



We are  
**Eastbourne**  
Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board

# Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board

# Pride in Place Regeneration Plan

November 2025

**PRIDE IN PLACE**  
LED BY YOU – BACKED BY UK GOVERNMENT

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## Chair's Introduction

This is an incredibly powerful moment for us to come together. To lift our town, our neighbours, and ourselves. When a community chooses connection over isolation and hope over hesitation, extraordinary things become possible. Eastbourne is on the edge of something extraordinary. From the beginning, our vision for the Eastbourne Pride in Place Programme (PiPP) has been about people – every single one of us who calls this town home. It is a vision built not just on numbers or targets, but on humanity: the feeling of being known, of belonging, of being rooted in a place that sees you and supports you. It is about the spark that happens when we connect with each other, with our coastline, our natural spaces, our creativity, and the opportunities that help us flourish.

Real regeneration does not start with buildings or infrastructure. It starts with trust. It starts with people believing that their voice matters and that their town believes in them. It begins the moment someone decides to show up – to listen, to contribute, to imagine a better future. That purpose runs through the Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board, established earlier this year with Eastbourne receiving a once-in-a-generation funding opportunity of £20 million over ten years – not just to fund projects – but to rewrite the story of how change happens. Not as something delivered from above, but as something crafted by the people who live here, who care, who dream, and who dare to shape the future.

We are imagining an Eastbourne that becomes a model of renewal and wellbeing, and when we come together with purpose, a resilient, confident, connected and fair Eastbourne is not just possible – it is already beginning to emerge. But vision alone isn't enough. We must provide homes people can afford, skills that open doors, infrastructure that supports growth, and pathways to opportunity that are open to all. That is why we commissioned a new Economic

Strategy – one rooted in sustainable, inclusive, long-term prosperity. We owe it to the people who live here now, and to those who will call Eastbourne home in the years to come.

The ideas that surfaced from our community workshops and stakeholder consultations have been inspiring: food-growing initiatives that nourish us and our community, a beach school that connects young people to our coastline, campaigns for safer and cleaner streets, anti-racism action that strengthens unity, and accessible parks and trails that invite everyone in. The call for a residents' forum or assembly is powerful and proof that the people of Eastbourne are ready to have a voice, to lead, and to shape a collective future.

Through our business survey, the Citizens' Questionnaire, the "We Are Eastbourne" website, and our podcast, we have found new ways to bring people into the conversation. Along the way, we have met the everyday heroes of this town. The foodbank organisers, artists, disability advocates, business leaders, teachers, nature champions, councillors and volunteers who quietly and consistently make life better for others. We look forward to collaborating with our neighbours in Hastings and Bexhill to build pride and connection along our shared coastline.

I want to thank every person who has spoken with us, attended a workshop, shared a thought, sent a message, or offered support. Your contributions are shaping Eastbourne's next chapter. I want to thank Eastbourne Borough Council for their partnership, and our MP for trusting us to listen to our residents and act on what we hear. And finally, to the Board members – thank you. The time, energy, and heart you have poured into this work has been extraordinary. You have shown what becomes possible when passion meets purpose.

**Richard Garland, Independent Chair, ENB**

## MP's Message of Support

As an Eastbourne boy, born and bred, I'm so proud of our town's trailblazing traditions.

We're a town founded upon the innovative spirit of the 7th Duke of Devonshire, who had an ambition to build a new town - 'Eastbourne' - to be the most extraordinary seaside resort in the country.

With grand Victorian architecture, vast Downland landscapes, sweeping beaches, a powerhouse tourist economy and a reputation as the sun trap of the South, he succeeded.

Today, Eastbourne still shines bright with an arts and culture scene of national prominence, an emerging technology sector, solid connectivity to our capital city, a tight-knit village-like community, a destination that is attracting young families and retiring folks alike, and a determination to maintain the same glory that powered the Duke.

But the Eastbourne sun casts some long shadows, too, which our community is committing to banishing. That includes tackling poverty across our town and consigning what was once the busiest Foodbank in Britain and widening inequality, to the history books. That includes powering up our high streets and making empty units and the anti-social behaviour they bring a thing of the past. That includes protecting our environment, ensuring that we save our land, sea and air from irreversible damage. And that includes bringing our diverse town together to build its own future in an age where so many have felt disempowered.

This Regeneration Plan captures some of these challenges and opportunities - and explores many more - to use as a foundation for helping to take Eastbourne to the next level.

I welcome the Neighbourhood Board's commitment to working with residents, businesses, charities, community groups and more to regenerate our town alongside Eastbournians and look forward to it getting even further into the nooks and crannies of our community to engage with our needs, interests, priorities and aspirations.

I'm particularly excited about the use of Citizen's Forums and participatory budgeting techniques to give residents a direct say over how this funding, that I fought hard to secure from Government, is allocated on the ground.

While the Pride in Place programme alone cannot meet every challenge or audacious ambition our town has, this Plan is an important step toward securing long-term investment and giving residents a clearer voice in shaping local priorities.

I therefore support the Plan's submission and look forward to working constructively with partners to ensure the programme benefits people across our town.

**Josh Babarinde OBE**  
**Member of Parliament for Eastbourne**

## Leader of the Council's Message of Support

On behalf of Eastbourne Borough Council, I would like to extend my thanks to the residents, businesses, and visitors who have contributed their views to the first Regeneration Plan for the We Are Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board.

Whether through the Seafront Strategy consultations, ward workshops, online and paper surveys, or by attending meetings, your input has shaped a plan that truly reflects the aspirations of our town. You have shaped a vision for the town we know Eastbourne can become.

This Regeneration Plan represents many hours of thoughtful engagement and clearly sets out a shared vision for how we can make the most of this significant Government investment.

My sincere thanks also go to the Board members for their dedication, generosity, and unwavering commitment to Eastbourne. Whilst I value the independence of the Board from the Council, the willingness of the Board Members to freely give their time and work side by side for the good of our town is something that I am both incredibly grateful for and inspired by.

I am particularly pleased that the Board has already demonstrated its commitment to ensuring the funding benefits the whole town. By allocating £10,000 to each neighbourhood ward, the Board is putting power directly into the hands of the people who know their communities best.

This approach also celebrates the extraordinary work already being done by local groups, volunteers, and residents – people who every day demonstrate what it means to get involved for the greater good of our town.

A central part of this Regeneration Plan is a firm commitment to ensuring that community voices continue to be heard. As a Council, we will play an active role to support the Board in delivering this ambition.

Eastbourne has a long tradition of collaboration and civic pride, and this plan reflects that shared commitment to our town's future.

Together – We Are Eastbourne.

**Councillor Stephen Holt**  
**Leader of the Council**



# Section 1

## Local Context

This section of the PIPP Regeneration Plan briefly summarises the local Eastbourne identity, the facilities it offers, its local community, and its economy.

## Identity

Eastbourne has around 104,000 residents and situated on the East Sussex coast at the eastern end of the South Downs National Park<sup>1</sup>. It is primarily a seaside resort with approximately 7km of outstanding coastline and natural shelter provided by Beachy Head. Within its built environment, Eastbourne has a wide range of parks and gardens and significant areas of historic interest, including 250 listed buildings, with almost 10 per cent of the built-up area protected with Conservation Area status. For an urban borough, it has a significant natural environment, a high proportion of which is downland. This natural environment, with its panoramic views, areas of outstanding natural beauty and sites of special scientific interest, has 485 hectares of open access land and is highly valued by our residents and visitors.

Figure 1.1 Aerial View of Eastbourne & its Seafront<sup>2</sup>



## Facilities

Eastbourne has a range of sports and leisure facilities including: an international, high quality tennis centre developed in partnership with the Lawn Tennis Association; several community and borough sporting facilities; three major theatres and a recently built conference centre; the Towner, an award-winning art gallery which recently hosted the Turner prize; and various smaller venues acting as centres of local memory and heritage. It has an outstanding seafront destination offering miles of unspoilt coast, with a preserved Victorian promenade, extending to a modern, high-quality marina and berthing facility at Sovereign Harbour. The seafront also has important heritage assets including a listed bandstand and pier and Wish Tower, and the Redoubt scheduled monuments. The Borough has a diverse range of restaurants, retail and hospitality accommodation adding to the visitor and community offer.

<sup>1</sup> Source: ONS Census 2021 & Population Estimates

<sup>2</sup> Photograph reproduced with permission from EBC 2023/24 Statement of Accounts

## Local community

It has a relatively elderly population, with the median age being 45 years in 2022 (about 5 years above the English average) and 24.4% of its residents are aged 65 and over (England average 18.6%). Across the Lower Layer Super Output Areas that make up Eastbourne (either wholly or in part), 90.71% of people identified with a White ethnic group, 3.55% as Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh, 1.31% as Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African, 2.74% with Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups, and 1.69% with other ethnic groups<sup>3</sup>.

Eastbourne's demographic profile presents both opportunities and structural challenges. The significantly older age structure than regional and national averages reflects its popularity as a retirement destination. This ageing population contributes positively to community life and civic participation but also places additional demands on health, housing, and social care services. At the same time, the working-age population is in gradual decline, reducing the local labour supply and constraining business growth. Younger residents often leave in search of higher-skilled, higher-wage opportunities elsewhere, while many of those who remain find employment in seasonal, lower-paid sectors, particularly in hospitality, retail, and tourism. These trends combine to suppress productivity and reinforce economic vulnerability - making skills development, career progression, and business diversification central to the town's investment priorities.

## Economy

Eastbourne's economy is worth just over £2.1 billion, but real term economic growth over the past decade has averaged just 0.8% - half the growth rate in England. The Borough's economy is over-reliant on lower value service sectors, including Accommodation & Food Service, Health & Social Work and Retail. These provide significant local employment, but they do not add the same level of economic value to the

Borough's economy. Low value sectors generally provide low-paying jobs and, in Eastbourne's case, over a third of these are part-time. At £30.90 per hour, 2023 GVA per hour worked is well below that in England (£40.20).

There is evidence of the emergence of higher value activity in the IT & Communications, Professional, Scientific & Technical and construction sectors which between them make up 30% of businesses in the town. Health & Social Work continues to provide the most jobs and the greatest value to Eastbourne's economy. Opportunities for significant inward investment are likely to be limited, not least due to development constraints. However, Eastbourne has a thriving freelance and small business economy with high start-up and business survival rates. These are good ingredients to build on and for Eastbourne to develop a strong reputation for enterprise and entrepreneurship. Despite this, Eastbourne lags well behind peers in rates of high growth businesses, which must be a priority for support.

Eastbourne has significant pockets of deprivation; qualification levels and educational attainment are below national averages; and there are large numbers of carers and people with disabilities or long-term health conditions. At 76%, the employment rate is around the national average, but over 2,400 more people would need to be in work to achieve a national employment rate target of 80%, equivalent to an additional 4% of working-age individuals.

Eastbourne's environmental context constrains development opportunities and, as a coastal location, climate change poses long-term threats to the Borough. Although its railway is centrally located, journey times to and from other commercial centres can be long, whilst the condition of the strategic road network along the Sussex coast continues to inhibit economic growth. Digital connectivity is good, but business and consumer expectations are constantly rising as technology evolves.

<sup>3</sup> Source: ONS Census 2021 Ethnicity tables

An aerial photograph of a coastal town. In the foreground, a river flows through a lush green landscape that includes a golf course. The middle ground is dominated by a dense residential area with many houses and buildings. In the background, the town meets the sea under a clear blue sky with some light clouds.

## Section 2

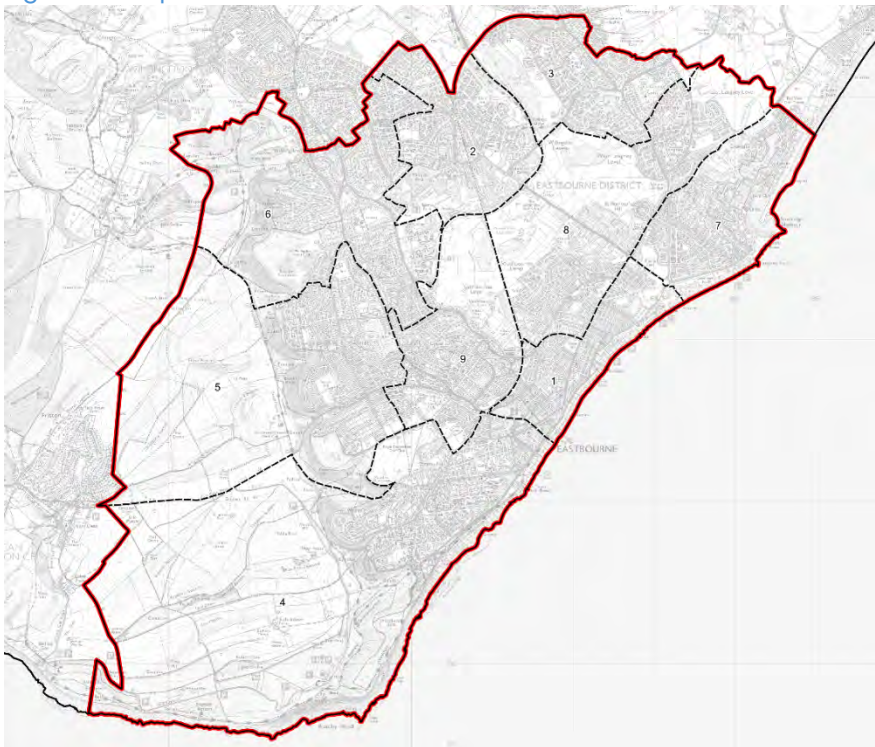
# Spatial Targeting

## 2.1 Eastbourne's geographic boundary

Eastbourne Borough is located equidistant between Brighton & Hove and Hastings and is one of the south coast's principal tourist destinations. It covers an area of just over 17 square miles and has strong economic links with South Wealden, particularly Willingdon, Polegate and Hailsham. Seven Sisters Country Park is located to its west, the English Channel to the south and Pevensey Bay SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) to its east. Eastbourne Park, a mixture of public and private marshland, runs through

the central area of the Borough and is a designated "functional floodplain", a crucial area for storing floodwater to protect surrounding developed areas of Eastbourne, such as Willingdon, Hampden Park, and Langney. Eastbourne's coastal location and its natural environment shapes its economy, constraining physical development opportunities, but making it one of the south coast's most desirable places to live and visit.

