

August
2021



ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATION PLAN

ST. NEOTS - FUTURE HIGH STREETS FUND

Revision H: 28 August 2021

PleydellSmithyman

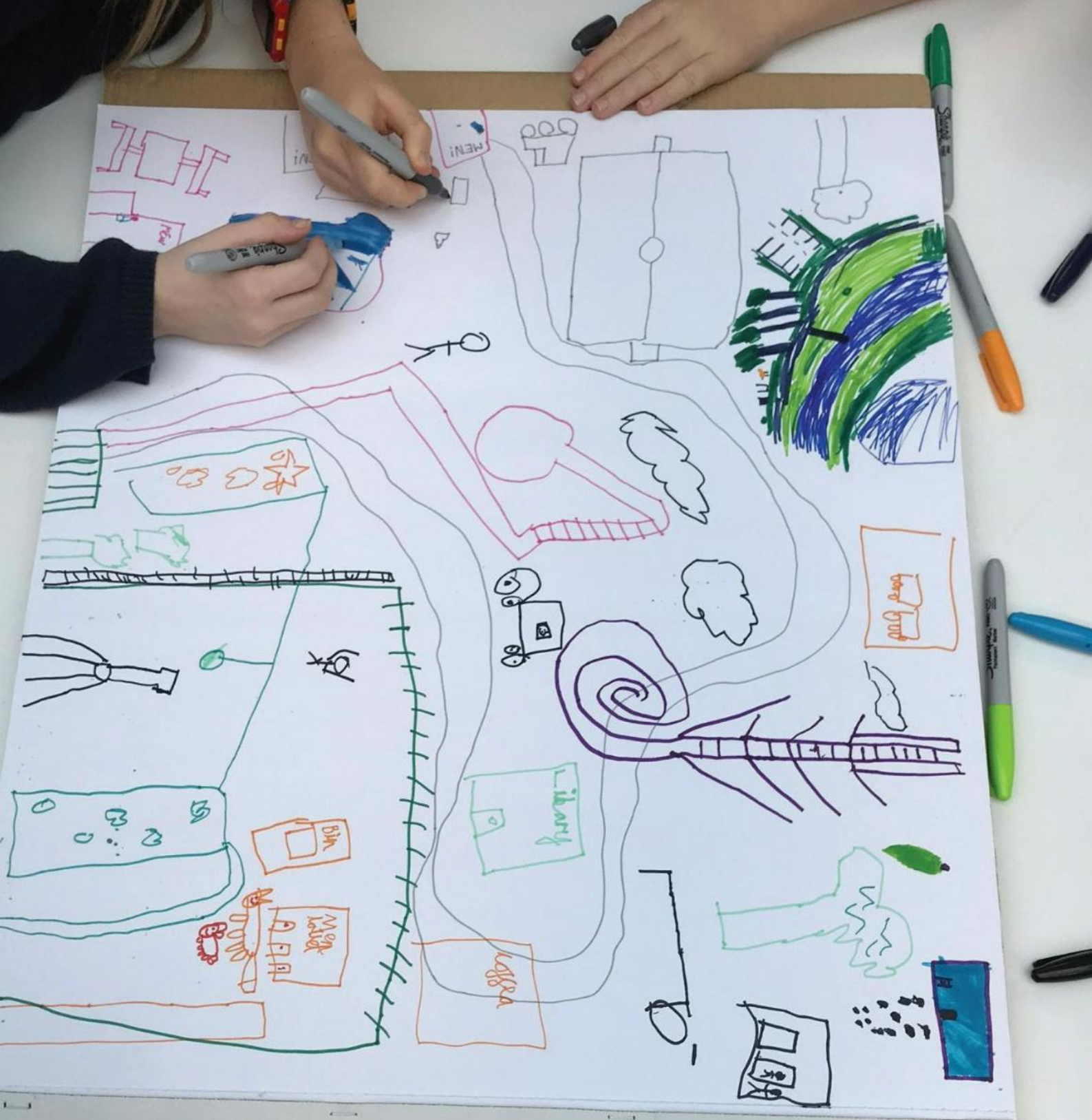
STRATEGY • **CREATIVITY** • **DELIVERY**



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1.0 BACKGROUND

The Future High Street Fund has been established by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) with the aim “to renew and reshape town centres and high streets in a way that drives growth, improves experience and ensures future sustainability. It will do this by providing co-funding to successful applicants to support transformative and structural changes to overcome challenges in their area¹.”

Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) has secured funding through the Future High Street Fund (FHSF) and a range of other sources for an ambitious £12.8 million investment programme in St Neots Town Centre. An approach to community and stakeholder engagement and wider communication is needed to support and inform this investment.

This communication and engagement plan has been produced by Pleydell Smithyman Limited and has been informed by discussions with Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC), alongside guidance from the MHCLG and engagement best practise. The plan sets out communication and engagement activities between June 2021 and November 2021.

