACKAGE 4 - River Corridor Enhancements**

Delivery of new development and public access improvements to evolve the current enhancements in the River Corridor, recognising the potential limitations presented by flood risk.

**Key Projects:**

- Establish pedestrian linkages between Bridge Street / The Causeway and Halstead Public Gardens through redevelopment of the EMD site in Kings Road
- Re-use of vacant sites along the riverside
- Continued enhancements to footpath and cycling routes
- Improved connections to the Butler Road community facility development
- Riverside and town wide signage strategy

**PACKAGE 5 - Town Centre Promotion**

Co-ordinated promotion approach to the town centre particularly focussed on linking niche art, craft and clothing shops with wider events and retail offer.

**Key Projects:**

- Short term the focus on coordinating existing events (such as Halstead in Bloom) and using these as opportunities to promote the retail offer of the town
• Retailers should be encouraged to ‘tie in’ their offers with the events programme, ensuring they are open on event days and, potentially, offering shared discounts

• Develop marketing of niche activities such as antiques/craft cluster, clothing retail

• Medium term there is the potential to use this Strategy as a tool for promoting the town centre

• Ensure new developments in the town are integrated into the High Street environment from day one
1. **Introduction**

1.1 Working in partnership, and in response to the changing dynamics of the retail sector, the District Council, Halstead Town Council and the Halstead Town Team have identified the need for investment and intervention to strengthen the offer of Halstead, enabling it to maximise its strengths and secure greater levels of footfall and spend in the future.

1.2 GVA, supported by Studio REAL and MVA Consultancy, have been appointed by Braintree District Council to prepare a town centre strategy and intervention plan that meets these aims. The core aim of the Strategy is to identify a range of interventions and coordinate their delivery to maximise the regeneration benefit for Halstead town centre.

1.3 This Strategy is not intended to start from scratch. It builds on the feedback provided by Halstead residents and users of the town centre via the “Talk of the Towns” public consultation undertaken between January and March 2011. The consultation sought to understand public views of Halstead, its strengths, weaknesses and how they would like to see it change in the future. The key messages are set out in the following table and provide the starting point for the Strategy.

**Table 1 - Talk of the Town Key Findings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent Shops</td>
<td>Poor range of shops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halstead in Bloom</td>
<td>Number of vacant properties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of community</td>
<td>Parking cost and availability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Through traffic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events programme</td>
<td>Lack of supermarket</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What would make the most difference?</th>
<th>Ideas for improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction of ‘brand names’</td>
<td>Public toilets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in through traffic</td>
<td>Better quality restaurants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broader range of shops</td>
<td>Public realm and shop front improvements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved market</td>
<td>New supermarket</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seating areas and greenery</td>
<td>Market Hill roundabout improvements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Talk of the Towns Halstead Town Centre, 2011
1.4 Given the strength and depth of the Talk of the Town exercise the Strategy development process did not include a public engagement process. However, to build the project team’s understanding and to ensure the Strategy developed locally relevant interventions stakeholder workshops were held at three key points in the project.

1.5 The workshops were open to all members of the Town Council, relevant District Council members, Essex Highways, Halstead Town Team and other key organisations with a stake in the future of the town centre. The workshops, in tum, acted as a ‘sounding board’ for the baseline analysis, emerging project ideas and draft strategy enabling local experience, knowledge and experience of the stakeholders to be included in final Strategy.

1.6 The approach taken to developing the Strategy has been vital to build agreement around the key themes and secure partner ‘buy in’ to the range of interventions and projects identified. Building this consensus throughout the process will be critical for moving from strategy to delivery given the role the partners will play in supporting, funding and managing the identified interventions.
2. **An Appreciation of Halstead**

2.1 Halstead is a small market town with a relatively stable and established occupier base, including a core of niche independent businesses. It has a strong sense of community, significant heritage assets and a vibrant events programme. These assets provide a solid foundation for future improvement and a successful strategy for the rejuvenation of the town centre which needs to work with, and enhance, these assets.

2.2 To develop an effective and locally distinctive way forward for Halstead it is vital we understand its history and current context. This section sets out our understanding of Halstead as a place; how it has evolved over time and the challenges and opportunities it faces in the future. This understanding underpins the Strategy and interventions set out in subsequent sections of this Report.

**History and Urban Form**

**A brief history**

2.3 The name Halstead derives from Old English. Heald has modern meanings like refuge, shelter, healthy; and stede means a site or place. Others say that heald refers to the slope or hillside on which Halstead has developed but, whichever the case, clearly the name relates to the town’s very prominent and defensible site above the Colne Valley. It is referred to as Halstead in 1086 (the Little Domesday Book).

2.4 In the medieval period water mills on the River Colne were important in the local economy, and Townsford Mill is still one of Halstead’s most iconic buildings. The present structure dates to 1740. A market was established in the early middle ages as a centre for trading the agricultural output of the area, and it was chartered in 1251. Weaving took on an early economic importance, eventually leading to the establishment of Courtaulds’ silk and crepe manufactories in the early 19th century using the waterpower of Townsford Mill and later steam power. Courtaulds expanded significantly in the town, and the company’s philanthropic principles have left a legacy of buildings and facilities in Halstead.

2.5 The Halstead - Colchester railway opened in 1860 providing fuel and transport that allowed further industrial expansion, including a foundry, timber sawyers and turners, and brewing. There was a related rapid rise in the population from 1831 when it was 4,637 to a peak of 11,226 in 1891, but the early 20th century saw a decline in rural populations through emigration to cities and overseas. The character of Halstead today combines
both the medieval scale of its early timber framed and rendered buildings and buildings of a more industrial brick-built appearance, and this mix is distinctive among other market towns in the region.

2.6 The railway closed in 1965 as a result of the Beeching review when Halstead perhaps seemed a relatively remote and sleepy part of rural north Essex, and these former industries left the town. However, there has been enormous residential growth in the Braintree district with commuting to London and other urban centres, and the population of Halstead returned to 11,053 in 2001. During that time, the area of the town has increased significantly as household sizes have reduced and the number of dwellings has increased correspondingly. The population had risen further to 11,906 in 2011.

The town today - urban form

Form of the Town

2.7 Halstead has developed in a linear form along the main road from Braintree to Sudbury. There are routes which cross it, of which the Colchester Road is the most significant, but most of the historic development has been on Trinity Street, High Street and Head Street. No historic network of streets has really developed behind the main road frontages.

2.8 The double bend at Bridge Street is intriguing, as there is no obvious reason for it: it might represent a diversion from Trinity Street / High Street from an old river crossing to the present bridge over the Colne (something seen in many towns developed around river crossings), but there is no obvious evidence. As well as these changes in street alignment, the level changes from Bridge Street to Head Street are striking, especially compared with other Essex towns. In particular views from St Andrews church and The Centre westwards across the town centre are a very special part of Halstead’s character.
Figure 1 - View over the town from St Andrews

2.9 High Street is a classic “broad street” and contrasts with the narrow medieval scale of Head Street. Its breadth allows flexible uses of the street space, with space for pedestrians, through traffic and for other activities such as stalls and outdoor space for shops and cafés. Building plots reflect the medieval pattern of deep sites with regular 5-6 metre frontages onto the street, maintaining a steady scale and rhythm to development while allowing great variety in building styles. It was noted above that there is not much early development behind High Street but, particularly on the south side, the medieval plot pattern includes yards and accesses between and under buildings to the backs of sites, providing opportunities for secondary uses and links through to areas behind. This pattern has been used to link the modern Weavers Court development from the Co-op car park, and there are other opportunities along the street.
The quality and variety of buildings in Halstead is exceptional and wide ranging. A number are important landmarks in the town as the focus of key views and vistas:

- The Bull Inn, Bridge Street, which terminates the view down High Street from the east;
- 82 High Street, with its distinctive oversailing first floor, forming a strong gateway feature at the western end of the High Street and marking the bridge over the Colne;
• Townsford Mill, spanning the Colne and forming a strong riverside space flanked by Dutch gabled houses on The Causeway;
• Buildings on Market Hill at the top of High Street, forming a strong street space around the Victoria Jubilee drinking fountain and lantern;
• St. Andrews Church, occupying the top of the hill and visible from most of High Street and surroundings;
• Trinity Church on Trinity Street, acting as a foil to St. Andrews to the west and, between the two churches, marking the area of the town centre.

Figure 3 - Halstead has a Number of Landmark Buildings

2.11 Halstead is certainly not just about built development. The river corridor provides a green spine, which recent town initiatives are trying to promote. Historically, towns tend to turn their backs on their rivers, seeing them as functional rather than environmental assets. With the passing of industry, the riverside has become important, if neglected, green space; and the same is true for some of the backland sites behind the High Street which have become overgrown.