Figure 2.1: Map of Eastbourne and its nine Wards



Wards:

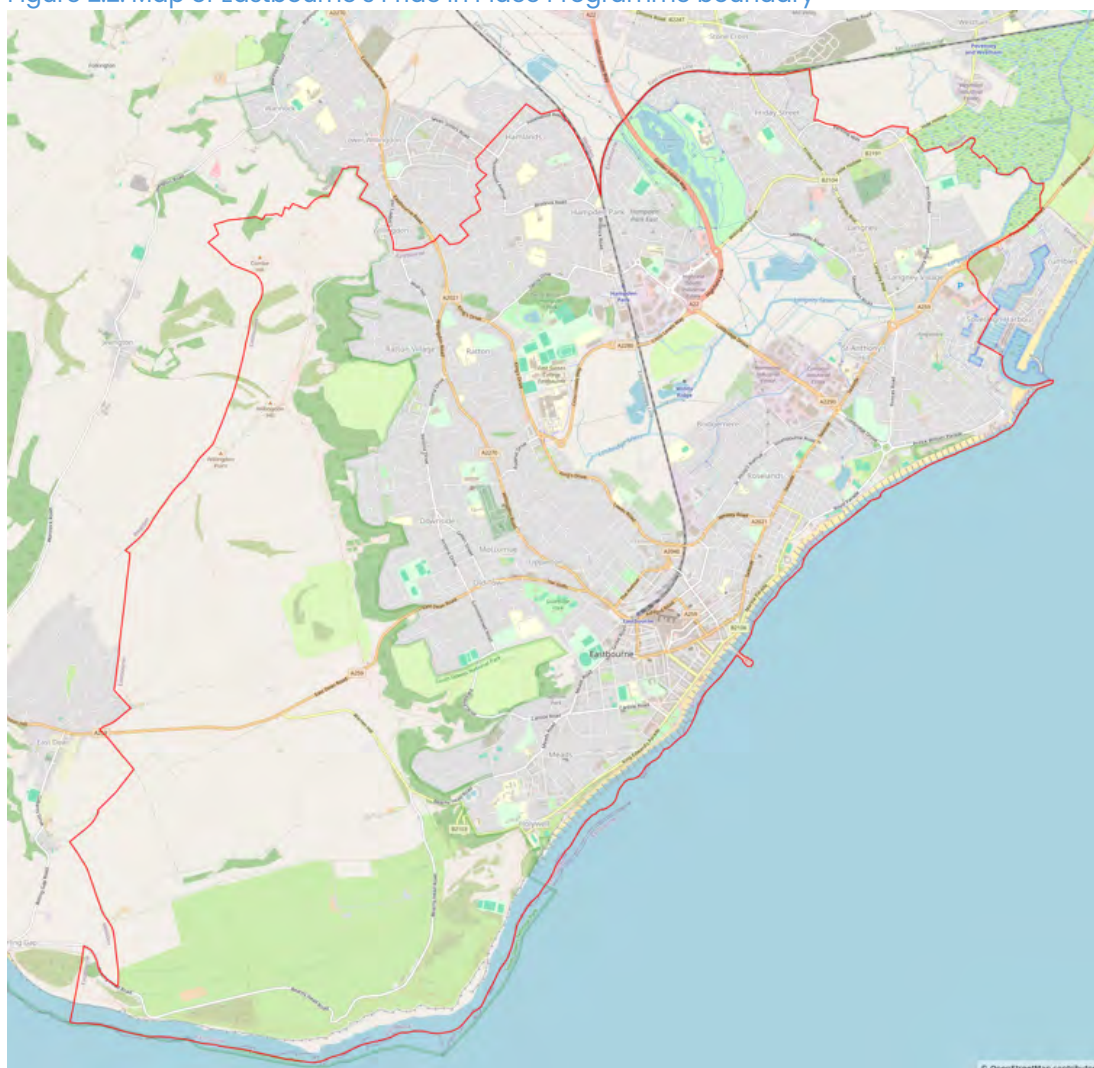
1. Devonshire
2. Hampden Park
3. Langney
4. Meads
5. Old Town
6. Ratton
7. Sovereign
8. St Anthony's
9. Upperton

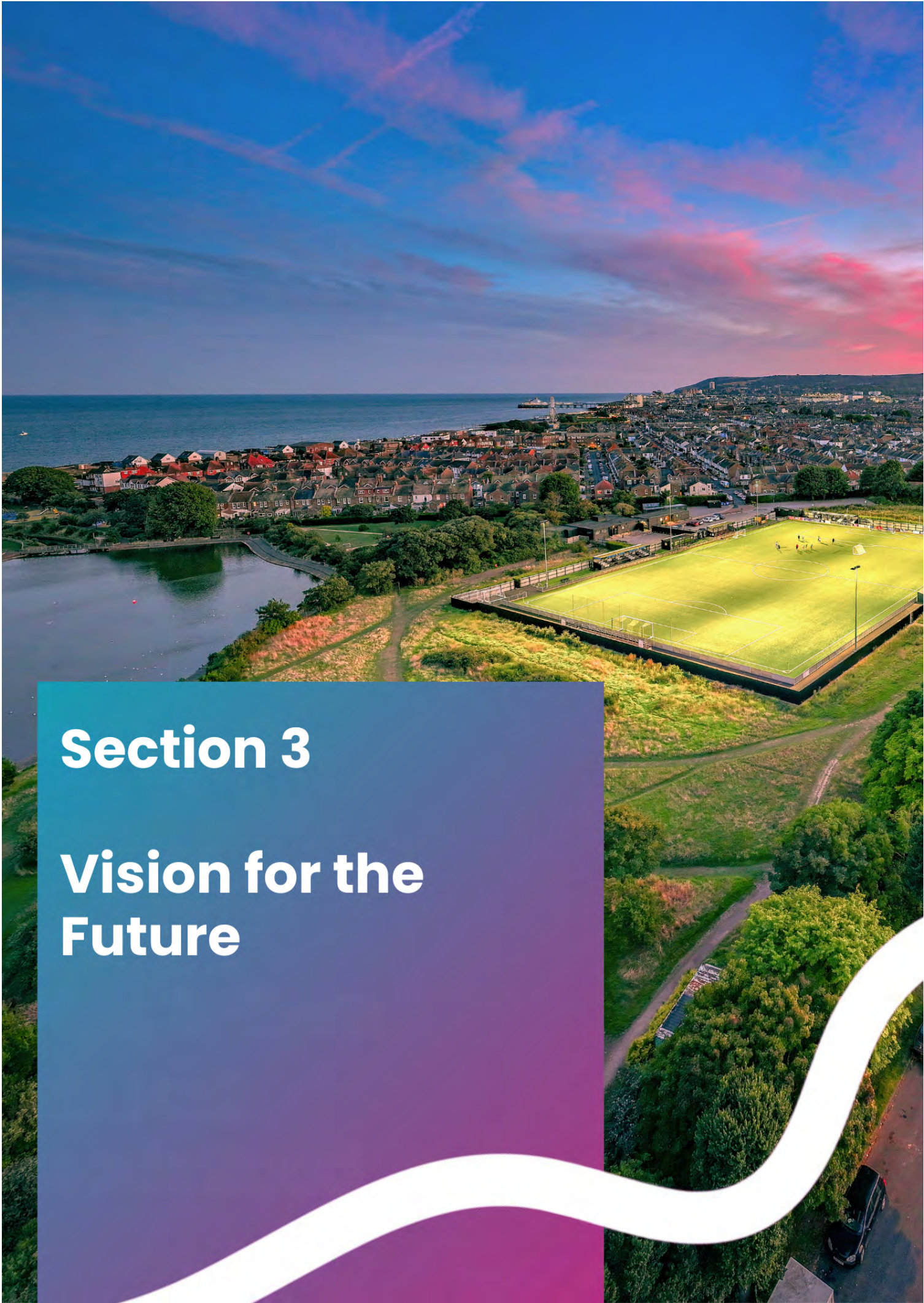
## 2.2 Spatial priorities for funding and interventions

The Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board, through its research and community and stakeholder consultations, has identified a number of areas in the Borough that require investment and intervention. Specific proposals are still largely at the consultation and early development stage, but spatial priorities are likely to include the following:

- Focus on the more deprived neighbourhoods across the town.
- Education attainment and opportunities.
- Eastbourne town centre.
- Vacant and dilapidated buildings across the town.
- Eastbourne seafront, which is a key asset, but its economic contribution could be enhanced with the right investments (as detailed in the new Seafront Strategy).
- Supporting the provision of affordable homes across the Borough.
- Active transport infrastructure across the Borough and beyond.
- Reducing the heavy reliance on Foodbank and community food programmes.
- Improvements in public realm, in particular street lighting and litter control across the town.

Figure 2.2: Map of Eastbourne's Pride in Place Programme boundary





# Section 3

# Vision for the Future

This section of the Plan highlights our long-term vision for Eastbourne, setting out the main themes for change that the Eastbourne PiPP Regeneration Plan will progress.

**Our Vision** is for Eastbourne to become a distinctive and outstanding coastal Borough where people are proud to live, inspired to work, and drawn to visit – a place that encourages ambition, champions health and well-being, and strives to improve the quality of life for all its residents.

We want Eastbourne to be a town which makes opportunity available to all including people who may be vulnerable, disabled or disadvantaged – a town which values its heritage and celebrates its outstanding natural and built environment. And we want Eastbourne to become a more productive, resilient, diversified, and inclusive economy that offers quality work, education and skills improvement for its residents.

Consultation with local stakeholders and communities is still an on-going process although there are emerging priorities from Ward consultations (see Table 4.1). At this stage however, it is clear that there are 5 over-riding and co-dependant, priority themes that the Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board Regeneration Plan will promote:

## 1. Investing in people and families

A core commitment of the Eastbourne PiPP Regeneration Plan is to invest directly in people, ensuring that funding and initiatives not only support organisations or businesses, but also create meaningful opportunities that improve the lives of residents and communities. Initial feedback from local residents has highlighted themes of exclusion, lack of opportunity, and feeling “unseen,” alongside a strong desire for accessible, inclusive, and locally relevant opportunities. Our Regeneration Plan seeks to respond to those needs by placing people at the centre of investment and decision-making.

We recognise that trust is central to meaningful engagement. By listening to residents’ experiences and perspectives – particularly those from less advantaged

backgrounds – the Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board can ensure that funding delivers real impact. This includes co-producing projects with residents and community partners, who are already embedded in local communities. Through listening sessions, pilot projects such as a Citizen’s Forum, and collaborative design, we aim to demonstrate that Eastbourne’s Pride in Place investment can directly improve people’s lives.

Projects and ideas have included family amenities, activities for younger people and digital connection, as well as more connected cycle routes across the Town, cleaner streets, traffic calming, awareness campaigns and improved lighting throughout the town to ensure residents feel safe and secure during the darker hours.

## 2. Community wellbeing

The second priority theme focuses on the health and wellbeing of Eastbourne residents and families as these are central to community life and the local economy, affecting workforce participation, service demand, and quality of life. Life expectancy in Eastbourne is below regional and national averages, particularly for men, and health outcomes vary across the town, with some

areas experiencing higher levels of deprivation. The town also has a higher proportion of working-age residents with limiting disabilities (27.4%) and over 5,000 unpaid carers providing 20+ hours of care per week, highlighting the need for accessible, inclusive, and flexible support.

The Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board will seek to invest in a range of health and physical wellbeing initiatives, including:

- Accessible programmes promoting physical activity, social engagement, and healthy lifestyles.
- As a seaside town we want to advocate the importance of water based fitness initiatives.
- As a part of our economic strategy support flexible learning and employment pathways to enable participation for residents with disabilities or caring responsibilities.
- Projects to help promote residents Mental health.
- Initiatives to help tackle violence against women and girls (VAWG).
- Collaborative projects with community groups and voluntary organisations to deliver inclusive, integrated services. This could include working with community food initiatives.
- Working with charities and our NHS partner to increase targeted support for carers, including peer mentoring, training, and respite opportunities.
- Pilot projects and micro-grants to test innovative approaches and deliver visible, local impact quickly. This could include opportunities to provide wider public access to health and sporting facilities across the town.
- Improve access to active trails and playgrounds.
- Improve the greening of public spaces and replace many of the trees recently lost to disease.

### 3. Economic Eastbourne

Driving economic recovery is another key objective, recognising the need to help Eastbourne fully recover from the Covid-19 pandemic and rebuild the town's confidence and reputation as a destination to do business, visit, study and live. The Neighbourhood Board will help support a more diverse mix of industries and jobs by creating conditions for a sustainable and thriving future economy. We will provide residents of working age with the opportunity to access and develop new skills for the modern age, support young people in gaining work ready skills and help those on benefits access the jobs market. And we will nurture home-grown businesses by ensuring they have the skills, premises and digital know-how they need in the age of Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Equally, our Borough must be resilient and 'future-ready'. By addressing climate change and safeguarding our coast,

countryside and open spaces, we can create opportunities in green business, sustainable tourism and low-carbon innovation. At the same time, we want a place that is easy to move around with active travel routes and sustainable transport.