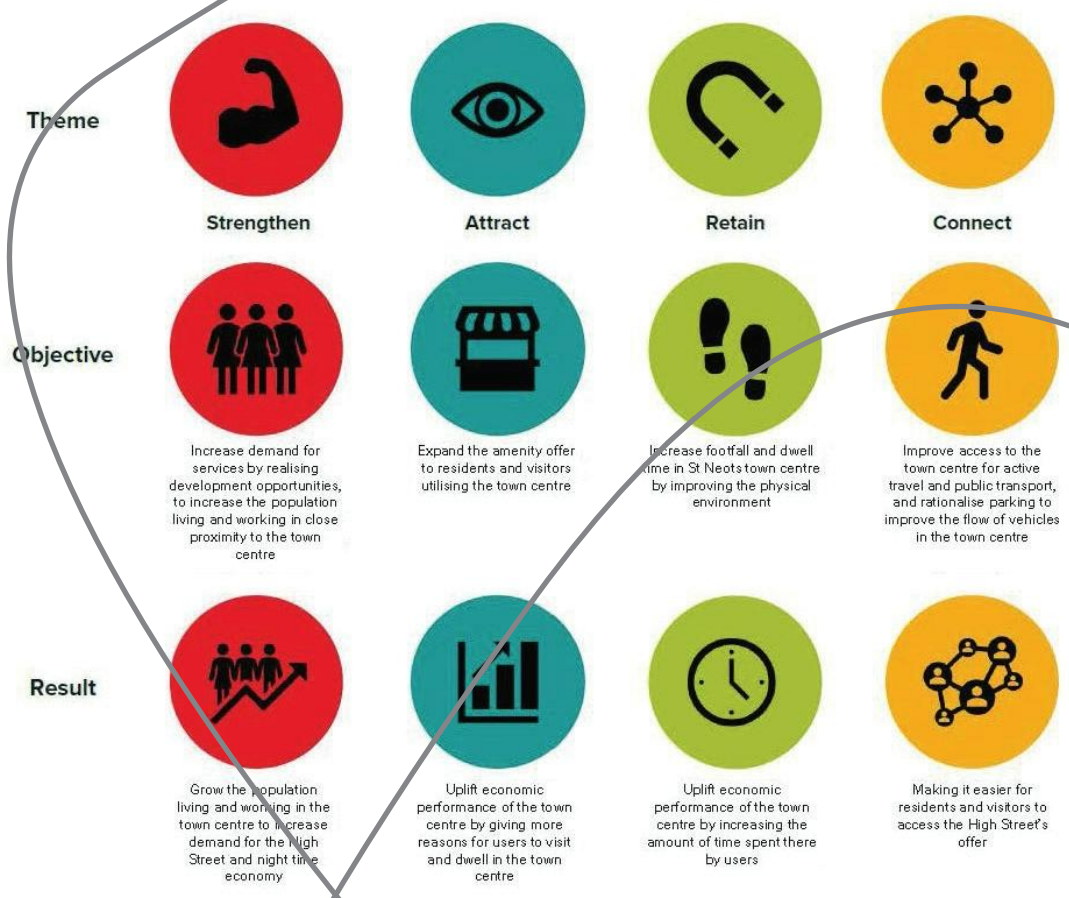
Please note this a working document and will be updated accordingly. A project programme, stakeholder map, equalities impact assessment and risk log support this work.

2.0 SITUATION

2.1 St Neots FHSF Objectives

The FHSF offered a unique opportunity to address the challenges facing St Neots town centre and enhance the area for the benefit of local people and visitors. To support the process of developing and selecting proposals, four overarching themes were identified; strengthen, attract, retain and connect. In turn these themes were developed into objectives and results as shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. FHSF Themes, Objectives and Results²



¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/future-high-streets-fund>
² St Neots Future High Street Fund Summary

2.2 Selecting and Developing Projects

An Expression of Interest (EOI) in relation to the Future High Street Fund (FHSF) submitted to the MHCLG in March 2019 outlined the current situation, the challenges facing St Neots and the strategic ambition of the town. The EOI drew on existing strategies, that will have been informed by engagement, including the St Neots Masterplan for Growth.

The successful EOI resulted in a request to submit a full business case. This process built on the St Neots Masterplan for Growth and involved collaboration with the St Neots Masterplan Steering Group and other stakeholders. During this process a large number of project ideas and suggestions were assessed and refined down to a smaller number of proposals. This process sought to ensure that all projects put forward in the full business case:

- Fit with the strategic direction of the town.
- Delivered on the St Neots FHSF themes and objectives.
- Aligned with the funding priorities and criteria of the FHSF.
- Maximise value for money for the public sector (costs relative to benefits).
- Were deliverable within the time-frame with acceptable risks.

Through engagement with stakeholders a long list of projects was developed, this was refined through further engagement, urban design studies, cost estimation and a best practise approach options appraisal. This led to six projects being selected for funding.

2.3 The Projects

The full business case process informed the selection of 6 projects, that together “will improve the high street’s accessibility, increase its attractiveness to pedestrians and cyclists and ensure strong connectivity between the High Street and the western bank of the River Great Ouse.”³ The projects are:

- Pedestrian and cycling improvements to St Neots Road Bridge.
- St Neots High Street improvements.
- Market Square improvements, including removal of car parking, improved public realm and connectivity enhancements.
- Redeveloping the Priory Quarter to provide a high-quality event and cultural space and act as an anchor for the redevelopment of the northern parts of the town centre.
- Regeneration of the Old Falcon Inn to bring it back into productive use and protect its heritage status.
- A new Waterfront Route, including a riverside promenade to create a new attraction in the town centre which utilises the riverfront of the Great Ouse for leisure and recreation. The proposed route ends at the Priory Centre, with potential for future extension southwards.

2.4 Project Delivery

The strategic investment in St Neots Town Centre will be a collaborative process lead by HDC with a range of delivery partners including Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC), Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA), the UK Government, and St Neots Town Council (SNTC). These partners are in the process of developing a delivery plan. This engagement and communication plan will seek to support, add value to and enhance that plan.

3.0 ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

3.1 Why Engage

HDC's Consultation and Engagement Strategy (2018-2022) states public consultation "is the process by which people are invited to express their views ("here are our options, what do you think?") which would then be used to help inform the Council's decision⁴."

