

Leigh-on-Sea

Coastal Community Team
Economic Plan
February 2018



Leigh-on-Sea
Coastal Community Team



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Executive Summary

The Leigh on Sea Coastal Community Team (CCT) has been established since October 2015 and has representation from a range of stakeholders including Southend Borough Council, Leigh-on-Sea Town Council, Leigh Port Partnership, Leigh Society, local fishermen and businesses.

The CCT has identified the main projects and priorities that it hopes will support the local economy of Leigh-on-Sea as a coastal area, including Old Leigh and the wider retail areas of the Broadway and Leigh Road. The CCT Vision is.....

'A thriving local area which celebrates its long fishing and maritime heritage, recognising the primary importance of the port and fishing industries to the cultural, economic and environmental vibrancy of Leigh. A strong and resilient local economy with an excellent offer for visitors, residents and business.'

The Vision is supported by Six Objectives under which all of the priority projects will be taken forward with various partners and stakeholders.

Objective 1: Ensure the future sustainability of Old Leigh as an active Fishing Port

Objective 2: Enhance the cultural and heritage offer of Leigh-on-Sea

Objective 3: Local business initiatives and support the local economic resilience of Leigh

Objective 4: Ensure that Leigh has the highest quality open spaces and public realm and community facilities

Objective 5: Improve the promotion and marketing of Leigh as a Tourism Destination

Objective 6: Work with partners to achieve a coherent approach to transport to support the local economy

Following the successful set up of the North Thames Fishing Local Action Group (NTFLAG) in March 2017, priority projects for the CCT now include continued support for the local fishing industry, investment in port facilities including wharves, looking into increased opportunities for the sale of local catch, measures to improve Two Tree Island as a space for wildlife and visitors in partnership with Essex Wildlife Trust and other local groups, supporting the development of the heritage offer and working with all stakeholders to improve the tourism promotion/marketing of Leigh.

This Economic Plan has already supported improved partnership working and coordination of effort and many projects in the initial Plan (Jan 2016) have been developed. The new projects and priorities have been informed through regular meetings of the Leigh CCT and wider consultation (much undertaken in relation to the NTFLAG). The Action Plan will be regularly updated by the CCT as new opportunities arise and challenges are addressed.

1. Introduction: What is the Leigh-on-Sea Coastal Community Team?

The Leigh-on-Sea Coastal Community Team (CCT) is a new initiative, responding to the Government's interest in Coastal Regeneration, with a focus on local partners identifying the issues that are important to them in coastal areas across England. Over the last few months the CCT has met and discussed priorities that relate to the area as a coastal destination and place to live, including the fishing industry based in Old Leigh.

This document sets out a Vision that has been developed by the CCT, some Key Objectives that are the priorities for achieving the Vision and, under each of the Objectives, the projects that the CCT is either tackling directly or supporting.

The Vision for the Leigh-on-Sea Coastal Community Team is:

A thriving local area which celebrates its long fishing and maritime heritage and recognises the primary importance of the port and fishing industries to the cultural, economic and environmental vibrancy of Leigh. A strong and resilient local economy with an excellent offer for visitors, residents and business.

The Team is an independent group made up of representatives of local organisations, charities and businesses, Success in achieving the Vision, Objectives and delivering projects will require the support of Southend Borough and Leigh Town Councils and many other partners. Both the Town Council and the Borough Council are represented on the team and have contributed fully to the completion of this document and the priorities set out within it. For more information on the make-up of the CCT see Section 3 below.

The Government Strategy for Coastal Regeneration

The UK has one of the longest coastlines in the world and Essex has the longest coastline in England.

In 2015 the Government announced the ambition to help Coastal Community Teams become established across England. These new teams would support the following ambitions:

- Encourage greater local partnership working in coastal areas
- Support the development of local solutions to economic issues facing coastal communities
- Establish a network of teams across England who can work together and with Government to tackle issues facing coastal communities
- Encourage the sustainable use of heritage/cultural assets to provide both a focus for community activities and enhanced economic opportunities

By bringing together local businesses, local leaders and volunteers, Coastal Community Teams can help tap into their local heritage and make the most of our stunning seaside assets to make a success of the tourist trade. The teams can also help ensure local people have the skills and opportunities so that they benefit from the new jobs and investment too.' (Mark Francois MP – Minister for Coastal Communities, July 2015).

It was anticipated that the priorities for Coastal Community Teams could include enhancing the accessibilities of public areas, providing more community facilities, promoting the visitor economy, and creating links to support the growth and performance of the retail sector. However, the Teams are free to develop

their own priorities based on an assessment and understanding of local need.

The Coastal Community Teams initiative builds on previous interest from Government in coastal regeneration, recognising the particular challenges that many coastal areas can face in terms of high unemployment and seasonal factors, low skills levels and a need for investment in heritage and cultural assets. In 2013 Southend Borough Council secured £1.3m for a number of coastal regeneration schemes including the proposal for a new lagoon at Three Shells Beach in Southend. In 2010 the area benefitted from around £7m Thames Gateway funding for the regeneration of the City Beach area of Southend. The Council has therefore demonstrated, along with its partners, a clear commitment to supporting coastal regeneration in the Borough, and to securing funding for projects.

Why an Economic Plan for Leigh-on-Sea Coastal Community Team?

This document is *not* a detailed analysis of the wider Leigh economy. The priorities set out in this document reflect the challenges and opportunities for Leigh-on-Sea as a coastal area, identified by all representatives on the CCT working together – ‘tapping into local knowledge’. The Government want to see each CCT in England produce an Economic Plan for their area highlighting local challenges and opportunities.

This is a ‘working document’, which means that it will be constantly revised and updated as projects are delivered and new opportunities and challenges emerge. What is contained in this document is intended to support all partners by providing some helpful context and background for all priority projects.

Where does the Leigh-on-Sea Coastal Community Team Fit Strategically?

The CCT is not a statutory organisation or group, and indeed currently operates on an informal basis, with new Members welcome. This economic plan is not a statutory document but is intended to contribute to identifying local issues and projects that can be delivered, and should help all partners in the coordination of funding applications on projects where there are multiple partners. All of the partners within the CCT continue to have their own identity as organisations.