The Board commissioned and developed a progressive 10-year Economic Strategy in partnership with Eastbourne Borough Council, which provides a forward-looking action plan for immediate implementation. It has been informed by a strong evidence base and detailed discussions with local businesses and other stakeholders; it is aligned with East Sussex County Council's economic prosperity priorities; and it sets out the Borough's strengths and challenges as Sussex establishes a new Sussex and Brighton Mayoral Combined County Authority.

The Economic Strategy sets out five 'themes' to focus economic growth in Eastbourne, many of which overlap with the priority themes of this Regeneration Plan:

1. Develop and diversify Eastbourne's sectors and clusters for a prosperous economy.
2. Nurture community wealth building, enterprise, and entrepreneurship.
3. Develop a vibrant town centre and clusters of retail hubs that serve as great places to live, do business, invest, and visit.
4. Upskill and empower residents to thrive in the modern Eastbourne economy.
5. Promote and ensure investment in sustainable and resilient infrastructure to deliver long-term economic, social, and environmental benefits.

We have identified the need for start-up grants for new entrepreneurs and to help existing businesses in the town grow. As well as supporting mentoring programmes and capacity building alongside the local Chamber of Commerce, EDEAL, Business Improvement District, Hospitality Association, CHALK Eastbourne, BNI Eastbourne and other capacity building networks.

## 4. Experience Eastbourne

Eastbourne is one of the South Coast's most distinctive destinations, celebrated for its coastline, culture, and community spirit. Experience Eastbourne, the fourth priority theme of our Regeneration Plan, will build on this reputation by working with partners to broaden the town's attractions under a shared vision for sustainable growth. Initial investment will include a much-needed tourism strategy in collaboration with a number of the Town's principal stakeholders, across all sectors.

This involves looking beyond traditional tourism to strengthen Eastbourne's arts and cultural scene, revitalise the seafront and retail areas, improve accessibility to the

South Downs, and support the town's festivals, sports, and community events. It also celebrates Eastbourne's rich heritage while embracing its evolving creative identity. At its core, Experience Eastbourne aims to encourage greater participation by residents in all the experiences on offer in the town whilst attracting more visitors and boosting the local economy. Once celebrated as a refined seaside resort, we want Eastbourne to reclaim its position as 'East Sussex's premier location for leisure, culture and entertainment'. Thoughtful and collaborative investment in the public realm, co-designed by local people is required, from cycle lanes to a more accessible beach.



## 5. Natural Eastbourne

Our final PiPP Regeneration Plan priority is focused on Eastbourne’s distinctive landscape (see map below) – from coastal habitats and chalk downland to urban green spaces – it provides a unique platform to promote inclusivity, biodiversity, and healthy outdoor lifestyles.

The Natural Eastbourne priority theme proposes a portfolio of nature-based community projects designed to enhance the town’s green spaces, strengthen social cohesion, and deliver measurable environmental benefits to combat climate change. Our vision is to develop and fund projects in partnership with local voluntary and community groups already active in promoting sustainability, climate resilience, and outdoor wellbeing.

We have spent time with a local school who need funding to maintain an important marshland nature reserves. We want to explore the creation of green corridors linking our schools, parks and wards, enabling safe and active travel around the town. There has been considerable concern raised at the extent of tree removal from the town due to Ash die back and Dutch Elm disease, leading to calls for new planting schemes around the town. once referred to as ‘leafy Eastbourne’. In addition, through the ward workshops we have identified the need for a blue/ green audit of how the Town’s spaces are used and how we can enhance the value of these spaces to include active trails, better wayfinding, heritage trails and support the groups who volunteer to maintain these spaces for the benefit of all.

Figure 3.1: Map of Eastbourne’s distinctive landscape





## Section 4

# Strategic Case for Change

## 4.1 Economic need, market failure and social disadvantage

This section of the Eastbourne PiPP Regeneration Plan highlights issues associated with economic need, market failure and social disadvantage in Eastbourne. It has been structured in line with the PiPP intervention categories as follows:

- Regeneration, high streets and heritage
- Housing
- Work, productivity and skills
- Cohesion
- Health and wellbeing
- Transport
- Safety and security
- Education and opportunity

### Regeneration, high streets and heritage

Eastbourne's town centre and its seafront are major economic and cultural assets. With 2.4 retail and service outlets per 1,000 population<sup>4</sup>, Eastbourne Town Centre vacancies (all properties) for Q2 reported on 29th September 2025 was 7.98% compared to the national rate of 13.6%. Eastbourne Town Centre has consistently had lower vacancy rates for many years, and retail was also boosted following the opening of the £85m investment in The Beacon even though we saw the closures of Debenhams and TJ Hughes department stores.

Community and business engagement has identified that improving Eastbourne town centre is a priority for residents, young people and local businesses. Despite significant investment in recent years, there is consensus that the quality of the town centre has diminished – its vitality impacted by a rise in anti-social behaviour, derelict former large department stores in prime locations (e.g. Debenhams) and the closure of nightlife venues. Our town centre needs to be reimagined to reflect the needs of its residents, entice new visitors and attract investors – this is not about nostalgia or superficial beautification – it is about revitalising the physical environment to better serve a modern, dynamic population. The quality of Eastbourne's urban spaces, its streets, buildings and public areas must rise to meet 21st-century expectations and combat the impacts of climate change. We must develop more residential units in the town centre to increase footfall, and dwell time and ensure natural policing of the area.

Despite these pressures, Eastbourne's town centre footfall is robust – with an index score of 191.3, nearly double the national benchmark – and cultural engagement is notably high. Between 2022 and 2024, 45% of adults attended a theatre or live performance, 48% visited museums or galleries, and 92% participated in arts activities, all above England averages<sup>5</sup>. This cultural vitality underpins Eastbourne's regeneration potential. Its strong heritage offer, creative

<sup>4</sup> Source: Local Data Company (LDC) outlets and vacancy database, 2025

<sup>5</sup> Source: DCMS Participation Survey 2023–24

sector, and visitor economy provide a foundation for renewal – but it must be matched by infrastructure investment, skills alignment, and community inclusion.

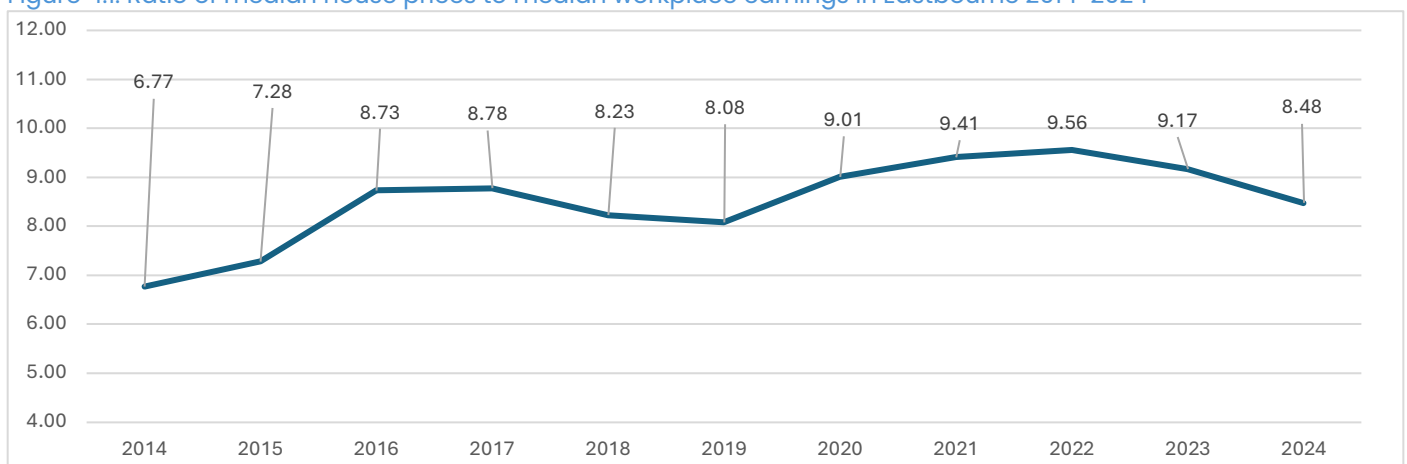
## Housing

In 2024, there were 50,026 residential dwellings in Eastbourne. This is just under 1,900 more than there had been in 2014. The Eastbourne Local Housing Needs Assessment (2024) identifies a need for 735 new homes each year, including 520 affordable homes annually<sup>6</sup>. The Borough faces significant challenges in meeting housing demand, specifically the physical and environmental constraints that restrict the supply of development sites across the town.

The housing affordability ratio (price-to-earnings) stands at 8.5, lower than the South East average (9.6) but higher than the England average (7.7)<sup>7</sup>. This reflects moderate pressure in the housing market, compounded by a mix of older housing stock – 11.3% of dwellings are non-decent, above the regional average of 9.5%<sup>8</sup>. This has a significant impact on the local economy. It makes it difficult for many local people to get on the property ladder and, when they do, a high proportion of their earnings leak out of the local economy in the form of mortgage repayments. High housing costs can also make it difficult for the Borough’s businesses to attract the talent that they need to grow if they are in competition with less expensive parts of the country.

Eastbourne also has challenges around the proliferation of Houses of Multiple Occupation. There are estimated to be around 400 currently<sup>9</sup>, many of which are used by other local authorities to place their homeless residents with complex social needs, putting additional pressure on local services.

Figure 4.1: Ratio of median house prices to median workplace earnings in Eastbourne 2014-2024<sup>10</sup>



<sup>6</sup> Source: Eastbourne Local Housing Needs Assessment; AECOM; 2024

<sup>7</sup> Source: ONS housing affordability statistics – ratio of median house price to median gross annual workplace-based earnings, 2024

<sup>8</sup> Source: English Housing Survey (EHS) dwelling condition / non-decent homes, 2021

<sup>9</sup> Source: Eastbourne Borough Council HMO licensing and housing enforcement records, 2024

<sup>10</sup> Source: Ratio of median house price to median gross annual workplace-based earnings by local authority district, England and Wales, 1997 to 2024; 2025

## Work, productivity and skills

Annual average economic growth of 0.8% in Eastbourne is less than half the England average over the period. The Borough's economy shrank by 9.2% during the Covid-19 pandemic (similar to England – 9.8%)<sup>11</sup>. After an initial strong recovery, it lost ground between 2021 and 2023.

The low value of Eastbourne's employment is borne out by productivity data. In 2023, GVA per hour worked was £30.90 – well below that in the South East (£44.40) and England (£40.30)<sup>12</sup>. Within East Sussex, only Rother (£28.90) had lower GVA per hour worked than Eastbourne.

Figure 4.2: GVA per hour worked (£) in Eastbourne, East Sussex, its districts and borough, the South East and England, 2022



Business birth rates are high in Eastbourne, when compared to other coastal towns. In 2023, there were 108 new businesses for every 1,000 active businesses in the Borough, compared with 100 per 1,000 active businesses in Hastings and 98 per 1,000 active businesses in Worthing. However, more of a challenge may be encouraging businesses to grow. Eastbourne lags behind peers with regards high growth businesses, and this is reflected both regionally and nationally. In 2023, the Borough had 5 'high growth' businesses<sup>13</sup>. This is a smaller number than all the other districts and boroughs in East Sussex. The small number of high growth businesses has been a feature of Eastbourne's economy for several years.

A key part of delivering sustainable and inclusive economic growth is generating and retaining wealth locally by scaling up the social economy. This includes supporting social enterprises and the voluntary sector, encouraging community ownership of local assets, developing a coordinated approach to local procurement, and strengthening local supply chains.

Eastbourne has significant assets that are likely to be attractive to future investors. Alongside the excellent quality of life and natural environment that it offers, the Borough also has very good digital connectivity, a key factor in business location decisions. Nearly nine out of ten

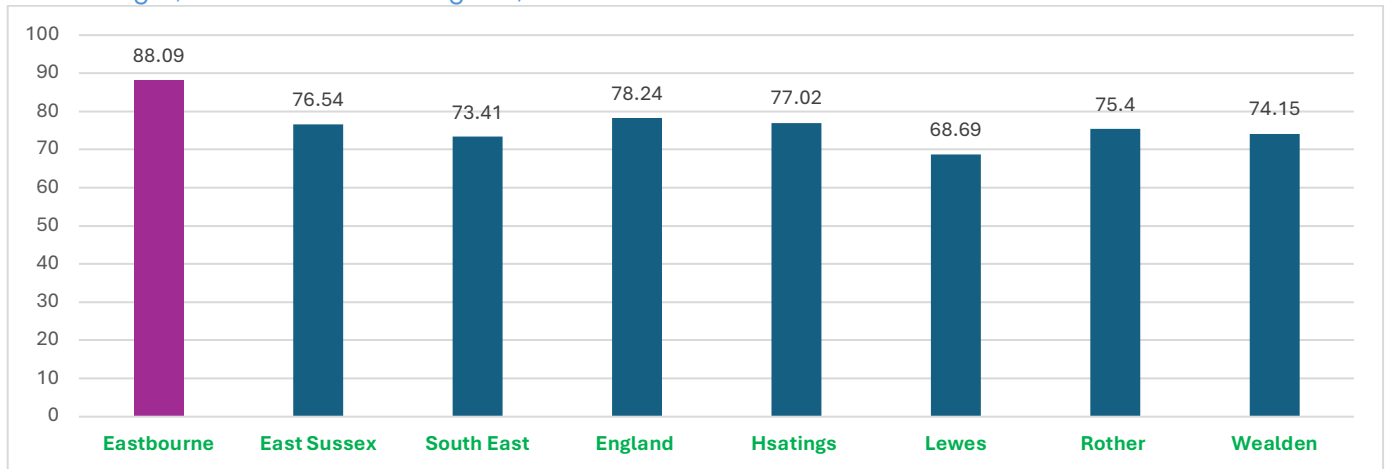
<sup>11</sup> Source: ONS regional & subregional GVA (balanced) series