The MHCLG Future High Street Fund prospectus outlines the need for local and stakeholder support, as well as engagement with stakeholders and the community. Whilst the projects that make up the St Neots FHSF and strategic investment have already been selected, there is still an important role for engagement to inform the next steps and projects that are developed and implemented. A well designed programme of engagement and communication will ensure that local people and stakeholders feel involved in the St Neots FHSF, can inform the vision for the future of the town and influence how the 6 projects are designed and delivered.

4.0 OBJECTIVES

4.1 Communication and Engagement Objectives

The delivery of the engagement and communication plan will add value to the St Neots FHSF project by delivering the following objectives:

Table 1. Objectives

Objective	Priorities
Understand communities and stakeholder vision for the future of the town.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with local people and stakeholders to develop a shared vision for the future of the town.• Enable communities to share their perspectives and experiences of the town.• Understand what communities and stakeholders consider to be the challenges facing the town.• Explore local people and stakeholder's priorities for the future.
Raise awareness of the St Neots Future High Street Fund and it's aspirations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inform and engage with local people and stakeholders.• Share accessible and timely information about the project.• Explain the decision making process and partners involved.• Address myths around the project selection and wider FHSF process.• Sharing the benefits of participating in engagement.
Explain the role and remit of the Future High Street Fund, the St Neots projects within in and the Government guidance that shapes the strategic approach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plain English, jargon free explanation of the fund and its remit.• Share MHCLG guidance.• Share the aspirations and benefits of the proposed approach in St Neots.
Ensure local people, businesses and organisations are involved in shaping the design and implementation of the proposed projects.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify opportunities where engagement can inform decision making.• Design approaches to engagement that enable participants to understand how their contribution will inform the FHSF project.
Keep the public, stakeholders and delivery partners updated on the progress of the investment and the projects within it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share accessible and timely information about the project.• Share time-lines.• Illustrate how the timing of engagement aligns with the wider project programme.

Objective	Priorities
Support a multi platform approach to engagement that ensures the opportunity to participate is open to all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer engagement activities across a range of platforms. • Design and deliver a COVID secure approach to engagement. • Identify seldom heard groups and deliver targeted engagement activities. • Ensure everyone has a mechanism to participate and join the conversation around the St Neots FHSF.

5.0 TARGET AUDIENCE

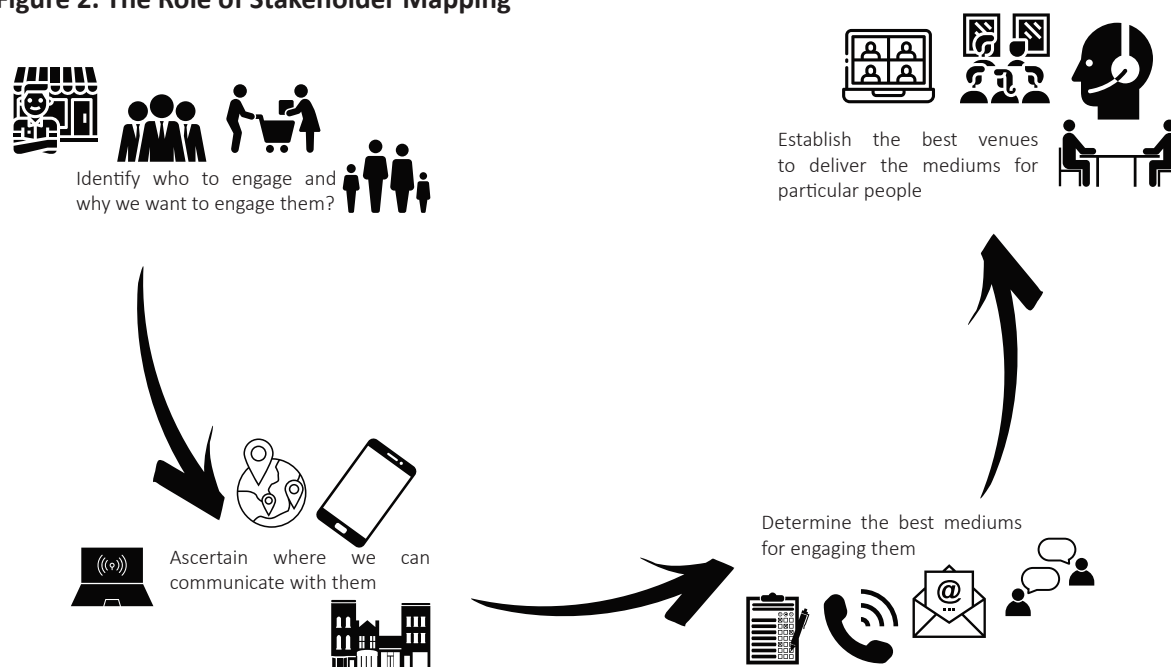
5.1 Stakeholder Mapping

Critical to a robust engagement programme is a good understanding of all the stakeholders, and planning how they need to be involved and anticipating how they will react. Stakeholders are essentially those individuals and organisations that are affected by the St Neots Future High Streets Fund, affect the St Neots Future High Streets Fund or both affect and are affected by the St Neots Future High Streets Fund. The Consultation Institute recommends using the 'Six Tests' method for the basis of identifying key stakeholders⁵:

- Test 1: Who is **directly** impacted by this decision?
- Test 2: Who is **indirectly** impacted?
- Test 3: Who is **potentially** impacted?
- Test 4: Whose **help** is needed to make the decision work?
- Test 5: Who **knows** about the subject?
- Test 6: Who will have an **interest** in the subject?

The stakeholder mapping has influenced our approach as follows:

Figure 2. The Role of Stakeholder Mapping⁶



Our approach to stakeholder mapping is based around Consultation Institute protocols and uses an interest/influence matrix which will ensure the individuals and organisations that need to have a voice in the process will have one. The mapping process also gives consideration to suitable methods of engagement for each group and supports the wider strategy for the project. It becomes the foundation of the stakeholder management system, a database which we use to store data and information relating to participants throughout the project.