Description of Leigh-on-Sea and the Coastal Community Team Area

The CCT area for Leigh-on-Sea covers both of the Leigh-on-Sea Wards, Leigh and West Leigh which have a combined population of 19,237 (2011 Census), although that figure is likely to be higher five years on from the census.

The main area that people recognise as Leigh-on-Sea has its focus around the historic settlement on the hill-top overlooking the estuary. This area is a vibrant secondary town centre (the primary being Southend Central), with a wide range of individual shops, cafes, pubs and services and a good quality urban environment. The suburbs extend out from this core and they were largely built during the Edwardian and Inter-war periods, and represent some of the most attractive and desirable parts of the Borough of Southend.

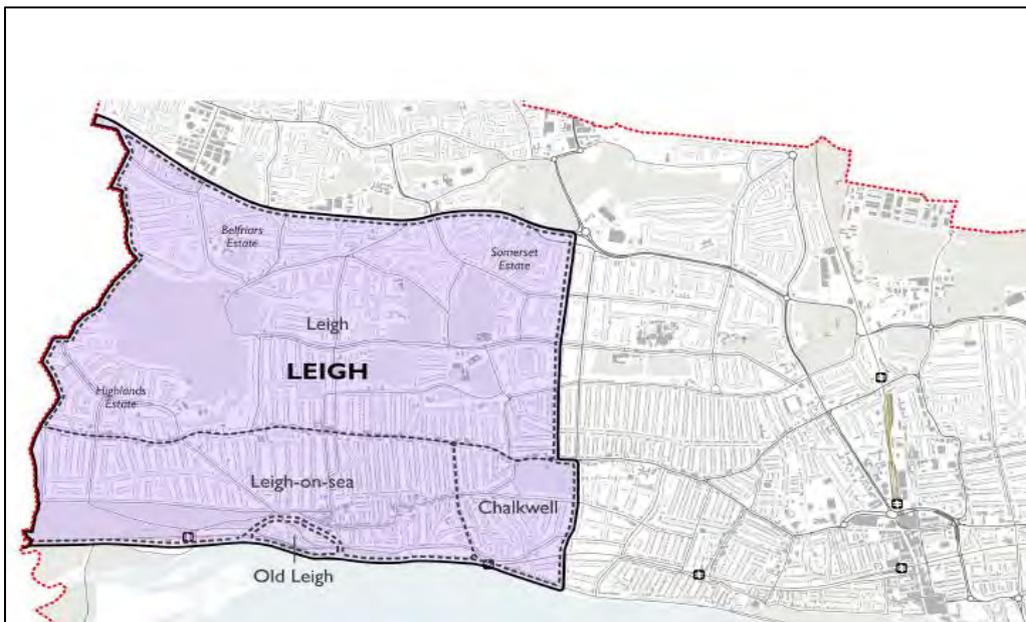
Old Leigh is the original coastal settlement, based around the shellfish beds and fishing grounds along the estuary. The arrival of the railway line from Fenchurch Street effectively cut off Old Leigh from neighbouring areas and despite the construction of a large fly-over in the late twentieth century, it remains a microcosm

of townscape from the more distant age. It is in the Old Leigh area that the fishing industry (which includes shellfish) is still very much alive and forms a major part of the identity of the area as a historic fishing village.

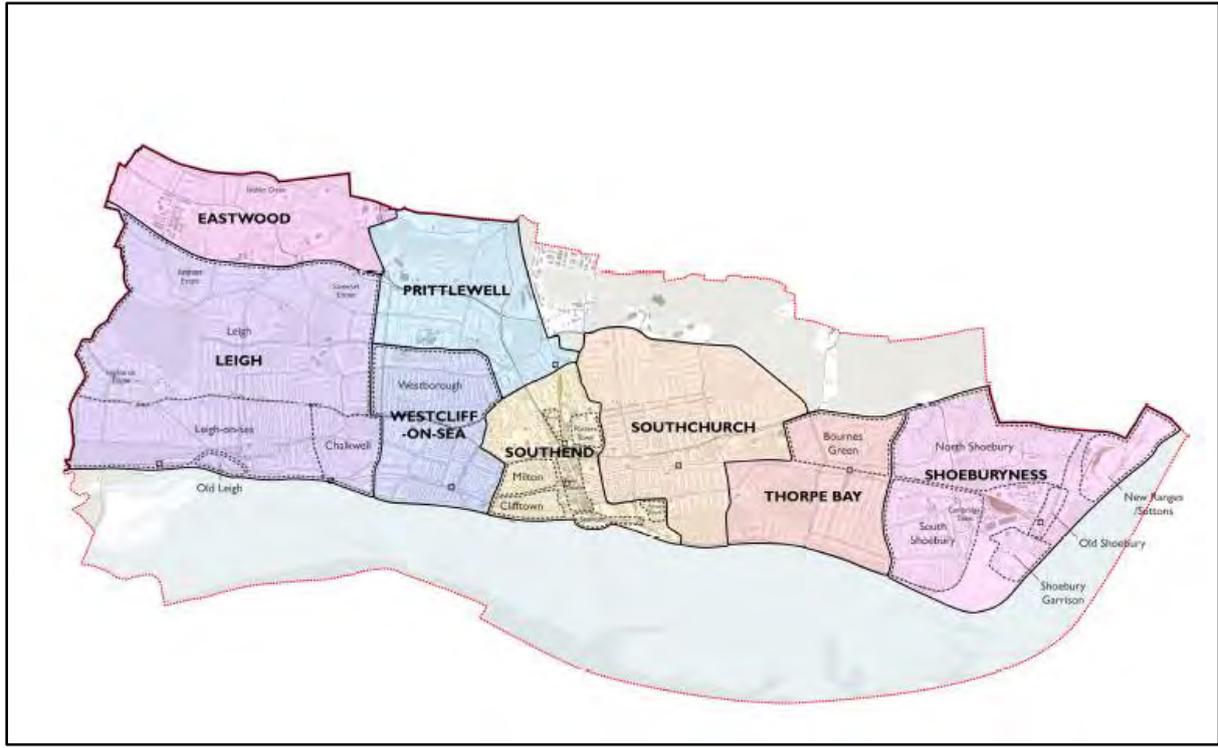
The London Road (A13) forms a spine to the area, providing a linear centre for local shops and services, including specialist retail and businesses. It also acts as something of a dividing line between the recognised Leigh-on-Sea area and other areas also forming part of Leigh to the north.