<sup>12</sup> Source: ONS subregional labour productivity – GVA per hour worked by local authority, 2023

<sup>13</sup> High growth businesses have a minimum of 10 employees and an average, annualised employment growth rate of 20% or more over a three-year period

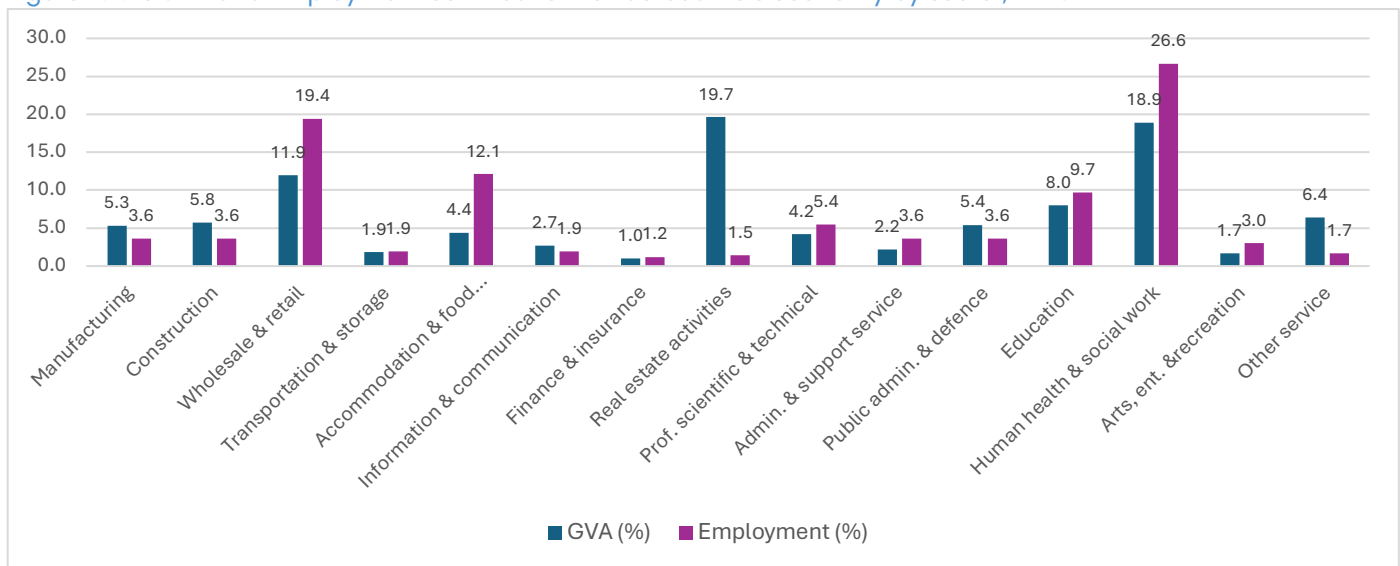
(88%) premises in Eastbourne have access to full-fibre broadband<sup>14</sup>. This is greater coverage than in the South East region, England and all the other districts and boroughs in East Sussex.

Figure 4.3: Percentage of premises with access to full-fibre broadband in Eastbourne, East Sussex and its districts and boroughs, the south east and England, 2025<sup>15</sup>



Eastbourne’s economy is diverse but relatively low in productivity compared with regional and national benchmarks. Gross Value Added (GVA) per job filled stands at £39,953, well below the South East average (£68,021) and England (£62,751).<sup>16</sup> With 41,000 jobs across 3,800 businesses, Eastbourne would need to help around 2,450 additional residents into work to achieve an 80% employment rate – a critical goal for inclusive growth and productivity improvement.

Figure 4.4: % GVA and Employment contribution to Eastbourne’s economy by sector, 2023<sup>17</sup>



Much of the existing employment base is concentrated in low-wage, seasonal industries, with high levels of part-time work. This limits income growth and household resilience, particularly in coastal and tourism-dependent wards, since the Accommodation and Food Service sector, while a high contributor to local jobs, produces a much smaller proportion of local GVA. The Health and Care sector is a similarly strong contributor to local employment. To strengthen

<sup>14</sup> Source: Broadband coverage statistics from Ofcom Connected Nations 2024

<sup>15</sup> Source <https://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/E07000065>; 2025

<sup>16</sup> Annual Population Survey (APS); Office for National Statistics; 2024

<sup>17</sup> Business Register & Employment Survey (BRES); Office for National Statistics; 2024; and Source: Table 2: Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: local authorities by International Territorial Level (ITL) 1 region: TLJ South East; Office for National Statistics; 2024

economic sustainability, Eastbourne must attract and retain skilled workers, support business diversification, and develop year-round employment opportunities.

More than one in five (22%) working age residents are economically inactive<sup>18</sup> and the claimant count unemployment rate (4.7%) is higher than in England (4.2%)<sup>19</sup>.

Skills attainment also lags behind regional levels: 52.8% of residents hold qualifications at Level 3 or above (compared to 58.9% in the South East), while 12.2% have no formal qualifications. The town's employment rate (69.5%) trails the South East average of 74.1%, and economic inactivity (44.5%) is notably higher than both the regional and national averages.

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<sup>18</sup> Annual Population Survey (APS); Office for National Statistics; 2024

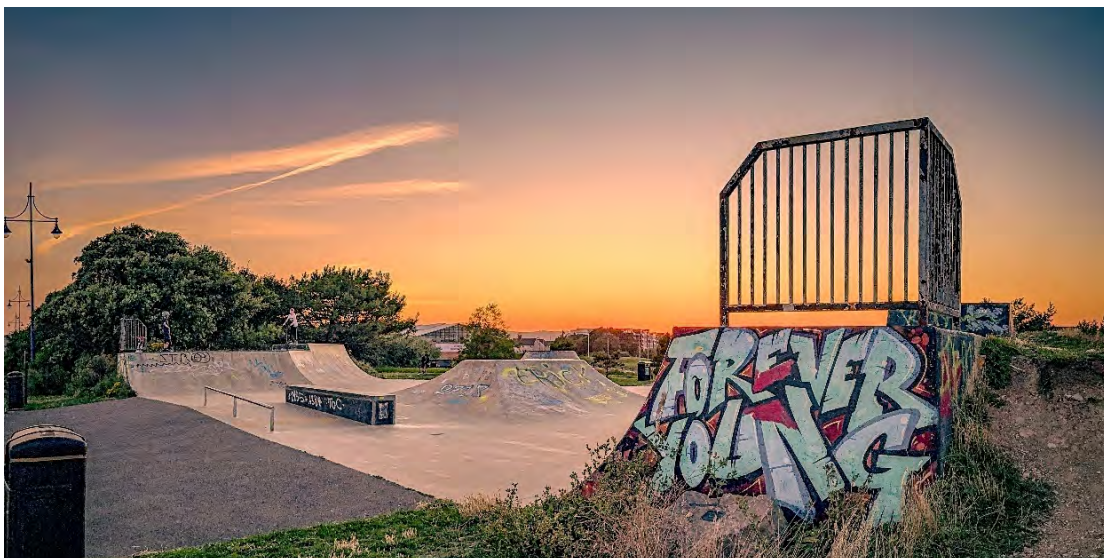
<sup>19</sup> Claimant Count May 2015 to May 2025 Office for National Statistics; 2025

## Cohesion

In Eastbourne, community cohesion faces several measurable challenges. The town's median age is 45 – above the England average of 40 – indicating a more ageing community with weaker inter-generational interaction. Over 20% of Eastbourne's LSOAs fall within the 20% most deprived nationally for education, skills and training, undermining inclusive opportunity and reducing social mobility<sup>20</sup>. Housing pressures intensify this: 19% of socially rented and 14% of privately rented homes are overcrowded, creating higher stress and instability for families<sup>21</sup>.

However, Eastbourne also holds clear opportunities for strengthening cohesion. Population growth has been steady (+3.9% 2011-22), and the town's broadly stable demographic mix provides a solid foundation for inclusive community-building. In 2021, 18% of residents living in Eastbourne were from an ethnic minority, the highest of all the districts and boroughs in the county. The Eastbourne PiPP Regeneration Plan can support cohesion initiatives, enabling investment in community-led forums, volunteering networks, inter-generational activities, and shared-use spaces. Addressing education and skills deprivation through neighbourhood learning hubs and targeted training can build shared social capital and enhance upward mobility. By focusing PiPP funding on the neighbourhoods with the greatest need – while strengthening participation across the whole town – Eastbourne can turn current pressures into a platform for stronger belonging, mutual responsibility, and a resilient community identity.

The workshops and ward funding each year for the next 4 years is all about building trust and cohesion. A single project cannot achieve cohesion anywhere near the impact of micro investing across each and every ward. The projects we are encouraging are community-based projects designed to bring people, families, community groups together to help fix the small stuff that can have a great impact. From community planting schemes to new benches and from improved way finding and local awareness campaigns, these are all focused on creating cohesive neighbourhoods.



<sup>20</sup> Eastbourne MHCLG Data Pack (2025):

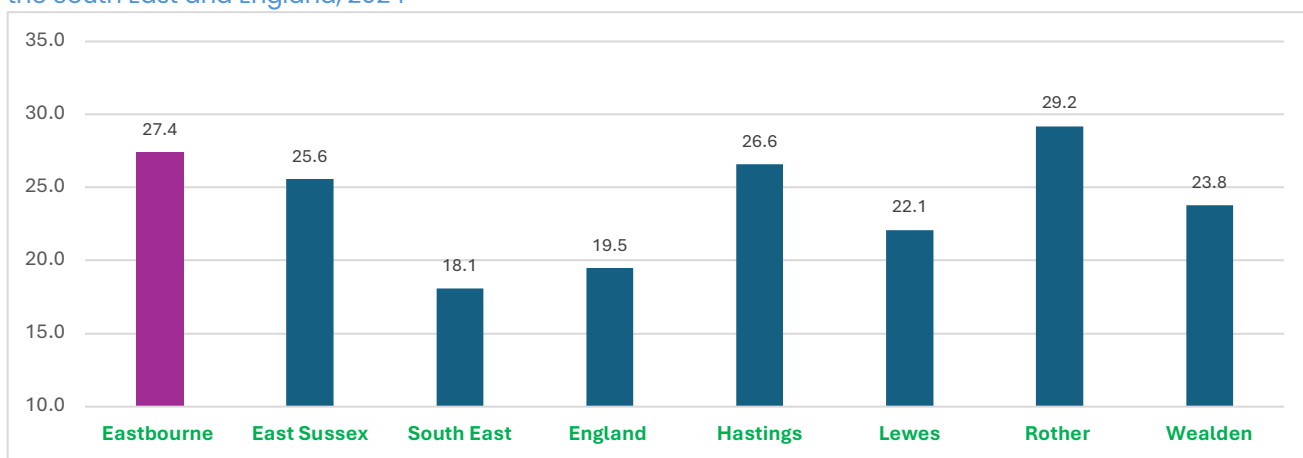
<sup>21</sup> Source: East Sussex JSNA – Eastbourne Profile: <https://www.eastsussexjsna.org.uk/area-profiles/eastbourne-borough-area-profile/>

## Health and Wellbeing

The Borough's ageing population presents both challenges and opportunities in designing and developing services that improve the wellbeing of older residents and making the Borough attractive to older visitors from outside Eastbourne. The Borough's outstanding natural and cultural assets, and its strong community cohesion can be promoted and strengthened to ensure that older people can live full and active lives.

Improving health and wellbeing is not confined to older residents, however. Nearly a third (30%) of the Borough's 16–64-year-old residents have some form of work-limiting disability<sup>22</sup>, and 10% of its residents provide regular unpaid care<sup>23</sup>.

Figure 4.5: 16–64-Year-olds: Work-Limited Core Disabled in Eastbourne, East Sussex and its districts and boroughs, the South East and England, 2024<sup>24</sup>



Over 10,000 working age residents with work-limiting disabilities are not in work<sup>25</sup>, which represents a significant amount of under-utilised talent that can be better harnessed through a more holistic approach to improving health and wellbeing, and by promoting active participation in community activities, learning, and more flexible forms of employment.

Health indicators suggest a mixed picture. Healthy life expectancy for men and women (61.8 and 62.2 years respectively) is slightly below regional levels, though in line with England overall. Demand for primary care services is high, with over 534 GP appointments per 1,000 population, well above the national average of 472, suggesting pressure on local healthcare capacity. Only 60% of residents report a good experience when contacting their GP, compared to 66–67% nationally<sup>26</sup>.

There has also been a steady migration of patient services from the DGH to the Conquest in Hastings, including, consultant led maternity, obstetrics, emergency and high risk orthopaedics. In addition in-patient mental health services are moving from Eastbourne to Bexhill.

<sup>22</sup> Annual Population Survey Jan-Dec. 2024; Office for National Statistics; 2025

<sup>23</sup> Census 2021; Office for National Statistics; 2021

<sup>24</sup> Source: Annual Population Survey; ONS 2025

<sup>25</sup> Source: ONS Annual Population Survey – disability and employment, 2024

<sup>26</sup> Source: ONS health state life expectancy; NHS 'Appointments in General Practice'; GP Patient Survey, 2024

## Transport

Connectivity remains both a strength and a constraint. 83% of premises have access to gigabit broadband, matching the South East average and exceeding the national rate of 79%<sup>27</sup>. Commuting patterns show strong links with surrounding towns reinforcing Eastbourne's role as a subregional employment hub.

According to the 2021 Census, just over half of adults (51.6%) were in employment, with most commuting less than 10 km. Driving (42.3%) remains the dominant mode of transport, though 10.2% walk and 6.4% travel by train<sup>28</sup>. 26.5% of households in the town have no car or van, higher than the East Sussex, South East and National averages. Enhancing sustainable travel options and accessibility will be important to supporting growth and reducing congestion and air pollution.