Along with this plan the database will be regularly updated to include details of all correspondence, participation and any reasons given for opting not to take part. Throughout the process there will be open lines of dialogue, with all engagement and communications logged. The project will have a clear single point of contact, and partners will be encouraged to share issues and ideas during the project in both a structured and flexible manner.

We are conscious that COVID-19 and the economic down turn will mean that a range of organisations will have other priorities and we will put in the work to reach out to all stakeholders to ensure they have an opportunity to participate in a way that works for them. To achieve this aspiration, we will put a focus on sharing the benefits of engaging and make it easy and effective for them and showing how participation will inform the FHSF project.

5.2 Seldom Heard Voices

We believe in community and stakeholder engagement that enables everyone to have a voice, tell their stories and share. The phrase “hard to reach communities” can be interpreted as suggesting people or organisations don’t want to participate, rather than reflecting on the numerous barriers that have disengaged people. We prefer to use the term “seldom heard” and our approach is to put the emphasis on us and acknowledge that we need to work harder to reach this group.

This plan has been informed by, and will continue to be informed by, a stakeholder and community mapping exercise and accompanying equality impact analysis. This process ensures that we identify all people and organisations that we should be engaging with, ensures we remove or minimise disadvantages that could be barriers to participation, and take steps to meet the needs of diverse groups to build relationships. Our targeted approach to communication and management will be based around collaboration with those organisations and partners working with seldom heard groups. We will explore opportunities to work in partnership to ensure their voices are heard and inform the St Neots FHSF.

6.0 COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT PRINCIPLES

6.1 Reaching Communities and Stakeholders

All engagement and communication activity to support the St Neots Future High Street Fund will be:

- Open and inclusive to all interested parties, with particular emphasis on widening participation amongst members of the community who do not traditionally partake in engagement.
- Involving all communities, including those from wards that are not within the town centre.
- Robust and representative, ensuring that those involved in the process can evidence the value of their participation.
- Providing adequate opportunities for all interested parties to participate.
- In-line with current guidelines relating to COVID-19 and social distancing.
- Innovative in the way that engagement can take place, accessing as many of the different community and stakeholder groups as possible.
- Flexible and able to adapt to respond to participation and potential changes in the wider project.
- Clear and concise, ensuring messages are easily understood by all.
- Available in different formats, acknowledging that not everyone has the digital access or literacy to participate in online engagement. All communication will be in plain English. Any use of acronyms will be explained, and jargon avoided to ensure everyone can understand the information we are sharing and the questions we are asking.
- In line with MHCLG brand guidance.
- Consistent and accountable in relation to the aspirations of the St Neots FHSF.

- Flexible, all activity is designed to meet the needs of its specific target audience.
- Safe and welcoming, in line with current protocols around COVID-19 to ensure people feel safe and able to participate.
- Open, honest and transparent; we will share the information we can share and explain when and why there is information that cannot be made public for example if it is commercially sensitive.
- Targeted, to make sure messages reach right the people in a way that is engaging for them.
- Timely, making sure people have the time to participate and that engagement and communication activity aligns with the FHSF delivery plan.
- Two way, we will listen and respond. We will provide feedback to illustrate how communication and engagement outcomes have affected the wider FHSF project.

7.0 TACTICS

7.1 A Multi Platform Approach

There is no single communications channel that will be effective in reaching and engaging all our target audiences. It is therefore important that a range of methods are used that present information in a timely way that is targeted to its specific audience. Collaboration with stakeholders, partners and those organisations working in the community will provide insight into the best methods and approaches for engaging seldom heard groups.

7.2 Website and Social Media

The project team are seeking to develop a bespoke website for St Neots FHSF Programme, which will be a hub for communication and engagement. For the duration of our work on this project, Pleydell Smithyman will provide and upload content for the site and social media. This content will be in line with the engagement objectives and principles set out in this plan. In line with MHCLG Communications and Branding Guidance all social media activity will use the #FutureHighStreet and tag MHCLG. In addition we will also monitor social media to collate and code feedback and comments from the community and stakeholders.

7.3 Branding

All communication and engagement activity, promotional materials and content will be designed and delivered in accordance with MHCLG Communications and Branding Guidance.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

8.1 Stakeholder Launch

The success of the engagement process and the ultimate implementation of the Future High Street Fund in St Neots will be dependent on a number of partners within the Council alongside a wide range of organisations, project partners and stakeholders, working together. A workshop session will be held to launch the project and bring together partners for an open and honest dialogue. The invitation list will be taken from the stakeholder mapping with a focus on those within the high influence and high interest area of the matrix, those who are key partners to work with and engage and will enable us to consult with the wider community.

Coordinated and facilitated by Pleydell Smithyman Limited, this session will communicate with all available existing and potential partners the overall process and aims of the project, raising awareness of the process among stakeholders and clarifying suitable levels of future involvement and partnership working opportunities. The session will also start the conversation around developing a shared vision for the future of St Neots.

8.2 Community Outreach Relationship Building

We have learnt the importance of being visible to support participation and reach seldom heard groups. For example, in our work on the Neath Port Talbot Play Sufficiency Assessment we effectively moved in to the area, developing relationships with parent & toddler groups, nurseries and schools and attending appropriate events to both engage stakeholders and reach parents and carers. As COVID-19 limits are softened, our ability to be embedded in identified communities to work with them should be increased.

During the equalities and stakeholder mappings we have identified the communities we need to work with and the organisations that could support this process. This plan will be updated to reflect collaboration with these groups and engagement activities.

