

Future of the High Street Fund: Vision for Leamington Town Centre

Leamington Spa has a distinct identity which we are seeking to build on to provide the town centre with a secure and vibrant future. This identity is rooted in our **creative and entrepreneurial** past; our heritage in **health, wellbeing and leisure**; and our **historic and green environment**. These themes provide the basis for our town centre vision, underpinned by six “Big Ideas”:

- A thriving town centre
- A connected town centre
- Places to meet
- Revealing Leamington’s waterways
- A Hub for Creativity
- Enhancing Old Town

These form the basis of the Leamington Town Centre Vision and Strategy (LTCVS - see appendix 1). Developed through collaboration, this seeks to mobilise local energy and creativity, recognising that change should address local needs through shared ambitions and a community-led approach to change.

Our Businesses: creative and entrepreneurial

The innovation, energy and passion within the town centre underpins our ambition to put creativity at the heart of our vision. This relates not only to the people and businesses we wish to support, but also to how we deliver projects. Our vision builds on our entrepreneurial past. New trends and emerging opportunities require structural and environmental change to support businesses and inspire initiatives for creative industries and investment in leisure.

The LTCVS provides a strong foundation for this by supporting “**A Thriving Town Centre**” and “**A Hub for Creativity**”. The Council and its partners aim to deliver a resilient and adaptable town centre, investing in key sites along the north-south axis to regenerate run down and disconnected areas, endorsing the kind of uses we want to thrive in the future – particularly creative industries and leisure and wellbeing attractions.

Demonstrating our commitment to think big and be bold, we have established a delivery partner to bring forward proposals for a Creative Quarter. The Creative Quarter Big Picture supplements our town centre vision with tangible proposals. Our vision aims to develop imaginative, attractive buildings and spaces, enriching the character of the town for future generations.

Our People: Health, Wellbeing and Happiness

Our riverside, gardens and historical spas inform our ambition to place health and wellbeing at the heart of our vision. Our proposals seek to reimagine this aspect the town’s heritage providing a hub for social interaction, healthy lifestyles and leisure. Historically people travelled to Leamington to get well. In response to the social, physical, mental health, fitness and isolation challenges facing our

community today, we will embed an ethos of health, wellbeing and caring into everything we do. This involves consolidating the town centre’s rich retail, food and drink offerings, whilst also encouraging new social, leisure and recreation facilities, coupled with a mix of housing and employment.

Key to this is enhancing connectivity – physical, digital and social. **“A Connected Town Centre”** is about how people move through the town, but is equally about providing **“Places to Meet”** and interact, both key elements of the TCVS.

By supporting employment, providing affordable homes and welcoming visitors, the value of the town centre as a place to meet and enjoy cultural activities will be enhanced. Our vision will;

- improve digital connectivity, investing in digital networks and apps;
- enhance the rich range of events hosted in the town centre;
- provide meeting points for social interaction;
- improve public realm and physical connectivity;
- improve the environment, including tackling air pollution.
- encourage healthy, active lifestyles and improve medical services in the town

Our Place: Historic and Green Environment

Leamington has a distinctive architectural heritage which is enhanced by a range of parks and gardens. Whilst this provides an enviable basis for a thriving future, it masks some significant structural issues around connectivity, poor air quality and pockets of environmental degradation (particularly around Old Town). These issues inhibit the potential of the Town Centre to thrive as a place to do business and for residents and visitors to enjoy. Our vision seeks to:

- improve connectivity to deliver a better **“Connected Town Centre”**,
- **“Reveal the Town’s Waterways**
- **“Enhance Old Town”**, a focus for many environmental problems.
- reimagine the way people move so they can find places they want to visit, whilst pausing to enjoy the spaces between

This requires public realm investments and a visionary transport strategy, supporting modal shift and providing connections with surrounding areas.

We have a strong vision and commitment to deliver our ambitions. Map 5 below shows some opportunities associated with our vision. We now require the support and expertise of Future High Street Fund to refine and deliver proposals to make our vision a reality.

Map