## Safety and security

Safety and security are essential to residents' wellbeing and visitor confidence. While overall crime levels in Eastbourne are slightly above national averages, patterns and anecdotal evidence suggest concentrated challenges rather than widespread disorder.

In 2024, the recorded crime rate for the Eastbourne Built-Up Area was 92.8 per 1,000, compared to 76.7 nationally<sup>29</sup>. The town experiences higher rates of shoplifting (22.5 per 1,000) and violent and sexual offences (41.0) than the England averages (7.9 and 32.3 respectively). These figures reflect both the town's status as a visitor economy - where retail and hospitality density can elevate certain offences - and a need to reinforce community safety, particularly in the town centre after dark.

<sup>27</sup> Source: Ofcom Connected Nations 2024 – gigabit coverage

<sup>28</sup> Source: ONS Census 2021 'Travel to Work' data

<sup>29</sup> Source: data.police.uk, 2025

## Education and opportunity

Overall, working age residents in the Borough are less qualified than residents in England. Around 39% have a Level 4+ (degree or equivalent) qualification, compared with 46.8% in England<sup>30</sup>. Attainment at the Borough's schools is mixed and a lower proportion of 19-year-olds in Eastbourne (50.4%) than in England (57.6%) hold at least a Level 3 qualification ('A' Level or equivalent)<sup>31</sup>. This pattern exacerbates the Borough's low pay/low productivity challenges and makes many of its residents vulnerable to labour market changes that demand higher level skills.

In January 2022, the University of Brighton announced plans to close its Eastbourne campus by the start of the 2024-25 academic year. There had been 1,500 students studying at the University of Brighton in Eastbourne. In addition, there are on-going challenges to the language school market as learning programmes are increasingly delivered on-line.

Across the county, Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) have increased by 87% between 2010 to 2023. The number of school-aged pupils with an EHCP is forecast to rise in East Sussex by 11.8% over the next three years to 2026.



### 4.2 Target long-term outcomes

Specific investments and interventions are still being considered and consulted upon but there are a number of emerging objectives that the Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board PiPP Regeneration Plan may focus on. These initial objectives, in relation to the economic need, market failure and social disadvantage demonstrated above, require further consideration, consultation, detail and quantifiable targets but at this 'direction of travel' stage may include the following:

*Regeneration, high streets and heritage:* revitalise the quality of Eastbourne's urban centre, in particular, its high streets, derelict buildings and public realm, as well as the Eastbourne

<sup>30</sup> Source: 2021 Census; Office for National Statistics; 2021

<sup>31</sup> Source: Explore Education Statistics; Department for Education; 2025

seafront through implementation of the Seafront Strategy. There are opportunities to work with landlords who own vacant and, in some instances, derelict buildings in the town centre. In addition, there is opportunity to work with the local and County Council to develop a new town square and reshape the infrastructure around the town's pier. We hope by allocating monies from this PiPP to an Eastbourne Town Centre Improvement Fund, we can make that difference.

*Housing:* whilst we recognise the limitations of the PiPP funding, we shall wherever possible work to identify and address housing quality, energy efficiency, and affordability issues to help support residents' wellbeing and retaining younger workers. We will explore supporting proposed and established Community Land Trust housing projects across the town.

*Work, productivity and skills:* attract and retain skilled workers, raise skill levels in the local population and promote business and sector diversification and economic inactivity initiatives to help the employment rate in the Borough to reach the Government's 80% national target. This includes developing skills for the new economy, particularly in Artificial Intelligence and Digital Skills. The action plan in our Economic Strategy will be prioritised to reflect this.

*Cohesion:* through inclusive capability and community-building, increase the capacity of Eastbourne as a place for people to live, work, learn and socialise together across backgrounds, with shared rights, responsibilities and opportunities. Increase neighbour-confidence, participation, and the shared sense of belonging fundamental to cohesion. The ward workshops identified a strong need to widen the engagement process and build trust. As well as much needed community hub, the Neighbourhood Board have identified the need to work quickly to support much needed concern for cleaner streets, improve planting schemes in our green spaces and support the many 'friends of' groups around the town who work to maintain the public realm at their own expense.

*Health and wellbeing:* improve the health and wellbeing of the local population, in particular for older residents and those with some form of work-limiting disability. Residents want more active trails and improved wayfinding and seating areas in our green spaces. Access to more leisure activities and public sporting facilities.

*Transport:* secure investment in transport, capital and infrastructure projects in line with or above that proposed for Eastbourne in the East Sussex Local Transport Plan 4. This also includes consideration of more active travel, improved cycle lanes and connections. We also need to consider more traffic calming measures around the town to enable people to walk and cycle more. In addition, connecting people to services and amenities that support.

*Safety and security:* focus on reinforcing community safety, particularly in Eastbourne town centre after dark. Working with the PCC we have identified the need for improved lighting, mobile noise cameras and more visible policing in addition to creating safer spaces in our parks and gardens. With a focus on improving our public realm we can empower people to create positive change.

*Education and opportunity.* improve early years intervention to tackle the rise in the proportion of Eastbourne children entering reception below age-related expectations in communication and language. Develop the concept of an exemplar Beach School supporting all the Borough's pupils with arts and humanities, as well as climate change and outdoor water based recreational opportunities. Inspire learning and placemaking amongst young people to nurture mutually beneficial social and economic connections with schools, centres of learning and the business communities.

### 4.3 Priorities for change identified through community engagement

Eight of the nine wards in Eastbourne Borough have now held ward priority workshops. Table 4.1 below summarises the main activity clusters emerging from the ward consultations (Devonshire, Langney, Meads, Old Town, Ratton, Sovereign Harbour, St Anthony's and Upperton). Each is mapped against MHCLG's eight pre-approved intervention groups and the three overarching Plan for Neighbourhoods objectives. It shows how locally generated project ideas link to national programme categories and intended outcomes.

Table 4.1: Ward Consultation Projects – Alignment with MHCLG Intervention Groups and Plan for Neighbourhoods Outcomes

Project Ideas (from Ward Consultations)	Local Activity Cluster	MHCLG Pre-Approved Intervention Group	Overarching Outcome
Community gardens; verge upkeep; wildflower planting; planters; compost hubs; flood-resilient landscaping.	Public Realm Greening & Planting	Green spaces and nature – Intervention 1	<b>Thriving Places</b>
Cycling and walking route upgrades; dropped kerbs; safer crossings; benches; way-finding signage; Beachy Head trail.	Active Travel & Access	Transport – walking, cycling and accessibility – Intervention 6	
Shopfront and building improvements; murals; promenade seating and lighting; visitor signage; park interpretation boards.	Town & Seafront Appearance	Regeneration, high streets and heritage – Intervention 1	
Bin replacement; waste collection; graffiti removal; Pride of Place campaign; litter-picking volunteers.	Environment, Waste & Cleanliness	Cohesion – pride in place and civic engagement – Intervention 4	
Tree planting; habitat management; biodiversity boards; storm-drain improvements.	Nature & Biodiversity	Green spaces and nature – Intervention 1	

Project Ideas (from Ward Consultations)	Local Activity Cluster	MHCLG Pre-Approved Intervention Group	Overarching Outcome
Neighbourhood hubs; community centres; repair cafés; fridges; shared spaces linking indoor and outdoor activities.	Community Facilities & Hubs	Health and wellbeing – community health infrastructure – Intervention 5	<b>Stronger Communities</b>
Community events; local markets; film nights; gardening clubs; heritage trails; art festivals; Be Proud of Eastbourne campaign.	Events, Culture & Heritage	Regeneration – arts, culture and heritage facilities – Intervention 1	
Youth clubs and pop-ups; family fitness trails; outdoor learning; SEND-friendly play; inter-generational programmes.	Youth, Families & Inter-generational Activities	Education and opportunity – youth services and centres – Intervention 8	
Food kitchens; cookery projects; wellbeing workshops; counselling; inclusive social activities and exercise.	Community Health & Wellbeing	Health and wellbeing – wellbeing programmes – Intervention 5	
CCTV and lighting; PCSO patrols; Neighbourhood Watch; ASB reduction campaigns.	Safety & ASB Prevention	Safety and security – community safety initiatives – Intervention 7	

Project Ideas (from Ward Consultations)	Local Activity Cluster	MHCLG Pre-Approved Intervention Group	Overarching Outcome
Neighbourhood volunteers; Friends groups; VCSE capacity building; micro-grants; youth volunteering.	Community Volunteering & Local Networks	Cohesion – civic engagement and participation – Intervention 4	<b>Taking Back Control</b>
Community skills hubs; digital and green skills courses; business mentoring; youth career pathways.	Skills, Learning & Enterprise	Work, productivity and skills – skills development – Intervention 3	
Ward forums; mini-assemblies; noticeboards; Neighbourhood First points; shared consultation channels.	Neighbourhood Communication & Forums	Cohesion – civic engagement and participation – Intervention 4	
Mobility and transport access for older residents; hubs for homeless support; signposting to services.	Inclusive Access to Services	Housing – homelessness and access support – Intervention 2	

## 4.4 Intended use of powers

The Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board is still finalising priorities for investment but has recognised the potential of the powers and tools at their disposal to assist in the implementation of its Investment Plan. In particular, this includes powers in anti-social behaviour and crime, environmental protection, regeneration, neighbourhood planning, housing, transport and connectivity. It may also include investigating opportunities for using compulsory purchase powers where appropriate.



## **Section 5**

# **Alignment with other Programmes and Investments**

A key aim in the development of the Eastbourne PiPP Regeneration Plan is to ensure our proposed investments and activities align with, and complement, existing and planned programmes, and support the delivery of key local, regional and national strategies.

There is significant current and planned project and programme delivery within the Eastbourne boundary, and our PiPP Regeneration and Investment Plan will build on this work, and further act as a catalyst for additional local and external investment in the area.

## Strategic guidance

The following strategic plans and strategies have influenced the development of the Eastbourne PiPP Regeneration and Investment Plan:

- Invest 2035 – the UK’s Modern Industrial Strategy. This identifies eight growth-driving sectors: advanced manufacturing; clean energy industries; creative industries; defence; digital and technologies; financial services; life sciences; and professional and business services, a number of which are priorities for Eastbourne.
- Similarly, improving health and wellbeing is a key part of the Eastbourne Regeneration Plan which aligns with the Government’s plans to increase labour market participation, reduce welfare dependency, and boost economic growth. The Get Britain Working Plan (2024) aims to get more people into work, including by addressing health-related worklessness. The 10-Year Health Plan for England – Fit for the Future (2025) – also aims to join up support across the health, work and skills systems to help people to find and remain in work.
- The emerging Get Sussex Working Plan will include clear actions for partners across Sussex and Brighton to deliver better outcomes for people in the most disadvantaged communities and groups, a key priority for the Board.
- East Sussex County Council has also set out clear economic ambitions for the county in its East Sussex 2050 Economic Prosperity Strategy. The twin goals are for East Sussex to become a county of opportunity and a county of creativity and innovation. The Eastbourne Regeneration Plan aligns with these goals and the strategy’s two defining principles: achieving net zero carbon by 2050; and embedding circular economy considerations into local decision-making.
- New sub-national governance structures are emerging too; a newly elected Sussex and Brighton Mayor is scheduled to be in place in May 2026, supported by a Sussex and Brighton Mayoral Combined County Authority and potentially three unitary authorities. The Eastbourne Pride in Place Regeneration Plan can play a crucial role in shaping sub-regional strategies, programmes and governance by clearly articulating the issues and opportunities facing the Borough. Whilst not being constituent members of the Mayoral Combined County Authority, Eastbourne Borough Council and the Eastbourne

Neighbourhood Board have key strategic roles in representing the Borough externally, and this Regeneration Plan will retain relevance throughout changes in sub-national governance arrangements.

- The Eastbourne Economic Strategy 2025 – 2035, commissioned jointly by the Board and Eastbourne Borough Council and now finalised, will inform the Board’s investment decisions over the next decade. It provides an ambition, priority themes, and action areas around which the Borough can coalesce to drive a more distributive and regenerative economy. It has been informed by a strong evidence base and detailed discussions with local stakeholders.

## Local investment programmes

There are a number of strategically important programmes and projects currently being delivered in Eastbourne. The PiPP, whilst independent of these projects, acknowledges the ongoing work to deliver these important schemes within the town. These include the Local Regeneration Fund (formerly EBC LUF) programme in Eastbourne which comprises the following three projects:

- The transformation of **Victoria Place** into a vibrant and pedestrianised cultural district with *al fresco* dining.
- The creation of a prestigious cultural and educational centre on the Downland at **Black Robin Farm**.
- Improvements to the **Towner Gallery** and the creation of a number of legacy public artworks as part of the Towner Centenary including a new public art installation at the seafront end of Victoria Place.

The Investment Plan has already invested and will continue to support the delivery of the Eastbourne Seafront Strategy 2050 which aims to create a vibrant, safe, and inclusive space for everyone to enjoy. Key priorities include preserving the town’s heritage, sustaining traditional events, introducing new cultural initiatives, establishing Eastbourne as a year-round destination, promoting wellbeing and active lifestyles, and creating a safe and accessible seafront for all. The strategy will inform the Environment Agency about how the seafront should look, feel, and function in the future, and will also play a role in the preparation of the new Eastbourne Local Plan. The strategy is informed by extensive public consultation and local engagement, ensuring that the vision reflects the values and aspirations of the wider community.

Other key projects that have commenced and can be built upon by the Eastbourne PiPP Regeneration Plan include the 2022 – 2026 UK Shared Prosperity Fund programme which includes initiatives to support new and growing businesses, enhance Eastbourne’s open spaces, improve links between the town and South Downs, help young people set up in business and assist those that are economically inactive back into employment.



