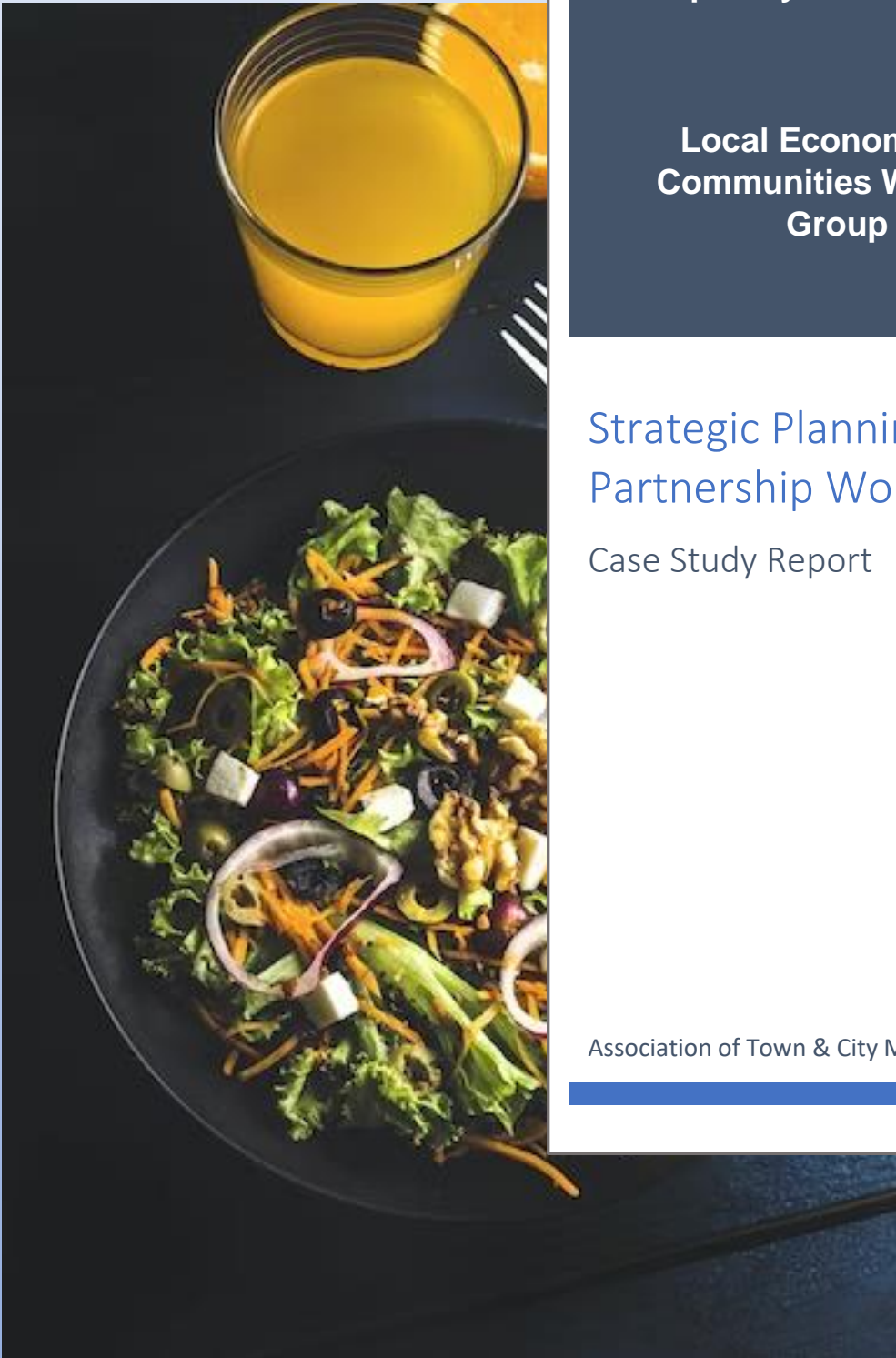


November 2022



Hospitality Sector Council

**Local Economies &
Communities Working
Group**

**Strategic Planning &
Partnership Working**

Case Study Report

Association of Town & City Management

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Introduction

1. Hospitality is an important part of the ecosystem that drives every local economy and supports every local community. Not only do hospitality businesses provide jobs, attract visitors and enable communities to come together, they also help provide a foundation for growth and levelling-up.
2. There is no question that hospitality is a critical part of our economy, but it finds itself under pressure. Global inflationary pressures on everything from energy to food and drink have created challenging market conditions for the sector. These challenges are exacerbated by a shortage of labour and the shadow of debt - a legacy of the COVID-19 pandemic.
3. Against this backdrop, we need collaboration between the public, private and voluntary sectors, locally and nationally, to help the sector recover and thrive. This is the mission of the Hospitality Sector Council's 'Local Economies & Communities Working Group'.
4. With the support of businesses (large and small), trade associations, central and local government, Business Improvement Districts, and many others we want to explore how we can work together to create the best possible trading environment for our high street businesses, maximising their potential to support growth and levelling-up. This includes:
 - How Government can set the foundation for better tax and planning regimes;
 - How local authorities and other key bodies at a regional and local level can work with the hospitality sector to support its recovery through strategic planning and partnership;
 - Understanding the community contribution of hospitality and the opportunities to scale up best practice; and
 - Enhancing routes to finance to support investment in the sector.