2.12 The overall impression of the town is of intriguing variety, revealed glimpses and vistas, and surprising level changes and views. The biggest negative issue is the weight of traffic passing along High Street and its approaches on Head Street and Trinity Street - but of
course it is this route that has been a founding feature of the town. Many of the town’s assets are relatively hidden – the yards off the High Street and the riverside are good examples – and could be better linked together. Nevertheless, there is a very strong basis in the form and detail of the town centre on which to build a prosperous future.

Employment areas

2.13 The employment base within Halstead had traditionally grown up around the rail line which ran to the south of the town centre. Once the line was closed the corridor it occupied was used to accommodate a diverse range of industrial activities within a series of small estates and large standalone sites along Butler Road, Factory Road and King’s Road.

2.14 In recent years much of this activity has scaled back, leaving a number of larger sites vacant and ripe for redevelopment. Some sites to the north of the river have already been redeveloped for housing and recently the former EMD facility on Kings Road was granted planning permission for the development of a major food store.

2.15 The location of large scale employment uses to the south of the town has influenced the retail footprint of the town, with a number of lower value and convenience uses clustering in this area over time.

The Town Centre Offer

2.16 The Talk of the Town exercise highlighted the importance of the retail offer to users of the town centre, recognising the strengths in terms of independent and niche retailers but also a number of weaknesses in the offer principally the loss of ‘multiple’ retailers and the lack of a major foodstore.

2.17 The District-wide retail study (Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners, 2012) highlights the retail challenges facing Halstead. Based on survey data the Study estimates that 17% of potential expenditure on comparison goods (i.e. expenditure on ‘non-food’ items such as
clothes and electrical appliances) within the Halstead catchment is spent within Halstead itself. The majority of spending ‘leaks’ to other retail centres including Colchester (26%), Braintree Town Centre (16%) and Sudbury.

2.18 These findings support the key messages of the Talk of the Town consultation, this identified a key weakness of the town is the inability to buy comparison goods such as clothes and shoes within it. This market share also reflects the scale of the town centre and changing retailer practices (which we consider in more detail later).

2.19 Similarly the retail study records a significant leakage of convenience goods expenditure (i.e. food and newspapers) is lost from the town with only 44% of potential spend remaining in the town. This spend is likely to be focussed on the Co-Op(Solar) store and the small Sainsbury’s but this low retention highlights the lack of a major supermarket and the opportunity a new foodstore may offer to the town.

2.20 These shopping patterns suggest that the role of Halstead is principally focussed on smaller ‘everyday’ top up and service trips rather than for major or large purchases. This changing role is reflected in the share of retail units.

**Figure 4 - Share of Town Centre Units by Activity**

![Pie chart showing the share of town centre units by activity](image)

*Source: Experian, 2013*

2.21 As shown in Figure 4 less than half the units within the town centre are considered to be ‘retail stores’ (which include a combination of convenience and comparison retailers).
Even with the inclusion of the charity shop category the proportion of retail stores remains below 50%.

2.22 Almost a quarter of the units within the town centre fall within the bars, cafes and restaurants category. The ‘food and drink’ offer of Halstead is mixed, larger ‘chain’ restaurants are relatively scarce (Prezzo at Market Hill being the exception), Dominos Pizza takeaway has also recently opened. The main offer comes from smaller, independent cafes and restaurants alongside a small number of pubs.

2.23 The Talk of the Town exercise raised some concerns from shoppers relating to the quality of the food and drink offer within Halstead. A number of respondents sought a higher quality offer, particularly wishing to see a move away from takeaways.

2.24 Anecdotally a further key area of growth in occupancy has been from ‘personal services’ such as beauticians and nail bars. This reflects wider trends in the economy where, even during the recession, the sector has continued to grow.

2.25 The independent and niche retail offer of Halstead was viewed as a key strength in the Talk of the Town. This importance is underlined when the share of employment is taken into account, as shown in Figure 5 below.

Figure 5 - Share of Employment by Retailer Type

Source: Experian, 2013
2.26 Almost 80% of people employed within the town centre work within independent businesses, i.e. businesses where their only outlet is in Halstead or where a ‘chain’ has less than two stores nationally. This is considerably higher than other centres within the District and also Chelmsford (as the major retail destination in Essex) and provides the town with a unique offer.

2.27 The independents provide the town with a ‘niche’ offer in two identifiable areas, clothing and craft/antiques. Generally the town has a strong reputation as a centre for antiques with Townsford Mill a particular draw for visitors. To the north end of the High Street there is a small (but growing cluster) of independent clothing retailers, from general ‘boutiques’ to niche specialist retailers such as “Going Underground”.

2.28 Allied to the core retail offer is Halstead market, a chartered market which is held on Friday’s and Saturday’s on Market Hill. The market offer is small with a maximum of six stalls on most trading days.

2.29 Overall, it is clear that Halstead’s occupier base has changed considerably and is continuing to do so. There has been a decrease in the range of the retail mix, both within the core town centre units and the market. The impact of the recession is also evident, with a number of vacant units occurring as a result of retailers that have gone into administration in the last 2-3 years, whilst this is not solely a direct result of local trading conditions the empty properties impact on the perception of the town centre.

2.30 There is a strong and established independent retailer base. This, alongside a relatively stable base of ‘multiple’ retailers (including foodstores), can underpin future growth of the retail mix and ensure the offer in Halstead is different from other, larger town centres.

2.31 The key challenge for improving the vitality of Halstead and, in turn, rejuvenating the retail offer will be in generating sufficient footfall to support a greater level of activity. The catchment for Halstead is relatively limited given its predominant role as a ‘top up’ shopping location. This means it relies more heavily on the indigenous population than larger centres, however there is a relatively little town centre residential offer, reducing the ‘top up’ opportunity.

2.32 Whilst there is a larger residential population in the town centre ‘hinterland’ connections can be limited. The lack of a large convenience offer also causes a high leakage of what spend there is close to the town centre to other centres rather than drawing shoppers to the town.
2.33 Increasing the potential footfall of the town will be the key to a successful regeneration programme. This will need to maximise the contribution of the town’s strengths in attracting shoppers, utilise assets better to attract new visitors and deliver new development that increases the catchment.

**Planning Policy Context**

2.34 Given the importance of new development opportunities in creating a positive benefit for Halstead town centre it is vital that the Strategy for its rejuvenation is developed in line with the wider vision and spatial strategy identified by Braintree District Council. The core principles for the future growth and development of the town are set out within the adopted Core Strategy (September 2011).

2.35 The over-arching vision which the policy base seeks “to maintain and develop vibrant and prosperous main towns of Braintree, Witham and Halstead, by encouraging new development and regeneration schemes that support their function as major service centres, with a range of good quality employment, shops, services and cultural provision” (Pg 27). This strategy therefore needs to provide a toolkit for delivering this aim, coordinating a range of interventions (both physical and non-physical) that encourage footfall and enhance Halstead’s draw for shoppers and visitors.

2.36 The “Spatial Strategy” establishes Halstead as one of the Main Towns within the District, however it recognises that future development potential and capacity is limited by the relative isolation, limited public transport services and environmental/landscape sensitivities. As such no growth locations are proposed for Halstead.

2.37 Given the sensitive context the aspirations for Halstead are identified as:

- A minimum of 300 new dwellings within existing boundaries;
- Support for the expansion of employment and community service provision; and
- Support and promotion for the regeneration of land East of the High Street.

2.38 The Core Strategy also provides specific direction for the regeneration of the District’s key town centres, including Halstead. This framework recognises the respective role each town plays both within the District and the wider North Essex retail market, with Halstead being strongly influenced by both Colchester and Chelmsford as larger centres.

2.39 The priority identified for Halstead is to enhance the current convenience good offer within the town in order to capture retail spend that currently ‘leaks’ to other locations (Pg
66). The land east of the High Street is recognised as the main regeneration opportunity, offering capacity for new floorspace and car parking with strong links to the High Street.

2.40 Policy CS6 directs future development to meet additional retail needs to both land east of the High Street and Weavers Court.

2.41 Integrating new growth and existing communities into the existing centres is critical to their long term success, Policy CS7 seeks to secure sustainable, enhanced accessibility through coordinated transport planning. There are, however, no identified major interventions within the Halstead transport network.

2.42 The Town Centre Strategy set out here develops the themes of the Core Strategy into a more detailed set of actions and interventions, ensuring that redevelopment and growth are linked with enhancements to the town centre offer, its built fabric and accessibility.

