

2020 - 2021 Annual Report



**HIGH
STREETS
TASK
FORCE**



CHANGING
HIGH ST.

A forward look for high streets

Mark Robinson - Task Force Chair

“Alongside...
much welcomed
and significant
national investment
in infrastructure,
we need to harness
and learn from local
place leadership,
identifying the
resource gaps
that, if filled, will be
transformative

2020 has challenged all of us. In unimaginable circumstances, local communities came together to help vulnerable and isolated residents, straining businesses, and the delivery of public services we may have previously taken for granted. This makes it even more remarkable that groups of people all over England are right now planning the long-term transformation of their towns and cities- and the High Streets Task Force is proud to support many of them. As this report details, we are now well into our long-planned programme to help leaders improve their local high streets, armed with the data, research and proven approaches that will enable them to succeed.

Perhaps driven by the necessity to reimagine places in the wake of a pandemic, nobody should now be complacent about the changes happening in our towns and cities, or the potential for transformation.

Online retail has spiked, people's weekly patterns have become more centred on the local, and we're all re-evaluating what we need and want from our high streets. People are less likely to care about a favourite supermarket or clothing store within 20 minutes of their home, than they are about independent cafes, good health care, and somewhere to spend a couple of hours working that's not the kitchen or living room.

The Task Force has been tracking these recent trends and it's been great to hear from our team of Experts how councils and placemakers are leading their high streets in a new direction. There are fantastic plans around the country to put new government and private investment to work in this new landscape.

Alongside this much welcomed and significant national investment in infrastructure, we need to harness and learn from local place leadership, identifying the resource gaps that, if filled, will be transformative. Local authorities have been tasked with so much over the past 18 months and coped admirably. In many places we work with, the Task Force's first job is identifying other place leaders within the local area, and how they can be brought in more formally to place partnerships, aligning the work they're already doing.

As the High Streets Task Force picks up pace, we have an ambitious programme to directly support 70 towns through to 2021, when we'll announce another group to benefit from this range of expertise. There is an example in this report too, from Newquay in Cornwall, of how places can benefit from our online support, available to everyone. If you're involved in looking after your local high street, or just care about it and want to do more, I hope we can help. In return, we will continue to listen, learn and respond as our towns and cities carry on their evolution.

Contents

Introduction	4
Developing our Experts Register	5
Working with Local Authorities	7
Delivery of Direct Support	8
Case Study: Ellesmere Port	9
Online Resources	10
Case Study: Newquay	11
New Research on High Street Viability	12
Forward Look	13
Our Governance	14
The High Streets Task Force Consortium	15
Appendix 1 - Key Performance Indicators	17

Introduction

In our last annual report in September 2020, we detailed how the COVID-19 pandemic had impacted the development and roll out of the Task Force’s products and services. The advent of COVID-19 and the challenges it brought to high streets and society as a whole, meant fundamental changes to our planned programme of activity were required. Our pilot programme was suspended, and the Task Force pivoted to develop and offer products and support which focussed on disaster recovery and resilience.

Our second year of operation, which began in July 2020, has also been severely impacted by the pandemic, as visiting high streets in person and meeting with local stakeholders has often not been possible. However, through further reworking of our products and services, over the last twelve months we have been able to offer support virtually and in hybrid form to places across England. Shifting our offer in this way has been a significant undertaking, and it would not have been possible without the invaluable contributions of our consortium partners, and our newly convened register of Experts, Mentors and Facilitators. We’d like to thank you all for your hard work over what has undoubtedly been an extremely challenging period.

This Report provides a review of the work of the Task Force over the last 12 months. As we move into our third year of operation, we have much to look forward to. As restrictions have eased and local place leaders able to refocus on longer-term transformation, we have been able to reinstate aspects of in-person delivery, conducting visits to places across the country. Along with our Experts, we look forward to meeting as many place makers as possible through 2021-2022, and supporting those who are at the frontline of ensuring brighter futures for our town and city centres.

“The High Streets Task Force is a wider commitment to raising the skills and resources of local leaders to transform our towns and cities for many years to come”



Above: Darlington, selected for Task Force support in 2021..

Developing our Experts Register

In Quarter 1 (July-Sept 2020), we finalised our selection and contracting process with over 180 experts from across our professional body Partners: Design Council, Institute of Place Management, Landscape Institute, and the Royal Town Planning Institute.

These new High Street Task Force Experts, Mentors and Facilitators have been appointed to deliver a range of Task Force services, including workshops with local authorities and communities to explore and build local visions, mentoring for place leaders, and providing bespoke advice to help councils tackle complex issues that are blocking progress.

This specialist support is critical as it offers Local Authorities additional capacity and expertise, at a time when many are evaluating what their future high streets should look like and what local users need now.

Those appointed as High Streets Task Force Experts have at least 5 years' experience, are accredited as members of their professional body, and can have significant experience in solving complex place-based challenges relevant to their field.

In April 2021, a series of training sessions were conducted with our all of our Experts, Mentors and Facilitators. These sessions focussed on the specifics of each of the Task Force's range of products that are available, how each is delivered and can be adapted to meet the needs of each place that the Task Force supports. Some Experts have already taken the opportunity to shadow place visits to build this understanding before their first commission to support a high street, and the Task Force has tested all those on its register to ensure all aspects of the respective products are fully understood. Having these individuals fully conversant in the Task Force offer stands us in good stead as we continue to ramp up our delivery of support across the country.