The area covered by the CCT is within the Leigh and West Leigh Wards outlined together in this image. The area to the South is the eastern side of Two Tree Island (the west being within Castle Point Borough)



Map showing the west of the Borough of Southend with the area of Old Leigh identified on the coast. The A13 runs across the area separating the main part of Leigh-on-Sea to areas further north.



Map showing the main urban area within the Borough of Southend-on-Sea.

Other Coastal Community Team Areas

There are two other CCTs to the east of Leigh becoming established in the Southend-on-Sea Borough – Shoeburyness and Central Southend focused on the seafront area. It will important that there is collaboration on issues relating to coastal regeneration within the Borough, and that these issues are fed into regional and national structures where appropriate – for example the Local Enterprise Partnership. Southend Borough Council are a partner in each of the CCTs, and are the accountable body for all three.

Since 2016 there has been some good coordination between Shoeburyness and Leigh CCTs, particularly focused on the development of ‘Destination Southend’ – the 2017 Tourism Strategy for the Borough of Southend.

Timescale for the Economic Plan

This document sets out priorities that have been identified by the CCT. Projects that can be taken forward from January 2018 onward are set out in the Action Plan. Some of the projects will take a long time to develop and deliver (over a year or up to five years for some of the larger projects), while others can be taken forward and resolved more quickly (under 12 months). Some are related to other initiatives such as the NTFLAG.

As the situation changes with projects, this document, and the Action Plan, in particular, can be updated.

2. Leigh-on-Sea CCT Opportunities and Assets

What happens beyond the publication of this document very much depends upon the CCT's ability to continue the work it has done to date. This means developing projects and securing funding. Projects and priorities that are included in this economic plan means that all partners in the CCT recognise them as such, and this should support future funding bids whether they be heritage, arts, fishing or business related. The CCT will also continue to consult and refine on the Vision, Objectives and the projects to strengthen further the case for funding.

Increased Levels of Partnership Working

All CCT partners recognise that there has been an excellent level of collaboration over the last few months to get to the stage where the CCT can set out its priorities. This collaboration, which cuts across all sectors from heritage, retail and fishing, will continue.

The CCT is based upon some excellent examples of local collaborative working through groups such as Leigh Port Partnership and forums such as the Town Council's Old Town Working Group. This is however the second time that any comprehensive strategy has been attempted relating to Leigh-on-Sea as a coastal area after the recent North Thames Fisheries Local Action Group strategy, since the publication of the Southend Fisheries Strategy in 2002 (see the Section 6 – The Fishing Industry). This document is intended to act as something of a catalyst for further collaborations, principally focused on delivering projects strategically; forming the necessary partnerships and the broader buy-in necessary to achieve results while making the most of often scarce resources.

Funding Opportunities

The CCT has identified a number of priorities that are set out in this document. This makes it clear for potential future funders which projects are likely to come forward from CCT partners for funding, and provides a degree of assurance that the projects have a good chance of succeeding. No funding is guaranteed of course, but good collaboration and partnership working always create better opportunities for success.

Initially the CCT will focus on securing funding for projects through the following routes (not exhaustive):

- Coastal Communities Fund: This fund will not be open again through the Big Lottery in early 2018, but the preparation required for projects includes developing full delivery and business plans and ensuring that partnerships are in place. It will be important for the CCT to liaise with other CCTs and local groups in the Southend area to ensure that there is a clear strategy for this potential fund.
- Heritage Lottery Fund/Big Lottery: There are clear opportunities for Heritage Lottery bids for projects set out in the Action Plan, and also Big Lottery Funding which can support a wide range of projects with clear community outcomes.
- European Marine & Fisheries Fund (EMFF): The UK Government has just launched the EMFF programme and the CCT will be taking forward the FLAG application initially while also looking at individual projects that can support the fishing industry on their own merits (such as Bell Wharf). EMFF is one of the ESIF funds (see below)

- Other European Strategic Investment Funds (ESIF): Principally European Regional Development Funding (ERDF) and European Social Fund (ESF). Although it is not possible to match one ESIF fund with another, the Government and the EU are keen to see a strategic approach to ESIF funds to deliver outcomes. The infrastructure challenges and opportunities set out in Section 6 are clearly relevant, as well as the diversification opportunities for the industry which ESF could be relevant to. It will be interesting for CCTs to see what replaces ESIF funds following Brexit, particularly funding relevant to Community Led Local Development initiatives and coastal regeneration.
- Infrastructure investment: There is likely to be investment over the next few years in improving flood defences at Old Leigh and potentially along the Cinder Path route between Chalkwell Station and Bell Wharf Beach. At this stage the Southend Shoreline Strategy has not been published, but if investment does come forward for this then the CCT will need to work with all relevant partners to ensure that match funding opportunities are not lost, for example matching any Environment Agency investment in sea wall improvements with bids to ERDF or EMFF for facility improvements. As set out in the Policy Section below, the Southend Borough Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan for 2014 makes clear reference to investment in sea defences at Leigh, as well as potential investments in public transport schemes which could support some of the initiatives set out in the Action Plan.
- Local Enterprise Partnership: The South East LEP has a clear reference to supporting the FLAG application (see Policy section below), and further to this it will be important for the CCT to work with other CCTs in the South East area to ensure that they have a clear voice on priority setting and proposed investment in coastal regeneration which includes cultural investment. The LEP have the key role overseeing EU funding which is relevant to EMFF, ERDF and ESF.
- Arts and Cultural Funding: There are priorities set out in the Action Plan that are potentially relevant to Arts Council funding (or indeed other Trust funding for arts and cultural activity), and the CCT could play a role in supporting bids from local groups and organisations to support local events for example.
- Visit England: There may be an opportunity as the Destination Management process develops to look at securing funding for the branding / destination management work that the CCT has made a priority.
- Other Government Funding: The Government opened the first Coastal Revival Fund in 2015 demonstrating a commitment to supporting coastal regeneration above and beyond what may be available in the future through the Coastal Communities Fund. It is important that the CCT is ready to make the most of such opportunities in the future, with clarity on priorities and 'oven ready' projects.
- Private Sector: Matching public sector with private sector funding is often beneficial to projects and improves chances of securing public sector funding. The CCT will ensure that it considers where opportunities may arise for this in the future in relation to all of its priority projects.

