

Hastings Local Strategic Partnership

Recovery Statement of intent - 'Building Back Better'

FORWARD

To be drafted by Chair of LSP and Leader of the Council

Introduction

Following the outbreak of the global pandemic we face an enormous challenge. But we face it together. We have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to use this crisis to our advantage by focussing on what is important to us and making sure we put all our collective effort into our vision of making our town a great place to live, work and thrive.

The Local Strategic Partnership draws together our communities, private sector, academics, voluntary, community and social enterprise sector, public sector and regional networks of expertise. As this umbrella organisation we have developed this statement of intent to set out what we want to build back to as a town. LSP Membership see Appendix 1.

By creating a shared statement of intent for the future of Hastings we can make sure our joint efforts focus us as a town to recover and evolve from the impacts of the pandemic, creating a fairer, healthier, vibrant, sustainable and resilient future for our town. We want to develop and implement approaches that support our diverse communities and puts them at the heart of re-shaping Hastings, to create one we all want, now and for future generations.

As we look towards a brighter future for our town, we need to continue to build on the strengths we have demonstrated over the past months. We need to harness the neighbourliness that has led people to support each other in new ways and support our local businesses to help them grow and thrive. Above all we need to provide as many opportunities as possible for all our people to flourish and live happy, healthy lives with access to work which enables them to live a good life.

We will do this not by returning to all the old ways, but by capitalising on our strengths and tackling its deep-rooted inequalities to create a new economy which includes everyone in our town, builds resilience and tackles the climate and ecological emergencies.

The situation facing us is incredibly serious and it's end cycle unknown. We appreciate that there remains an uncertain and difficult path ahead through an unprecedented situation. Navigating this requires collective vision and commitment.

But this is what Hastings has., Renowned for a 'can do' attitude, we are ready to begin planning for the economic renewal of our town, learning from our experiences of the past and ready to develop new and innovative solutions for the future.

With targeted government and private investment, and a coordinated, integrated approach to partnership working, we can maximise the opportunities for investment in our unique town. In doing this, we must make sure we deliver economic inclusion, challenging the systemic injustices that have historically existed and impacted the communities of our town. We will work to ensure that we have a joined-up approach, ensuring no one is left behind. We'll use our experience and partnerships to work together, to lobby for additional funding and to accelerate our recovery.

We will make the most of all the resources we have in the town and Hastings will 'Build Back Better'. This is our statement of intent.

This document is a statement of intent about getting things done better and together; having clear goals backed by robust plans, but a good statement of intent is no good unless it unites people on a common purpose, a golden thread that pulls people together to face an unprecedented challenge.

This statement of intent is:

- A recognition of the way we as a town want to rebuild after the Covid-19 crisis;
- A means to deepen the new, and existing forms of cooperation across the town that have happened in response to Covid-19, and to ensure no-one misses out on benefitting from our recovery
- A description of how Hastings Local Strategic Partnership will contribute to the wider recovery work and interact with other existing governance structures
- A means to share a statement of intent which all partners' activities, actions and programmes seek to deliver.
- A way to collectively seek to reduce poverty and inequality, increase the towns resilience and environmental sustainability, and enhance the economic and social wellbeing of every community
- A way for us to communicate our priorities locally and to regional, national and international stakeholders and provide a deeper understanding of the Hastings context within the wider regional and national setting

This Statement of intent **is not** our full recovery plan, nor is it an action plan which LSP partners must undertake; nor a strategy document duplicating or replacing other local or regional activities. This statement of intent and the commitment to work

together will help shape and influence the plans and activities being developed by all partners.

Setting the Scene

Hastings is an ambitious town that thrives on making things happen. Our response to the COVID-19 pandemic crisis and the innovation of service delivery via strong partnership working is testament to that; the Local Strategic Partnership wish to address our recovery in much the same way.