## Section 6

# Match Funding and Leveraged Investment

The Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board is constantly seeking ways to leverage its investment to achieve positive outcomes for Eastbourne's residents. It co-financed the consultation for Seafront Strategy and has approved support for Phase 2 work which will permit Eastbourne Borough Council to apply for additional resources.

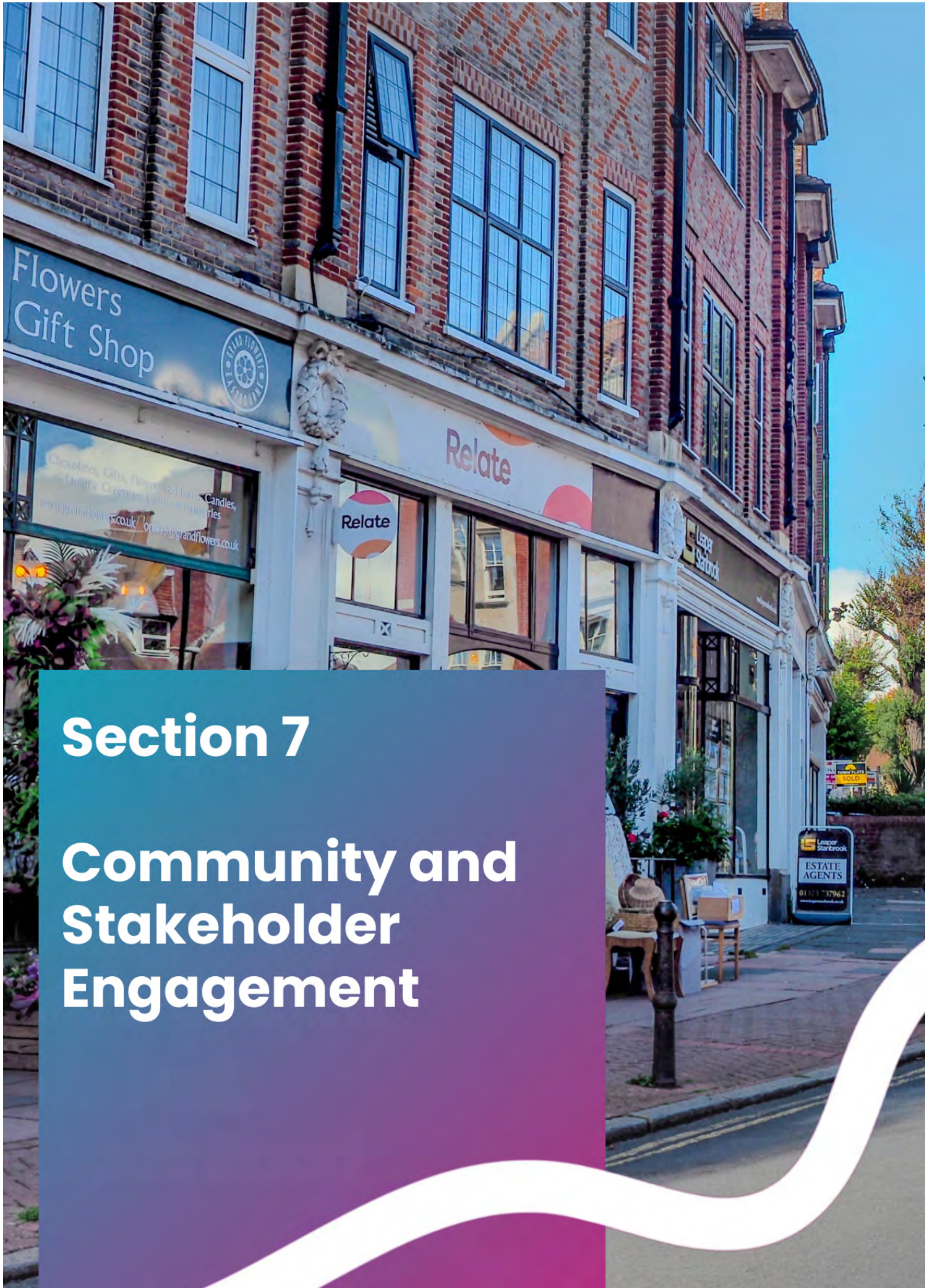
Where appropriate the Board will consider proposals from Eastbourne Borough Council and other statutory partners to co-finance key scoping, feasibility and outline design options for ideas that will leverage additional public and/or private sector investment in Eastbourne. Topics likely include heritage structures, health and wellbeing initiatives, transport support, children's activities and learning enrichment, and safety and security enhancements.

The Board has financed the Eastbourne Economic Strategy – as detailed previously, and this substantive consultative and analytical work will help inform and guide our work and investment choices for years to come. In conjunction with Eastbourne Borough Council, we are already looking at options for several major capital investments in the town centre and its

immediate surroundings. These will be developed in more detail over the next 12 months.

The emphasis of the Board's approach to investing PiPP funding is on using this resource as a catalyst for change and to help build external and local investor confidence. Rather than simply responding to market failures, the Board will adopt a market-shaping approach to help achieve specific social, economic, and environmental goals in Eastbourne. This allows the Board to steer investment towards opportunities that align with the strategic priorities set out in this Regeneration Plan. Building local capabilities and partnerships and aligning local needs with investor interests are essential aspects of the Board's approach.

Eastbourne has a number of fast-growing companies working globally in the events, sports, health, entertainment, retail and digital sectors and we have started to build positive relationships with them all. We have shared our vision and economic strategy, and will work with them to identify ways in which we can grow together, supporting them, their workforce and the wider town.



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## Section 7

# Community and Stakeholder Engagement

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This section summarises how the Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board has and will continue to ensure the local community and key stakeholders are involved in the ongoing development and delivery of our PiPP Regeneration Plan over the course of the 10 years of funding.

## 7.1 Securing buy-in from local businesses, civil society, and communities

### Consultations Informing our approach

Engagement to identify local investment priorities has already taken place in 2025. Activities have included:

- An online survey 'Citizen's Questionnaire' inviting views on regeneration priorities from the general public. Launched in October 2025.
- Community workshops held in partnership with Eastbourne Borough Council Ward Councillors to gather local grassroots insights. 10 workshops held between October and November 2025.
- An online business survey conducted in partnership with the Eastbourne Chamber of Commerce, July 2025, to understand business challenges and priorities for investment.
- Workshops and one-to-ones with businesses and Councillors to explore future economic development growth priorities and opportunities.
- A joint consultation event co-hosted with the Eastbourne Foodbank on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2025, engaging third sector stakeholders and community faith leaders in open dialogue about shared priorities. This has led to site visits to exemplar community interventions.
- Resident and business workshops and active seafront events funded by the Board to help co-create a new Seafront Strategy in collaboration with Eastbourne Borough Council and the 'Friends of Eastbourne Seafront' group.
- One to one meetings with individuals, charities, senior managers from the Council, NHS leads, neighbouring boards in Hastings and Bexhill and business leaders.
- Attended local Digital Festival hosted by CHALK Digital on 15<sup>th</sup> October 2025.
- Meeting with Buzz Active water sports manager on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2025.
- Meetings with a number of the town's secondary schools head teachers.
- Presentation to the Eastbourne Disability Inclusion Group on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2025.
- Meeting with the Eastbourne Food Partnership on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2025.

These sessions have provided a strong foundation for co-creation, revealing a consistent appetite for projects that address local skills, employment, health, community wellbeing and environmental 'pride in place' initiatives.

Events were held across the town throughout October and November, with venues ranging from community centres and church halls, to local pubs and schools. Times included during the day, weekday evenings and Saturday mornings to encourage as diverse a resident participation as possible. Table 4.2 below highlights the wards, dates, times and venues.

Table 4.2: Ward Consultation Projects – Ward Dates & venues

Ward	Date, Time	Venue, Postcode
Devonshire	29 <sup>th</sup> Oct, 6-8pm	Crown & Anchor
Langney	25 <sup>th</sup> Oct, 10-12am	Shinewater Primary School, BN23 8ED
Meads	05 <sup>th</sup> Nov, 6-8pm	Meads Hall, 77 Meads Road
	17 <sup>th</sup> Nov, 6-8pm	St Saviours Church Hall
Old Town	29 <sup>th</sup> Oct, 10-12am	Victoria Baptist Church, Eldon Road
	12 <sup>th</sup> Nov, 6.30-8.30pm	Victoria Baptist Church, Eldon Road
Ratton	8 <sup>th</sup> Nov, 10-12am	Church Hall, St Mary's Decoy Drive
Sovereign	21 <sup>st</sup> Oct 6-8pm	Sov Harbour CC, BN23 6JH
	1 <sup>st</sup> Nov, 11-1pm	Conqueror Hall, Kingsmere
St Anthony's	21 <sup>st</sup> Nov 6-8pm	Langney Community Centre
Upperton	27 <sup>th</sup> Oct 5-7pm	Emmanuel Church, BN21 1LQ
Youth Board	8 <sup>th</sup> Nov, 1-3pm	Willingdon School

## Proposed further community engagement

Our engagement model recognises that not everyone has the time, resources or confidence to attend formal consultation events. We will therefore meet people where they already are – both physically and digitally. We plan to build on our community engagement strategy and deliver against ambitious targets for reaching an even wider audience.

Engagement activities being planned for 2026 include:

- Additional ward workshops.
- Outreach in trusted spaces such as shopping centres, cafes and health clinics.
- Family-friendly pop-ups with childcare and small creative activities designed around the questions, "What makes Eastbourne great? What could make it even better? And What resources do you need to make that happen?"
- Additional episodes of our community podcast highlighting the challenges and great work happening in the neighbourhoods around the town. Building creative listening tools such as story circles, and short voice-note recordings capturing ideas in people's own words without the need for formality.

- Short films and photovoice projects highlighted on our website and social media content.
- Participatory budgeting, allowing residents to propose and vote on small local projects and grants.
- Visible pilot projects such as pop-up craft hubs, youth sport events, and short skills workshops to demonstrate immediate benefits.
- Consideration of a new pilot Citizen's Assembly which will bring people together.
- Workshops with specific focus groups, including Eastbourne's Disability Inclusion group and a Community Arts group working extensively with disadvantaged and unrepresented residents.
- On-going presentations on the work of the board and the PiPP to community groups and wider audiences in the town and beyond. We want to show that Eastbourne is an exemplar Town for the PiPP.
- Young people will also have a voice in shaping Eastbourne's future, with engagement sessions delivered in partnership with East Sussex College Group, local schools, the Youth Board and other youth organisations.

## Ongoing Communications, Feedback and Learning

The Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board has, with the expertise of a local consultancy built a robust Communications Plan and has established communication channels to inform local people of its work. These include a dedicated website which is regularly updated, media briefings, press releases, social media and a trailblazing community podcast.

People have been encouraged to share their thoughts about priorities for investment in their communities and the Borough as a whole.

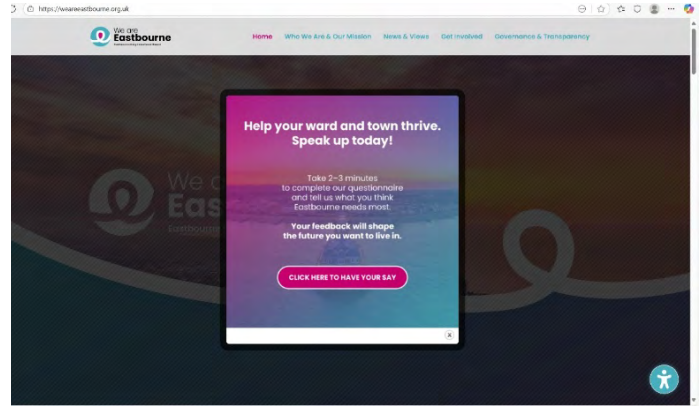
In Eastbourne, there are more than 60 Facebook community groups and pages, representing a combined following of approximately 202,000 people (including duplications). These social media platforms will also play a key role in our outreach in 2026, enabling the Board to reach deep into Eastbourne's diverse communities with regular posts and interactive content across these public social channels, minimising misinformation.

Transparency will remain central. Our communications will use simple, direct language such as "This funding is for people in Eastbourne – for you, your family and your neighbours."

We will publish regular "You Said – We Did – What's Next" updates and share data and personal stories to evidence local impact. By combining creative engagement, and quick, visible results, the Board will demonstrate that regeneration is being shaped by Eastbourne's people – ensuring everyone can share in the town's renewed prosperity and sense of pride.

This multi-channel approach will ensure that everyone – from business owners to residents in deprived wards – has access to up-to-date information and is aware of opportunities to get involved.

In September 2025 the Board launched a comprehensive website <https://weareeastbourne.org.uk>, with FAQs, biographies of the Board Members, links to key MHCLG documents, a half-hour podcast which includes a walk on the seafront, and interviews with the Eastbourne MP Josh Babarinde OBE, and the Chair of the Board Richard Garland. This has been produced by a local production company who work on global events, and we hope to build on this success by opening up future episodes as a training platform for young people to get involved with music and podcast production. In October we launched an online Questionnaire 'Have your say'!



## Ward Consultations

In September and early October 2025, the Board consulted with Councillors from the 9 Eastbourne Wards<sup>32</sup>, and agreed that workshops would be held to identify a priority list of immediate (1-6 months) community-based projects. £10,000 per ward would be made available for local community capacity and confidence-building quick-win projects (subject to governance and financial quality assurance mechanisms being in place).