Strategic planning and partnership working

5. Hospitality and other high street businesses are key to the vitality and attractiveness of our towns and cities. As such, these businesses need to be seen as assets that can be used to attract visitors, students, new local businesses, and inward investment. By working in partnership with local government and other key local bodies, hospitality businesses can help deliver local objectives, including regeneration, growth, well-being, and health equality. But achieving this means taking a more strategic approach and working in partnership.
6. The good news is this is already happening in many areas across the UK, but we all need to do more to embrace new ways of working if we are to maximise the potential of our local communities to deliver growth and levelling-up.
7. This paper brings together case studies that demonstrate best practice in the use of strategic planning and partnership working that is inclusive of, or led by, the hospitality sector. We recognise, of course, that there will be many, many more examples across the UK.

Adapting to change

8. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted a lack of resilience across our local economies and communities, with many high street businesses struggling to adapt to social distancing restrictions and a drop in customers. The pandemic also accelerated consumer trends, such as an increase in online retail.
9. While many local authorities took to support local businesses, for example by taking advantage of regulatory easements that made it easier for businesses to use outdoor space, many took the initiative to ensure the best possible trading environment for their businesses to maximise footfall, and Liverpool Without Walls is a good example. South and East Cambridgeshire Councils also took steps to support the regions' mobile caterers and "wet-led" pubs through the pandemic by adapting unwieldy licensing rules to give businesses the flexibility they needed to support each other. Both local authorities are making permanent changes to help improve the resilience of local businesses.
10. Several case studies recognise the need for permanent change to improve business resilience and protect local economies. Cheltenham Borough Council and Cardiff Council recognise the increasingly important role that hospitality and entertainment could play in adapting to an increase in online retail and the need to build and preserve evening and night-time economies. Bristol City Council also recognise the importance of night-time businesses to the city's economy and cultural diversity, and the need to ensure that new homes and nightlife businesses can happily co-exist.
11. East Lothian takes this a step further in building on its reputation as Scotland's food and drink region by working in partnership with Queen Margaret University to develop a Food & Drink Innovation Hub, underpinning the region's success as a food and drink exporter, while providing quality, skilled jobs and attracting investment.

Building visitor economies

12. A number of case studies recognise the strategic importance of hospitality, food and drink and in attracting visitors and increasing visit durations and spend, including those submitted by East Lothian, Derry and Plymouth, Cheltenham and NewcastleGateshead.

Regeneration and community support

13. The potential for hospitality businesses to help drive regeneration, support communities by providing services and training opportunities also came through case studies submitted by Digbeth Dining Club, Sefton Council, and NewcastleGateshead Initiative. The Sefton Case Study is a good example of a local authority taking a holistic approach to regeneration, drawing on the Government's Hospitality Strategy¹ (being delivered by the Hospitality Sector Council), and good practice developed by Digbeth Dining Club and Aston Villa FC. The case study by Brixton Business Improvement District provided a good example of how, what was initially a community outreach scheme, turned into an international collaboration between two communities resulting in businesses on both sides of the Atlantic working collectively to develop new and unique products.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hospitality-strategy-reopening-recovery-resilience>

Critical success factors

14. Reading across the case studies included in this report, while each is unique in that they reflect local circumstances and priorities, there are also similarities. Each recognises the important role hospitality plays (along with other high street businesses), in driving healthy local economies and supporting local communities. They acknowledge that hospitality is part of a local ecosystem, with co-dependency between daytime and night-time economies. They understand the role hospitality plays in providing accessible local jobs, stimulating regeneration, and supporting levelling-up by helping attract visitors, new talent, and inward investment.
15. There are also indicators of what it takes to deliver successful projects across the case studies include:
 - **Vision:** knowing what needs to change, why and how is critical to effecting successful change. This includes understanding the local economy, monitoring consumer trends, and striking the right balance between economic and social interests. This could be reimagining a city or region as a prime destination for national or international tourism, revitalising town and city centres by creating stronger links between day and night-time economies, or a desire to regenerate unloved spaces.
 - **Strategy:** delivering a vision requires a plan of action or strategy that sets out the end goal and how it can be achieved. These could be short-term strategies to address immediate challenges, for example maximising the use of outdoor space in response to COVID-19 restrictions or strategies to deliver structural change over a longer period, for example creating unique visitor destinations.
 - **Leadership:** sitting beneath each case study in this report, will be leaders who have championed the need for change – people at all levels, working across all organisations, who have helped develop and sell the vision, built strategic partnerships and identified and exploited opportunities to deliver change.
 - **Partnerships:** recognising all local stakeholders, including local government, employers, colleges and universities, enforcement agencies, community groups and charities, have a stake in their communities. Encouraging stakeholders to coalesce around a vision for the local economy and community will help ensure strategies and plans are the right, but will allow for the pooling knowledge, assets, resources, and energy.