Despite all the growth and positives Hastings has, parts of the borough have always been held back, affecting people's life chances and stifling our full economic potential. Inequality is deeply ingrained in our communities and current events provide an opportunity to spark meaningful structural and behavioural change. Doing this well will help enable all people in Hastings to benefit in future successes and to mitigate the worst impacts of the pandemic. We will continue to work with partners to develop longer-term pathways for residents living with poverty, ensuring that they do not fall to the back of the queue for recovery focussed opportunities.

Prior to COVID-19 the packed seasonal events calendar was proof enough of a town with a relentless need to express itself. This year many events quickly migrated to online and still delivered a creative and innovative diary of happenings, though the loss of physical events has been felt keenly.

A steady stream of creative entrepreneurs and business people were drawn to relocate to Hastings, partly due to the seaside location, relatively low rents and house prices and the 'feel' of Hastings as place to set down roots. The lockdown has the potential to build on this, giving the opportunity for London and larger city occupying businesses to rethink their need for office space, a trend that is likely set to continue.

In some respects, the town was at a significant pivotal moment in terms of regeneration, however significant commitment was still needed by a range of partners to enhance and bolster the regeneration investment we've seen over the last 20 years.

We know many families and businesses have been impacted by the pandemic and the lockdown, and some will take a long time to recover, if at all. The full impact on our residents and our economy will not be known for some time and we will need to act quickly to mitigate against the worst affects that could further widen the health, social and economic inequalities within our town, and between our town and other areas. We already knew that our Town had its challenges as well as its strengths. This worldwide pandemic has shone a spotlight on both.

Our focus must be to protect jobs and address the immediate threats to lives and livelihoods, but it must also reset the local economy to address structural inequalities in our town, as well as place a fairer and greener future at the heart of our recovery.

Before the coronavirus pandemic we had a growing economy with Hastings developing a name for itself as a creative and digital hub, with an influx of new and growing businesses locating themselves here, as well as a core mix of high-tech vacuum manufacturing businesses including aerospace, precision optics and high-tech electronics. Many businesses looking for space to base themselves or grow found just that in Hastings. From creative start-ups seeking offices and unusual studio space to specialist manufacturers needing warehouse and engineering facilities.

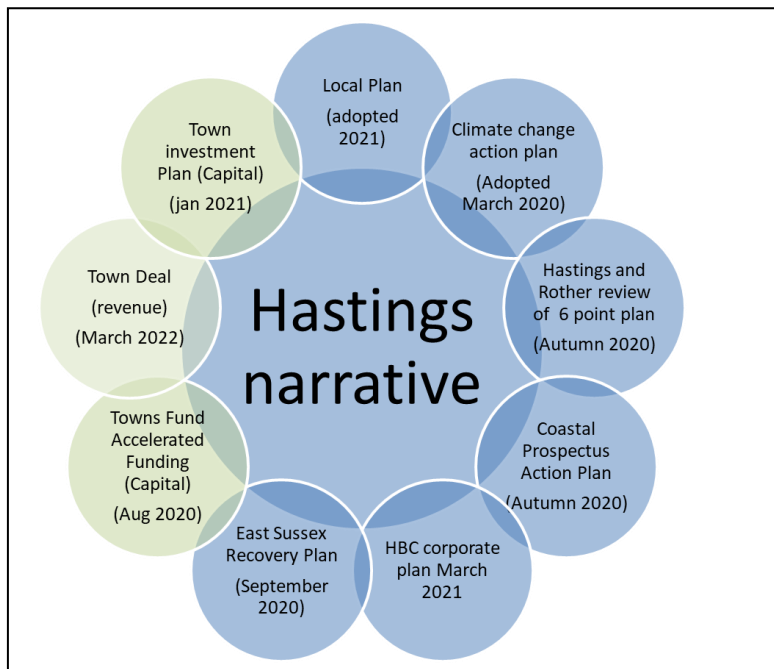
The town is renowned as culturally rich, with its assets such as the Old Town and Castle, for all its year-round events, festivals and music, appealing to residents and visitors alike, as well as its busy tourism industry contributing £266m to the economy and supporting over 6500 jobs in the town. Hastings is a town that appeals to residents, visitors and those seeking something different in equal measures. For many it has a sense of community like no other.