8.3 Questionnaire: The Future of St Neots

Our approach seeks to blend qualitative and quantitative techniques to support decision making. The questionnaire is key to our quantitative approach and will influence later elements of the engagement plan. The questionnaire will enable us to see if the community perspective aligns with the evidence base and to capture priorities for change to inform the vision and options for the future. The focus of this initial engagement will be understanding stakeholder's and the communities aspirations for the future of the town; in essence what type of town do they think St Neots should be in the future.

8.4 Your Future High Street Community Event

In our work on the Vision for the Future of Rhyl Town Centre, the most popular method of engagement was a pop up exhibition in an empty High Street shop which was attended by over 700 local people across 3 days. Whilst Town Centre footfall is not what it was, having been impacted by COVID-19, we still believe a Town Centre presence will be a key part of the engagement process and we are proposing a 2 day socially distanced exhibition, over a weekend. The exhibition will present the Future High Streets Fund, and the projects within it, alongside the thinking behind the process of project selection.

This event will feature interactive displays to capture comments and feedback, to support the short listing process and the development of a shared vision. It will provide a valuable opportunity for myth busting and raising awareness around the projects and the fund. In addition the information from the event will be made available online for those who do not wish to or cannot attend the event.

8.5 Embedded Engagement

Following the socially distanced exhibition and to support the work undertaken by the strategy and bid team, we are proposing to work in partnership with them to host and deliver a programme of embedded engagement in St Neots. The activities would be in accordance with COVID-19 protocols and could include meetings, workshops, visioning sessions and a world cafe. "The World Café methodology is a simple, effective, and flexible format for hosting large group dialogue. It is a creative process for leading collaborative dialogue, sharing knowledge and creating possibilities for action in groups of all sizes."⁷

8.6 Themed Workshops and Stakeholder Surgery Sessions

The stakeholder workshop that starts off the engagement process will be a wide ranging and general discussion on St Neots and the Future High Streets Fund. To enable more focussed and in-depth engagement we are proposing a series of 6 themed workshops, one for each project included in the Future High Street Funds Bid. Depending on COVID-19 restrictions, participation levels and the needs of stakeholders, these workshops could take place in person in a socially distanced environment, take the form of a walk-shop (in the location of the project) or digitally via a platform such as Teams or Zoom. We are also conscious that there are stakeholders who may wish to discuss opportunities, issues or concerns on a one to one basis or in more detail. We will therefore make the equivalent of 3 days available for stakeholders to book a surgery slot for a telephone or online discussion.

8.7 Focus Groups

Focus groups are a great tool for obtaining qualitative data and drilling into the issues and opportunities highlighted through desktop research and quantitative data. We are proposing to host 4 digital community focus groups to enable a more in-depth conversation with key groups / audiences identified through the questionnaire and stakeholder mapping around the four FHSF themes: strengthen, attract, retain and connect.

8.8 Myth Busting

A key part of community and stakeholder engagement is myth busting, providing consistency of information and ensuring participants have a clear understanding of the role and remit of the project. Myth busting will be built into all elements of the engagement strategy and techniques. We will undertake a myth busting campaign through social and local media, in partnership with the project team. This will include a digital 'ask me anything session' focused on the Future High Street Fund, web content including frequently asked questions and short videos for Instagram, Facebook and YouTube each focusing on a specific question / aspect of the project.

8.9 Recommendations for Future Engagement

The project and implementation of funding will benefit from continued engagement with the community and stakeholders after this initial project has concluded. At the conclusion of this first phase of engagement we will put forward recommendations for future engagement based on the capacity and resources of the Council and the project. In addition we would establish and host the first engagement activity.

8.10 The Future of Your High Street Event and Feedback

Good quality engagement includes feedback. Often people disengage from consultation because they can't see the value of their contribution and how it is used. We recommend that the Council publish the findings of the consultation on the Future High Streets Fund website and notify participants of next steps and any tangible outcomes of the consultation. Pleydell Smithyman Limited would support this process by developing an infographic which will summarise the engagement process, participation and findings. We will email or post this with a thank you note to everyone who participated in the project and opted into receiving communications. To conclude this phase of engagement we will hold a pop up The Future of Your High Street Event, this will be delivered with the wide range of partners who will support the implementation of the projects.

9.0 MONITORING & EVALUATION

9.1 Understanding Participation

Throughout this phase of engagement and communication we will constitutently and consistently monitor all activity to ensure we are reaching our target audiences and ensure we are providing equal and appropriate opportunities for participation. It is through monitoring and evaluation that we will be able to learn lessons and gain insight into community and stakeholder perceptions and aspirations, in so doing adapt the approach to engagement and inform the FHSF project.

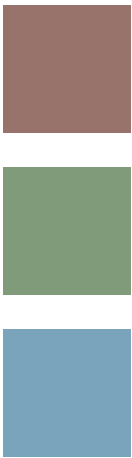
A communication log will record all activities including participation by demographics characteristic to ensure that we don't exclude any groups.

Examples of how we will monitor participation and engagement include:

- Media and social media monitoring and listening.
- Stakeholder feedback.
- Community feedback.
- Equality monitoring.
- Scrutiny and challenge from the FHSF team and partners.
- Communication log.

This plan is a live document and where necessary we will update and redesign our approach in response to the ongoing monitoring and evaluation process. It is important for the Future High Street Fund Project to illustrate that it is sharing information, listening to the community and stakeholders and responding to participant's concerns and challenges. We will monitor all communication activity from June 2021 to November 2021 via social / digital media tracking tools, feedback from participants and the communications log.

APPENDIX 1



Power and Influence

HIGH

LOW

Stakeholder Map

The diagram below is a thematic stakeholder map, based on the St Neots Future High Streets. It builds on this map with details of specific organisations and individuals. The map below uses an i engaged with but that the way we engage with them will be different.