Leigh-on-Sea's Assets

All of the projects that are set out in the Action Plan below respond to the area's many assets whether they be economic, cultural, heritage or environmental. Below are listed some of the assets and

consideration of their relevance to the CCT with its focus on Leigh as a coastal economy and destination. It should be noted that all of these are also assets for the wider Southend area and also South Essex.

Leigh has an active Fishing Industry that supports the local economy and the cultural identity of the area – This is a clear asset to the area, not only through the direct employment in the industry and supply-chain, but also because it supports tourism and therefore other sectors of the economy including hospitality and retail. This industry contributes to local distinctiveness, the interest in local food and it also provides a unique opportunity to consider environmental trends in the estuary.

Leigh has an excellent independent and boutique retail offer – This is a well-recognised asset and a major feature of the local economy, supporting local economic resilience and wealth that is likely to circulate locally (the local multiplier effect referenced in the Southend Local Economic Assessment). As with the fishing industry, this is an asset that must continue to be recognised as such and supported, where possible. While it may not be possible for partners to intervene in a commercial market, there are projects listed in the Action Plan that may well support this sector such as transport and specific promotions, as well as developing the wider heritage and cultural offer.

Leigh has a thriving non-commercial marine culture: With two yacht clubs, two motor boat clubs and three sea scouts, a new rowing club with Gigs (a 6 or 8 person rowing boat that used to put pilots aboard sailing ships all round the coast of Britain). The Endeavour Trust which has overseen the refurbishment of a Cockle boat built in 1926; the only survivor of the six Cockle

boats that went to Dunkirk which now joins the Dunkirk little ships for events and education.

Leigh has good quality urban areas: Leigh is an attractive place to live with some of the highest quality urban areas in the Southend Borough. This also supports local business as the environment for shopping and for restaurants and pubs is excellent, both at the top of the cliff along the Broadway and Leigh Road, as well as in Old Leigh. The CCT recognises the importance of creating good quality spaces and projects like Leigh Town Council's investment at Strand Wharf are a good example of what can be achieved.

Leigh has good quality open spaces: Open spaces include Two Tree Island which is a major priority for the CCT and many partners, as well as other more urban spaces including Leigh Library Gardens and Belton Hills local nature reserve. There are of course challenges relating to managing large areas of open space, particularly Two Tree Island which is an important space for nature and recreation, with limited funding to support management and new initiatives.

Leigh has a wealth of culture and heritage: Leigh has a long history as a port centre for the fishing industry going back over 1000 years, and this includes ship and boatbuilding which has all but disappeared from the area. The Leigh Heritage Centre plays an important role in telling the story of Leigh and Old Leigh village remains an excellent draw for visitors as it offers an historic setting and a clear (but complementary) alternative to the seafront at Central Southend for example. More investment is needed in the existing offer as well as new developments such as the proposed Maritime Museum and Heritage Trail.

Leigh Community Centre: The CCT has held all of its meetings at the Community Centre which is now run by Leigh-on-Sea Town Council. The centre is used by over 2500 people each week, many from Leigh but also by residents and groups from outside of the area. Investment is required to ensure that the building is fit for the future as demand on the space available increases. There is a clear sense that this is an important community building for the area that supports Leigh Town Council and its partners in achieving important community and social outcomes as well as meeting the many civic needs of the area.

Threats to Assets

There are, of course, threats to all of the above, as well as the opportunities that are represented through the projects in the Action Plan set out below. There are risks to the delivery of individual projects and these are considered at a high level in the Action Plan. Many of the projects are based around Old Leigh as this is the main 'coastal' area and hosts many assets that the projects relate to. The CCT therefore recognises the importance of Old Leigh to the wider Leigh (and Southend) economy. The corollary of this however is the threat that could come from the assets in Old Leigh being put out of action, whether through natural disaster (such as flooding), or fire or other causes of potential disaster, and the negative impact this could have on the local economy and of course the businesses and organisations in the Old Leigh area. The CCT will look in more detail at business resilience in relation to individual projects (as would be expected for external funding bids for example), while also considering what joint actions partners can take to support the resilience of Old Leigh in a broader sense.

3. The Team and the Vision for the Coastal Community Team

The CCT is still evolving as a partnership-driven collaborative group of representatives from the area. Currently the team includes representatives from the following organisations and groups:

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

As well as being the accountable body for the CCT, the Council has representation from Members and well as executive staff. Three local Councillors attend all meetings and have contributed significantly to setting the priorities. Southend Council is also the accountable body for Shoeburyness and Central Southend CCTs, and therefore will play an important role in identifying collaborative opportunities and a strategic approach to coastal regeneration funding.

Leigh-on-Sea Town Council

Leigh-on-Sea Town Council is an important partner for the CCT with significant influence locally on a range of issues that affect Leigh as a location for business and for visitors. The Council also supports important local events, running the Christmas Lights each year for example, and is running the Community Centre and overseeing and funding the public realm improvements at Strand Wharf in Old Leigh.

Leigh Port Partnership

Leigh Port Partnership (LPP) was formed in 2003 as a limited liability company with the aims of promoting the Port of Leigh-on-Sea. It is a not-for-profit organisation with

everyone involved being volunteers. Since 2003 LPP has engaged with the local fishing industry and other stakeholders in boatbuilding and maintenance, arts, heritage and environment sectors, as well as tourism. LPP is taking a lead on developing some key projects part-funded by the North Thames FLAG process (through EMFF) – including supporting the industry to attain MSC accreditation for Leigh Cockles. LPP also offers a long-term leadership role to support and coordinate activity to support the Port and the fisheries beyond the North Thames FLAG (2020 and beyond).