Our register of over 180 professionals have started supporting towns with specialist and cross-disciplinary expertise, increasing their capacity for change.



Above: High Streets Task Force Experts, Mentors and Facilitators

The areas of expertise represented by Experts, Mentors and Facilitators appointed from each body are:

Design Council

- Civic activity, engagement and participation
- Diversity and inclusive design
- Healthy placemaking, social and environmental sustainability
- Sustainable building design, whole life carbon and meeting UK's net zero target
- Urban design and streets
- Architecture
- Repurposing buildings
- Future trends insight
- Future proofing town centre environments
- Pedestrian flow and movement
- Service design and user research

Royal Town Planning Institute

- Town centre/high street planning- general- all uses and mixes (including retail, commercial and residential, leisure, tourism, art and culture)
- Town centre / high street assessments including town centre and primary shopping area designations, boundaries review, range of uses, sequential approach, PDRs and application of policy
- Planning for heritage and conservation/historic environment in a town centre/high street context
- Urban regeneration, urban design and place making (when public realm/green space is not a major focus)
- Development and regeneration frameworks including masterplanning (when not anchored by public realm/green space)
- Transport and infrastructure planning and management
- Participatory planning (including community and stakeholder engagement)
- Assessments and modelling including modelling/ visualisation of visions/plans (via data insight and analytics)
- Environmental planning, sustainability and climate change resilience
- Health and well-being planning

Institute of Place Management

- Place leadership and visioning
- Place marketing and branding
- Stakeholder engagement, communication and management
- Governance, place management partnership structures (inc. BIDs)
- Place activation (events, festivals, arts and culture, markets, pop-ups)
- Consensus building and conflict resolution across councils, community and business
- Place analytics and dashboards (integrating and sharing sources of data)
- Place-based approaches to economic, social and other challenges (e.g. homelessness)
- Identifying local priorities for improving vitality and viability
- Identifying and communicating complex trends and factors affecting town centres and high streets

Landscape Institute

- Design – public realm
- Masterplanning (including visioning)
- Visualisation and photography
- Landscape assessment
- Sustainability, climate change and resilience
- Community engagement (including co-design)
- Inclusive design Landscape construction (& Implementation)
- Landscape engineering
- Management of landscapes or parks management or people/visitor management
- Procurement and tendering
- Water Management (including Water Sensitive Urban Design & SuDS)

Working with Local Authorities

In March 2021, following our work with 14 pilot towns, we announced the first group of 70 Local Authorities to receive direct support from the Task Force. To help target support where it will have the greatest impact, the Task Force used a selection criteria which includes regional indicators of deprivation and inequality alongside research on the impact of COVID-19 on high street retail.

The first group of 70 local authorities is listed below. Visits to these areas commenced in April 2021, and will continue until mid-2022, when a further list of local authorities will be nominated.

As we have been keen to stress throughout the process, this is not just about support for 70 locations alone. The High Streets Task Force is a wider commitment to raising the skills and resources of local leaders to transform our towns and cities for many years to come. For every high street we support directly, we hope and expect that many more will benefit from the approaches and learning gained locally.

Below: a high street tour of Sheerness, with representatives of Swale Council (Sept 2021)



Cohort one selected for direct Task Force support until mid-2022 (70 locations)

Ashfield	East Lindsey	Luton	Sheffield
Barking and Dagenham	Enfield	Mansfield	South Tyneside
Barnsley	Gateshead	Middlesbrough	Southampton
Barrow-in-Furness	Great Yarmouth	Newcastle upon Tyne	St. Helens
Blackburn with Darwen	Hackney	Newham	Stockton-on-Tees
Blackpool	Halton	North East Lincolnshire	Stoke-on-Trent
Bolton	Haringey	Norwich	Sunderland
Bradford	Hastings	Nottingham City Council	Swale
Brent	Ipswich	Oldham	Tameside
Bristol City Council	Islington	Pendle	Tendring
Burnley	Kingston upon Hull	Peterborough	Thanet
Calderdale	Lambeth	Plymouth	Torbay
Corby	Leeds	Portsmouth	Tower Hamlets
Country Durham	Leicester	Redcar and Cleveland	Wakefield
Darlington	Lewisham	Rochdale	Walsall
Derby	Lincoln	Rotherham	Wigan
Doncaster	Liverpool	Scarborough	Wirral
		Sefton	Wolverhampton

Delivery of Direct Support

From Quarter 4 (April-June 2021) provided a welcome milestone as the Task Force was able to meet for the first time, at first virtually, with our first group of directly supported locations. These initial 'Unlocking your Place Potential' workshops (UYPP) were delivered to understand each place's unique challenges and opportunities, offer Expert input, and convene stakeholders in a safe environment as the vast majority were yet to return to shared spaces and workplaces.