LOW

KEEP SATISFIED

- Local businesses (not on the High Street) and their representatives / organisations that we engage with them
- Cultural and creative institutions
- Tourist attractions
- Developers and housing associations
- Local Schools, Colleges and Training Providers
- Arms-length bodies and other non-departmental government agencies
- Investors and philanthropists
- Active Travel Groups
- Local media including community based social media

MONITOR

- Emergency / public services
- One Leisure, gyms and local sports teams

Fund (FHSF) Application and MHCLG guidance. There is an accompanying stakeholder register and communication log which interest / impact matrix to focus approaches to engagement. It is not to say that those in the high interest / low impact won't be

Interest

HIGH

MANAGE CLOSELY

- The Residents of St Neots
- Jonathan Djanogly, MP
- Huntingdonshire District Council
- Cambridgeshire County Council
- Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority
- The Business Board of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (formerly the LEP)
- St Neots Town Council
- St Neots Initiative
- Neotists
- St Neots Manufacturing Club
- St Neots Masterplan Steering Group
- Cambridge Ahead
- Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerces
- Community Group and Third Sector Organisations
- High Street Businesses and Market Traders
- Travel providers e.g. bus and rail service and taxis
- Project locations e.g. The Priory Centre
- Community building and facilities in the Future High Street Fund area including Churches and Places of Worship
- East West Rail
- OxCam Arc
- Urban & Civic
- Welcome Back Fund

KEEP INFORMED

- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
- Visitors and tourists

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

PROJECT TITLE:	Community and Stakeholder Engagement to support the St Neots Future High Street Fund
ASSESSMENT COMPLETED BY:	Sarah Wheale-Smith, Associate, Pleydell Smithyman Limited
DATE OF INITIAL ASSESSMENT:	17 June 2021
REVISION:	-
REVISION DATE:	-

1.0 SCOPING

1.1 What are the aims of the project, policy, service / service change or contract?

This project sets out to ensure local people and stakeholders are communicated and engaged with about the St Neots Future High Street Fund project. This project has 5 core objectives:

- Understanding communities and stakeholder vision for the future of the town.
- Raising awareness of the St Neots Future High Street Fund and its aspirations.
- Ensuring local people, businesses and organisations are involved in shaping the design and implementation of the proposed projects.
- Keeping the public, stakeholders and delivery partners updated on the progress of the investment and the projects within it.
- Supporting a multi platform approach to engagement that ensures the opportunity to participate is open to all.

1.2 Who does the project/service/policy/contract affect? Who are the main customers (internal or external)?

This project will have a wide ranging impact on residents of St Neots and Huntingdonshire, alongside local businesses and organisations, as well as visitors to St Neots. Appendix 1 uses a stakeholder mapping matrix to identify and prioritise key groups.

1.3 What equality information is available, including any evidence from engagement and analysis of use of services?

As this project has the potential to impact all people, it needs to take into account the widest possible equality information, including, but not limited, to census data and information available through the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Open Data Portal.

During this engagement process (Engagement and Communication Plan, Section 9.0) we will monitor and collate equalities data relating to participants in engagement activity. We have identified a range of seldom heard groups and will be working with organisations that already work with these groups to collaborate on the design and implementation of our engagement activities. Seldom heard characteristics identified include:

- Disability.
- Ethnicity.



- Sexuality.
- Communication impairments.
- Communities for whom English is not a first language.
- Learning disabilities and learning difficulties.
- Mental health problems.
- Those with health issues including those shielding from COVID-19.
- People living in areas of deprivation.
- Unemployed.
- Homeless.
- People living in geographically isolated areas.
- Gypsy / traveller communities.
- Digital exclusion.
- Young people.

1.4 What does this information tell us about the equality issues associated with the service and implications for the protected groups?

Through our experience of community engagement and working with seldom heard groups we have identified a number of issues that act as barriers to participation. These included feeling disengaged and put off by the language used in community engagement, as outlined in our communication and engagement principles (Engagement and Communication Plan, Section 6.0) all communication will be in plain English. Any use of acronyms will be explained and jargon avoided to ensure everyone can understand the information we are sharing and the questions we are asking. Tools such as Microsoft's accessibility checker and in house peer review will be used to ensure information is concise and understandable.

Research also suggests that people are less likely to participate if they do not think they will be directly affected by the proposals, it is therefore important to illustrate how the design and implementation of the St Neots Future High Street Fund will impact on participants from seldom heard groups, as well as the benefits it can have for them and their communities. Seldom heard groups often feel they are not listened to, so it will be important to ensure that we explain why their participation is important and how it will impact the FHSE. We also need to ensure we feedback to these groups to explain and illustrate the impact of the conversations they have had with us.

We need to take a targeted approach to the design and implementation of engagement and communication with seldom heard groups. This includes collaborative working with organisations they trust and have an existing relationship with. We must also take our approaches to where these groups already live and meet and not expect them to come to us.





2.0 ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT: ANALYSIS AND ACTION PLANNING

Any gaps in information of provision, opportunities to promote equalities and good relationships id engagement and communication activity.