2.43 The pre-submission draft of the Site Allocation and Development Management Plan (September 2013) identifies both the former EMD Site and land east of the High Street under Policy ADM33. This directs future development towards retail and wider appropriate ‘town centre’ uses.

2.44 Policy ADM36 develops the principle of ADM33 in more detail identifying the specific recommendations and aspirations for the future redevelopment of the land east of the High Street. The policy seeks a comprehensive, mixed use development that could directly delivers a combination of:

- Residential units;
- Retail floorspace;
- B1 employment;
- Community facilities; and
- Open space.

2.45 Development should also be sympathetic to the heritage and environment/habitats within the site, enhance the conservation area and provide appropriate, high quality links to the High Street.

2.46 The town centre strategy should seek to provide a framework within which both the EMD site and land east of the High Street can be brought forward in manner that ensures they integrate into the wider town centre offer and public sector intervention can complement private sector investment.
Halstead Town Transport Baseline Conditions

2.47 As shown in Figure 6, Halstead’s road network is dominated by the A131, a southwest / northeast route which forms the High Street as it passes through the town centre. The main southeast / northwest highway route is provided by the A1124 which connects with the A131 at the High Street’s northern end via two mini roundabouts, located in close proximity to each other.

2.48 The A131 and A1124 provide Halstead with good highway access to key towns in the surrounding area such Sudbury, Braintree and Colchester. Furthermore, the A131 provides a direct connection to the UK’s wider strategic road network via the A12 to the M25 Motorway and the A120 to the M11 Motorway, although both routes are long.

2.49 Halstead is heavily dominated by traffic. Previous traffic surveys carried out in 2012 indicate that during the morning and evening weekday peak periods, on average a vehicle travels through the town on the A131 around every 2 seconds. As a result, congestion often occurs during peak times at the two mini-roundabout junctions with the A1124.
2.50 The speed limit along the A131 through Halstead is 30 mph. However, a combination of steep gradients, wide carriageway and congestion bottlenecks at the two mini roundabouts is contributing towards high accelerating vehicles traveling through the town.

Figure 6 - Halstead Highway Network

2.51 The town also appears to suffer from an ill-defined arrival point for new visitors as they enter the town via the A131, making them confused as to where the town centre actually commences. Currently there are physical gateways located on the A131 to the north and south of the town. They consist of signs at the roadside, which provide a welcome to Halstead and signify a change in speed limit to 30 mph.

2.52 However, it is believed the ability of these gateways to help calm traffic through the centre is limited. Firstly they do not include any physical measures in the actual road
carriageway, such as contrasting colour surfacing and secondly they are positioned at considerable distances away from the start of the town centre.

**Halstead - Car Parking**

2.53 Details on the location of existing on and off street car parks together with information on their parking supply and charging regime are included below in Figure 7 and Table 2.

**Figure 7 - Halstead Car Parking Details**

Evidence from site observations, discussions with key stakeholders at the Halstead Town Centre Workshops' and information from the ‘Market Town Benchmarking – Halstead 2012 Report’, (a report compiled on behalf of Braintree District Council), all indicate that on-street car parking along the High Street is heavily utilised, with high demand and a significant turnover of spaces. This high demand is understandable given free parking is
available for up to an hour on the High Street, making it particularly attractive for through traffic wishing to make a temporary stop off in the town. While this parking is seen as a significant asset for the town for increasing visitor numbers, it is believed that a one hour period for free parking is excessive for short convenience type trips.

2.55 High demand for parking along the High Street is in contrast to off-street parking where up to a third of the overall parking supply is available in Butler Road, Chapel Street and Solar car parks during a typical day. Parking charge promotions run by the Town Council (“Free after Three”) are in place and seeking to encourage greater use.

2.56 While these car parks are relatively close to the heart of the town centre, there is generally poor wayfinding signage for pedestrians walking between these car parks and the High Street.

2.57 It should also be noted that visitors using the short stay on-street parking will tend to limit their time in the town centre to under an hour and are not be encouraged to stay longer to visit shops and activities in other parts of the town. Improving signage to the existing car parks may increase the propensity for through traffic to stop, although this would be charged and may limit the impact.

2.58 In the future the Town is faced with an important choice with regard to parking. 1 hour is not sufficient for a ‘full’ shopping trip, discouraging visitors from increasing their ‘dwell’ time and using local cafes and restaurants. Reducing the time period to 30 minutes could encourage visitors who are minded to make a longer stay to park in off street car parks, leaving 30 minute bays free for those who intend to make a short visit to one store.

2.59 In contrast there is the option of increasing the free parking period on street. We understand the Town Team is considering an extension to 2 hours. This could provide sufficient ‘dwell time’ but may have an adverse impact on parking revenues and decrease availability of bays for passing trade or those seeking to use one shop as cars remain parked for longer. The full costs and benefits of each approach should be investigated in more detail before any change is made.
Table 2 - Halstead Town Car Parking Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Car Park Type</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Parking Supply</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Short Stay</td>
<td>on-street</td>
<td>~58 spaces</td>
<td>Between 8:00am and 6:00pm Monday to Saturday, vehicles can park free up to 1 hour with no returning within 3 hours. No parking fees outside this period.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-street</td>
<td>Town Centre (Along High Street)</td>
<td>~325 spaces</td>
<td>For Chapel Street and Butler Road parking tariff between 8:00am and 6:00pm Monday to Saturday based on £0.50 (0-1hrs), £1.20 (1-3hrs), £2.40 (3-6hrs), £5.00 (6+hrs). 1 hour free parking available in Chapel Street for Sainsbury’s customers. Current promotional free parking in Chapel Street and Butler Road after 3:00pm. No parking fees outside 8:00am to 6:00pm Monday to Saturday period. For Solar car park free parking up to 2 hours, maximum stay 2 hours (between 8:00am and 6:00pm, Monday to Saturday, free unrestricted parking outside this period)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Off-street</td>
<td>permitt only car parks (Hedingham Road and Rosemary Lane)</td>
<td>~36 spaces</td>
<td>Season ticket permits required.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Halstead - Public Transport

2.60 Figure 8 shows the current provision of public transport services in Halstead. Given the town has no rail station, its public transport offering is based on a small number of bus services and routes. Furthermore, at only 1 to 2 buses per hour on average per service they all operate at a relatively low frequency. Outside of peak times services are particularly limited with a lack of evening services a key issue.
Figure 8 - Halstead - Public Transport Services

**Halstead - Walking and Cycling**

2.61 The land topography with its steep gradients together with very high traffic levels on the A131 make Halstead a difficult environment for cyclists and people on foot.

2.62 Promotion of cycling is further hampered by no formal cycle routes within the town or surrounding area and low levels of cycle parking limited to the southern end of the town.

2.63 Pedestrians are provided with limited crossing facilities to negotiate the A131 with only a zebra crossing located at the southern end of the town opposite the library and a pelican crossing in the centre of the High Street. This lack of crossing facilities together with high
traffic flows is resulting in significant severance where people struggle to cross the road to
visit both sides of the High Street, particularly at the northern end of the town.

2.64 Halstead benefits from having a river walk and recent investment has been made into
enhancing its environment for walkers with improvements such as new footpaths and
connections to the river. It should be noted however that such improvements are limited
due to physical constraints which force the route away from the river particularly along
Factory Lane East. In addition, due to limited wayfinding, the connection between the
riverside walk and the High Street is unclear.

**Halstead - Baseline Transport Conclusions**

2.65 The conclusions of this baseline review of transport conditions within Halstead are
presented in Table 3.
### Table 3 - Halstead - Transport SWOT Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Strengths</strong></th>
<th><strong>Weaknesses</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Good highway access to key neighbouring towns and to strategic highway network via the A12 and M25.&lt;br&gt;• On street parking along High Street, convenient for visitors.&lt;br&gt;• Convenient, relatively low cost off street car parking within the town.</td>
<td>• Very car dominated town particularly with through traffic along the A131.&lt;br&gt;• Traffic congestion hotspots at the two mini roundabouts located at the northern end of the high street.&lt;br&gt;• Poor environment for cyclists. Steep gradient up to northern end of town, high traffic levels, no cycle routes and very limited cycle parking.&lt;br&gt;• Poor environment for pedestrians. Steep gradient up to northern end of town, high traffic levels, narrow footway along certain sections and limited crossing facilities along the High Street.&lt;br&gt;• Limited bus services (low frequency).&lt;br&gt;• Relatively poor wayfinding between off street car parks and High Street.&lt;br&gt;• Town suffers from lack of defined sense of arrival.&lt;br&gt;• One hour free parking discourages longer ‘dwell times’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Opportunities</strong></th>
<th><strong>Threats</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Enhance the urban realm to create a better environment for pedestrians.&lt;br&gt;• Reduce the severance of the A131 through the town by introducing additional pedestrian crossing facilities.&lt;br&gt;• Potential for improving the town’s environment through greater use of the riverside walk.&lt;br&gt;• Enhance the sense of arrival to the town through appropriate ‘Gateways’.</td>
<td>• Increased problems of High Street severance as traffic levels increase on the A131.&lt;br&gt;• Future traffic growth will increase traffic congestion at the two mini roundabouts at the northern end of town.&lt;br&gt;• Poor accessibility to the town centre likely to reduce visitor numbers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Changing Character and Role of Market Towns

2.66 The role and function of high streets within market town centres has constantly evolved since their origins as the key trading hub for the range of smaller villages and hamlets in their surrounding area. The traditional role of market towns as the principal location for shopping, whilst changing in form and nature, had remained consistent until the end of the twentieth century when both retailer and shopper habits began to change.