Conclusion

16. While the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted a lack of resilience, the current cost of living crisis and trends towards more online retail is hampering the recovery of our high street businesses. The case studies included in this report shows that many local authorities are acutely aware that local economies are volatile, and the quality of our high streets reflects the health of local economies and communities, and poor local amenities do little to attract visitors and businesses investment.
17. While every community is unique and there are no on-size fits-all solution to addressing the challenges we currently face, investing time and energy to ensure the best possible trading environment for local high-street businesses is critical. Key to delivering local economies that are for the future is leadership and working in partnership to deliver visions and strategies that will support growth and levelling-up.

Liverpool Without Walls

The City Breaking Down Barriers for its Hospitality Businesses

Reimagining the Streetscape in a Crisis

Like cities around the world, Liverpool's hospitality industry hit severely during the COVID-19 pandemic, with restrictions impacting businesses and the local economy. Liverpool City Council, Liverpool BID Company, and Liverpool Chamber of Commerce recognised early that they needed to work towards the eventual reopening of the cultural sector, including restaurants, bars and theatres, as restrictions began to relax.



Liverpool reimagined the city through the lens of social distancing, allowing businesses to trade profitably while adhering to Government restrictions. Liverpool Without Walls aimed to do this by maximising the use of outdoor space as soon as conditions allowed.

Making Liverpool Without Walls a Reality

Through £450k of repurposed funding, businesses were supported through measures, including:

- The closure of Castle Street to traffic, maximising space for restaurants to spill out onto the open space.
- The closure of Bold Street to traffic with an added pilot scheme of street furniture and parklets within existing parking bays, transforming the look of the street.
- All independent restaurants in the city could apply for grants up to £4,000 to purchase furniture to trade outside, including tables, chairs, planters, outdoor parasols, and heaters.
- Street Cafe licence fees were waived for all new applications, ensuring businesses were unburdened by extra costs as they tried to get back on their feet.

ERDF funding was also used for signage, logistics, transport alterations, marketing, and dedicated HR support to deliver the project.

The Outcome

Liverpool Without Walls supported 152 businesses, generating revenue of £8.9m between July and September 2020. For every £1 invested in the scheme, the local economy produced £20.

Average covers for hospitality venues increased 42%, allowing some staff to come off furlough and get back to work. 64% of participants said the scheme made it viable to reopen.

Further Information

Liverpool Without Walls pilot scheme to help restaurants reimagine outdoor eating:
<https://www.liverpoolbidcompany.com/liverpool-without-walls-pilot-scheme-to-help-restaurants-reimagine-outdoor-eating/>

Contact: info@liverpoolbidcompany.com

Off the Beaten Truck

How mobile caterers, pubs and Local Government joined forces in Cambridgeshire.

Modern 'street-food' emerged from the financial crash of 2007, with Chefs in America opening artisan food trucks - restaurants on wheels! The trucks move between pitches on private land throughout the day, using social media to inform customers of their whereabouts.

In the UK street trading pitches require an annual licence, consent and planning approval and can cost up to £2,000. As pitches in the UK are at fixed sites, street food in the UK generally revolves around street markets and events.



However, lockdown closed markets and events leaving over 20,000 mobile catering businesses unable to trade. At points during the pandemic, pubs were only able to serve drink with food, preventing many "wet-led" pubs - those unable to provide food - from opening. There should have been an opportunity for street food caterers to partner with pubs, allowing both to continue trading, but rigid street trading rules made licencing difficult.

The Solution

Working in partnership with 'Off the Beaten Truck' (OFTBT) the Nationwide Caterers Association' (NCASS), South & East Cambridgeshire developed an innovative solution that helped mobile food businesses and pubs to stay afloat.

Following assurances from OFTBT & NCASS that the mobile caterers would work to assured standards, and that the NCASS connect system would allow enforcement officers to monitor trading activity, the Councils devised simplified registration schemes² that allowed the mobile caterers and landowners to support each other, while reducing costs and delays.

The Impact

The solution helped over 100 food businesses and pubs across South and East Cambridgeshire trade through the pandemic, providing important relief to local communities. As a result of the initiative, the Councils have retained the registration schemes and now rural Cambridgeshire is now home to a unique independent food truck scene, with Off The Beaten Truck working with both Councils to develop street food events and markets across the region.

