

# O.W.E.N.S

What's in store? A ground breaking new leisure concept!

Founded by a multi-award-winning leisure team, Owens Entertainment are bringing an exciting and ground-breaking new leisure concept to Hastings. Working alongside Moxie Management Two Limited in redeveloping and repurposing the iconic ex-Debenhams building, this project will bring new purpose and life into this renowned local site.

Owens will deliver a centre-of-fun housing over 20 different attractions, all under one roof. Activities will include a themed restaurant, children's soft play area, 2 bowling attractions, 3 crazy-golf courses, table tennis, pool tables, air hockey, 2 football simulators, a retro amusement arcade, two different virtual reality experiences, a dinosaur attraction, a space-themed mirror attraction plus a museum of the bizarre and wonderful and two immersive theatre experiences (the 1066 experience – a fun, historical nod to what life was like and a Pirate experience – capitalising on Hastings seafaring history).

Created and run by the team behind the award winning, Brighton based 'Phileas Fogg's World of Adventures', Owens creative and imaginative leisure concept will add new activities to Hastings existing mix of attractions. Targeted to meeting the needs of the local community, Owens will also attract both new and returning visitors working with other local businesses and leisure concepts to contribute to Hastings tourism market.

The Towns Fund Investment will enable Owens to elevate their proposition by providing funding to enhance the visitor experience. It has enabled the opening of 20 attractions as opposed to 15, and the creation of an additional 35 local career opportunities to add to the 65 planned, totalling 100 new jobs created. An 80,000sq ft centre of fun will be created with support from the Towns Fund, ensuring that the buildings central position in the Trinity Triangle area will continue to contribute to the high street offering and act as a relevant link from the Pier/Beach/High Street and Old Town.

Owens goal is to create an amazing leisure experience within the community, for the community.



## Green Construction, Energy and Vehicle Training Centre

The GCEVTC will offer a unique opportunity for residents in the immediate area around the development, as well as wider Hastings and the South East region, to acquire new, high value skills and qualifications. The Centre will focus on a high skilled offer around green and sustainable technologies such as the installation and repair of green insulation, electric vehicle repair and maintenance, solar panels, boilers, and heat pumps.

Training and qualifications in low carbon retrofitting of existing housing units will support the environmental objectives of Hastings Council. Improving the quality and energy efficiency of the housing stock is vitally important to help the town meet its net zero commitments, and the skills offered at the GCEVTC will give locals the tools to support this initiative. In 2019, Hastings set itself the target of being carbon neutral by 2030. The most recently available data (2017) showed that 49.5% of the town's carbon emissions are produced by its domestic housing stock, making it the largest single contributor. The UK average for domestic properties is significantly lower at 27.9%<sup>1</sup>, showing the need for interventions in this area.

The demand for clean energy is increasing at pace as the Government aims for net zero carbon emissions by 2050. The use of fossil fuels for energy production is going to have to reduce significantly to meet this target. A growing area of demand will be for the installation of residential and commercial solar panel technology, to enable properties to generate a significant proportion of their electricity by renewable means.

The GCEVTC at Ore Valley Campus supports the Hastings TIP vision clearly by providing the opportunity for residents to acquire skills in new, green technologies, strengthening and future-proofing the local labour market and providing a key enabling function in the economy's drive to Net Zero carbon. A further 150+ Full-Time and Apprentice 16-18 year old students will directly benefit from improved facilities and future proofing of the educational content delivered at the College.

The GCEVTC project is a development focused around the provision of modern skills infrastructure at the East Sussex College Group's (ESCG) existing Ore Valley Campus. The refurbishment of the Ore Valley campus will create a Green Centre of Excellence which will provide the following key outputs:

- **New training & skills opportunities for students.** This includes those aged 16 to 19, adults, higher education. By 2025/26 it is anticipated there will be an additional 150 learners per annum attending courses at the Centre.
- **650m2 of new and/or existing refurbished facilities**, including business to rent spaces (SME's)
- **Fostering stronger employer/college collaboration**
- **Engaging entrepreneurs**

The following list presents the other outputs resulting from the project:

- **Installation, design and repair of domestic retrofits of low-carbon**, sustainable and self-powered (green insulation, solar, draught-proofing, LED lighting, boilers, rainwater harvesting, grey water harvesting, smart glass, residential ground source heat pumps)
- **Installation, design and repair of large scale commercial solar** installation and LED lighting conversions and the cost/benefit process (including estimating capital costs and payback)
- **Servicing and repair of electric and hybrid vehicles**
- **Installation of Smart meters and smart appliances** and undertaking thermal/energy surveys for home owners/landlords
- **200 sqm of space on the campus for green businesses to rent**
- **The development of a social enterprise**, with partners including local authorities and existing CiCs involved in retrofitting, to provide retrofitting services to private and public landlords and individual homeowners along the south coast – potentially in partnership with other partners in Kent and Essex within the SELEP.
- **Enable 2000m2 of urban regeneration** on Ponswood and Castleham Industrial Estates with the relocation of the college's Automotive Training Centre (AITC) and Construction Industries Training Centre (CITC) to Ore Valley.