These facts, combined with our natural environment and coastline, amenities and normally-thriving visitor economy, mean that Hastings is well placed to build back better – but only with meaningful investment and joined-up intentions from partners locally, regionally and nationally.

The impact of COVID-19 has increased the pressure on our communities already struggling, potentially being pushed deeper into poverty as the impacts of the pandemic play out in Hastings. COVID-19 has clearly highlighted the impact of existing inequalities in Hastings.

What we build back is likely to be incredibly different to anything we have known before with many more working from home, residents needing new jobs/having to re-train to re-enter the job market, changes in our connectivity (both digitally and public and active transport), and probable changes in our supply chains and business models. We have the opportunity to shape a future economy that not only delivers growth and jobs but delivers outcomes for wider society as well as responding to a changing climate. It will take more than relying on our traditional strengths and previous plans to form the basis of a thriving long-term future.

The Hastings Narrative/ Story (illustrative only)



To include Draft Sussex Health and Care Plan

Figure 1 The Hastings Narrative

COVID-19 has shown us that whatever we do next, our working arrangements and plans need to remain nimble, flexible and to some extent reactive to the challenges that will arise in the coming months and years. The above diagram illustrates some of the strategic and policy documents that are emerging that will underpin our recovery.

As a strategic partnership we plan to take the following steps to support and ensure the towns recovery in the future.

Our immediate next steps are to:

1. Put health, sustainability, equality, inclusion and resilience at its heart, including mitigating health impacts, both physical and mental
2. Continue to engage meaningfully with our communities and stakeholders to understand the short, medium- and long-term impacts of COVID-19 and the needs of our communities
3. Work with local organisations, supporting short term interventions and initiatives to support the towns recovery and a thriving local economy
4. Protect and sustain jobs through the partnership and new funding opportunities through the development of the towns strategic policies and Town Deal

5. Work together to deliver the ambition of the Climate Emergency Declaration for Hastings.

We know that we don't have all the answers and there is still much that will continue to be unknown and out of control. There will unfortunately still be more of the loss that we have already experienced from COVID-19 and we must recognise this.

What we can do is to work together, flexibly, openly and responsively as a town; as one community for the benefit of all.

It is essential we recognise that that COVID-19 is still present in our community. The impacts to our economy, our health and wider resilience will be felt for some-time, and as such we need to continue to work in partnership to build local resilience, support our community where it continues to be impacted and work together. Scenario planning for a second wave or localised outbreak of COVID-19, and the implications this would have for the town needs to be central to these plans.

What is our ask of town partners?

1. To listen as widely as possible the views of communities and businesses by using your own networks to help raise awareness of this work
2. To work with the Hastings Local Strategic Partnership to provide constructive ideas, suggestions and solutions
3. To provide robust data and evidence that you have for your area that could contribute to an understanding of the issues we are facing
4. To look at how you can support your community through the recovery 5. Champion this statement of intent and vision

What will the LSP do?

1. Be open and transparent
2. Recognise and be realistic about our collective strengths, weaknesses and capacity
3. Drive the vision in this statement of intent, championing it at all levels
4. Build on lessons learned from the initial onset of COVID-19
5. Remain nimble, responsive and flexible to new challenges and opportunities as well as the ongoing COVID-19 recovery
6. Be a voice for the town using the statement of intent to draw our community together in collaboration for the benefit of all

Appendix 1 - Membership of the Hastings and St Leonards Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

The Hastings and St Leonards Local Strategic Partnership is a well-established, respected, long running structure operating in the town, recognising that decisions made by one organisation impacts on the whole town and all other partners

The LSP Board brings together leaders from the boroughs public, private, community and voluntary sector organisations and is supported by the Council. It has been meeting for almost 20 years and has worked tirelessly to ensure a joined approach is developed and taken to address common issues in the town, raise awareness of one another's activities and work together for the positive good of all those who live, work and visit the town.