2.67 Major changes in how the retail sector functions are having considerable impacts on the high street offer within market towns. Increasing competition between high street and online retailers is driving the sector to seek increasing efficiencies to be able to maximise profits whilst still offering competitive prices.

2.68 For the major, multiple outlet retailers (“multiples”) this has resulted in a drive for greater sales efficiencies, mainly by increasing the value of sales per square foot of retail floorspace. The multiples’ strategy has been to focus on retaining highly efficient stores with large open floorplates located within a smaller number of major town centre and shopping centre locations.

2.69 This approach has been replicated across the range of major high street retailers effectively reinforcing the trend and increasing the market dominance and share of the major centre. It has also presented a dual challenge for smaller, historic market towns which a. cannot provide the scale of units major retailers require and b. do not have sufficient footfall to attract major retailers to the units available (partly because shoppers are now able to travel more easily to larger centres).

2.70 For Halstead the scale, offer and accessibility of Chelmsford and Colchester provide the major local draw, however given the road infrastructure and wider rail services Lakeside regional shopping centre and Westfield Stratford also draw spend away from the traditional town centre. This has driven a number of occupiers to leave Halstead which, alongside recession-driven closures, have significantly affected the town’s retail offer.

2.71 More locally the development of Freeport has widened the retail offer, however the nature of shopping offered (designer outlet) is less likely to have a major impact on Halstead occupiers as retailers would not have considered the town centre as a location. However, the accompanying leisure offer is likely to have drawn some food and drink spend away from the town.

2.72 The increased influence of these major, more distant, out of town centres reflects a significant change in shopper behaviour. Until relatively recently shopping had been
viewed as a ‘necessity’ however as disposable incomes have risen and a wider range of shops opened it has become a leisure and recreational activity. Major shopping centres and town centres have responded to this change by providing a much broader range of services and amenities to complement the core retail offer such as bars, restaurants and cinemas.

2.73 Even the traditional unique selling point and draw of market towns – the market itself – has seen its role diminished considerably since the turn of the century. The rise of the discount retail sector through stores as varied as Primark, The 99p Store, Wilkinsons etc has seen the traditional market ‘niche’ become crowded, with similar goods offered at similar (if not cheaper) prices within more pleasant shopping environments, the ability to try clothes on, multiple payment methods and clear returns policies and guarantees.
3. **The Strategy**

3.1 Having considered the nature of Halstead as a town centre, its historic context and the challenges it faces in retaining a vibrant and vital centre for the surrounding communities this section focuses on the development of a strategy that delivers a range of improvements to the town centre to make it a more attractive place to visit and spend time.

**Aims and Objectives**

3.2 To remain a vital and viable centre Halstead must evolve once more, refocusing its role and function to ensure it continues to provide a range of services and amenities that attracts footfall. We have to recognise that Halstead will not compete with the ‘big centres’ in terms of attracting large scale retail activity or major ‘destination’ shopping. As a retail centre Halstead’s future lies in its ability to provide a convenient ‘top up’ shop location alongside the unique offer independent retailers and by co-ordinating events to draw more people to the town.

3.3 By focusing on Halstead’s smaller retail and physical assets alongside an evolution of activities and other uses Halstead can retain its role and vibrancy as a key centre for local residents.

3.4 To achieve this the future focus will need to be upon:

- Expanding the local catchment
- Providing a range of ‘top up’ and local shopping opportunities to meet the needs of each element of the catchment
- Strengthening of the independent, ‘niche’ retail offer
- Improving the ability to move around the town
- Reinforcing the civic and events role
- Maintaining and improving accessibility and parking

3.5 At the heart of the Halstead Town Centre Strategy is the desire to work with the assets the town already possesses. Whilst facing certain challenges Halstead remains an attractive and relatively vibrant town centre, in seeking to improve its vitality in the future the strategy should not lose sight of what makes it successful today.
3.6 However, there is a key need to increase footfall through the town centre to provide greater trading opportunities. This will require a combined approach that maximises the role of existing assets and delivers new growth to enhance the town’s catchment, this will need to be integrated through the delivery of improvements to movement within the town centre.

**Spatial Framework**

3.7 By working with the current form of the town and linking its key assets together there is the opportunity to deliver a series of investments and interventions that, whilst modest in their own right, combine to make a significant impact on the town centre. The coordination of these interventions is designed to build upon the existing spatial framework, strengthening key nodes of activity, improving permeability and accessibility, and enhancing the role each asset plays in drawing footfall to the town.

3.8 The Spatial Framework serves to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the town and therefore suggests the location and nature of appropriate interventions that can build on the strengths and address weaknesses and, over time, can work together to improve the town for all visitors.

3.9 The analysis that underpins the Spatial Framework begins to reveal the interventions that are required, these are explored below. These intervention requirements directly inform and direct the projects developed as part of this strategy.
Figure 9 provides a spatial framework for the development and improvement of Halstead town centre’s physical environment. It highlights the key elements of the urban fabric that any public or private sector investment in the town seeks to protect, enhance or improve. These include:

**High Street and St. Andrews**

3.11 High Street is the location for almost all of town’s retail activity, with the addition of the two main supermarkets in areas close by at Factory Lane East and Chapel Street. As noted above, it offers remarkable views over the town and is of a classic “broad street” form, with flexibility for parking, street markets and outdoor space for business premises.
3.12 Against this, pedestrian comfort is not prioritised and heavy traffic can feel intimidating. Improvement schemes should take advantage of opportunities to use the setting to create interesting places for people to spend time just for the pleasure of being in the town. At the top of High Street there is a focus at the jubilee lantern, but a “lack of occasion”. It is tidy, but could be helped by more activity related to adjacent buildings and less domination by vehicles on the mini-roundabout.

Figure 10 - Potential to Improve the Pedestrian Experience at the Jubilee Fountain

3.13 Trinity Street is a key approach to the town. It is a green and leafy introduction, although the quality of frontage development breaks down closer to the town centre, especially around the Butler Road area. Trinity Church and Halstead Public Gardens are green spaces of particularly high quality. Buildings on Bridge Street back onto the river and are very prominent on the Trinity Street approach. However they are not of high quality or sympathetic to the historic character of the town. There is some formal landscape on the bend in the road related to the public library, but it is not quite the entrance feature to the town centre that its position might offer. The bridge itself creates a more memorable entrance into High Street, with views to Townsford Mill and a strong marker building on the northwest side.
3.14 The key opportunities here focus on making better connections between some of these elements. In particular, buildings on Bridge Street could have a much better relationship to the river, allowing more access onto the riverside and more usage of it. Links could be made between the Public Gardens and the town centre through development sites between Kings Road and The Causeway. Also as the main direction of arrival for visitors by car, destinations and parking areas could be made clearer. The town could certainly attract more visitors, but interpretation would be essential – perhaps a town trail that would take in more than just the main street.

**Weavers Court, The Centre**

3.15 Southeast of High Street the town centre has a classic backland form of courts, inns and yards that derive from its medieval plot plan. In other towns this has developed into a network of lanes, but in Halstead the area has become more of a barrier to movement between the town centre and adjacent residential areas. Weavers Court has been developed behind the frontage with a narrow lane access to High Street at Factory Lane East and the main pedestrian link has been made through one of the buildings.
3.16 Behind Factory Lane East and extending as far as The Centre is a large area of disused land. It has become overgrown in places and some of the trees are now subject to preservation orders. A number of yards with access onto High Street back onto this area, so that there is potential to open it up with direct access, if only pedestrian, to High Street.