Further Information:

Nationwide Caterers Association: www.ncass.org.uk

² <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/new-street-trading-policy-approved-for-all-south-cambridgeshire-streets/>

A Hospitality Offer for All

Cheltenham's Inclusive Approach

Addressing a Lack of Clear Strategy

Cheltenham had a successful and engaging evening and night-time economy (ENTE); but lacked a strategy to build on its success. Cheltenham recognised the vitality of entertainment and its role in driving footfall was critical to counterbalancing an increase in online shopping. This became central to plans to promote Cheltenham as a festival town and leisure destination.



Cheltenham wanted an ENTE that was accessible and appealing to everyone, catering for all ages, interests, and income groups. But above all, it needed to be safe. Recognising the need for a cohesive approach, Borough Council and Cheltenham BID worked closely with key delivery partners to encourage safe alcohol use and to minimise crime and disorder.

The 5 Point Plan to Provide Services for All

The Cheltenham ENTE strategy aimed boost the appeal, safety and vibrancy of the town via 5 main themes:

A safe night out for all by considering welfare in the ENTE including by addressing negative perceptions that may drive people away. This includes enhancing security, investing in the CCTV system and developing a code of practice to create and agree on service standards.

A well-managed ENTE by creating a place that works for everyone – is accessible, inclusive, and well managed. This includes maintaining appropriate levels of public utilities and establishing a multi-agency group to promote strategic oversight of Cheltenham's ENTE.

Sustainable by considering how Cheltenham's ENTE can adapt to changing trends and environmental sustainability. This includes appointing an ENTE Champion, finding sustainable ways to support the opening of new ENTE businesses, and implementing strategies to ensure safe and environmentally sustainable transport to and from the centre.

Accessible and Inclusive by creating an ENTE for all to enjoy, with choices of vibrant leisure and entertainment. This includes working with elected councillors and policymakers to make sure licensing and policy reflects the strategic ambition to maintain diverse ENTE offer.

Data is used to understand the ENTE better, using the Purple Flag KPIs to create a sound statistical base for the evaluation of the progress and success of the strategy, including the intelligent use of quality data and find sustainable and creative solutions to issues.

Further Information

A Strategy for the Management of Cheltenham's Evening and Night-Time Economy:

https://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/8311/ente_strategy.pdf

Cabinet report on ENTE Strategy:

https://democracy.cheltenham.gov.uk/documents/s30563/2019_09_10_A_strategy_for_the_management_of_Cheltenham's_evening_and_night-time_economy.pdf

Understanding Hospitality - Long-Term, Post-Pandemic Recovery

Cardiff's Greener, Fairer, Stronger City Recovery and Renewal Strategy

The Cardiff Challenge

As a capital city and a regional hub, attracting workers from a large catchment, Cardiff experienced a substantial hit to its economy as an impact of COVID-19. Cancelling events and restricting hospitality had impact on businesses, workers, and the local community.



As Cardiff navigated its way through the pandemic, it was clear that keeping the city active with restrictions in place would be challenging. Recognising the need to improve their resilience against economic shocks, they started work on building a stronger, more inclusive and sustainable city for post-pandemic recovery.

Greener, Fairer, Stronger

Cardiff started by producing a draft “Greener, Fairer, Stronger City Recovery and Renewal Strategy) in May 2021, using this as a guide through the pandemic. The strategy consisted of two phases: recovery and renewal, and 10 key trends that would shape and influence recovery and renewal, laying out the key issues to address, including the role of a city as a place of experience, with hospitality playing a key role in the city’s ability to bounce back.

The recovery phase addressed immediate and pressing recovery issues, including action to support and safeguard jobs, boost communities and assist businesses. To support hospitality during this phase, Cardiff provided additional space for businesses, including new arrangements for permits using public spaces. This mirrored action taken earlier in the pandemic, with the council and BID partnership establishing the Castle Street Café, which provided additional support space for City Centre food vendors. This resulted in increased footfall; with Cardiff significantly overperforming the average of regional cities across the UK.

The strategy’s Renewal Phase considered how Cardiff could create a better city for the future. This reimagining considered the impact of the pandemic on the city’s hospitality industry and how they could build a stronger hospitality industry in future. From this they developed a dynamic approach to ensure empty spaces were used proactively to maintain the quality of the city centre, increasing the authentic and local value of Cardiff. Both immediate recovery and long-term renewal of the city centre relied on a strong partnership between the council and city-centre businesses.

Following the draft strategy, Cardiff Council released a report approving the strategy to establish a programme of engagement.

Cardiff, DRAFT Greener, Fairer, Stronger City Recovery and Renewal Strategy:

<https://www.cardiff.gov.uk/ENG/Your-Council/Strategies-plans-and-policies/covid-recovery-strategy/Documents/Draft%20City%20Recovery%20and%20Renewal%20Strategy.pdf>

The Night Time Economy vs High Street Homes

Supporting Co-Location through a City Centre Framework

COVID and Place Transformation

Bristol began to see a transformation of its city centre during the COVID-19 pandemic, creating new opportunities and challenges to develop the city. From the beginning of these subsequent changes, Bristol City Council decided to create a framework to set out proposals for improvements. This included changes to the public realm, enhanced movement and a new approach to regeneration and development in Bristol, using the framework to assist in informing investment decisions.