Membership of LSP

- Hastings Borough Council
- East Sussex County Council
- Sussex Police
- East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service
- DWP
- Optivo
- Sea Change Sussex
- Let's Do Business
- East Sussex College
- Public Health
- Education (schools, college and EFT)
- Community and Voluntary Sector representatives
- CCG

Appendix 2 - What we already know about Hastings – the statistics (July 2020)

For a detailed statistics about the town please visit East Sussex In Figures
<http://eastsussexinfigures.org.uk/webview/welcome.html>

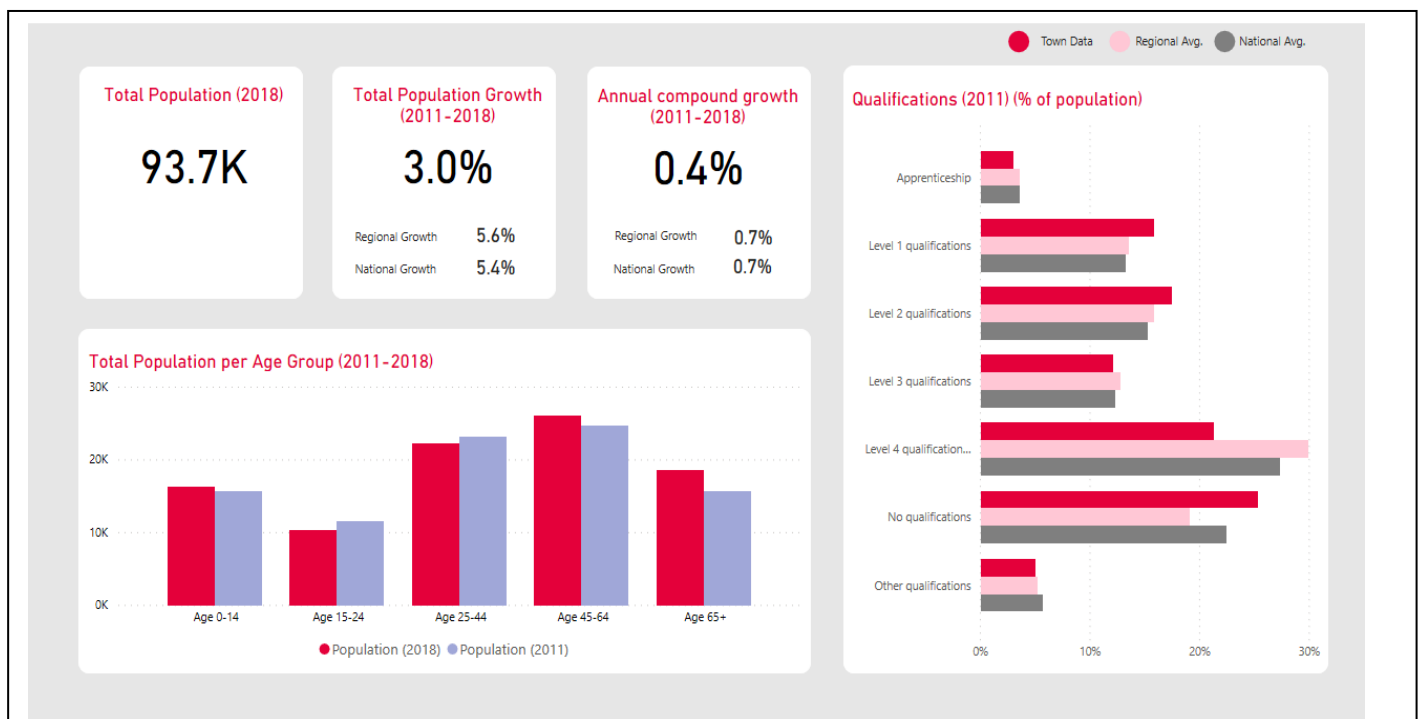
What we already know about Hastings

Hastings has significantly higher income and employment deprivation than East Sussex, including the percentage of older people affected by income deprivation and children in low income families, rates of working age people claiming ESA, JSA and UC, households with dependent children and no adults in employment (Census 2011) and households in fuel poverty, and, in all cases, the highest rates of all East Sussex districts/boroughs.