The Leigh Society

The Leigh Society was founded as a registered charity in 1972 and runs the Leigh Heritage Centre in the Old Smithy building in the Old Town that the Society restored soon after forming. The Society has also restored Plumb Cottage (No.2) which now forms part of the Heritage Centre. The aims of the Leigh Society include promoting 'high standards of planning and architecture in the Leigh Conservation Areas and to secure the preservation of features of historic and public interest'. Also to provide and maintain a museum in the Old Leigh Conservation area for the advancement of the education of the public and for the exhibition to the public of objects, documents, photographs and any other item. The Leigh Society is run entirely by volunteers.

The Heritage Centre receives thousands of visitors every year, many returning to revisit their childhood either in Leigh or as visitors. Visitors come from around the

world and the Centre is a focal point for local and family history.

Local Fishermen

Local fishermen are represented on the group directly, but also the interests of the industry are clearly represented by members of the Leigh Port Partnership.

Leigh Studios

Old Leigh Studios in the High Street, Old Leigh was opened as a working pottery and artists' studios with gallery in front in 1991. Richard Baxter, Sheila Appleton and Kate Baxter renovated the former Southend Marine Engineering works where boats had been built in the early 20th Century and boat engines were made later. During the War, 24 hour shifts of mostly women turned shell cases on rows of lathes. So it continues to be a working building but with a new life, right in the heart of the fishing village. The gallery gets thousands of visitors each year, and local people frequently bring their visiting friends and family in to buy the artworks made on the premises.

Leigh-on-Sea Independent Traders Association (LOSITA)

Developing from an informal group formed for traders, businesses, churches, community groups and schools along the Leigh Road, Leigh-on-Sea in September 2012. The purpose of this group was to form community and promote the Leigh Road. The group meets on a regular basis to plan events/activities and promotions on the Leigh Road and Broadway areas in order to promote increased footfall (wayfinding signs from transport hubs and gateways) and shopping locally. Following the formation of LOSITA the Leigh Partnership Group has been established (in 2017) which includes representatives

from all of the business groups in the wider Leigh area including LOSITA and Pubwatch, and a survey is taking place in March 2018 which will inform priorities.

Leigh Marina

Based in Old Leigh and in close proximity to Two Tree Island and Leigh Station, Leigh Marina provides important facilities and services for boats with hard-standing space for 60 marine craft and development undergoing for a water pontoon which will increase capacity up to 150. Leigh Marina offers marine engineering services, repairs and maintenance, craning and hoisting, welding and fabrication. There is also business space available for other small businesses including craft and design.

Leigh Maritime CIC

Leigh Maritime CIC is a not-for-profit organisation, being formed to provide a unique and meaningful facility for the advancement of education and interest in the maritime history of Leigh. The group are planning to develop a new visitor experience in Old Leigh through a new museum complimentary to, but not competing with, the Leigh Heritage Centre, which will be a repository for information, artefacts and memorabilia in relation to the maritime heritage and including public events and activities which relate historically to Leigh as a maritime settlement on the Thames Estuary.

Essex Wildlife Trust

EWT are an important partner in the CCT as the charity manages the 640 acre Two Tree Island on a lease from Southend Borough Council. EWT has a number of volunteers who take responsibility for maintaining many areas important for wildlife on the Island, and the Trust is keen to develop

new projects and programmes to enhance the Island for wildlife and visitors, in partnership with the CCT and other stakeholders.

North Thames Fisheries Local Action Group

It is important that there is a close relationship between the NTFLAG team which has developed since March 2017 and the CCT. The CCT supported the establishment of the NTFLAG which is now being led by Thames Estuary Partnership working closely with the Cultural Engine and Southend Borough Council. The Cultural Engine continue to support the CCT in Leigh as well as providing a base and management support to the NTFLAG Coordinator (who also attends the CCT meetings).

Meetings and notes of CCT meetings are available on the Leigh-on-Sea Coastal Community Team website (www.leighonseaacct.com). Here all interested parties can see which individuals are representing the various CCT partner organisations listed above.

The Vision for Leigh-on-Sea Coastal Community Team

The Vision for the CCT is important as it sets the context for future work, project development and as such is a means of ensuring that all partners in the CCT have something meaningful to contribute now and in the future. The Vision recognises Leigh's essential character and offer, and provides context for the Six Objectives under which projects are identified and will be taken forward.

'A thriving local area which celebrates its long fishing and maritime heritage, recognising the primary importance of the port and fishing industries to the cultural,

economic and environmental vibrancy of Leigh. A strong and resilient local economy with an excellent offer for visitors, residents and business.'

Below we set out the Six CCT Objectives with a brief explanation of why they have been identified as important:

- Objective 1: Ensure the future sustainability of Old Leigh as an active Fishing Port
- Objective 2: Enhance the heritage and cultural offer of Leigh-on-Sea
- Objective 3: Develop local business initiatives and support the local economic resilience of Leigh
- Objective 4: Ensure that Leigh has the highest quality open spaces and public realm and community facilities
- Objective 5: Improve the promotion and marketing of Leigh as a Tourism Destination
- Objective 6: Work with partners to achieve a coherent approach to transport to support the local economy

Objective 1: Ensure the future sustainability of Old Leigh as an active Fishing Port

This important objective is critical to the success of other objectives and the CCT recognises the importance of a sustainable local fishing industry. It is vital that all partners, stakeholders and potential funders understand that the importance of the industry goes beyond the direct supply-chain employment.

The local offer for visitors is in large part built upon Leigh's past, present and future as a fishing centre and active port. The CCT also recognises that any measures taken to improve facilities for the industry and access to the Port will also support non-commercial marine activity including

maintenance to infrastructure for tourists as well as pleasure boating. The projects set out in this document under this priority have been confirmed as priorities through the NTFLAG which includes representation from the fishing and cockling industries as well as other local organisations.

Objective 2: Enhance the cultural and heritage offer of Leigh-on-Sea

The cultural and heritage offer of the area is of critical importance to the economy locally as it drives visits to the area which support other sectors, including hospitality and retail. People come from all over the world and visit the Heritage Centre, the local pubs and restaurants and eat the famous Leigh cockles. However, as recognised elsewhere in this document, the distinctive identity of the area is one of its most important, if not the most important, asset. Providing visitors and residents with interesting places to go, free festival and events – these are all important and the offer must continue to develop.