Towards a New City Centre Framework with Hospitality at its Heart

The framework identified key objectives to track success. For the hospitality industry, this was defined through a liveable, vibrant, safe and inclusive city centre that could be enjoyed by everyone. The importance of creating a city that can be used both during the day and night was centred as a main goal.

In achieving this, Bristol placed the role of hospitality and culture at the focus of its decisions, highlighting the importance of its position, and the wider NTE (Night Time economy) in the success of the city. Bristol @ Night panel worked to ensure the vitality and diversity of night-time activities are supported to flourish and expand.

The framework encourages the growth of the culture and the NTE uses as part of the diversification of the area, supported by the 'agent of change' principle which enables nightlife and new homes to coexist and thrive. The inclusion of more housing must not put at risk music venues, clubs or existing industries that are vital to the city's cultural diversity. Any restrictions on these can damage both the NTE and its economic success. Bristol Council and Bristol @ Night continue to promote these uses and seek to protect them through the principle.

Further Information

Bristol City Centre Framework:

<https://democracy.bristol.gov.uk/documents/s50582/Appendix%20A2%20-%20City%20Centre%20Framework.pdf>

Contact: citycentre@bristol.gov.uk

The Food and Drink Innovation Hub

East Lothian Council and Queen Margaret University Cementing the Region's USP

The Food and Drink County

East Lothian, like all areas in the UK, took an economic hit following the Covid-19 pandemic. It was not just the health and wellbeing of residents that was greatly affected, but the local economy too.

Food and drink are central to the region - East Lothian sees itself as the food and drink county of Scotland, and Scotland's food and drinks exports, at 30% of the UK total, are more than Northern Ireland, Wales and Northern England combined. This provides the platform for an excellent hospitality sector, and home to everything from Michelin rated restaurants to nationally acclaimed chippies.



As being Scotland's food and drink county is a source of pride for East Lothian, the Council's aim was to exceed expectations.

Aiming Higher with an Innovation Hub

For East Lothian Council, the answer was an ambitious one - the Food and Drink Innovation Hub. Located at Queen Margaret University, the hub is the result of a long-standing collaboration between Queen Margaret University and East Lothian Council. The Food and Drink Innovation Hub is being part-funded by £30 million from the Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region Deal and a further £10 million from East Lothian Council.

Once complete, the Hub will focus on food and drink related innovation within the context of health and wellbeing, and will include serviced laboratories and office accommodation as well as facilities for events. This Hub will participate in securing sustainable and long-term economic recovery by providing quality jobs, creating skills pathways and attracting investment to the County of East Lothian. By mixing science and medicine with food and drink, the innovative projects will help with development and growth of the food and drink industry of the future.

Construction has just begun, but the expected outcomes are extraordinary including economic growth, increased quality of life for residents, and increased investment into East Lothian.

Further Information

Food & Drink Innovation Hub plans progressing:

<https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/news/article/13792/food-and-drink-innovation-hub-plans-progressing>

[£40m City Region Deal funding unlocked for Edinburgh Innovation Park:
https://www.qmu.ac.uk/news-and-events/news/2021/20210630-40m-city-region-deal-funding-unlocked-for-edinburgh-innovation-park/](https://www.qmu.ac.uk/news-and-events/news/2021/20210630-40m-city-region-deal-funding-unlocked-for-edinburgh-innovation-park/)

The Business Improvement District Dedicated to Food and Drink

A UK First in East Lothian

Protecting the Heart Beat of a Region

With over 40 producers, East Lothian is Scotland's food and drink county. The sector is inextricably linked to its thriving hospitality sector and a key economic driver and USP for the area.

The council had already established an East Lothian Food and Drink Group actively working with members (food and drink suppliers in East Lothian), but to support sustainable economic growth of the food and drink industry, the group needed to access new markets and the ability to apply for new routes of funding. As it was not possible for the council to apply for this funding, it was decided to create the UK's first sector specific BID – East Lothian Food & Drink Company.



Formalising Support for the Food and Drink Sector

While applying for a sector specific BID proved challenging, East Lothian persevered to create the UK's first Food and Drink BID. Their aim is to work collectively and collaboratively with Food and Drink producers in East Lothian, offering advice to members on training courses, funding and business start-ups in conjunction with ELC, Business gateway, QMU and various others. We also subsidise events throughout the year that benefit and help all businesses, especially smaller ones.

By working closely with producers and members and giving them the support needed to grow and thrive, this goes on to create a strong collective that shouts out about how amazing East Lothian is and creates an interest in locals as well as other Regional Food Groups. Positive outcomes have included economic growth within the food and drink industry, reduced food miles and carbon emissions, enhanced community commitment to shop local and recognition of East Lothian being Scotland's Food and Drink County.