3.17 There is a major opportunity to develop the backland areas between The Centre and Factory Lane East to help support town centre activity and improve linkages between High Street and the rest of the town. The Weavers Court development has weaknesses that should be avoided -

- Useful function for parking, but the route to and from the High Street lacks elements to draw one through;
- There is very little indication on the High Street of what lies behind;
- A parking strategy should consider the impacts of these routes on town centre lanes and how pedestrian links from car parks to the main street could be made more obvious;
- Scale and intimacy is critical to these urban forms.
Figure 12 - Weavers Court lacks a sense of place and does not provide a draw for shoppers

The Riverside

3.18 The Halstead River Walk is being promoted to improve access to the countryside, but it has great potential within the town, too. Waterside development always attracts interest and has good development value as well. Key objectives should be to:

- Improve access and accessibility to the riverside within the town centre;
- Use the riverside as a linking route between areas of the town;
- Within the town centre, encourage development to create usable waterside space for café use and leisure;
- Create continuous routes along the riverside, e.g. at Bridge Street, around Townsford Mill;
- Seek mixes of uses where appropriate on riverside sites (e.g. Butler Road).
**Approach**

3.19 The Strategy and intervention approach builds upon the Spatial Framework, identifying projects across the town that will contribute to raising the quality, increasing footfall and broadening the town centre offer. Each in turn is directed at addressing the weaknesses identified through the Spatial Framework analysis.

3.20 The key focus is to improve the vitality and viability of Halstead as a market town by increasing footfall and spend in the town centre through an increase in the town centre catchment via new development and improvements to access and movement. This will build upon a number of opportunities:

- Realisation of development opportunities to benefit the High Street
- Improvement of the river corridor
- Enhancements to the town centre ‘circulation’
- Public realm and highway improvements

3.21 Analysis of the Spatial Framework, the major opportunities and the challenges identified both within Halstead and outside that affect its vibrancy provided a ‘long list’ of potential intervention projects, summarised in the table below.
**Table 4 - Project Long List**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Ref</th>
<th>Project title</th>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Rationale</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Impacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1</td>
<td>Butler Road Development</td>
<td>Development of this site on the edge of the town centre to provide a strong frontage on to Butler Rd and improved connections between the River, Theatre and High Street</td>
<td>The site is currently underutilised and creates a gap between key components of the wider town offer. It currently reduces the sense of arrival within the town and does not make the most of the leisure assets. A mixed use development could introduce improve retail frontages and residential provision alongside community facilities</td>
<td>Medium term</td>
<td>Re-use of key brownfield land New residential and community facilities</td>
<td>Improved footfall and catchment Enhancement to public realm and gateway.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2</td>
<td>Bridge Street Redevelopment</td>
<td>Redevelopment of poor quality buildings clustered around the southern gateway to the town.</td>
<td>Currently built stock detracts from the attractiveness of the town centre providing a poor quality sense of arrival. A recent permission secured to convert the existing office building to residential may help raise the appearance of the existing building stock.</td>
<td>Long term</td>
<td>Redevelopment buildings to improve gateway</td>
<td>Improved public realm and appearance of the town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3</td>
<td>Sainsbury’s Car Park Development</td>
<td>Potential development on southern edge of the car park to maximise the role of the riverside setting and improve landscape of the river walk</td>
<td>The site currently does not make the most of its location and detracts from the overall attractiveness of the river walk. Active frontages could be introduced to include café use (for example)</td>
<td>Medium term</td>
<td>New development of residential and café space. Improvements to the river walk</td>
<td>Improved footfall and catchment Enhancement to public realm and gateway.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Ref</td>
<td>Project title</td>
<td>Project Description</td>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>Timeframe</td>
<td>Outputs</td>
<td>Impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4</td>
<td>High Street East Development</td>
<td>Comprehensive development of large site to the east of the High Street, could incorporate the redevelopment of The Centre to enhance capacity</td>
<td>The town currently lacks capacity to deliver large floorplate retail units. It also suffers from a lack of immediate footfall. This site is currently providing no benefit to the town. The Centre is a dated offer that creates a poor environment for shoppers and retailers.</td>
<td>Medium-long</td>
<td>New mixed use development and integration of backland site into the town centre</td>
<td>Increased immediate catchment and footfall. New retail floorspace.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5</td>
<td>River Corridor Development</td>
<td>Long term development strategy for the Factory Lane West area</td>
<td>This is one of the strongest areas of town in terms of the built environment but is let down by vacant sites and poorer premises. Improvement will enhance their setting and also enhance the attractiveness of the antiques centre - a key visitor draw</td>
<td>Long term</td>
<td>Improved public realm, new development, enhanced river walk</td>
<td>Increased footfall, improved setting for historic buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6</td>
<td>Weavers Court</td>
<td>A series of improvements to the internal area of Weavers Court improving appearance, encouraging active use of outdoor space. Also seek to improve connection through to the High Street</td>
<td>Currently the internal area lacks vibrancy and is experiencing falling occupancy rates. There is also a poor relationship with the High Street reducing footfall between both locations.</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Improved Weaver's Court, re-occupied units</td>
<td>Improved connections and trading environment, increasing footfall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Ref</td>
<td>Project title</td>
<td>Project Description</td>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>Timeframe</td>
<td>Outputs</td>
<td>Impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7</td>
<td>Riverside Corridor Enhancements</td>
<td>Enhancements along the river walk to increase footfall and improve the public environment</td>
<td>Improving the quality of the river walk will support the aspiration to encourage greater access to the town centre by sustainable modes</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Improved public realm,</td>
<td>Encouragement of sustainable mode of transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H8</td>
<td>High Street Public Realm</td>
<td>Redistribution of street space to enhance pedestrian environment and increase available space for business use.</td>
<td>The High Street is attractive but dominated by vehicle movements, expanding the pedestrian space will help calm traffic and make pedestrians feel safer, encouraging greater use of the town</td>
<td>Short-Medium term</td>
<td>Improved pedestrian environment</td>
<td>More pleasant user experience, increasing dwell time and footfall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H9</td>
<td>Shop Front Design Strategy</td>
<td>Policy and potential funding support to reinstate historic character through retail frontages. Potential to phase approach.</td>
<td>Enhance the key selling point of the town centre</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Enhanced town centre character</td>
<td>Improved environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H10</td>
<td>Illumination Strategy</td>
<td>Improve street lighting and enhance appearance of key buildings</td>
<td>Parts of the town can be uninviting at night, leaving the town looking uncared for and reducing evening activity.</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Enhanced town centre character</td>
<td>Improved night-time environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H11</td>
<td>Colour &amp; Materials Palette</td>
<td>Designation of agreed palette for future refurbishment</td>
<td>Ad hoc refurbishment can damage the overall quality and appearance of the town weakening its offer.</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Enhanced town centre character</td>
<td>Improved environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Ref</td>
<td>Project title</td>
<td>Project Description</td>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>Timeframe</td>
<td>Outputs</td>
<td>Impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H12</td>
<td>Bus Service Improvements</td>
<td>Series of investments to improve bus facilities in the town including enhanced services and infrastructure</td>
<td>Currently services are infrequent and in town facilities poor, this will discourage use</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Increased patronage of buses</td>
<td>Reduced reliance on car, improved town centre environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H13</td>
<td>Cycle Improvement Scheme</td>
<td>Improve facilities for cycling and cyclists in the town centre through parking provision, signage and routes.</td>
<td>Whilst access via the river corridor is good, in-centre movement and facilities are poor. Enhancement will help achieve a modal shift.</td>
<td>Short Term</td>
<td>Improved access and infrastructure</td>
<td>Greater cycle-based trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H14</td>
<td>Pedestrian Improvements</td>
<td>Introduce new and consistent wayfinding signage to bring the town centre together</td>
<td>Currently a lack of defined pedestrian routes limit the ability for visitors to navigate between places and thus reduces linked trips.</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Improved town centre legibility</td>
<td>Distribution of footfall across the town centre through linked trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H15</td>
<td>New Pedestrian Crossing</td>
<td>Introduction of a new pedestrian crossing to the north of the High Street</td>
<td>Currently the High Street is car dominated, with no formal crossing point north of Chapel Street. This, coupled with the steep gradient, makes trips across the street northern end of the High Street unattractive and is likely to reduce footfall.</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>New crossing facilities</td>
<td>Improve links between east and west side of the High Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H16</td>
<td>Events coordination</td>
<td>Link town centre events to retail opportunities through joint promotion and encouragement of offers/promotions</td>
<td>The town has a vibrant events programme which draws in visitors (antiques, In Bloom, informal ‘ride outs’), however this opportunity is not currently linked to the retail offer</td>
<td>Short term</td>
<td>Improved events programme</td>
<td>Increased footfall from one off events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Ref</td>
<td>Project title</td>
<td>Project Description</td>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>Timeframe</td>
<td>Outputs</td>
<td>Impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H17</td>
<td>Arts and culture</td>
<td>Enhance promotion of the 'niche' offer of the town in terms of craft activities including the antiques, Empire Theatre, boutique shops</td>
<td>Developing the sense of identity and uniqueness of the town will help promote the town and increase visitor trips</td>
<td>Short – 0-2yrs Medium – 2-5yrs Long – 5-10yrs</td>
<td>Coordinated approach to unique aspects of the town, encouraging greater visitors</td>
<td>Enhanced image of the town based on unique strengths.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.22 Having identified the potential interventions these were then ‘scored’ against their deliverability and likely impact on achieving the aims for the town centre. The assessment tool and logic model are set out in the accompanying appendix, however a summary of the scoring approach is provided below.