To the end of June 2021, the Task Force delivered a total of 19 UYPP meetings and virtual visits with supported locations. As we scale up this delivery, at time of publication, the Task Force has now completed over 30 visits since the reopening of high streets (April 12, 2021). This product, with an initial workshop and high street tour, is the gateway to subsequent Task Force support, identifying the specific challenges the Local Authority is facing, and 'prescribing' follow on products and services based on Expert assessment.



Above: a scene from Chiswick Flower Market, a High Streets Task Force best practice case study

“We saw a really good representation from across the area and very positive feedback from our partners, with a keen interest for future collaboration...we look forward to continuing to work with the Task Force”

Adam Bryan (Chief Executive, South East LEP)

An important pre-cursor to the UYPP visits, and something which provides our Experts with a comprehensive introduction to a place prior to undertaking their visit, is the 'Transforming your High Street' (TYHS) report. In Quarter 4, TYHS reports were produced for 138 Local Authorities. These reports provide an assessment of unsuccessful submissions to the initial stage of the Future High Streets Fund, combining this with an overview of secondary sources of information including the Indices of Multiple Deprivation and the Consumer Research Data Centre. By combining these data, we were able to establish an indicative baseline position for transformation in each place.

Diagnosis and prescription of support for high street transformation

Following the initial UYPP Expert diagnosis, the Task Force delivered 12 Expert and Mentor visits in Quarter 4. These visits provide a designated Expert or Mentor (or, if appropriate, a team) to assist with specific technical or local collaborative issues, ensuring that support is being directed exactly as required. As the programme delivers to more locations this support will also grow and provide insight into the key themes for developing high streets in England.

In June, we delivered our first Developing Place Leaders workshop. This one-day session will be delivered to all 38 LEPs across the country. South East LEP was our first recipient, and feedback from the session was overwhelmingly positive.

The final stage of direct support is our workshops. In Quarter 3 (January-March 2021) we delivered our Developing a Shared Vision workshop to 3 of our pilot local authorities. Based on feedback received, and our partner Design Council's advice, it was determined that an alternative model of delivery would be necessary to ensure that the product meets the needs of participating Local Authorities most effectively. As a result, the Task Force is developing proposals for new support that we plan to begin in late 2021. We also hope to deliver our first Place Making Programme workshops in the same period.



Case Study

Ellesmere Port: the challenge for a proud industrial area

Snapshot

Ellesmere Port is a town with a large local population and a proud industrial area, home to business such as the Vauxhall Motors manufacturing plant and those serving the growing hydrogen economy. The town was one of our Pilot locations, and Task Force support has allowed the team in Ellesmere Port to make real progress in addressing their challenges in an effective way.

Despite its strengths, Ellesmere Port doesn't have a strong place brand and faces challenges to increase footfall, encourage empty units back into use, and improve its public realm. Like many places recovering from COVID-19, it needs to ensure that it offers many reasons for residents, visitors and businesses to return to the town centre.

Working with Cheshire West and Chester Council and local stakeholders, the High Streets Task Force identified a lack of local partnerships and collaboration as a barrier to transformation in the town. All agree that developing these will enable a better quality vision to be developed, and ensure that investment in Ellesmere Port delivers the most for its community.

Task Force Support

The Task Force visited Ellesmere Port 7 days before lockdown began in England, on 16th March 2020. Its Experts met with local councillors, businesses and the community, and continued to deliver a range of ongoing support over the following 6 months, designed with the local team to help transform their efforts.

Comprehensive support from the Task Force has included: a dashboard of local footfall data and social media sentiment to enable better analysis and decision making; a review of its local masterplan and spatial planning to help make it more ambitious and ensure it serves everyone; a workshop to develop a shared vision for the area; and, crucially, consultation and advice on developing partnership working in Ellesmere Port.

Vital capacity building and new partnerships

As a result of support received, the Council is now developing a town-wide partnership, engaging closely with the community and businesses, to deliver on the ambitions and vision for Ellesmere

Port. By coming together, they will drive meaningful collaboration, to spark innovation and creativity and to be a recognisable beacon for change in the town.

As well as capitalising on the impetus and expertise received from the High Streets Task Force in the town centre, Cheshire West and Cheshire Council will now review plans across the local authority to ensure that place leadership and partnership are embedded throughout its work.

“(The High Streets Task Force) unlocked my perceptions of the primary issues, and future opportunities for Ellesmere Port... and will be instrumental in developing future plans for the town centre”

Online Resources

As well as direct Expert delivered support, the Task Force has continued to provide our online training and resources which is open and accessible to all involved in transforming high streets, via highstreetstaskforce.org.uk. Over 250 resources were created and collated by the Task Force research team and added to the online resource library, each with a summary to make clear their relevance to place makers. This brings the total number in the Resource Library to over 350, including best practice guides, diagnostics, and our 'evidence on a page' series.

Developing place analysts and understanding local trends

Working with our Partners Springboard, the Developing Place Analysts course was delivered to 5 cohorts, with delegates selected either on the basis of their UYPP visit, or as Task Force footfall dashboard users' expressing an interest in further understanding the use of data and trends. In many cases this course has enabled local authorities to better understand the footfall data provided to them by the Task Force. We have supplemented this learning support focus with Understanding Place Data and Understanding Place Sentiment webinars and begun to add Partner-produced online learning relating to their specific specialisms, with Landscape Institute's 'Delivering change through landscape' webinar the first example. Each of these resources are communicated on a monthly basis to the Task Force's network of over 3,000 online subscribers.