Workshops, designed and facilitated by the board members, asked attending sub-groups to write down their priorities for their neighbourhood and having shared with all attendees, selected their top three. The group then voted on the top priorities, enabling the board to identify themes and trust-building "quick-wins", as well as town wide longer-term projects such as safety and awareness campaigns, greening public spaces and active heritage trails. Groups were further asked to state how these small community-based projects could be run and who would receive the monies. Where wards covered a wide socio-economic base multiple workshops were held. The breadth of ideas can be seen in Table 4.1.

The success of these workshops has been such that we have allocated a further 3 years of ward specific funding for small neighbourhood investment. The Board hopes this will enable us to build stronger ties with people and local representatives across the Borough. Fixing a variety of things, from a broken bench to gardening equipment for the local friends group, we believe

<sup>32</sup> The Sovereign Harbour Retail Park is included in the Eastbourne boundary, as is the residential area of Kingsmere. However, the residential part of the Harbour is excluded. ENB believed that it was important to seek the views of the residents living in this part of town, especially with respect to longer-term priorities.

will bring the greatest results for many people who place significant value on their street, local shops, green spaces and their neighbours.

## Residents Engagement (Citizen Forums)

The Board is considering a range of methods of residents engagement including Jon Alexander's 2022 *"Citizens: Why the Key to Fixing Everything Is All of Us"* approach<sup>33</sup>. Here, people are not just consumers or subjects but active citizens with creativity, agency, and responsibility. Organisations and institutions need to shift from serving or selling to citizens, to partnering with them as co-creators of change. Examples include the approach of Camden Council in London, where Camden Council's plan was co-created with residents, reflecting a shift from service delivery to shared leadership and citizen partnerships<sup>34</sup> and the Co-operative Group, where over 4 million members collectively shape policies, ethical sourcing, and community investments, reframing commerce as citizen engagement<sup>35</sup>

The board has held initial discussions with the New Citizen Project team and with board approval will explore the co-creation of a pilot forum in 2026.

## Eastbourne Youth Board and a Beach School

We have been working with the Head Teachers group in Eastbourne, representing the secondary schools, and have received their approval to develop a Shadow Youth Board which will address many of the same questions as the Board and where our responses differ, we will seek to understand the reasons and seek consensus where possible. An inaugural Youth Board met in November to run through the same workshop as the wards, and the students were tasked with their own immediate project – the development of an accessible "Beach School" on the seafront (with sea access for all users). Buzz Active is a water-based activity centre located on the seafront – an East Sussex County Council initiative located on Eastbourne Borough Council land, and we have begun talks to make this the centre of the school. We have allocated monies to carry out a feasibility study to identify if this community asset could be expanded to provide an exemplar centre of learning and activity. The need is clear; it is worrying that many children in wards not adjacent to the seafront rarely go near the sea or benefit from water-based leisure activities. Their understanding and use and valuing of this precious marine resource is, therefore, poorly developed. This scheme aims to turn that around.

## Foodbank and The Food Partnership

Eastbourne has one of busiest foodbanks in the UK. In addition we have six community fridges, five of which are in or near neighbourhoods ranked among the 20 percent most deprived in

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<sup>33</sup> Citizens: Why the Key to Fixing Everything is All of Us: Amazon.co.uk: Alexander, Jon, Eno, Brian: 9781912454884: Books

<sup>34</sup> We Make Camden – Connecting the citizens of Camden to make the borough we want to see

<sup>35</sup> Homepage - Co-op

England. With over 5000 children in poverty in Eastbourne this is a growing concern for our town. With the Foodbank and their Better Together event, we identified a clear need for a central hub providing support and guidance – a one-stop shop.

In addition, we have identified the need to reduce food waste even further and to improve much needed food distribution by connecting people, organisations, supermarkets, local growers, and community allotments. To build up our resilience as a town, support is needed for a framework of skills to help people improve their understanding and relationship with food. This work could include a centralised distribution hub, community kitchen and supermarket.

## 7.2 Neighbourhood Board membership and leadership

### Chair and Board recruitment

The position of chair of the Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board was advertised and those who applied went through a selection process with Eastbourne Borough Council and MP at that time. The chair role was then endorsed again by our new MP and Central Government. The Board positions were then openly advertised following a 'meet the chair' event. All applications were assessed on their merit and the applicants passion for a better Eastbourne.

### Board membership

Richard Garland is the independent Chair for the Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board. Richard is a local business owner, chartered surveyor and former Chair of Eastbourne Chamber of Commerce. The other members represent a variety of groups and organisations, including:

- Local business owners
- Eastbourne Hospitality Association
- Re-imagining Newhaven Board
- East Sussex College Group Corporation Board
- Community interest companies
- Voluntary organisations
- Town Twinning Association
- International development consultancy
- Friends of Eastbourne Seafront
- Environment Agency's Coastal Communities Group
- Leader of Eastbourne Borough Council
- Sussex Police & Crime Commissioner
- East Sussex County Council Councillor
- Local MP

We are excited to be able to broaden the board membership throughout the term of this plan to ensure this board reflects communities and neighbourhoods across our town.

## 7.3 Board operation and delivery of interventions

The distinctive roles of the Board in relation to the accountable body, Eastbourne Borough Council, are summarised in Section 8.1 below.

The Board has managed itself through 2 primary working groups; Vision & Strategy and Engagement & Communications, with representation from both in a Governance sub-group, to support the preparation and delivery of the Regeneration Plan and Investment Plan. These

groups facilitate engagement on the three investment themes and met regularly during the engagement process and preparation of the Regeneration and Investment Plan, reporting to the full Board.

These working groups are likely to remain for the first year (26/27) of funding whilst additional and supporting groups are established. The Board is proposing the establishment of a number of new sub-groups to support the delivery of investments and interventions. These groups may include the following:

**Enterprise and Innovation Group.** This group, or board, will actively manage the Eastbourne Economic Strategy and have the capacity to award grants, commission business support and training programmes, working alongside existing business and education networks (including the BID, Chamber of Commerce, Edeal and the Hospitality Association) to help facilitate business growth and inward investment, in line with the Thriving Places theme.

This Enterprise and Innovation Group may also be a conduit for the creation of a Town Wealth Fund. An annual fund to support this element of the PiPP over the next 4 years has been included in the Investment Plan. An option being considered is to establish this group as a Community Interest Company (CIC) with all profits being recirculated and having the ability to raise additional funds, co-create and match fund with private organisations. Funding will be from the Economic Eastbourne budget.

**Community Funds Group.** This group will manage the invitation of new project ideas, produce a funding prospectus for bidder guidance, and assess bids to support the delivery of locally owned and supported projects across the 8 interventions. It will also manage the legal, financial and delivery monitoring considerations of awarded funds. This will be in line with the local empowerment and stronger communities themes. The Board will monitor the overall Pride in Place funding and grants programme and have oversight of the request for proposals. Funding for these community projects is covered by the investing in themes, People, Community, Experience and Natural Eastbourne.

**Citizens Forum/ Assembly Group.** Following full board approval, this group, in conjunction with our MP and Council, would lead a pioneering and exemplar participatory process to centre the residents of Eastbourne in allocating funding. Working alongside the Community Funds Group to ensure that local residents are informed and involved in shaping local priorities and bringing their input and ideas into the process. A cost for the establishment and inaugural pilot running of this forum has been provided in the Investment Plan.

**Youth Group (Shadow Board).** The Board is working in partnership with the local secondary schools head teachers group to firmly establish a Youth Shadow Board, building capacity and sharing decision making processes with young people.

These new groups will work in collaboration and provide regular feedback to the full Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board. In terms of group recruitment, the Board will look to reach out to new individuals, businesses, communities and networks to encourage applications from people with suitable drive, skills and experience to lead and participate in these groups.

We are assessing the requirements for office space and management support for the work of the PiPP as well as these proposed groups. We have also allocated both revenue and capital monies to setting up a support office. We have identified space in the town centre with office accommodation and meeting rooms.

We also expect to recruit a project officer to assist with the delivery of the community funding group and youth group work. In addition, we also envisage bringing in administrative support for the board's day to-day work, including communications, engagement and governance.



## Section 8

# Governance

## 8.1 Governance Arrangements

### Role of the Board and Eastbourne Borough Council

The roles of the Board are to:

- Champion Eastbourne at every opportunity and have a strong natural passion for the Town.
- Develop and agree Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board Regeneration Plan Vision for the next 10 years and the first 4-year Investment Plan, in conjunction with the local community.
- Co-ordinate resources and consult with stakeholders.
- Work closely with local people to consult and engage with local residents, businesses and organisations throughout the delivery of the Investment Plan.
- To monitor the progress, milestones, budget, risks and issues throughout the delivery of the Investment Plan.
- To celebrate the achievements of the investments.
- To provide regular updates and reporting to MHCLG.

Eastbourne Borough Council<sup>36</sup> has a major role in the short-term with the Pride in Place programme. Its key roles are as follows:

- Being the accountable body for funding and executing plans.
- Providing a secretariat function for the Board.
- Being the main point of contact with MHCLG.
- Coordinating the submission of monitoring and progress reports from all delivery partners and project managers.
- Leading on the preparation and submission of performance reports requested by MHCLG.

### Meetings and Administration

The Board meets every quarter, or more frequently as and when required, to make key decisions and monitor the delivery of Eastbourne's Regeneration Plan and Investment Plan. A quorum of 8 must be present at any meeting for decisions to be taken. Each non-statutory Board member has been provided with a name@weareeastbourne.org email address so a clear record of discussions, decisions and communication is recorded.

A Secretariat from Eastbourne Borough Council will support the Board. The Secretariat will oversee delivery of the Investment Plan and the various interventions on a day-to-day basis, co-ordinate and facilitate meetings, co-ordinate production and monitoring of the Investment Plan and associated actions and provide other support as required.

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<sup>36</sup> Details of the entity that will replace Eastbourne Borough Council at the end of 2026 are unknown at this stage

All decisions will be by consensus unless a member requests a vote. In this case all members present at the meeting in question will have one vote. In the case of a tie the Chair will have the casting vote.

## Relationship with stakeholders

The Board has undertaken extensive consultation with local stakeholders and communities to ensure their priorities are reflected in the Regeneration and Investment Plan. This consultation and engagement will be an ongoing process throughout the 10 years of the Pride in Place Programme. Examples of these consultations include:

- Partnerships with local organisations, e.g. Eastbourne Foodbank and the Eastbourne Food Partnership.
- Working with the local authority and local elected representatives.
- Continued consultation programming, including further ward workshops, face to face and online.
- Co-creation of consultation workshops with disability, arts and food partnership groups
- On-going consultation with neighbourhood 'friends' groups.
- Engagement through social media / We Are Eastbourne.
- Establishment of a Youth Board in conjunction with the Borough's secondary schools. An inaugural meeting took place in November 2025.
- On-going business questionnaire to reflect emerging priorities and changing feelings.
- Production and co-creation of community podcasts. Episode 1 was launched in August 2025.
- On-going and planned communications strategy, including informing via social media channels

## 8.2 Programme management principles

The Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board will ensure that the PiPP will be managed in line with the Nolan Principles and the standards expected for projects and proposals as outlined in Managing Public Money (regularity, propriety, value for money and feasibility).

## 8.3 Investment appraisal and approval process

For projects seeking investment from the Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board’s PIPP funding allocation from MHCLG, it is proposed to have a two-stage transparent and consistent application process, initially with projects being outlined in an Expressions of Interest format. This will involve an initial ‘Gateway’ criteria assessment which all project applications must pass to be considered for selection (i.e. eligibility assessment). For example, project proposals must demonstrate they:

- Will be delivered by specific deadline.
- Respond to a need identified in the Eastbourne Regeneration Plan.
- Will make a meaningful contribution to the achievement of the Eastbourne Regeneration Plan vision and objectives.
- Will, in most cases, be delivered by a legally constituted organisation that can receive public funds.
- Will be delivered in line with subsidy control requirements.
- Fall within the parameters set for the Eastbourne Regeneration Plan.

Projects passing the Gateway EOI assessment should then complete a more detailed application form. The application form and scoring evaluation system needs to be developed and clearly communicated to potential applicants. These will be informed by HMT’s Five (Business) Case Model<sup>37</sup> as outlined below among others.

Smaller community projects that require smaller sums could be grouped and ‘packaged’ in a ‘Community Chest’ type approach. A more streamlined application and appraisal process will be developed and applied, whilst ensuring the necessary transparency and due diligence requirements are met.

Category	Possible criteria/weighting factors
Strategic case	The project will deliver against at least one of the 3 Pride in Place strategic themes and intervention categories.
	Degree to which application meets identified local priorities (to be determined through community consultation process) and strategic case for change (detailed in 10-year vision).
	Extent to which the project has clearly evidenced, strong local support
	Proposal fits in relation to national, regional and local policies, strategies and plans.
	Project has clear and concise spending objectives which are SMART and will deliver against specific output and outcome categories (all outputs and outcomes need to be realistic and supported by a clear and convincing explanation of how these have been estimated and how they will be delivered).

<sup>37</sup> Business case guidance for projects and programmes - GOV.UK

Economic case	Scale of likely impact of project delivery on target market, taking account of realism of proposed specified outputs and outcomes.
	Linkages with other local strategic programmes and potential to act as a catalyst for further investment.
	Cost benefit analysis (value for money assessment).
	Strategic Added Value (SAV) - not all benefits that accrue to the project can be readily quantified in Pride in Place output and outcome terms. This assessment criteria is therefore a measure of the extent to which the project will provide non-tangible, but meaningful SAV contributions to the achievement of the identified local Eastbourne priorities.
	Legacy considerations.
Financial case	Evidence of costs provided being accurate and that capital and revenue costs are eligible.
	Leverage and value for money assessments (the level of contribution to priority outcomes in relation to Pride in Place funding sought) and the amount of match funding or leverage proposed to maximise impacts.
	Additionality - extent to which the project demonstrates the added value of Pride in Place funding, providing evidence that it could not be delivered at the scale required without this funding and that match funding has been secured.
Management case	Comprehensiveness of identification of delivery risks, mitigation processes and proposals and contingency arrangements. Risk rating that the project will be delivered by deadline – sensitivity and critical success factor analysis.
	Appropriateness and realism of the key milestones plan for the implementation of the project. Assessment of applicant project delivery experience and capacity, necessary approvals, procurement, etc.
	The comprehensiveness and appropriateness of the project monitoring and evaluation strategy to monitor and measure proposed Pride in Place outputs, outcomes and SAV.
Commercial case	Demonstration that a range of options to deliver the intended objectives have been considered and rationale as to why the chosen model has been selected.
	Detailing how the project will be procured competitively within current regulations for public sector funds procurements.
	Consideration of risk in the design, build, funding and operational phases of the project.