To keep this offer going however relies upon a wide network of local enthusiasts and volunteers who contribute time, expertise and knowledge. This is important to recognise as the future success of the cultural and heritage offer in Leigh relies upon accurate and well interpreted information on the area's past including oral histories, pictures and painting, written records and music. Ensuring that there are excellent spaces where people can contribute to this will ensure that Leigh's history, heritage and culture are continually interpreted and presented to inform its future, both culturally and economically. Developing the offer for visitors out of the summer season will also be supported through investment in existing as well as new 'indoor' facilities.

Objective 3: Develop local business initiatives and support the local economic resilience of Leigh

A big part of Leigh's appeal to visitors and residents is an economy that includes a significant proportion of independent retailers and other small businesses including cafés, pubs and a growing craft, cultural and creative industries sector. LOSITA now exist to support the interests of the independent traders in the area, and the new Leigh Partnership group is developing strategies for wider promotion of Leigh as a destination (this includes all areas from London Road through to Old Leigh). Leigh Partnership is receiving support from Southend Borough Council. It is important that local business has the opportunity to be heard, identify collaborative opportunities and to contribute to the continued cultural vibrancy of Leigh and its distinctive offer to visitors and residents. The CCT will support all local business initiatives where possible.

Objective 4: Ensure that Leigh has the highest quality open spaces and public realm and community facilities

Leigh's urban public spaces, particularly those in Old Leigh, its open and green areas and many of its community facilities have a broad range of uses as well as challenges. The challenges are in ensuring that the different uses do not compete but rather complement each other. Many of the wharves in Old Leigh are used by both industry and the public. Two Tree Island is a haven for wildlife while also being a popular destination for dog walkers and other activity including model aircraft and currently there are limited resources for management, interpretation, engagement and enforcement. Leigh Community

Centre has been run for the last two years by LTC. There is pressure on the building, which needs significant investment, with increasing interest from a range of uses and groups as well as being the administrative office for the Town Council. Local Authority and other sources of core funding are increasingly restricted for these important civic and community spaces, and the CCT is very aware of the need to find ways of ensuring they are well managed and receive the investment and resources required as they are important for the local community, for business, for events and increasingly for visitors.

Objective 5: Improve the promotion and marketing of Leigh as a Tourism Destination

Leigh-on-Sea is a classic coastal destination in the sense that visits from outside the area contribute significantly to the local economy (and therefore the wider economy of Southend-on-Sea). The hospitality sector is therefore a very important employer although it can be seasonal. The wide range of free events and festivals are important in terms of attracting visitors to Leigh from all of the UK and beyond, and many of these are very well promoted. Many of these events are often under pressure financially however.

The wider Southend-on-Sea area has an excellent profile as a day-trip destination, and Leigh-on-Sea plays an important part in this alongside other attractions in Central Southend, such as the Pier, Adventure Island, the 'Golden Mile' and the excellent natural space and military heritage offer at Shoeburyness. There has been an effort to encourage longer and higher spending visits to the area, and Leigh is well placed to benefit from this with its well-developed coastal, heritage,

culture and independent retail offer. Guidance from Visit England makes it clear that tourism 'has a range of impacts on society and the environment and is inherently an activity that benefits from management'.

This Objective is totally interrelated with all of the other Objectives set out in this section, and all of the projects that the CCT intends to take forward will contribute to the local offer. This will have an impact locally – economically, culturally, environmentally and socially, and this impact needs managing. In 2017 Leigh CCT had a positive impact on the development of Southend Borough Council's Tourism Strategy 'Destination Southend' in which Leigh-on-Sea and the CCT feature prominently alongside Shoeburyness and the CCT there. Leigh-on-Sea and Shoeburyness combine to offer a variation to the tourism offer for the whole of Southend – east, west and central areas supporting the drive for more staying visitors (which increases tourism spend in the local economy).

In 2018 Southend Borough Council have established a new Destination Management Organisation (DMO) 'Southend Tourism Partnership' with a number of sub-group feeding in to a main DMO Board. Leigh and Shoeburyness CCT make up one of the sub-groups and will therefore feed in to the development of strategy and delivery of the 'Destination Southend' objectives.

Objective 6: Work with partners to achieve a coherent approach to transport to support the local economy

Transport has a major impact on Leigh-on-Sea as a destination for visitors, a place for business and as a major residential area. The area is well served by trains, but the

core retail areas can be very busy with cars and parking is always cited as a major issue by businesses. With the exception of cycling, the CCT is not focused on securing or promoting major infrastructure changes in the area. What is required is a considered response and strategy to look at how the area is accessed by all groups, what challenges and opportunities this provides, and what strategies can be developed to create the right balance. Leigh-on-Sea is on the National Cycle Network 16, but this requires a major upgrade to enable cycling along the main seafront route between Bell Wharf and Chalkwell Station (known as the Cinder Path) before this can be fully promoted and utilised. The largest car park in the area serves Leigh Station while car parking in key retail areas and especially Old Leigh is limited and in great demand. The High Street in Old Leigh and the seafront route along 'Cockle Row' to the Station effectively function as 'shared space' environments where cars, commercial vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians all mix, although there are few traffic restrictions. The CCT will look at all transport challenges and opportunities together, and the projects put forward in the Action Plan are those that have been identified by partners as having some potential to explore further.

4. A Short History of Leigh-on-Sea

This section is a very brief introduction to Leigh as an area, included because of the CCT recognition that the history and heritage of the area, principally as an active port for over 1000 years, is vitally important to its economy now and in the future.

Leigh-on-Sea has a long history stretching back over 1000 years. It was mentioned in the Domesday Book (under the name Legra) as a fishing location with five fishermen recorded as active. The fishermen in these early times would have used wicker traps across the creeks. The earliest boats were known as Pinkies and Peterboats that were double ended. The Leigh Bawleys came in during the 1700s by putting a 'transom stern' on the back of the Peterboats. The Peterboats and Bawleys had wells in the centre of the boats which were full of water to keep fish and shrimp alive. The flatfish were kept in pits dug in the salt marsh that trapped the tide. When the fishermen had caught enough, the fish were collected and taken up river to Billingsgate Market in London.