Footfall dashboards

Our dashboards, that allow places to monitor footfall and sentiment information in order to better understand the performance of their town centre or high street, have now been provided to over 400 places. Each dashboard provides a snapshot of footfall patterns throughout the year which places can add to by engaging in our footfall counting programme, or by plugging in existing Springboard automatic footfall counts where locations have them. As evidenced in the case study on Newquay, overleaf, these dashboards are a valuable tool to support place strategies and stakeholder engagement and we will continue to build the number of dashboard accounts over the coming year.





Case Study

Newquay: looking to the future, with online Task Force support

Snapshot

Drawing on support from online guidance and resources published by the High Streets Task Force and available to all, the newly formed Newquay Town Team is now working to deliver a development framework that will help further collaboration and investment in the town.

“Our experience of working with the High Streets Task Force has been inspirational, and has encouraged us to look at places through the perspective of their footfall data. I would highly recommend that anyone involved in the transformation of urban centres takes a look at the Task Force online”

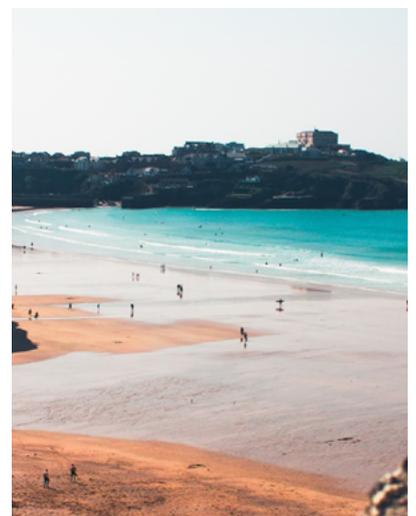
Jennifer Dixon (representative, Newquay Town Team)

During 2020, stakeholders in Newquay collaborated to form the Newquay Town Team, which aims to build on the strengths of the town, including its natural assets and strong post-lockdown footfall, to deliver benefits for the local community.

Analysing footfall and future regeneration strategies

Drawing on support from expert online guidance and resources published by the High Streets Task Force, the Town Team is now working to deliver a development framework that will help further collaboration and investment in the town. The Newquay Team accessed support including webinars, a footfall dashboard, and the Task Force Resource Library, which are part of the online support available for free to all high streets and place leaders around the country. The Town Team were able to achieve a range of outcomes that have pushed forward transformation efforts in the town, including develop their local governance arrangements and analysing footfall data to understand what demands on and off season footfall are putting on local businesses and amenities.

Newquay utilised a Task Force approach to evaluating place strategies, the ‘4Rs’ framework of reinventing, restructuring, rebranding and repositioning, to focus their local discussions with stakeholders about priorities for the town. Building on this work, Newquay is now creating a development framework to ensure projects meet local needs, to build on the recent surge in summer visitors and make Newquay more resilient throughout the year.



Above: view across Porth Beach, Newquay

New Research on High Street Viability

COVID-19 has focused many, including the High Streets Professional, Research and Data Group, on understanding the impact of restrictions, on high streets and how we use them. However, a longer-term challenge still exists to understand what factors create viable and sustainable high streets that serve their communities of users well? Traditional measures of viability focus upon the ability of a location to generate sustained income and investment – and rely on indicators such as property prices and yields. However, these often don't pose important viability questions regarding how high streets meet the changing needs of users, be they residents, workers, consumers, investors, tourists or other place stakeholders.

Our Viability study is now nearing completion and will be published in Year 3. It will enable us to better understand the medium and longer-term viability of high streets in the post-pandemic future from a multifunctional perspective (significantly widening the focus from retail and property).

“How can high streets meet the changing needs of users, be they residents, workers, consumers, investors, tourists or other place stakeholders?”.



High street viability study

Published in October 2021, the High Streets Task Force high street viability study is researched and authored by its Professional, Research and Data Group (PRDG).

The study will:

Provide a critical review of the concept of viability, and its relationship to vitality, in order to establish how conceptualisation and measurement may need updating to reflect the changing nature of the high street.

Build on consultation with our PRDG group and wider stakeholder network, to establish a useful means of operationalising and measuring high street viability through the production of a simple tool which can be used by place managers and stakeholders.

In addition to the viability study, we will produce our annual review of footfall, which we expect this year more than ever will be under scrutiny, particularly as we move beyond restrictions and people return to our high streets.

Forward Look

Having completed its first 6 months of direct support provision, the High Streets Task Force continues to develop its offer, taking on board recommendations from recipients of Task Force support and the Experts that have been working with them. Year 3 will see us return to full in-person delivery, which in itself should provide a boost in terms of the impact that the Task Force will have on helping places recover and readjust following the pandemic, and regenerate for the long-term.

Over the next 12 months, we'll complete delivery to our initial group of 70 places, with our second and final group engaged from Year 4 onwards. Over the period from July 2021 to end of June 2022, the Task Force will have delivered approximately 50 UYPP visits, followed by an additional ~50 Expert or Mentor visits. Select Local Authorities will then proceed to one of our workshops, of which we'll deliver Developing a Shared Vision or Place Making Programme to a further ~40. Our work with LEPs will continue, with a further 15 engaged over Year 3.