Eastbourne Borough Council, as the Accountable Body, will ensure that the due diligence and fraud risk checks are carried out, grant agreement contracts put in place, and that there is a clear reporting process for monitoring the progress of projects they have funded and ensuring that MHCLG monitoring and reporting requirements are met.



# Section 9

# Assurance

Eastbourne Borough Council as the Accountable Body will have regard to the statutory guidance on best value standards and interventions under Section 26 of the Local Government Act 1999 and will ensure that the funding from Government will be used only for the intended purposes.

In addition, all spend relating to this funding will be carried out in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules which state that all procurement carried out by the Council must achieve best value. This will be conducted with the support and guidance of the Council's S151 Officer, as required.

## **Addendum February 2026.**

**As a part of MHCLG's endorsement process several clarifications were submitted. These were in the form of questions and answers provided by the board on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026.**

### ***Q1) Tell us how you have developed your indicative spend forecast and why it is important for spend to occur in these years?***

A1) We have identified a detailed programme of priority projects for the first four years. This has been informed by in-depth data analysis, alongside our extensive engagement and consultation programmes with our communities. To maintain confidence in the Pride in Place Programme, it is important to initiate early implementation of these priorities where possible. Spend in these years is currently indicative, and will be reviewed and refined during 2026/27. We do not expect the major goals and key priorities to change significantly, although balance between projects may be adjusted over time as implementation is progressed.

### ***Q2) Tell us how your Neighbourhood Board will identify and select specific projects for investment across the first investment period?***

A2) For projects seeking investment from the Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board's PiPP funding allocation from MHCLG, it is proposed to have a two-stage transparent and consistent application process, initially with projects being outlined in an Expressions of Interest format. This will involve an initial 'Gateway' criteria assessment which all project applications must pass to be considered for selection (i.e. eligibility assessment). For example, project proposals must demonstrate they:

- Will be delivered by specific deadline.
- Respond to a need identified in the Eastbourne Regeneration Plan.
- Will make a meaningful contribution to the achievement of the Eastbourne Regeneration Plan vision and objectives.
- Will, in most cases, be delivered by a legally constituted organisation that can receive public funds.
- Will be delivered in line with subsidy control requirements. This is normal due diligence for Eastbourne Borough Council and whilst it does not assume a clearly identified risk of "subject capture", it permits Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board to monitor and manage any appearance of bias towards institutions that may already have significant experience and expertise who tend to win competitive bids for relevant work. This will help to ensure continued public trust in the programme.
- Fall within the parameters set for the Eastbourne Regeneration Plan.
- Declare any potential conflicts of interest ahead of selection, alongside proposed means of addressing these.

Projects passing the Gateway EOI assessment should then complete a more detailed application form. The application form and scoring evaluation system needs to be developed and clearly communicated to potential applicants. These will be informed by HMT's Five (Business) Case Model, among others.

Smaller community projects that require smaller sums could be grouped and 'packaged' in a 'Community Chest' type approach. A more streamlined application and appraisal process will be developed and applied, whilst ensuring the necessary transparency and due diligence requirements are met.

Conflicts of interest will be managed utilising the Council's Conflict of Interest policy. Any awards to the local authority, if they occur, will be evaluated and approved in the same robust and fair process as outlined above.

**Q3) Tell us how the accountable body will carry out fund oversight functions in the first investment period?**

A3) Eastbourne Borough Council, as the Accountable Body, will ensure that the due diligence and fraud risk checks are carried out, grant agreement contracts put in place, and that there is a clear reporting process for monitoring the progress of projects they have funded and ensuring that MHCLG monitoring and reporting requirements are met.

Eastbourne Borough Council as the Accountable Body will have regard to the statutory guidance on best value standards and interventions under Section 26 of the Local Government Act 1999 and will ensure that the funding from Government will be used only for the intended purposes.

In addition, all spend relating to this funding will be carried out in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules which state that all procurement carried out by the Council must achieve best value. This will be conducted with the support and guidance of the Council's S151 Officer, as required.

**Q4) Tell us about the resources and skills available to support delivery in the first investment period?**

A4) Eastbourne is a Victorian coastal town of some 104,000 people and has an experienced Borough Council with ~850 staff to manage its wide range of demands. Particular EBC skills that will be deployed in partnership with the ENB include: legal, regeneration, finance, contract procedure, compliance manager, staff time, project managers, fund management & delivery, collaboration & partnership working.

The Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board brings together a strong mix of strategic leadership, regeneration expertise, community-facing business knowledge, digital and infrastructure capability, and a deep commitment to inclusion. Members contribute experience from awarded-status businesses, B-Corp organisations, major commercial and residential projects, youth and community development, digital connectivity and telecommunications, professional education, civic leadership, and multi-agency partnership work.

Collectively, the Board includes leaders with backgrounds in urban development, housing, construction, town centre renewal, community enterprise, the visitor economy, technology, infrastructure services, environment, public health, sport and wellbeing, local and national government. This breadth means the Board can target economic development to community

needs, linking practical delivery experience with strategic planning and governance. Presently, ENB members contribute quite staggering amount of professional in-kind time!

Specialist technical consultancy work to undertake the development of the Seafront Strategy and Economic Strategy has been employed to help develop the regeneration and investment plan.

The ENB also employs the services of a local specialist website/communications company to help manage the daily flurry of on-line and other media comments and opinions.

In 2026, the Board will look at opportunities to set up a project office within the Town Hall, which Eastbourne Borough Council has now vacated, alongside other office space options that maintain good value for money, and will employ a lean team commencing with a project/admin officer to help with project administration, management and data collection and analysis for monitoring & evaluation & learning processes.

A skills and services needs assessment to deliver the full array of future projects and programmes will be undertaken in early 2026.

**Q5) Tell us what the programme delivery funding will be used for?**

A5) We intend to use capacity funding (between £31.95k and £33.95k per annum) to cover various management costs, including:

- Managing the funds
- A part-time administrator role
- Project office, back-office setup costs, staff training & support
- Communications and press
- Events
- Office furniture, IT equipment, & other onboarding equipment.

Of these costs, £25kpa (rising to £27k) has been allocated to the part-time Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board administrator role. The remainder is indicative at this stage, as we start the process of negotiating office space and equipment and service procurement. As these costs clarify, we will update our expense forecasts.

Additionally, we have identified funding for a full-time Programme Manager (£60-£65k pa.). These costs will be drawn entirely from CDEL, rather than capacity funding.

There are currently no plans to use PiPP funding to cover secretariat costs (Local Authority staff), with secretariat time fully compensated by the Local Authority. However, as pressures mount on staff time, we will discuss how reimbursement of a proportion of staff time can be paid.

CHANGE NOTE 06/02/026: In order to correctly reflect management costs, regardless of whether they have been funded from Capacity or CDEL funds, the Management Costs Spend Forecast section has been updated to include both sets, as detailed above. In addition, to

ensure costs are balanced and reflective, the Pre-Approved Interventions Spend Forecast section has been amended to reflect the removal of the management costs that had previously been included in these amounts (as CDEL). This means that management spend forecasts have increased while intervention spend forecasts have reduced, with the end result intended to present a balanced total.

**Q6) Tell us how you will use any remaining capacity funding since your last submission and outline how you plan to use your remaining capacity funding allocations?**

A6) Total current capacity funding spend to Nov 2025 is £67.3K

Capacity funding spend to date has focused on board set up and communications, ward priority workshops and engagement activities to build capacity around the town. For 2024/25 this spend included venue hire, workshop resources and local advertising (£17.4K)

For 2025/26, spend has included the commissioning and engagement of local specialist consultancies to prepare the Eastbourne Economic Strategy, as well as build a website, social media platforms, press releases and communication strategy (£49.9K).

For the rest of 2025/26, capacity funding will primarily be used to take forward priority projects identified during ward consultations in Oct & November.

**Q7) Tell us about the local challenges you have identified as priorities to address in the first investment period and why?**

A7) "What's the point", "why bother – nothing will change" illustrates the attitudinal challenge to institutions from some that the ENB is determined to overcome by 'doing' – and showing/reporting. Challenges are deep-rooted and not always susceptible to the levers and resources at the disposal of the ENB. In particular, are housing, homelessness, work & productivity (in a tourist service-industry dominated economy). More amenable to supporting enthusiasm and increasing resource injections are skill shortages, and civic engagement and cohesion.

**Q8) Tell us about any local opportunities for improvement or investment that you have identified and wish to pursue in the first investment period?**

A8) As referenced in our answer to Objective 1, for Taking Back Control we will be deploying larger-scale, inter-linked programmatic approaches to these issues.

In addition to addressing ward priorities that have emerged through our consultations, we will do what we can for the homeless with: mobility and (accessible) transport access for older residents; hubs for homeless support; signposting to services.

We will address work, productivity & skills through: community skills hubs; digital and green skills courses; business mentoring; youth career pathways.

And we will support and stimulate cohesion through: neighbourhood volunteers; Friends groups; VCSE capacity building; micro-grants; youth volunteering.

**Q9) Tell us how you have engaged with your local community and key stakeholders to develop your Regeneration Plan?**

A9) Engagement to identify local investment priorities has already taken place in 2025.

Activities have included:

- An online survey 'Citizen's Questionnaire' inviting views on regeneration priorities from the general public. To date 350 responses have been received.
- Community workshops held through October & November with Eastbourne Borough Council Ward Councillors to gather local grassroot insights. 13 workshops have been completed to date, with over 190 people attending.
- An online business survey conducted in partnership with the Eastbourne Chamber of Commerce to understand business challenges and priorities for investment. There have been 71 respondents to date.
- Workshops with businesses and Councillors to explore future economic development growth priorities and opportunities.
- A stall at the local "Digifest" IT conference (more than 200 attendees in total at the event).
- A joint consultation event co-hosted with the Eastbourne Foodbank, engaging third sector stakeholders and community faith leaders in open dialogue about shared priorities (~150 attendees). This has led to site visits to exemplar community interventions.
- Resident and business workshops and active seafront events funded by the Board to help co-create a new Seafront Strategy in collaboration with Eastbourne Borough Council and the 'Friends of Eastbourne Seafront' group. This involved 12 events and 10 workshops, engaging over 1,500 individuals, alongside outreach events to local schools.

Our engagement model recognises that not everyone has the time, resources or confidence to attend formal consultation events. We will therefore meet people where they already are - both physically and digitally. Engagement activities being planned for 2026 include:

- Additional ward workshops.
- Outreach in trusted spaces such as shopping centres, cafes and health clinics.
- Family-friendly pop-ups with childcare and small creative activities designed around the questions, "What makes Eastbourne great? What could make it even better? And What resources do you need to make that happen?"
- Additional episodes of our community podcast highlighting the challenges and great work happening in the neighbourhoods around the town. Building creative listening tools such as story circles, and short voice-note recordings capturing ideas in people's own words without the need for formality.
- Short films and photovoice projects highlighted on our website and social media content.
- Participatory budgeting, allowing residents to propose and vote on small local projects and grants.
- Visible pilot projects such as pop-up craft hubs, youth sport events, and short skills workshops to demonstrate immediate benefits.
- Consideration of a new pilot Citizen's Assembly which will bring people together.
- Workshops with specific focus groups, including Eastbourne's Disability Inclusion group and a Community Arts group working extensively with disadvantaged and unrepresented residents.

- On-going presentations on the work of the board and the PiPP to community groups and wider audiences in the town and beyond. We want to show that Eastbourne is an exemplar Town for the PiPP.
- Young people will also have a voice in shaping Eastbourne's future, with engagement sessions delivered in partnership with East Sussex College Group, local schools, the Youth Board and other youth organisations.

These sessions have provided a strong foundation for co-creation, revealing a consistent appetite for projects that address local skills, employment, health, community wellbeing and environmental 'pride in place' initiatives.

The Eastbourne Neighbourhood Board (ENB) with the expertise of a local consultancy has built a robust Communications Plan and has established communication channels to inform local people of its work. These include a dedicated website which is regularly updated, media briefings, press releases, social media and a trailblazing community podcast. People have been encouraged to share their thoughts about priorities for investment in their communities and the Borough as a whole.

In Eastbourne, there are more than 60 Facebook community groups and pages, representing a combined following of approximately 202,000 people (including duplications). These social media platforms will also play a key role in our outreach in 2026, enabling the Board to reach deep into Eastbourne's diverse communities with regular posts and interactive content across these public social channels, minimising misinformation.

In September 2025 the Board launched a comprehensive website <https://weareeastbourne.org.uk>, with FAQs, biographies of the Board Members, links to key MHCLG documents, a half-hour podcast which includes a walk on the seafront, and interviews with the Eastbourne MP Josh Babarinde OBE, and the Chair of the Board Richard Garland. This has been produced by a local production company who work on global events, and we hope to build on this success by opening up future episodes as a training platform for young people to get involved with music and podcast production. In October we launched an online Questionnaire 'Have your say'!



**PRIDE IN PLACE**  
LED BY YOU - BACKED BY UK GOVERNMENT