Of the 53 neighbourhoods in the town, 2 are ranked in the top 1% nationally as experiencing the greatest levels of deprivation, with a further 14 in the highest 10%, the town's previous success has not reached everyone and has left some communities behind for many years

Over 5800 (27 %) of all Hastings children live in low-income families and are living in poverty (before housing costs are considered)

Population



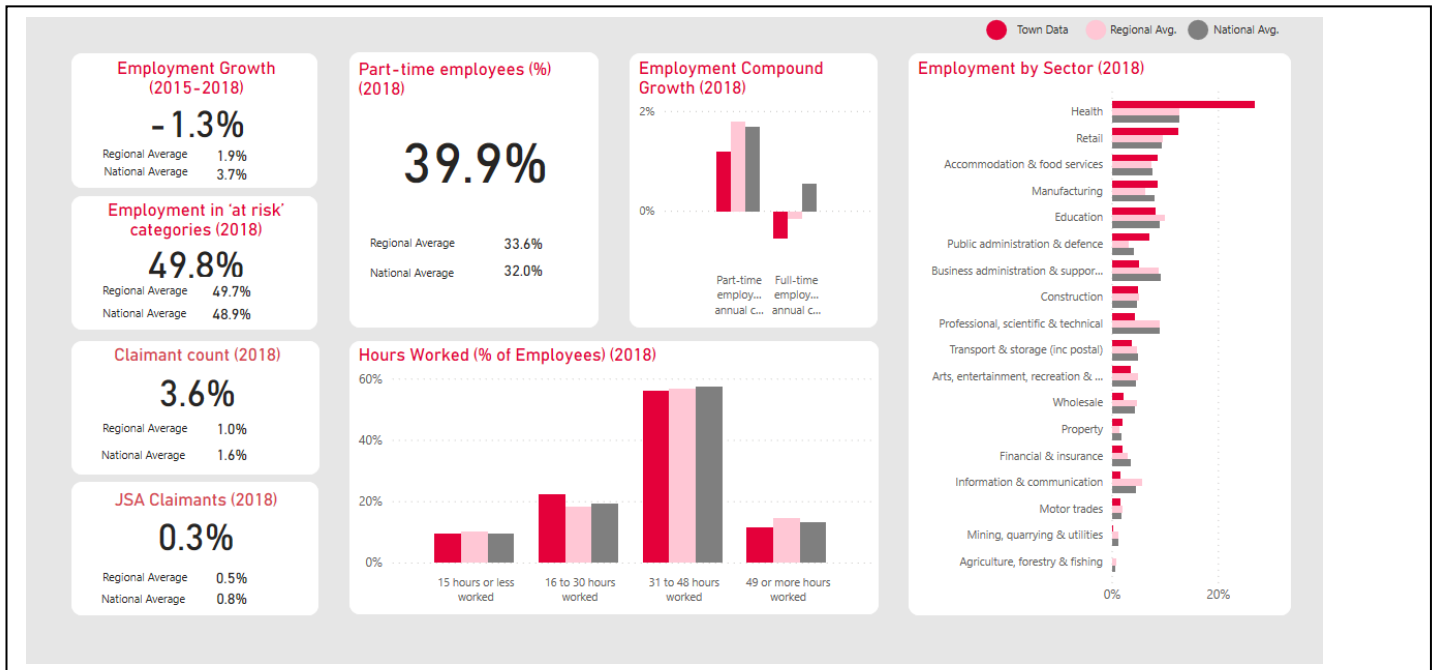
Housing



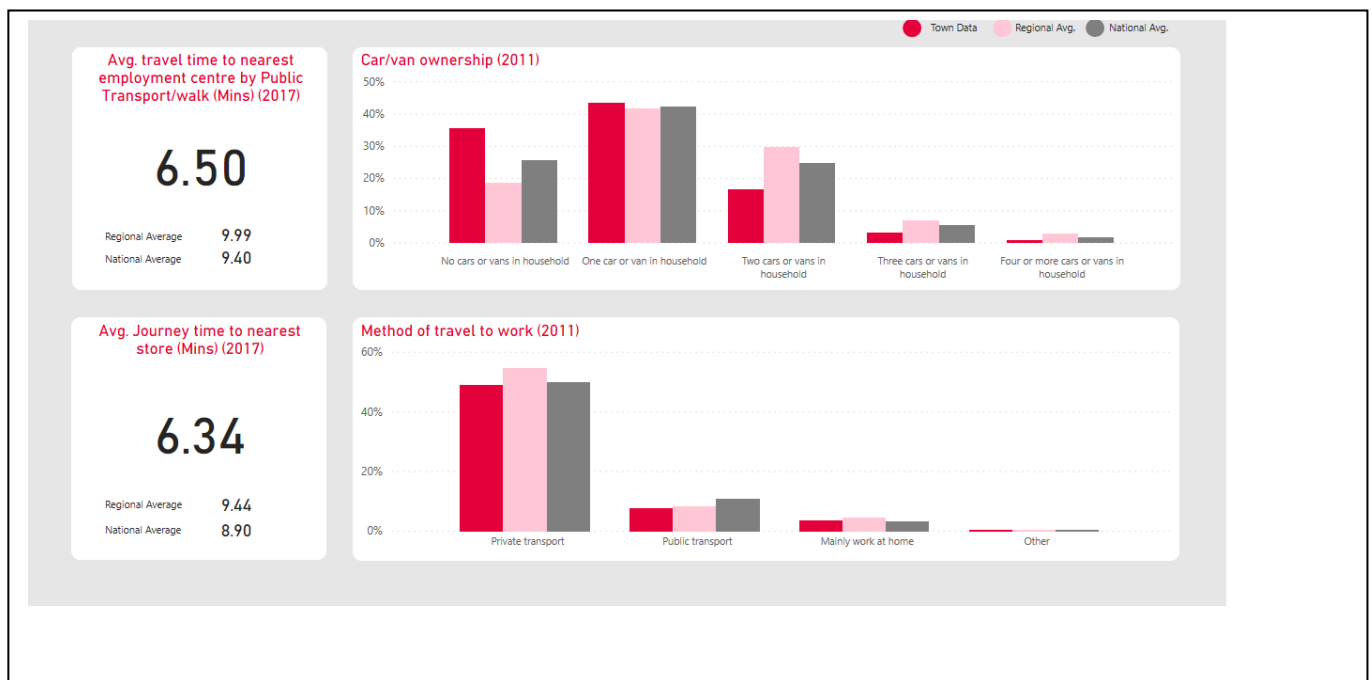
Income



Employment



Travel



The impact of COVID-19 in Hastings so far:

We are seeing claimants almost double to 4,900 on the previous year, resulting in 8.6% of working age population now claiming benefits in Hastings. This is second

highest claimant rate across the South East Local Enterprise partnership (SELEP) area and South East region after Thanet and far above our neighbouring district who are recording a level of 5.7% and nationally at 6.4%

In July 2020 1 in 7 young people are claiming Universal credit, 1 in 6 young men are claiming – at county level it is 1 in 9.

This will only rise as the furlough scheme changes and finishes. At the 30th June a total of 16,000 Hastings residents were either being supported by the -job retention scheme (furlough) or the Self -employment income support scheme – a total of 28% of the working aged people in Hastings.

Hastings has the second highest claimant rate across the whole of the south east local enterprise partnership. Across East Sussex 29 ward have rates at or above the England average, with 3 wards showing the highest levels in the county: Central St Leonards – 14.2%, Gensing – 11.8%, Castle – 11%

The Institute for Social and Economic Research (ISER) at the University of Essex study predicts that the lockdown could cost the UK 6.5 million jobs, with many people facing unemployment, lower pay, less hours – very tough times indeed. The Office for Budget Responsibility predict that by the end of this year 12%, nearly one in eight, of the workforce will be unemployed, this would have huge implications for Hastings.