We'll continue to provide online resources, including our Developing Place Analysts training, webinars, and our resource repository, which will become one of the largest free to access library of high street and place related information and guidance available.



Engaging younger people

The restrictions on events, festivals and social gatherings over the past year greatly impacted the anticipated delivery of our Teenage Market event programme. We were unable to introduce mitigations to tackle this, as unlike our other products and services detailed above it was not possible to deliver this product virtually.

To compound matters further, the past year has been particularly problematic for young people, as they have experienced the highest redundancy rate of all age groups and suffered a number of negative side-effects as a result, including a reduction in income and a steep rise in mental health issues.

As a result of these factors, it is imperative that young people now receive as much help and support that can be offered to them.

With restrictions now easing, we will begin our roll out of the Teenage Market across the country, which we hope will play a part in bringing younger people into our centres, whilst providing them with a tangible stake in the future success of their place.

Net Zero

Through the early stages of our work with places across the country, it has become apparent that many towns suffer from a lack of local partnerships and governance structures, and need a powerful and unique vision for change.

Often this means that sustainability has not received the attention that such a critical priority requires. We recognise that without this urgent focus to embed sustainability within local plans to 'Build Back Better', any economic and social transformation efforts will simply not prove resilient when faced with the impacts of climate change.

Net Zero (cont...)

The Task Force will be actively working to embed environmental sustainability and zero carbon as priorities for places throughout our programme over the next 12 months. Some of the key actions that we have committed to include:

[Appointment of a new Board Member to advise on sustainability](#) and the role of the Task Force in supporting Net Zero.

[The Task Force will continue to leverage the expertise of our network of over 180 appointed Experts to provide direct advice to places on Net Zero.](#) This network includes accredited professionals and members of Design Council, RTPI, and Landscape Institute with specialisms that include environmental sustainability, sustainable building design for climate change adaptation, emerging technologies, climate resilience, and the development of regeneration frameworks including environmental, social, and economic strategies.

[We will incorporate Net Zero across our product portfolio,](#) as relevant, to ensure that stakeholders are able to fully consider the environmental impact and resilience to climate change of their regeneration plans.

[We will continue to add to our growing online resource library](#) which is open to all and contains best practice and guidance selected by the Task Force research team. We have already added a range of other articles and frameworks on sustainable regeneration.

Year 3 of the Task Force Programme

The High Streets Task Force will continue to listen to and support those delivering high street regeneration, prompting and challenging place leaders to take action on sustainability, and we will feedback on our progress to DLUHC.

Our second year has allowed us to develop, roll out, and refine our support to high streets across the country. Our pivot to virtual and online delivery of our products and services presented significant challenges, but we are confident that the learning we have gained throughout the process has allowed us to develop products that will have a tangible positive impact.

As restrictions have eased, we have been able to provide in-person support, visiting places and the people responsible for ensuring their successful futures. In our Year 2 annual report, we remarked how the challenge for our high streets has never been greater, and the last twelve months have further exacerbated this. However, our visits to date have provided much cause for positivity, and we remain optimistic that given the necessary interventions, undertaken by the right mix of people, the future for our high streets can be a bright one.

Over the next twelve months the High Streets Task Force, including our delivery partners, our Experts, and our affiliated stakeholders, will work hard to continue supporting place leaders to make the best decisions on the future of their high streets and how they best serve their communities, whilst building long-term capacity for this local transformation.



Our Governance

Effective governance is at the core of the Task Force's ability to achieve its goal of helping to transform high streets and town centres across the country. There are four main components to the governance structure that oversees the performance of the High Streets Task Force (HSTF). The Task Force Board is the most senior governance body and, as a result, is the point of direct escalation for the Sector Leaders Group (SLG), Professional, Research and Data Group (PRDG) and Executive Group.

High Streets Task Force Board

The HSTF Board was established to oversee the Task Force throughout its five-year commission. The Board provide strategic direction and represent the face of the Task Force through advocacy, media appearances and the use of social media. The Board met twice over the last twelve months, in July 2020 and February 2021, supplemented by informal 'advisory group' meetings.

Members are comprised of place leaders and innovators who are passionate about high streets, with actual, recent experience of transforming a high street or town centre. These place leaders have experience in various tiers of government, place management, the community, business, investment, and innovation.

Sector Leaders Group

The Sector Leaders Group (SLG) champion positive transformation of high streets and town centres, representing organisations that have interest and influence across many high street stakeholders. The SLG shares intelligence and information, identifies issues in common, cascades information and insights to the people and organisations that need it and hence empowers stakeholders to actively transform their local places. The group is comprised of members who are identifying new ways to be successful on the high street, anticipating and adapting to changes and who are leaders in their areas.

During 2020/21, the SLG continued to focus on supporting the response of town centres

to COVID-19. The group also acted as a forum in which MHCLG / DLUCH shared the latest guidance, explained support on offer, and canvassed insights and viewpoints on the Government response. The SLG convened five times during the past year, in July, September and December 2020, and February and May 2021.