**Table 5 - Project Assessment Approach**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Title</th>
<th>E.g. High Street East Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Description</td>
<td>E.g. Delivery of a new, mixed use development on vacant land to the East of the High Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>What is the rationale for this project? Where are the reasons for its suggestion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inputs</td>
<td>How much will the project cost? What are the additional cost considerations? What is the delivery timeframe?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Deliverability Considerations | What factors may affect the feasibility of the project? Considerations are likely to include:  
- Cost  
- Transport  
- Market Demand  
- Is there a requirement for further development of the project prior to delivery?  
- Partner/stakeholder/community engagement |
| Synergy | How does this project link to other projects? Is it dependent on others? Is it an anchor project? |
| Output | What will be the primary output from the completion of the project? |
| Impact | What is the potential wider benefit and influence (i.e. increased footfall)? |
| Deliverability | Project scored on a scale of 1 – 5 (1 is low and 5 is high) depending on the ease of which it can be timely delivered. |
| Scale of Impact | Project scored on a scale of 1 – 5 (1 is low and 5 is high) depending on the overall impact it will have. |
| Overall Score | Sum of deliverability multiplied by scale of impact |
| Scoring Summary | Summary of the scores given |

3.23 The outputs of the scoring are shown in Table 5, further detailed analysis is contained within the appendix to this report.
Through the project identification and scoring process it clear that many of the projects had a close alignment to each other. When considering the projects, their inter-relationships and the Spatial Framework together distinct ‘packages’ of projects were evident that directly addressed issues in a particular geography or tackled a particular town-wide issue.

Within Table 5 these inter-relationships are shown by the different coloured shading. It is clear that projects that contribute to the expansion of the town centre catchment through new development (shaded blue), improve pedestrian circulation (shaded orange) and maximise the opportunity for a high quality River Corridor are likely to have the biggest impact.
3.26 Also evident is the value to be gained from enhancing the quality of the public realm and coordinating the town’s events programme and cultural offer as a means to attracting greater numbers of visitors.

3.27 These form the bedrock of the Town Centre Strategy, providing a series of interventions that improves the existing environment, creates a larger catchment and enhances the role of existing assets. In considering these elements as elements of a ‘total place’ greater value can be gained from future intervention.

3.28 The Strategy’s implementation plan therefore focuses on interlinked packages that achieve:

- Realisation of development opportunities to benefit the high street
- Improvement of the river corridor
- Enhancements to ‘circulation’
- Public realm and highway improvements
4. Intervention Plan

4.1 The Intervention Plan builds on the project identification and scoring approach outlined above to identify a series of project packages and town-wide ‘management’ approaches that aim to address particular issues across the whole town.

4.2 The core aim of the Intervention Plan is to maximise the impact and value for money of investment through the combination of smaller interventions that each contribute to a single goal. This allows the pace of delivery to be tailored to budget constraints and allows different partners to take responsibility for different elements, broadening the potential resource base.

4.3 The Intervention Plan seeks to ensure projects are complementary both within the package and also between packages, ensuring that any investment in one particular area supports the wider objectives for the town and responds to the spatial framework.

4.4 The table overleaf provides a summary of each of the project packages, highlighting the key components, policy fit and delivery considerations. This is followed by a more detailed explanation of each.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Package Number</th>
<th>Package Title</th>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Component Projects</th>
<th>Policy Fit</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Indicative Costs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1             | Public Realm Enhancements      | A series of coordinated interventions that improve the key gateways to the town centre and provide an enhanced ‘public space’ at Market Hill | Town-wide with specific interventions at Bridge Street-Butler Road and the Market Hill Hedingham Road junction. | H1, H2, H8, H9, H14 | Public realm enhancements will assist in delivery the broad regeneration aims established under Policy CS6. Enhancements to the highway and pedestrian/cycle network will also contribute to the aims of Policy CS7. | Short to Medium | Gateway Improvements - £5k  
Market Hill enhancements - £200k  
Butler Rd-Bridge St to be determined upon detailed scheme. |
| 2             | Pedestrian Movement            | Deliver improvements to the pedestrian network to make circulation around the town easier, delivering at least one new crossing point to the north. Wider improvements would enhance access to the High Street. | Town-wide with a new crossing facility between The Centre and the Hedingham Rd roundabout. | H6, H7, H14, H15  | Enhancing the pedestrian ‘circuit’ within town will help to even footfall distribution through the town, helping to achieve the aims of Policy CS6. These would also help to integrate land East of the High Street and the EMD site into the town centre, supporting the aspirations of policy AMD36. | Short           | New crossing - £25k  
Wider wayfinding enhancements - £5k |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Land East of the High Street</th>
<th>Delivery of an integrated mixed use development on land to the east of the High Street. Including provision of new pedestrian routes.</th>
<th>The Centre and Factory Lane</th>
<th>H4</th>
<th>Delivering a land east of the High Street in line with the framework established here will ensure the aims of Policy AMD36 are achieved.</th>
<th>Medium to Long</th>
<th>Update to Development Brief - £15k</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>River Corridor Enhancements</td>
<td>Delivery of new development and public access improvements to evolve the current enhancements in the River Corridor.</td>
<td>Chapel Street to Parsonage Street</td>
<td>H1, H2, H3, H5, H7, H8, H13, H14, H17</td>
<td>The successful integration of a range of small ‘infill’ development sites alongside enhancements to the pedestrian and cycle network will support the achievement of policies CS6, CS7 and AMD33.</td>
<td>Short to long term</td>
<td>Development Brief / detailed area study - £30k</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Town Centre Promotion</td>
<td>Co-ordinated promotion approach to the town centre particularly focussed on linking niche art, craft and clothing shops with wider events and retail offer.</td>
<td>Town wide</td>
<td>H16, H17</td>
<td>Promotion of the town centre will help to support the town-wide opportunities by increasing footfall and attracting visitors, helping to achieve the over-arching aims of the Core Strategy and also Policy CS6.</td>
<td>Short</td>
<td>£30k</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Package 1 - Public Realm Enhancements

4.5 Rationale

- It appears from on-site observations that traffic tends to travel quite fast through the town centre. It is believed that this situation is not helped by driver suffering from a lack of arrival with limited sense of where the main part of the town environment commences.

- There are currently physical ‘gateways’ on the A131 at the southern and northern approaches to the town, with 30 mph speed limited signs and ‘Halstead’ signs at the side of the road. However it is believed the impact on these gateways to calm traffic along the High Street is limited due to their design and location.

- Improvements to the gateways should be carried out to help calm traffic through the town centre.

- These improvements should link with improvements to the Market Hill junctions, enhancing pedestrian safety and providing a more appropriate setting for the built assets in this location.

- Improvements to the Market Hill area can provide a new focal point at the north of the High Street at the intersection between a number of new and existing routes in and around the town, as shown in Figure 28.
4.6 Proposals

- Establishment of primary and secondary “gateways”;
- Delivery of coordinated public realm leading visitors into the High Street;
- Marking the start of the town through surface treatment;
- Improvement to the St. Andrews / Jubilee Fountain area;
  - This could provide enhanced space for the market.
- Coordinated improvement and development of Butler Road / Bridge Street area.
4.7 Arrival Points

- At the existing outer gateways provide surface treatment with ‘30’ roundels and colour surfacing on the carriageway. A typical example of this arrangement is shown in Figure 11.

- Include a new gateway ‘Welcome to Halstead Town Centre’ with appropriate signage by the road side and with coloured surface on the carriageway to emphasis to drivers they are entering a town centre type environment. The location and design of these new gateways will be subject consultation, although it is suggested that they should be located on the northern approach to the A131 / A1124 mini roundabout and on the A131 near to its junction with Butler Road.

- Estimated cost for gateway improvement ~£5k.