Opportunity to promote equality, good relations and/or address barriers to service/differential impact
The needs of different ethnic groups including white minorities, but also established white communities <p>There are a range of issues that can affect ethnic minorities communities, which may result in making it harder for them to engage. This could include language and cultural barriers which make people less likely to access 'official' spaces both off and online where engagement activities take place and are advertised.</p>
The needs of men, women and people who do not define their gender Including taking account of pregnancy <p>Our experience of engagement and communication suggests there is unlikely to be significant differentiation on the basis of gender.</p>
The needs of disabled people <p>There are a range of physical, sensory and learning disabilities that could affect people's desire and ability to engage. It is important to hear the views and opinions of people with disabilities to ensure that plans for the future of St Neots are not detrimental to this group and take into account the needs of people with disabilities.</p>
The needs of people with mental health issues <p>A range of mental health issues can impact on people's ability or desire to participate in engagement, it is important that we develop approaches that enable these voices to be heard.</p>
The needs of people with a religion or belief <p>It is not considered likely that there are specific barriers to responding to consultations related to a person's religion or belief.</p>
The needs of the LGBTIQ community <p>It is not considered likely that there are specific barriers to responding to consultations related to a person's sexuality.</p>
Issues from marriage and civil partnership <p>It is not considered likely that there are specific barriers to responding to consultations related to a persons marital status.</p>
The needs of different age groups, for example older and younger people <p>There may be some barriers associated with age to prevent people from responding to consultations. Young people are less likely to participate in community engagement for a range of reasons, for example they are less likely to be in 'official' off and online places where engagement is traditionally hosted and promoted.</p> <p>The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in increased use of the internet by older people and their digital literacy has grown however, it is important to ensure that lack of internet access / limited digital literacy is not a barrier to participation.</p>
The needs of people who are disadvantaged by socio-economic factors such as low incomes, skill or living <p>There is evidence to suggest that socio-economic disadvantage is likely to affect a persons likelihood to participate in engagement. This can result from a range of factors including lack of awareness, low skills levels and a belief that engagement doesn't benefit them or their community.</p>

identified need to be translated into actions and recorded below. These actions need to be delivered and monitored through all

Current action taken to address these	Responsibility	How will impact be measured
Building links and collaborating with ethnic minority community groups and leaders. Including, but not limited to Huntingdonshire Community Group (HCG), and Places of Worship.	Sarah Wheale-Smith	Monitoring of ethnic minority participation, redesign and adapt engagement if participation does not reflect the demographic data.
Disability and maternity		
	Sarah Wheale-Smith	
Collaborate with projects and organisations that support people with physical, sensory and learning disabilities. Design and implement engagement and communication activity in partnership with these organisations.	Sarah Wheale-Smith	Monitoring of disability participation, redesign and adapt engagement if participation does not reflect the demographic data.
Collaborate with projects and organisations that support people with mental health needs. Design and implement engagement and communication activity in partnership with these organisations.	Sarah Wheale-Smith	Monitoring of participation, redesign and adapt engagement if participation does not reflect the demographic data.
Places of Worship in the FHSF area will be identified and contacted through stakeholder mapping.	Sarah Wheale-Smith	
Collaborate on engagement design and delivery with local groups and associations that represent and work with the LGBTIQA community.	Sarah Wheale-Smith	
	Sarah Wheale-Smith	
Work with schools, colleges and local youth groups to reach and engage young people. Work with older people groups to reach older people including those without internet access. All activities will have an off and online presence.	Sarah Wheale-Smith	Monitoring of participation by age, redesign and adapt engagement if participation does not reflect the demographic data.
Engagement in a deprived area		
Partnership working with community groups and organisations based in deprived areas to design and deliver engagement. Sharing the benefits of participation.	Sarah Wheale-Smith	Monitoring of participation by socio-economic status (based on areas of deprivation), redesign and adapt engagement if participation does not reflect the demographic data.



APPENDIX 2

Opportunity to promote equality, good relations and/or address barriers to service/differential impact
The needs of people who live in rural areas / without access to transport
Transport barriers could prevent people from participating in engagement activities. In addition some rural areas may have limited / no broadband access which could prevent online engagement.
The needs of people who are digitally excluded
Not everyone has access to the internet and / or the skills required to participate online.
The needs of gypsy / traveller communities
A range of barriers, including cultural barriers, prevent this group engaging. To reach this group requires going to the community and inviting them to participate.



Current action taken to address these	Responsibility	How will impact be measured
<p>Provide community engagement opportunities at times when public transport is available and in areas that are easier to access via public transport.</p> <p>Outreach work in hard to reach rural areas in partnership with local community groups.</p> <p>A multi-platform off and online engagement.</p>	Sarah Wheale-Smith	Monitoring of participation by postcode to identify geographical areas to identify low and no participation areas. Extend outreach in low / no engagement areas.
<p>All activities will have an off and online presence. Provide a telephone number and free post address to support non digital contact.</p>	Sarah Wheale-Smith	
<p>Collaboration with the Traveller Liaison at Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC).</p>	Sarah Wheale-Smith	Monitoring of participation from gypsy / traveller communities.



APPENDIX 3

3.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

Identification of potential risks that may impact on the delivery and implementation of the community

Identified Risk	Likelihood (Low 1 - 5 high)	Consequence (Low 1 - 5 high)	Risk Rating
The process is insufficient to shape / support the development and implementation of the Future High Street Fund Project.	3	5	15
Low participation and engagement levels.	5	5	25
Stakeholders do not engage / participate.	5	5	25
Jargon is off putting and a barrier to engagement	3	5	15
It is hard for people to take part	2	5	10

ication and engagement plan, alongside potential mitigation methods.