Professional, Research and Data Group

The Professional, Research and Data Group (PRDG) collate and review research and data to ensure the HSTF has informed views on significant issues facing the transformation of England's high streets. The PRDG is comprised of professional bodies who represent members with a specialised interest in the high street; UK academics with research expertise in high street and town centre issues; data providers who have useful data on the changing high street; and data delivery partners with relevant skills and knowledge to inform the work of the group.

The PRDG group continued to focus on understanding the scale of the COVID-19 pandemic during 2020/21. In addition, the PRDG group input to the annual research study (focussing on Viability) detailed above. The group met on a quarterly basis, convening five times during the past year in July, September and November 2020 and February and May 2021.

HSTF Executive Group (internal governance)

This group, comprised of representatives from partner organisations within the HSTF consortium, have overseen the direction of the Task Force and monitored its progress towards milestones and objectives. To achieve this goal, the group has oversight of emerging risks and issues and the quality of work delivered by the Task Force. The Executive Group meets on a quarterly basis, convening four times over the last twelve months.

The High Streets Task Force Consortium



Institute of Place Management is the international professional body for people involved in making, managing and developing places. IPM provides the underpinning research and knowledge for the Task Force, and also matches expertise with local area need, trains experts, and develops the training and data dashboards products. The Institute is part of Manchester Metropolitan University.



PwC is a global professional services network with headquarters in London. PwC has broad experience working with public sector clients, helping to deliver and manage large-scale programmes such as the Task Force. PwC acts as a delivery and planning partner, providing operational capacity and expertise and resources for the coordination of the Task Force.



The Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) is the UK's leading planning body for spatial, sustainable and inclusive planning and is the largest planning institute in Europe with over 25,000 members. The RTPI provides experts to boost local authority capacity, and chairs the HSTF Professional, Research and Data Group.



Design Council is an independent charity and the Government's advisor on design. Their purpose is to make life better by design by enabling better places, products and processes. Design Council has worked with the Task Force to: develop a sustainable brand; use design tools and methods to challenge people to think innovatively about the future of their high streets; and share expertise in inclusion, healthy placemaking, service design, and social and environmental sustainability. Design Council are also leading the design and implementation of the 'Developing a Shared Vision' programme.



THE BID FOUNDATION

The BID Foundation is an industry body for Business Improvement Districts established in January 2018 following a UK-wide consultation. It is an independent and authoritative voice for BIDs, and is leading the development of industry standards. Its members are active place leaders in towns and cities with extensive networks. The BID Foundation co-chairs the High Streets Task Force Sector Leaders Group and has worked with IPM to identify experts and resources for the Task Force.



The Landscape Institute (LI) is the chartered body for the landscape profession. It is an educational charity that promotes the art and science of landscape practice. Its landscape practitioners include landscape scientists, planners, architects, managers and urban designers. The LI provides a pool of experts to contribute to Task Force delivery and services.



Association of Town and City Management (ATCM) is a not-for-profit membership organisation, dedicated to promoting the vitality and viability of urban centres across the UK and the Republic of Ireland. Its members develop and implement shared visions, strategies and action plans for hundreds of district, town and city centres. ATCM co-chairs the High Streets Task Force Sector Leaders Group and provides resources on how to improve high streets.



Civic Voice is the national charity for the civic movement in England. Civic Voice was formed following extensive consultation with hundreds of civic and amenity societies and other interested organisations in 2009. Civic Voice provides relevant advice and guidance resources for place leaders.



Founded in 2002, Springboard is a leading provider of data and intelligence on customer activity in stores and destinations. Springboard monitors customer behaviour in town and city centres, including footfall, demographic profiling and capacity monitoring. Springboard provides the Task Force access to all UK high street and town centre footfall data, as well as training courses and webinars for Task Force users to attend.



Maybe* uses AI to provide sentiment analysis from social media directly to over 150,000 businesses. They have worked to develop the digital evolution of some 30 towns through the 'What do you think' campaign which aims to improve digital influence to drive footfall. Maybe* provides the Task Force with consumer sentiment data for UK towns for benchmarking, and hold regular webinars that focus on high street sentiment data evaluation.



The Teenage Market, set up in 2012 by two brothers in Stockport, is active in over 30 locations across the UK, giving local young people the chance to actively engage and take part in events in their town or city. The Task Force will work with the Teenage Market over the five years to provide guidance and expertise for local authorities in England planning to hold Teenage Markets.



Cardiff University's School of Computer Science and Informatics is an internationally leading research School that impacts areas as diverse as healthcare, mobile and social computing, and the environment. They develop and integrate data sets on footfall and other high street performance indicators, as well as contribute to further research.



MyKnowledgeMap is a leading e-assessment software and solution specialist, with a full product, project, services and integration delivery. MyKnowledgeMap develop technology solutions that improve skills and knowledge for Task Force users, including high street data dashboards and an online resource repository.

Appendix 1 – Key Performance Indicators

The performance of the HSTF is measured through the progress made against 20 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), as agreed between DLUHC and the HSTF.

Our Key Performance Indicators

The 20 KPIs are aligned to the four objectives of the Task Force. Each KPI is reported on annually, with six reported on a quarterly basis, to provide oversight and assurance of progress in key areas as each year goes on.