Cockle boats traditionally returned to Leigh on the first of the floodtide, navigating a way through the creek before the tide covered the mudflats. In the days before the introduction of navigational aids such as radar, the fishermen used the tower of St Clement's Church to help them. After dark they used some street lights on Cliff Parade (still there today) which had red glass in the side facing the sea and the men lined them up to find a safe passage up the winding creek. A long plank of wood about 250mm wide was used as a ramp along which the men then carried cockles from the boat in baskets hanging from a wooden

yoke, up the hard and into a corner of the shed.

Even before its entry in the Domesday Book Leigh was a place of habitation with Saxon finds dating back to 893, the year of the Battle of Benfleet. Throughout the middle ages the records show activity in Leigh and boat building during the Tudor period and in 1588 at least 6 ships from Leigh were involved in the English response to the Spanish Armada. Many Masters of Trinity House had residences in Leigh and there are memorials to them in St Clement's Church.

In the 17th century Leigh played a major part in the Dutch wars when it refitted Admiral Blake's fleet and in the 1790s and early 1800s a Leigh man was involved in the Nore Mutiny. A Leigh Midshipman also sailed with Nelson at Trafalgar.

Smuggling was of course a very lucrative pastime for the men of Leigh and records show a thriving trade and a busy Custom's Office. There was also pressgang activity. There is a large tombstone in St. Clement's church yard where the press gangs sharpened their cutlasses whilst waiting for the congregation to come out of the church (this is known today as the Cutlass Stone).

In the First World War Leighmen played a prominent part in bringing down the Zeppelin L15 that had bombed London. They were part of the artillery garrison at Purfleet. In the Second World War once again Leigh was called on to help the war effort sending a flotilla of Little Ships to help in the evacuation of Dunkirk and the Endeavour remains as a testimony to their bravery and loss.



The Endeavour – The only survivor of the 6 cockle boats that went to Dunkirk. Refitted with Heritage Lottery Funding in the late 1990s by the Endeavour Trust in Leigh

5. Relevant Policies

This section briefly sets out some of the relevant policies and strategies that may impact or relate to the priorities and projects for the CCT. The main policy issues that impact on the Fishing Industry are set out in the following section.

Southend-on-Sea Economic Growth Strategy 2017-22

This strategy sets out the main ambitions for Southend in terms of developing key sectors of the economy. The Vision for 2022 – ‘the Southend economy will have addressed all areas of economic underperformance to emerge as the driving force for the wider region and the leading economy in South Essex. The benefits of our efforts will be reaped by businesses and residents as they thrive in the new economy.’ This includes aspirations for job growth in key sectors, increased GVA, improving education attainment, high business start-up and survival rates, and a resilient economy ‘diverse enough to weather global economic trends, recover at pace from economic downturns, adapt to changing technologies and provide benefit to all Southend residents.’

Leigh-on-Sea plays an important role in ensuring that Southend has a ‘resilient’ and ‘diverse’ economy, offering much for the tourism, retail, creative, hospitality and maritime sectors (including fisheries). Fisheries is specifically referenced in the strategy – ‘Given its unique history, significant contribution to the national cockling industry and its importance in shaping the community and contributing to the food-tourism of Leigh-on-Sea in particular, it remains an important part of the Southend tourist economy.’ Clearly the

focus on supporting the fisheries sector through the North Thames FLAG will be important in supporting this.

The Economic Growth Strategy also clearly references the importance of the Coastal Community Teams:

‘We are working with local communities, such as the Coastal Community Teams in Leigh-on-Sea, Central Southend and Shoeburyness, to deliver cultural-led regeneration at a local level, ensuring that our communities flourish’

This is key for the CCTs as many of the priorities focus on the importance of the coastal areas as distinctive places with a good cultural, heritage and tourism offer. CCTs are well-placed to support this ‘bottom-up’ approach, and in Leigh this is supported by the North Thames FLAG as well as Leigh Town Council, Leigh Society and Leigh Port Partnership.

Southend Park and Green Spaces Strategy 2015-20

Southend Council published their draft Park & Green Spaces strategy in late 2015. There is a clear reference to Two Tree Island which is a priority area for the CCT, recognising that the area has been transformed in recent years and is now an important nature reserve.

‘Former rubbish tip now rough grassland. Most important areas are extensive saltmarsh and mudflats to the east and south. The mudflats are part of Leigh National Nature Reserve (NNR) and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (S.S.S.I.) The island itself is a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) only.’

There is also a clear reference to Leigh Library Gardens and the ambition for Southend Council to raise external funding to support improvements to this important urban green space.

‘Develop and undertake major parks and green space schemes by securing external funding.’

South East Local Enterprise Partnership

South East LEP published its European Structural Fund Investment Strategy in January 2014, alongside its Strategic Economic Strategy. There is a clear reference to the proposals for a Fishing Local Action Group in the area (Southend is mentioned but the focus of the FLAG was always to be Leigh). Therefore the establishment of the NTFLAG is a success for the South East LEP.

This is a very important reference for a strategic regional document (South East LEP is the largest in England), and recognises the significance of the fishing industry to the local economy of Southend, and how it is integrated with other sectors of the economy.

In January 2018 SELEP is developing its new Economic Strategy and there will be a renewed focus on coastal regeneration. On the 22nd January 2018 Leigh CCT representatives attended a pan-Essex CCT meeting organized by Essex County Council and the Cultural Engine CIC. SELEP and representatives from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government also attended (MHCLG). This was a chance for Leigh CCT and other Essex-based CCTs to feed into the new SELEP strategy as well as engaging directly with Government.

North Thames Fisheries Local Action Group – Local Development Strategy

The NTFLAG launched March 2017 with the Local Development Strategy highlighting five priorities; with support from local groups and bodies such as Southend Borough Council, Leigh Town Council, Leigh Port Partnership, Southend Association of Voluntary Services, Thames Estuary Partnership, Cultural Engine, local residents, fishermen, cocklers and businesses.

Priority 1: Objective 1: Improve the quayside and facilities at Leigh-on-Sea by influencing future major infrastructure upgrades on Leigh Quayside through coordination with flood defence schemes.

Priority 3: Objective 2: Increase the market value and opportunities for production and sale of NTFLAG products

Priority 5: Objective 1: Embed fisheries and a healthy marine environment in the tourism offer for the local area.