**Figure 15 - Halstead Gateways**
4.8 Cross-cutting initiatives

- High Street building improvements
- Town wide signage strategy
- Developer contributions to public realm projects throughout the town centre

4.9 Next steps:

- Market Hill
  - Engage with Highways to
    - Agree detailed junction improvements
    - Agree surface treatment standards
  - Audit of ‘moveable’ street furniture & ‘civils’ issues
  - Undertake highway design work to establish engineering solution and detailed costs
  - Integrate with new crossing implementation
  - Engage with retailers to utilise new space
- Signage and public realm for outer gateways
  - Agree surface treatments
  - Agree appropriate design
- Develop longer term principles for Bridge St area
  - Opportunity sites/buildings
  - Design code
  - Appropriate surface treatments
  - Potential for development brief/SPD
  - Roundabout signage

4.10 Development proposals, public realm enhancements, lighting and other interventions will need to be designed to ensure they respect the sensitivities relating to the listed buildings and conservation area within the Town Centre.

4.11 The market could be accommodated within the new space at the Jubilee Fountain. Currently the market is formed of a handful of stalls, which could easily be relocated. However, to complement investment at Market Hill and ensure space is used efficiently it will be important to enhance the market infrastructure by providing higher quality stalls.
4.12 Over time, with increased footfall at the north of the town, it may be possible to rejuvenate the market and introduce a broader and potentially higher value offer. However, given the low current base it may be difficult to achieve this before wider improvements are delivered.

**Figure 16 - Potential Improvements at Market Hill to provide market space**
4.13 Rationale

- Halstead is heavily dominated by traffic on the A131 passing through the centre of the town. This is creating significant severance problems where people on foot struggle to cross the road to visit both sides of the High Street.
- The problem is particularly acute at the northern end of the town where currently no pedestrian crossing facilities exist. A package of measures is required to breakdown the High Street’s existing severance problems for pedestrians.
- More widely the town centre footpath routes should be considered as a whole network with investment focussed on linking all components together. Importantly new developments should be accompanied by enhanced pedestrian facilities, integrating them into the town centre and providing a choice of transport modes. For example, both the proposed community facility at Butler Road and the proposed food store at the former EMD site can be major footfall drivers if they have good links to the High Street from the outset.

4.14 Proposal

- To introduce two uncontrolled pedestrian crossings along the High Street based on footway ‘build outs’ as shown in the concept design arrangement included in Figure 10 below. Initial proposals provide one crossing between Chapel Street and The Centre and one crossing between The Centre the mini roundabout with Hedingham Road, although more detailed work is required to determine the exact location based on highway safety, impact and actual walking desire lines.
- Depending on their location, each of these pedestrian crossing is likely to result in the removal of around 4 to 5 on-street parking spaces along the High Street. Given that a signal controlled crossing would result in much greater loss of parking, the proposals are deemed to be appropriate given the balance required between the need to improve the environment for pedestrians while maintaining an acceptable level of on-street parking for visitors.
- Associated improvements to wider network of pedestrian and cycle routes including enhanced access to Halstead Gardens, wayfinding from car parks to High Street, links to the River Corridor footpaths and improved cycling facilities in the town centre.
4.15 Cost Estimate

- Estimated cost for each crossing ~£20 to £25k.

4.16 Next Steps

- Identify key wayfinding ‘points’ and assets
  - Key partners – Weavers Court, Sainsburys
- Detailed design and testing of crossing options
  - Engage with Essex Highways
- Engagement with EMD site developers to secure ‘through’ access to park
- Enhancement of cycling facilities
  - Part of new spaces
  - Visibility and security
Package 3 - Land East of the High Street

4.17 Location: between The Centre and Factory Lane East.

4.18 It should be noted that the development opportunity in this location is being promoted through other activities by Braintree District Council. Given the potential importance of new development to the wider aspirations for Halstead it is worth exploring the attributes that will be support the wider town centre. The principles are not intended to replace the more detailed process underway but provide a flexible framework to support the direction of travel.

Figure 18 - Key Principles Plan

4.19 Rationale: The area between Factory Lane East and The Centre is currently under-utilised, providing no benefit to the town centre. It offers an opportunity to integrate a well-designed new mixed use ‘quarter’ into the town centre, providing direct benefits in terms...
of new floorspace and residential community. The benefits of re-using this vacant site will be:

- To provide areas of mixed use to extend commercial activity of the High Street;
- To bring more people into the town centre;
- To create connections between High Street and residential areas south and east of Parsonage Street;
- To bring derelict land back into use;
- To create usable new green public space.

4.20 Proposals to maximise positive impact on the town centre

- Create a network of pedestrian routes across the area linking to surrounding streets;
- Give possible vehicular access from existing points at The Centre, St. Andrews Road and Factory Lane East, but avoiding through traffic routes;
- Create development within the new street network, with new street frontages;
- Retain green space within the network based on trees with preservation orders (TPOs) and other natural historic / assets;
- Build development frontages at the back of High Street plots linked to existing High Street uses, to create a proper built edge;
- Rebuild The Centre with new frontages on the street network;
- Wherever possible, extend yards and alleys from High Street into the development area and build up small scale uses along them;
- Approximately 75% of development could be housing to meet local market and affordable needs.
4.21 Cross-cutting and supporting initiatives outside of the site

- High Street building improvements
- Town wide signage strategy
- Developer contributions to public realm projects throughout the town centre

4.22 The key benefit of the approach highlighted above is that it enables an incremental approach to delivering a holistic approach and reinforces the significant benefits to the whole town of joining up linkages across a presently inaccessible barrier.

4.23 Next steps:

- Create a joint development brief for land east of High Street, updating the previous work, with the potential to include The Centre to create a comprehensive approach to development. The updated development brief should seek to:
  - Agree redline and sites to be included
  - Provide a detailed survey of ‘assets’/constraints
  - Confirm land ownerships/lease breaks
  - Identify an appropriate use mix
  - Undertake viability testing
• Work with landowners in the wider area to identify appropriate solutions for each site that respond to and direct their expectations and aspirations

• Develop route network / strategy for lanes
  • Improvement of existing access points
  • What they can connect to/from
  • Types of connections
  • Wayfinding signage

4.24 Precedents

**Figure 20 - Towcester - Masterplan Model and Linkage via existing lanes**

**Figure 21 - Bachelor Acre, Windsor - Public Gardens as the centre of town centre mixed use development**
Package 4 - Riverside Corridor

4.25 Location: the riverside from Chapel Street to Parsonage Street

Figure 22 - Riverside Corridor Key Plan - Opportunities

4.26 Rationale

- Creation of a new, high quality mixed use development that provides enhanced public accessibility;
- Build on current initiatives to promote a riverside walk to include development and other leisure potential;
- Use waterside setting to raise value of vacant / underdeveloped sites;
- Improve linkages between the town centre and arrival areas to the west.
4.27 The following series of images set out the design principles and potential development opportunities for this area, considering it in two sections, the Eastern area between Parsonage Street and Bridge Street and the Western Area between Bridge Street and the Broton Trading Estate.

4.28 It will be important to ensure that the mix of uses delivered respond appropriately to other neighbouring uses, existing development proposals and identified areas of flood risk. This will require more detailed consideration at the appropriate time.

**Figure 23 – Riverside Corridor – Existing**

![Riverside Corridor – Existing](image-url)
Eastern sites (Bridge Street to Parsonage Street):

- Redevelop existing industrial sheds with new residential frontage to Factory Lane West
- Outlook over the Colne,
- Incorporate public access along south-west bank of river with access onto over-bridges
4.30  Western Sites Street (Bridge Street to the Broton Trading Estate)

- **Bridge Street**
  - Potential to develop site with both a street frontage to Bridge Street and a river frontage;
  - Incorporate public access on riverside and up to over-bridges;
  - Architectural design to give visual focus to north end (from Trinity Street) and south end (High Street bridge);
  - Enhance pedestrian bridge and route from Trinity Street into Chapel Street car park

- **Butler Road / Chapel Street**
  - Projects already earmarked for Butler Road site;
  - Introduce a mix of uses if possible;
  - Ensure linkages to town centre via Chapel Street are made as clear and attractive as possible (n.b., pedestrian bridge improvements);
• Landscape enhancements to riverside at Chapel Street car park – could possibly include small scale riverside development (café / sitting space)

**Figure 26 - Riverside Corridor - Western Area Potential Development Approach**

4.31 Cross-cutting initiatives

• Redevelopment of the EMD site in Kings Road to seek pedestrian linkages between Bridge Street / The Causeway and Halstead Public Gardens

• Riverside and town wide signage strategy

• Developer contributions to public realm projects throughout the town centre
4.32 Delivery of the development aims for this area will rest on the Council working closely with private landowners to bring forward sites and buildings in a manner that complement the overall aims of the Strategy. This is not an unusual approach and by establishing the Council’s vision and clearly articulating its expectations it can create greater certainty and encourage delivery prospects. By showing the relationship between sites and public investment it can be demonstrated that greater value can be achieved by developing sites in line with a wider strategy, overcoming fragmented land ownerships.