The tables on the following pages provide the KPI figures for Year 1 of the HSTF. Those measures monitored quarterly have been fully reported to show development throughout the year.

Objective 1: Boosting Local Authority capacity through provision of experts

KPI 1.1 There is an increase in the number of previously unengaged high streets and town centres given expert advice each year.

	Year 1	Year 2				Total
	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
<i>Number of Local Authorities engaged</i>	7	0	1	6	12	19
<i>Cumulative number of Local Authorities engaged</i>	7	0	1	7	19	26

KPI 1.2 Increase in number of areas given expert advice year on year, as measured through engagement with Task Force products and services.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<i>Number of products delivered</i>					
THYS Report	14	138	-	-	-
UYPP Workshop	7	19	-	-	-
Developing a Shared Vision Workshop	0	3	-	-	-
Expert Visit	0	11	-	-	-
Mentor Visit	0	1	-	-	-
<i>Number of unique Areas given Expert advice</i>	14	138	-	-	-

Demonstrate impact of the Task Force on working with local areas on developing proposals for round 2 of the Future High Street Fund, with the Task Force demonstrating:

- KPI 1.3**
- (a) evidence of working with FHSF round 2 proposals**
 - (b) evidence of working with successful proposals**
 - (c) successful proposals referencing Task Force support**

There is no report on this as Round 2 has not yet been announced

	At submission of FHSF Round 2 proposals
Number of relevant products/services delivered	-
Number of successful FHSF proposals where LA received Task Force support	-
Number of successful FHSF proposals which reference the HSTF support provided	-

KPI 1.4 Provide evidence of positive feedback from local areas who receive advice and support from the Task Force with a year on year increase in feedback.

	Year 1	Year 2				Year 2 total
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Percentage of positive feedback from expert delivery						
TYHS report	77%	-	-	-	42%	42%
UYPP Workshop	94%	-	-	86%	66%	76%
Developing a Shared Vision Workshop	-	-	-	-	36%	36%*
Expert visit	-	-	-	-	100%	100%
Mentor visit	-	-	-	-	-	

*Developing a Shared Vision is currently being revised to a cohort delivery model.

Where high streets and town centres have been given on the ground support, the Task Force will evaluate impact locally through:

- KPI 1.5**
- Evidence of improvements in town centres**
 - Evidence of the use of data products by local authorities to make informed decisions on planning or delivery of high street services**

Case studies to begin in Year 3

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Measure the year-on-year change of HSTF indicators for areas*	N/A	N/A	-	-	-
Number of case studies from Local Authorities who have received on-the-ground support	0	0	-	-	-

Number of case studies from Local Authorities who have received enhanced Dashboards	0	0	-	-	-
---	---	---	---	---	---

* Note: the original four baseline indicators (Footfall, Digital Activity, Digital Engagement, and Collaboration Capacity) can no longer stand as a measure of HSTF impact due to external COVID-19 impact.

Objective 2: Build sustainable place-making skills

KPI 2.1 Provide evidence on the quality of Task Force services (e.g. training and expert advice), including number of feedback forms received from participants after attending classes and demonstrating impact of learning in their placemaking skills. The Task Force should aim for 90% positive feedback.

	Year 1	Year 2				Total Year 2
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Total number of feedback forms received	192	0	36	24	13	73
Average % of positive feedback	84%	0%	76%	88%	66%	77%

* Combines the averages of '4' and '5' ratings on a 5 point scale.

KPI 2.2 A year on year increase in the number of participants who feel their place making skills have improved due to training.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Total number of feedback surveys that agreed or strongly agreed that place making skill improved following expert product or Place Making Programme delivery	50	72	-	-	-
Percentage of feedback that agreed or strongly agreed that place making skills improved due to expert product or Place Making Programme delivery	81%	64%*	-	-	-

*Our Place Making Programme, commencing late 2021, will focus on improving skills in this area.

KPI 2.3 Year on year increase in the number of previously unengaged local high streets accessing and completing training courses.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<i>Number of places accessing the following training courses</i>					
Place Making Programme	0	0	-	-	-
Developing Place Leaders (LEPs)	0	24	-	-	-
Developing Place Analysts	0	57	-	-	-

Objective 3: Coordinating the range of groups involved in sustainable high street placemaking

KPI 3.1 Increase in the number of previously unengaged places (not limited to local authorities) receiving on-the-ground TF support (e.g. training and expert advice) each year.

	Year 1	Year 2				Year 2 total
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
<i>Total number of previously unengaged areas</i>	112	0	17	22	42	81

KPI 3.2 Evidence of engagement and partnership with national stakeholder organisations to include representatives of; businesses, business improvement districts, community groups, local authorities, young people and others as appropriate.