Further Information:

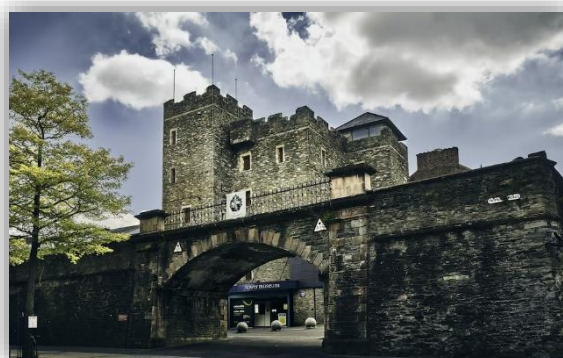
East Lothian Food and Drink: <https://scotlandsfooddrinkcounty.com/>

Hospitality and Heritage in NI's Second City

Derry's Desire for Authentic Experiences to Boost Tourism

A Plan for Growth through Hospitality and Tourism

Before the pandemic, tourism globally and within Derry was growing, with ambitions to use the sector as an economic driver, generating spend and creating jobs. Increasingly people were looking for more authentic experiences to connect emotionally and create memories with cultures and destinations, and so promoting the area's history and character was becoming more important. In addition, Derry needed to respond to increased competition for visitors.



The Derry City and Strabane District Council area have the second-largest city in Northern Ireland, with a standout heritage USP. So, to further develop and promote their offer, they produced a tourism strategy, which recognised the role of hospitality as an economic driver, as part of a wider strategic growth plan.

Developing the Tourism Strategy

One of the focuses of the Tourism Strategy, and areas of opportunity, was attracting more visitors to stay overnight, encouraging higher levels of spend in the area. The strategy highlighted the important role of the evening economy in encouraging people to remain in the area longer, which included enhancing food and drink experiences, entertainment, and events to appeal to international markets, lighting, animations, opening hours and availability of taxis.

New events were planned, including a cultural walled city experience with ambitious curated animation, with the financial backing of £75,000, to tell the stories of Derry in key visitor spaces, in engaging and entertaining ways.

Finally, food and drink experiences were included as a critical part in achieving one of the key goals within the strategy: boosting the Strategic Growth Plan's aim of improving visitor products and experience. The aim is to work closely with the food and drink sector and related businesses to improve standards by developing and implementing a Food & Drink Strategy and Action Plan to further bolster the region as a food destination, supported by £15,000 of funding.

Further Information

Derry City & Strabane District, Tourism 2018~2025:

https://www.derrystrabane.com/getmedia/4d4c8908-02ca-4e43-a8a1-c679358f3356/DCSDC_Tourism_Strategy_2018_LowRes.pdf

Contact: Catherine Goligher, Acting Tourism Manager, Derry City & Strabane District Council: Catherine.goligher@derrystrabane.com

Linking Hospitality and the Visitor Economy

Plymouth's Quest to Become an International City

Responding to COVID

In a bid to transform the city, Plymouth wanted to create a radical agenda with ambitions to become one of the most vibrant waterfront cities in Europe. Following the initial and ongoing repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic on the city's economy, it was clear there needed to be an increased focus on the encouragement of growth and recovery in Plymouth. These focuses presented a challenge in terms of boosting the city's vibrancy.



Hospitality and its Strategic Role in Plymouth's Aspiration

Plymouth created a policy-led plan that envisions the city in 2034 and provides a shared direction for the future of Plymouth. The plan brings together various strategic planning processes in one place, covering a range of sectors from environment and health, to improved business infrastructure and investment. Establishing itself as a welcoming city sits at the heart of the plan, ensuring all visitors are greeted with a high-quality experience, presented with a strong cultural offering filled with character and authenticity, and can access excellent hospitality services.

Plymouth's goal of becoming a truly international city sees hospitality as a driver to achieve this. Improving and celebrating the reputation of the hospitality industry, by providing diverse venues with a commitment to good food, will not only encourage tourism to the city, it will help kickstart its international business engagement.

The Outcomes

The expected outcomes of the plan include an increase in tourism, opportunities for international business engagement, and improving the view of resident and students of what Plymouth has to offer in both hospitality and culture, attracting greater footfall and new talent.

Although the 2034 plan is still in progress, Plymouth Council has set various KPIs to monitor progress, and use a resident's view survey to help assess the current standing. This showed that in 2018, 57% of participants agreed that 'Plymouth has a lot to offer'. Despite the impact of the pandemic on the city, this increased to 59% in 2020.

Further Information

The Plymouth Plan 2014-2034:

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/PlymouthPlanJanuary2021.pdf>

The Plymouth Plan Annual Report (June 2021):

<https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/PlymouthPlanAnnualReportJune2021.pdf>

Contact: plymouthplan@plymouth.gov.uk

Authentic British Cuisine Driving a Tourism Strategy for the North-East

The NewcastleGateshead Initiative's Support for Local Food and Drink

Despite having some of the UK's greatest cultural and natural heritage sites, the North-East of England has one of the lowest levels of tourism in the UK. This is having a negative impact on the region's economy and its ability to level up.