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<sup>1</sup> UK local and regional CO2 emissions (2019) BEIS

## Town Living

The Town Living project is focused on improving our town's housing stock and creating more diversity within the town centre demographics by repurposing and regenerating poor quality housing and redundant commercial space.

There are growing numbers of households in Hastings who cannot access affordable accommodation in the social or private rented sectors. There are over 1,500 households waiting for a social rented home and approximately 200 properties available each year. The private rented sector, which is disproportionately high in the town centre, has seen significant rental increases and is now unaffordable for many residents.

The town centre also has an ageing housing stock with many properties built pre-1919. This has contributed to a higher proportion of homes in the town centre being poorly insulated, suffering from excess cold and failing to meet the Decent Homes standard and the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES). These factors are contributing to a higher prevalence of fuel poverty and poor health outcomes.

The Town Living project is aiming to deliver 12 new homes for Affordable Rent which are highly sustainable and energy efficient. Not only will the project provide much needed quality affordable housing, but it will support a reduction in carbon emissions and fuel poverty and improve the perception of the town centre by regenerating properties. The overall cost of the programme is £3.7 million with £1.5m being funded through the Towns Fund Programme.

The project will be delivered over phases. The first phase, which is now underway, will see the renovation and refurbishment of a 5 storey, Grade II listed property in Wellington Square. This phase will act as a pilot which will:

- Enable us to share best practice with local landlords and homeowners on renovating and retrofitting older and historic properties
- Create new construction related employment
- Provide hands on training opportunities linked to whole house retrofitting
- Help meet local housing need
- Produce much needed energy savings
- Support the improvement of health and wellbeing outcomes for our residents

The council is seeking to purchase additional properties in the town centre to deliver Phase 2.

## Hastings Town Centre Public Realm and Green Connections

The Hastings Town Deal identifies the need for Hastings town centre to focus on the future, using its strengths to engage new investors, entrepreneurs and visitors.

To support this, the **Hastings Public Realm and Green Connections scheme** focusses on the Havelock Road and Harold Place corridor in the town centre which runs from the rail station - a key gateway into the town - through the heart of the town centre and across the A259, which runs parallel to the seafront promenade, to the beach beyond. The development and delivery of the scheme is being led by East Sussex County Council, Hastings Borough Council and the Hastings Garden Town Deal team, who will provide internationally renowned expertise in horticulture and ecology and local expertise in landscape and green infrastructure planning, design and management, health and well-being and community engagement as the project progresses from concept design through to construction.

The current key elements of the overall concept design for the Public Realm and Green Connections scheme include:

- Connecting Hastings station arrival space to the seafront to support ease of movement through the establishment of a dedicated cycle route and greenway. This can be achieved through the removal of vehicular carriageway along Havelock Road / Harold Place and reallocating this space for pedestrian and cycle infrastructure;
- Defining a central public space 'Albert Circus' - named as such to reflect the Albert Memorial which previously stood at this location - at the current confluence of Havelock Road and Harold Place with the pedestrianised sections of Robertson Street and Queens Road. This will be wrapped with meadow planting, that provides a focal point which is adaptable in accommodating a range of events, activities and festivals across the year;
- Introducing a new canopy structure and piece of public art that provides a distinctive centre of gravity at the heart of the town and reflects Hastings' creative community;
- Creating new and enhancing existing dwell spaces;
- Introducing a gradient of ecologies that brings together urban, fluvial and coastal landscapes that reinterpret the site's historic environmental conditions;
- Improving the multi-functionality of the public realm to enable it to be used for different purposes;
- Increasing tree planting to contribute to the attractiveness of the space; and
- Integrate the improvements of junctions across the A259 and Cornwallis Terrace to encourage safer and permeable movement.

£2.93m of Town Deal investment, augmented by £0.497m of Local Growth Funding secured by East Sussex County Council through the South East Local Enterprise Partnership, will deliver the first phase of the scheme which focuses on all the improvements to Havelock Road, south from its junction with Station Approach, Cornwallis Gardens, and Devonshire Road, to the 'Albert Circus' area. The elements of the first phase would include:

- enhanced pedestrian footways;
- segregated two-way cycle lane which is compliant with the Government's Local Transport Note 1/20 on cycle design;
- one-way bus lane with new bus stops alongside the potential re-routing of a one-way bus route along Queens Road; and
- Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS) planting.

Completing this first phase would deliver **£4,146,960 (NPV) of economic benefit**. In addition, it will:

- help to unlock future phases of public realm improvements, subject to further funding being secured, focussed on the Albert Circus area and Harold Place moving south towards the coastal A259 route and the seafront;
- enhance connectivity between the rail station, town centre and seafront through the inclusive and accessible walking and cycling routes;
- enhance the tourism, retail and creative offer of the town, driving town vibrancy, consumer confidence, inward investment and economic renewal;
- address issues of crimes and antisocial behaviour in the town centre; and
- improve climate change resilience through increased biodiversity, greening of the public space and flood mitigation.