Mitigation	Likelihood after control	New Risk Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A robust and realistic engagement plan designed in response to the Government Guidance on the levelling up fund and aspirations of the wider strategy. An effective communications strategy. Partnership working and collaboration with stakeholders. 	1	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will take engagement opportunities to the community, rather than hoping they will come to us, highlighting the benefits of taking part and the ways in which engagement will have an impact. We will work in partnership to design and promote opportunities to engage. We will provide a range of mechanisms for engagement. We will provide clear and honest feedback on how the engagement has shaped proposals for the future. We will monitor participation and adapt / flex the approach to engagement in response to what is and isn't working. 	2	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive stakeholder mapping. Early initial contact with stakeholders. Provide stakeholders with a range of options for engagement and participation. Highlight the benefits and impact of taking part. We will provide clear and honest feedback on how the engagement has shaped proposals for the future. 	2	10
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide clear "plain English" versions of key guidance and decision making. Work with partners to test engagement materials, questionnaires and communications. Work with stakeholders to ensure information is appropriate to the audience. Use a range of approaches for example infographics and videos to explain and share information. 	1	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will continuously ask what are the potential barriers to engagement and how we can address them. We will take engagement to communities in a number of ways including attending events and activities they participate in both online and in person. We will offer a balance of face to face and digital engagement options. We will ensure participants feel safe and that engagement is undertaken within COVID-19 protocols. 	1	5



APPENDIX 3

Identified Risk	Likelihood (Low 1 - 5 high)	Consequence (Low 1 - 5 high)	Risk Rating
COVID-19 reduces people’s desire and ability to participate	4	5	20



Mitigation	Likelihood after control	New Risk Rating
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will offer a balance of face to face and digital engagement options. We will promote the benefits of participation and the ways to take part across a range of platforms. We will ensure people are aware that they can choose how to take part. Comprehensive risk assessments and socially distancing measures will be put in place for all face to face engagement. 	2	10



APPENDIX 4

4.0 PROJECT PROGRAMME

The diagram below presents a plan for the delivery of this engagement and communication plan. The

Activity	FHSF Representatives	Invitees	June				
			7	14	21	28	5
Project Inception Meeting / Update Meetings	FHSF Project Team	-	●				
Monthly Summary Report	-	-					
Engagement and Communication Plan							
Draft Plan	-	-		●—●			
Stakeholder Mapping	-	-		●—●—●			
Engagement Database	-	-			●—●—●—●		
Equalities Impact Assessment	-	-		●—●			
Risk Assessment	-	-		●—●			
Monitoring and Evaluation	-	-					
Communication							
Launch the engagement phase	FHSF Project Team	-					
Regular updates through press releases, website / holding page and social media).	FHSF Project Team	-					
Updates to mailing list and partners.	-	-					
Stakeholder Launch							
Issue Invitations	-	-					
Stakeholder Workshop - 6 September at the Priory Centre	Council Leader FHSF Project Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> St Neots Councillors St Neots Town Council Stakeholders who submitted letters of support Key HDC Council Officers Project Partners 					
Community Outreach Programme & Embedded Engagement							
Identify Community Groups and Activities	-	-					
Issue Invitations	-	-					
Community Digital Workshop	FHSF Project Team Representative	Community Groups and Third Sector Organisations					
Embedded Engagement Activities with local groups	-	Local community groups, third sector organisations, schools and teams.					

This programme will be monitored and updated throughout the engagement phase June to November 2021.

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APPENDIX 4

Activity	FHSF Representatives	Invitees	June				
			7	14	21	28	5
Questionnaire: The Future of St Neots							
Draft community and business questionnaires	-	-			<div><div></div></div>		
Engagement Window	-	-					
Analysis	-	-					
Your Future High Street Community Event							
Event preparation and artwork development	-	-					
Communication and awareness raising	-	-					
Event (Saturday, 28 and Sunday, 29 August)	FHSF Project Team Representative	General Public					
Themed Workshops and Stakeholder Surgery Sessions							
Update for Cllr Fuller	FHSF Project Team						
Visioning Workshop	FHSF Project Team Representative	<ul style="list-style-type: none">St Neots CouncillorsSt Neots Town CouncilStakeholders who submitted letters of supportKey HDC Council OfficersProject PartnersCommunity GroupsThird Sector PartnersBusiness Sector Representation					
Workshops / Walk-shops 1 per project	FHSF Project Team Representative Project specific team members for example urban designer	<ul style="list-style-type: none">St Neots CouncillorsSt Neots Town CouncilStakeholders who submitted letters of supportKey HDC Council OfficersProject PartnersCommunity GroupsThird Sector PartnersBusiness Sector Representation					
Surgery Sessions	-	Project stakeholders or partners who request a surgery slot.					
Focus Groups							
Preparation	-	-					
Four number digital community focus group sessions	FHSF Project Team Representative	General Public					
Branding							
Meeting to develop brief based on community engagement	Council Leader FHSF Project Team	Key partners and stakeholders.					
Brand development	-	-					
Brand review meeting	Council Leader FHSF Project Team	Key partners and stakeholders.					

APPENDIX 4

Activity	FHSF Representatives	Invitees	June				
			7	14	21	28	5
Community Testing	-	General Public					
Finalise branding, brand guidance and website brief.	-	-					
Website and Social Media							
Develop holding and update pages/s within HDC website.	-	-					
Website Development.	-	-					
Launch website and FHSF social media - January 2022	-	-					
Communications							
Press Releases	-	-					
Updating holding page.	-	-					
Updates through HDC social media.	-	-					
Regularly update FHSF website and social media platforms.	-	-					
Myth Busting	-	-					
Mailing List Updates	-	-					
The Future of Your High Street Event and Feedback							
St Neots Business Event		B2B event					
Findings of engagement published on FHSF website.	-	-					
Mailing list update.	-	-					
The Future of Your High Street Stakeholder Event	FHSF Project Team Representative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> St Neots Councillors St Neots Town Council Stakeholders who submitted letters of support Key HDC Council Officers Project Partners Community Groups Third Sector Partners Business Sector Representation 					
The Future of Your High Street Community Event	Council Leader FHSF Project Team	General Public					
Analysis and Reporting							
Analysis	-	-					
Draft Report	-	-					
Final Report	-	-					

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