Food and Drink as Part of a Destination Management Plan

NewcastleGateshead Initiative (NGI) has recognised that its regional identity isn't just defined by its natural and cultural assets. It also recognises that the people of the North-East are its ambassadors and the region's thriving local food and drink businesses are part of its unique identity and needs to be promoted and celebrated as a tourist attraction alongside Durham Cathedral and Hadrian's Wall.

Food and Drink is now an integral part of NewcastleGateshead Initiative's marketing strategy and a key strand of delivery and growth within the area's Destination Management Plan. Through this work NGI will showcase the food and drink offer, improve quality and diversity, create opportunities for businesses in the sector to grow, and work to improve job opportunities and skills in the sector. This includes work to tell the story of the region's offer and opportunities within the sector via inspirational promotional videos³⁴. Key examples of local initiatives, include:

Big River Bakery with its driving motto: "Changing the world one stottie at a time", is a community-based bakery, specialising in handmade breads using locally sourced ingredients. But it also has a strong focus on community wellbeing, providing workshops and courses that bring communities together and create pathways into employment and education.

By the River Brew Company, created by Gateshead Council, is a container settlement nestled under the iconic Tyne Bridge, across the river from Newcastle. Every weekend it hosts the Hawker Market, with the finest selection of independent street food, attracting footfall and helping regenerate a previously unloved area.

The Grainger Market is undergoing major refurbishment to create a combined retail and hospitality space that will showcase delicacies and produce from across the region. Striking architecture, a diverse mix of independent traders and vibrant events will attract visitors and boost destination-retail tourism, while serving as an incubator for food and drink enterprises.

21 Hospitality Group - Celebrated North-East chef and restaurateur Terry Leybourne teamed up with Gateshead College to offer a unique traineeship for aspiring chefs⁵. The innovative training programme aims to create the next generation of highly skilled, creative chefs, helping to bridge the skills shortage in the catering and hospitality sector.

Further Information: Ian Thomas, Destination Director, NewcastleGateshead Initiative: ian.thomas@ngi.org.uk

³ <https://youtu.be/kcZ8S8YAOx0>

⁴ <https://youtu.be/Ym8ebZMf8fs>

⁵ <https://www.gateshead.ac.uk/article/serving-regions-next-top-chefs?msclkid=ef924855c63111ecb0e9666c1455dcba>

The Digbeth Dining Club

How a Community-led Platform is Levelling Up

Following the loss of Birmingham's manufacturing industries in the 1970s, parts of the city fell into a spiral of social and economic decline, leading to deprivation, high unemployment, poor living standards, education and health.

In 2012, Digbeth Dining Club (DDC) was created as a community-led platform for local street food traders, operating out of a converted taxi repair shop with a small carpark. Within 10 years DDC was operating with over 200 mobile caterers and has been credited with kick-starting the regeneration of Digbeth, which is now home to over 300 businesses.



Today, DDC operates two sites in Birmingham: Hockley Social Club and Herbert's Yard with two more sites anticipated to open in late 2022/early 2023.

Hockley Social Club (HSC)⁶, located in a post-industrial area in need of regeneration, is inspired by Berlin's warehouse spaces and Budapest's ruin bars. Providing space for local creative talent, the site operates 4 kitchens, record shop, coffee bar, live music, and arts and craft markets.

Herbert's Yard⁷ is a bespoke venue in the centre of Longbridge town. It's DDC's community-focused site and home to their Community Interest Company (CIC), dedicated to community-focused bookings three days of the week.

DDC CIC

In response to the challenges facing the local community due to COVID, and the work of Marcus Rashford in highlighting children in food poverty, DDC sought support from its on-line community to help children in food poverty in the Northfield area of Birmingham. As a result DDC traders produced 400 meals for children in Northfield, and a further 800 meals at Christmas. In addition, DDC CIC won the contract to supply 120,000 free school meals for children in Birmingham in the summer holidays of 2021, supported by the Nationwide Caterers Association (NCASS).

DDC CIC continues to support the local community, including its partnership with Aston Villa FC⁸, NCASS and South Birmingham College to provide hospitality training, qualifications and work experience for local people, as well as support to start their own hospitality businesses.

Digbeth Dining Club is a key partner in the street food alliance run by NCASS⁹ which aims to support the growth of the industry through professionalism and shared best practice.

Further information: www.digbethdiningclub.com

Contact: Mark Laurie, Nationwide Caterers Association: mark@ncass.org.uk.