Not currently reported as relates to FHSF round 2

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<i>Total number of products/services with national stakeholder organisations engagement</i>	4	-	-	-	-
<i>Number of organisations involved in these engagements</i>					
Businesses	32	-	-	-	-
BIDs	4	-	-	-	-
Community Groups	0	-	-	-	-
Local Authorities	101	-	-	-	-
Young People	0	-	-	-	-
Other Organisation Types	1	-	-	-	-

KPI 3.3 Evidence of work with different types of local organisation, to include; Business Improvement Districts, Local Authorities, LEPs, Community Groups, businesses/representative organisations, National stakeholder groups and young people.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<i>Total number of products/services with local organisation engagement</i>	7	29	-	-	-
<i>Number of organisations involved in these engagements</i>					
Local Authorities	11	22	-	-	-
BIDs	1	9	-	-	-
Businesses/Representative Organisations	20	43	-	-	-
LEPs	0	3	-	-	-
Community Groups	4	18	-	-	-
National Stakeholder Groups	0	N/A	-	-	-
Young People	0	N/A	-	-	-

KPI 3.4 Web analytics demonstrating successful mapping of existing work on high streets and town centres and evidence of the reach of this increasing year on year.

**Figures presented as rolling total*

	Year 1	Year 2				Year 2 total
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
<i>Total number of organisations/places mapped in the year*</i>	0	516	774	777	847	847
<i>Total number of visitors to mapping pages</i>	0	140	90	79	50	359

Objective 4: Information, best practice and data sharing

KPI 4.1 Web analytics, covering the reach and downloads of Task Force advice and guidance. Baseline followed by year on year percentage increases.

** Refers to the number of unique visitors to the website*

	Year 1	Year 2				Year 2 total
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
Total number of website visits*	9742	5443	4371	3180	4091	17085
Total number of website registrations	1822	556	280	121	249	1206
Total number of website views	6099	32654	22651	17609	18272	91186

KPI 4.2 Year on Year increase in number of high streets and town centres to have accessed learning materials and/or training.

**Number of visits to relevant web pages used as proxy for 'representatives'*

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Number of High Street/Town Centre representatives who have attended virtual/webinar training*	0	898	-	-	-
Number of High Street/Town Centre representatives who have accessed face to face training	0	0*	-	-	-

**All training in Year 2 has been delivered online (NB – this excludes direct Expert support)*

KPI 4.3 Evidence of promoting high street and town centre applications to Great British High Street (GBHS) Awards and other national body awards.

Not currently being reported on

Number of	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Local Authorities referred to the GBHS awards by the High Streets Task Force	0	0	-	-	-
Local Authorities, High Streets and Town Centres referred to other national awards	0	0	-	-	-
Local Authorities self-reported to have been influenced by HSTF to apply for GBHS awards	0	0	-	-	-

KPI 4.4 Demonstrate improvement in use of data. The Task Force will first be required to identify how best to do this and will agree its approach with MHCLG as part of its project plan. KPIs may include:

KPI 4.4.1 Number of places using any training on data

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<i>Number of unique users per training product</i>					
Developing Place Analysts	0	57	-	-	-
Understanding Place Data	0	394	-	-	-
Understanding Place Sentiment	0	447	-	-	-
Number of data resource views	0	41269	-	-	-

KPI 4.4.2 Web analytics on any data/dashboard provided by the Task Force

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<i>Number of Basic dashboards created</i>	50	392	-	-	-
<i>Number of Advanced dashboards created</i>	0	150	-	-	-
<i>Number of active dashboards per year</i>	50	542	-	-	-

KPI 4.4.3 Volume of data published by Task Force

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total
<i>Number of resources per the 4 R's Framework</i>						
Rebranding	3	10	-	-	-	13
Reinventing	11	57	-	-	-	68
Repositioning	5	26	-	-	-	31
Restructuring	9	27	-	-	-	36
<i>Number of resources per the 25 Priorities Framework</i>						
Accessible	18	43	-	-	-	61
Activity	6	31	-	-	-	37
Adaptability	8	31	-	-	-	39
Anchors	3	12	-	-	-	15
Appearance	6	14	-	-	-	20
Attractiveness	5	28	-	-	-	33
Barriers to entry	3	6	-	-	-	9
Diversity	2	41	-	-	-	43
Experience	12	56	-	-	-	68
Functionality	1	13	-	-	-	14
Innovation	5	31	-	-	-	36
Liveable	7	59	-	-	-	66
Markets	3	19	-	-	-	22
Merchandise	2	10	-	-	-	12
Necessities	5	12	-	-	-	17
Networks and Partnerships w. Council	9	57	-	-	-	66
Non-Retail Offer	4	50	-	-	-	54
Place Management	14	71	-	-	-	85
Place Marketing	4	21	-	-	-	25
Recreational Space	15	38	-	-	-	53
Redevelopment Plans	4	17	-	-	-	21
Retail Offer	4	29	-	-	-	33
Safety and Crime	16	22	-	-	-	38
Vision and Strategy	20	67	-	-	-	87
Walking	17	36	-	-	-	53

KPI 4.4.4 Synthesis of evidence

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<i>Number of resources for the following knowledge levels</i>		-	-	-	-
Basic	TBC	TBC	-	-	-
Intermediate	TBC	TBC	-	-	-
Advanced	TBC	TBC	-	-	-

Note: resource knowledge level mapping has not taken place due to changes required in Resource Library backend to add knowledge level categorisation

KPI 4.4.5 Evidence from authorities that the Task Force's work on data has facilitated improvements in their high street.

Case studies to begin in Year 3

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
<i>Number of Case Studies released</i>	0	0	-	-	-