4.33 Next steps:

- Improve existing connections
  - Signage
  - Maintenance
  - Lighting
- Develop a landscape strategy for long term river corridor improvements
  - Key sites
  - Areas for public realm improvement
- Promotion of strategy to land owners
- Promotion of development opportunities

**Figure 27 - Riverside developments & exemplars**
Package 5 - Town Centre Promotion

4.34 Allied to physical enhancements to the town centre offer there is an opportunity to increase footfall by attracting more visitors to the town and capturing greater spend from residents. This can also utilise potential ‘passing trade’ by continuing to provide convenient ‘on-street’ parking on the High Street for people using the A131 as a through route.

4.35 A great deal of activity is already undertaken to promote the town centre, with events and the niche offer bringing in visitors from a range of places. Halstead in Bloom is a considerable success and draws visitors to the town, as does the craft and antiques offer. More recently Going Underground and its appeal to a particular ‘mod’ culture attracts groups of visitors to the town specifically to visit the shop.

4.36 In the short term the focus should be on coordinating these and using any events as opportunities to promote the retail offer of the town. Understanding what draws people to the town and what their interests are will help to develop coordinated promotions. Retailers should be encouraged to ‘tie in’ their offer with the events programme, ensuring they are open on events days and, potentially, offering shared discounts.

4.37 In the medium term there is the potential to use this Strategy as a tool for promoting the town centre, highlighting the projects being delivered and how these are improving the town centre environment, its accessibility and its retail/leisure offer.

4.38 Allied to any ‘soft promotion’ approach will be a need to ensure new developments in the town are integrated into the High Street environment from day one, this will involve appropriate signage and access but also could involve a ‘welcome pack’ for new residents promoting the town centre offer.

4.39 Physical and access enhancements should also be promoted to the wider catchment, encouraging local residents back to the town, particularly via the riverside corridor.

4.40 Allied to the promotion of the town to shoppers the Town Team should also actively pursue and promote the town to new occupiers. The focus should be on attracting commercial leisure occupiers to the town centre (such as Prezzo) to broaden the food and drink offer. This will require a coordinated approach between the Town Team, landlords and the Council to ensure suitable premises are available.
4.41 Approaches should be made to target operators who do not currently have a presence within the Halstead catchment. In approaching the operator the Town Team should prepare material which clearly sets out:

- The key market opportunity, including:
  - Size of catchment and its socio-economic make up;
  - Estimated spending power in the catchment;
  - Scale of change in population.
- The key other users, including
  - Events programme and visitor numbers;
  - Town centre workforce;
  - Niche retail offer;
  - Other leisure assets including The Empire.
- Town centre regeneration efforts:
  - Physical improvements;
  - Events and promotions.
- Location and property options.

4.42 It should be recognised that this approach will be speculative and may not bear instant results, however as the elements of this Strategy are rolled out and footfall and spend in the town improves we would expect greater success.

4.43 The key resource requirements will be the time commitment of key officers and the Town Team. A budget of at least £20,000-£30,000 per annum should be retained to produce publicity material and procure any required data/catchment information.
5. **Next Steps**

5.1 The Strategy has been developed to deliver improvements to the town centre over time. Each intervention package identifies projects which can be delivered (even in pilot form) in the short term which contribute to longer term aspirations and opportunities.

5.2 The preparation of the Strategy is only the first step and it requires immediate action to demonstrate its role and the commitment of the project partners to its delivery. Therefore, once published, demonstrable action needs to be undertaken through a series of ‘quick win’ projects whilst the planning of the longer term larger interventions is undertaken.

5.3 Therefore, from within the project packages we have identified a basket of projects that should form the focus in the next 12-24 months. Some will deliver activity within the town whilst others prepare the ground for the larger interventions that will make a significant impact.

5.4 The approach to delivery needs to be flexible so if opportunities come forward sooner than anticipated they can be grasped and implemented in line with the overall Strategy principles. Similarly, should funding opportunities arise to deliver elements of the Strategy, these should be actively pursued using the Strategy as a key tool for evidencing why the investment is needed and the outcomes it can deliver.

**Early Win Projects**

5.5 Key ‘deliverable’ projects in the next 2 years will be:

- Enhancements to the existing River Corridor
  - Lighting
  - Maintenance
- Introduce new crossing to north of High Street;
  - Will require detailed design and discussion with Essex Highways;
- Deliver ‘gateway’ improvements;
- Reintroduce new cycle parking to complement investment in the River Corridor;
- Introducing new wayfinding signage within and to/from the High Street with a focus on:
  - Weavers Court car park (through Weaver’s Court);
  - Access to the park through the EMD site;
• Providing clear access from the new Butler Road community centre to the High Street.

5.6 In order to demonstrate the value of the Strategy, its coordinating role and how the immediate projects are part of a much larger approach to town centre revitalisation each project should reflect it is part of the Strategy approach. This should be kept simple but any promotional material could contain a ‘footer’ or strapline referencing the Strategy.

5.7 Alongside the ‘deliverable’ projects the following preparatory work should be undertaken:

• Continue to work with landowners to produce a development brief for the land east of the High Street to secure a mixed use development that aligns with the initial principles in this Strategy and fully integrates and complements the wider town centre offer;

• Develop a ‘landscape strategy’ for the River Corridor that sets the over-arching principles for long term development opportunities;

• This should incorporate an integrated set of principles for the long term enhancement of the Bridge Street area as a key transition into the town from the new Butler Road community centre;

• Engage with Essex Highways to identify acceptable improvements to the Market Hill area, providing a more pedestrian friendly environment and opportunities for pavement cafes and improved markets; and

• Work with landowners to open up or animate yard spaces.

5.8 Focussing efforts on these tasks in the next two years will prepare the ground for major intervention and improvement in the medium term. It will position the key development sites and the town centre more widely in an ideal position to exploit opportunities as the economy recovers and secure private sector investment.

**Monitoring Success**

5.9 The success of the Strategy will need to be measured in order to demonstrate its value and secure ongoing commitment from the Council, its partners and external funders. At the basic level key success criteria will be the implementation and delivery of the projects within strategy, however the understanding the impact of delivered interventions is also vital.

5.10 To provide this understanding and measurement of ‘success’ we have developed a small basket of indicators that can be collected to monitor progress over time. These tie directly
back to the core aims of the Strategy, which are to increase footfall, improve town centre vitality and encourage investment in the town from a greater range of operators.

5.11 Measuring town centre performance is notoriously difficult and is often affected by wider economic and other factors, however by building up a dataset over time should allow these variables to be ‘controlled’.

5.12 Unfortunately there is limited data available for measuring town centre performance, particularly without it having significant cost or time lags. Therefore the proposed indicators focus on the most relevant datasets and a small number of measures that can be collected locally with minimal resource implications.

5.13 Measure 1 – Market Data – a review of core market indicators

- Information
  - Achieved rents;
  - Number of vacant units
  - Number of lettings
- Source
  - Estates Gazette, CoStar Focus, local agents
- Monitoring period
  - Annual

5.14 Measure 2 – Footfall – a series of footfall counts at key town centre points. Counts across the town centre will allow comparison and estimates of footfall ‘flow’.

- Locations
  - Bridge Street – outside Prego
  - Weavers Court – outside Co-op store
  - Post Office ‘forecourt’
  - The Centre-High Street junction
  - Market Hill – outside Relics
- Source
  - Town Team staff
- Monitoring period
• Bi-annual
• Counts on 2 days, 1 weekend one midweek

5.15 Measure 3 – Retailer Sentiment – a short fixed question survey seeking retailer views on town centre and retail environment. Enable tracking over time of positive/negative sentiment.

• Source
  • Town Team staff coordinate
• Monitoring period
  • Quarterly

5.16 Measure 4 – Shopper Sentiment – a short fixed question survey seeking shopper views on town centre offer and environment, it should also track shopper habits including other locations they shop and for what goods. Enable tracking over time of positive/negative sentiment.

• Source
  • Town Team staff coordinate
• Monitoring period
  • Annual

5.17 Measure 5 – Occupier Mix – survey of town centre units to record occupier by type. Ability to track changing offer over time, should include market.

• Coverage
  • Activity / product type
  • Independent / chain
• Source
  • Town Team staff coordinate
• Monitoring period
  • Six months