⁶ www.hockleysocialclub.com

⁷ www.herbertsyard.com

⁸ www.avfc.co.uk/news/2021/october/21/villa-catering-club/

⁹ www.ncass.org.uk

Bootle Canalside – Hospitality Led Regeneration

How Sefton Council is putting hospitality at the heart of its plans to transform Bootle

Bootle, in the borough of Sefton, is one of the most deprived towns in the UK with 60% of its office space and 25% of its hospitality space standing empty. Sefton Council recognised it needed an ambitious plan to restore pride of place, attract visitors and inward investment and deliver on the needs of the local community.



Against a backdrop of COVID-19 and an increase in online retail, Sefton decided to put hospitality at the heart of its regeneration strategy for Bootle. The answer? A multi-million-pound project to transform an unloved space into a canal-side market garden, connecting the community with the canal corridor at the heart of the town centre^{10 11}. However, not content simply delivering an infrastructure project, Sefton wanted to maximise opportunities for local people to benefit from the project by providing education, training, skills development and pathways to employment and new business start-ups within the hospitality and leisure sectors.

The Government's Hospitality Strategy included a commitment to deliver hospitality-led regeneration projects, with the aim of creating street food venues in left behind neighbourhoods that would attract visitors and generate revenue to reinvest into community projects and provide work experience and training opportunities for local people. Sefton therefore decided to work with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and the Nationwide Caterers Association (NCASS) to deliver the UK's first hospitality-led regeneration project.

Working in partnership with Sefton Community Learning Service, NCASS, Everton in the Community and Hugh Baird College, with funding from its own Growth Budget, Adult Education Budget and Combined Authority's Town Centre Commission, Sefton is well on the way to delivering one the UK's largest permanent outdoor events destinations in the UK. The Bootle project is expected to fully launch in Spring 2023, supplemented by an inaugural events programme never before seen in the town.

Hospitality is a key sector for Sefton, with a concentration of Food, Drink and Leisure particularly focussed in the Victorian Seaside resort of Southport. Sefton Council recently completed a £1.5m conversion of its Southport Market into a bespoke food and drink venue, has created a wholly owned Company - Sefton Hospitality Operations Ltd - to manage its recently refurbished Lake House restaurant, bar and hotel in Crosby and developed bespoke training and recruitment programme with a view to further expansion.

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¹⁰ <https://mysefton.co.uk/2022/03/24/sefton-council-announces-ground-breaking-street-food-regeneration-pilot-project-for-bootle-canalside-strand/>

¹¹ <https://mysefton.co.uk/2022/05/27/bootle-gets-a-boost-as-cabinet-approve-bootle-canalside-business-case/>

The First Ever Transatlantic Beer Exchange

Brixton, Harlem and the Bond Across the Pond

Brixton Village is home to a thriving mix of small, innovative hospitality businesses bringing exciting food and drink to the high street. It is the home of the first ever Franca Manca and Honest Burger and a rich tapestry of multi-cultural offerings.

Like many towns, lockdown was difficult for Brixton, taking its toll particularly on the hospitality sector. But, as a diverse community with a large, black population and a strong Caribbean heritage, other events also resonated with the town, most notably the murder of African American, George Floyd in Minneapolis, an incident that shocked the community into reaching for a global dialogue on pressing social issues.



Reaching Out

This formed the foundation for an international collaboration with a like-minded neighbourhood, Harlem. Shared values on social issues and a shared history in the way both have influenced culture globally, the door opened to an exciting twinning programme, with hospitality acting as a cornerstone for this 'Bond Across the Pond'.

The respective Business Improvement Districts, Brixton BID¹² and 125th Street BID¹³, engaged with hospitality businesses from both sides of the Atlantic, to share views on how to overcome the challenges facing the sector. This led to the creation of 'Harlem in Brixton', a limited-edition cocktail by Market Row Rum, an amalgamation of the classic cocktail "the Harlem" and Market Row's signature drink - the Brixton Daiquiri.

Transatlantic Beer Exchange

The collaboration went further with the first ever transatlantic Beer Exchange, where drinkers in London and Harlem can share a pint. Brixton Brewery Taproom partnered with Harlem Brewing Company for a first-of-its-kind 'Beer Exchange'¹⁴, encouraging beer lovers in New York and London to buy each other a pint from across the pond, with the tap of a card.

As many of the best friendships start over a pint, participants are encouraged to share a message (and their Instagram handle if they fancy!) with the future recipient of their beer. These messages are shared with those receiving the beer, hopefully starting new conversations and friendships.

The relationship between the Brixton Brewery and Harlem Brewing Company was cemented with a collaboration brew, Common Threads¹⁵, a vibrant, complex summer pale ale with fresh pineapple and hibiscus, reflecting the character of both neighbourhoods. Cans feature hand-drawn illustrations by Brixton-based architects, Squire & Partners, that champion various ties that weave together the two communities: music, culture and heritage, activism, arts and design.

¹² <https://brixtonbid.co.uk/>

¹³ <https://harlembid.com/>

¹⁴ <https://brixtonbid.co.uk/harlem/>

¹⁵ <https://www.brixtonxharlem.com/common-threads-brew>