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2014

The Infrastructure Delivery Plan is an important strategic document as it identifies future priorities for investment across the borough to inform what decision can be made in relation to major developments. In this Plan there are three references to Leigh-on-Sea:

- In relation to one of the CCT priorities for sustainable transport the Plan references the Cinder Path projects as both a flood defence and sustainable transport priority: *‘Cinder Path Flood Defence works*

construction is due to commence in 2016/17, with work estimated to cost £26.8m. Potential GiA funding of £16m may be available and contributions are to be sought from Network Rail and Sustrans to complete the funding. GiA means in this case Grant in Aid funding through the Environment Agency, although clearly any such commitment from the Environment Agency will require match funding from other sources.

- The Old Leigh Flood Defences are also referenced which are also relevant to the CCT's priorities for investment in facilities to support the fishing industry locally: *'Old Leigh Flood Defence critical construction is to commence 2017/18. Work is estimated to cost £3.22m, with potential funding available of £1.4m'*. It is not yet clear that this work will in fact take place in 2017/18 or whether the full budget is in place to cover this important work.
- There is also some recognition of the need for *'local public transport measures'* to be funded in the future in Leigh-on-Sea and other local centres and locations. Investment could support some of the projects identified under the CCT Transport Objective.

6. The Fishing Industry

Leigh-on-Sea has been an active fishing industry and community for over a 1000 years. There are many examples of old fishing villages in the UK where the industry has disappeared. Leigh has managed to survive by continually diversifying and improving Old Leigh (and Leigh Port), which has an excellent offer for visitors and, of course, residents. In Leigh the fishing industry is very much present and highly visible throughout the year. There is very little commercial fishing activity of any kind still taking place in the Thames Estuary, and Leigh has the closest active fishing industry to London. The industry in Leigh is viable and has demonstrated its adaptability over many years, facing challenges such as a changing estuary environment which has seen stocks of traditional catch including shrimp and Dover Sole reduce significantly. Southend Utd are known as ‘The Shrimpers’ but there are now no fishermen locally catching shrimp commercially although there may be scope for leisure shrimping. Other stock caught locally includes herring, skate, sprat and whelk.

Many rightly associate Leigh-on-Sea with its famous cockles which are sold direct to the public throughout the year, landed and processed locally. The distinctive cockle sheds where much of the processing takes place is an important part of the character of Old Leigh and attracts visitors from London, Essex and well beyond.

The CCT is aware that it is vitally important for Leigh to retain its essential character as an active port, and the range of projects set out under Objective 1 demonstrate a commitment by local partners to find solutions to ongoing challenges. These are potential project solutions to challenges

that can be effected *locally* through collaboration. In terms of the local economy and coastal regeneration in the wider area, it would be wrong for all partners to simply assume that the fishing industry (and related marine industries locally) will always be in place in Old Leigh.

In summary therefore the CCT presents the following challenges to the viability of the industry locally, and indeed that of Leigh as a Port. Some opportunities are also reflected in relation to challenges:

- The silting of the channels into the Port and the wharves locally makes it more difficult for boats to access, moor up and to leave the area to head out into the estuary. There is a broad consensus that a solution needs to be found to this as if the silting continues access will be cut off forcing vessels to abandon the Port. This will require further technical studies to identify the most viable, long term and sustainable solution. This is not just a challenge to the fishing industry, but also the wider boating industry that has been developing around Leigh Port for many years. The benefit of addressing this issue is of course to the wider economy, tourist attraction and the identity of the area cannot be underestimated.
- Some of the facilities in Old Leigh need investment – the facilities and key areas of operation for the industry in Old Leigh sit alongside public spaces, pubs and paths, all of which are very popular with visitors throughout the year. There is scope for investment in improving the facilities, and potentially increasing the space available for the industry, landing, loading and large vehicle turning. The area that is known locally as Cockle Wharf (behind the Cockle

Sheds along Cockle Row) is the main area of concern with something of an ad-hoc nature about the development, uneven surfaces and challenges for large vehicles entering and turning. The supporting walls in front of the quay are in constant disrepair and are not included in the sea defence which actually lies behind the cockle sheds. There is some consensus emerging locally that the line of official sea defence could be brought forward to the front of the quay and improvements made through future flood defence schemes. This would have to be agreed by partners including Southend Borough Council, Natural England and the Environment Agency.



View over 'Cockle Wharf' from the flyover looking west with Leigh Marina beyond

- Changing environment – Local fishermen have noted a significant change in the estuary environment over the last few years and have also noted the loss of some species (such as Dover Sole and Shrimp), while other species such as Skate (Thornback Ray) are in greater abundance than has been seen before. Some independent research that can investigate these apparent changes to inform future strategy and management for the industry locally would benefit all partners. The Thames Estuary has vital nursery ground habitat for commercial and non-commercial species, contributing to the wider fish stocks in the North Sea and the wildlife of the estuary. Independent research would also go a long way to

informing environmental management and future marine and terrestrial planning locally.

- Marine Spatial Planning – The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is tasked with producing eleven Marine Plans for England by 2021 covering the inshore and offshore areas separately. The Greater Thames Marine Plan (Area 5) will most likely be getting underway in the next 12 months. Local Plans and strategies will be incorporated into them to cover the land/water interface and there is an opportunity for Leigh to produce its own Local Marine Plan. This work will be used by the MMO and serve to underpin future management and planning decisions locally.
- Limited local sales of fish – The fishing industry in Old Leigh is highly visible with the boats, nets and active wharf areas all very much part of the local culture and heritage. What is missing currently, and this is something many local fishermen are keen to explore, are regular opportunities for fishermen who are registered and operating out of Leigh to sell direct to the public at markets or off the boat as is seen in other areas. This would be good for local business because the margins are higher for this kind of direct sale, and most importantly good for local tourism with a greater interest than ever in food 'traceability', sustainability, local 'low carbon' food and independent business.
- Illegal and un-licensed fishing – This is an issue that has been noted by all partners, including fishermen locally. Un-licensed fishing does take place although there is no independent study of the likely financial impact of this, or indeed the impact on fish and shellfish stock. There is also a health and safety challenge with this as well. Un-licensed fishing and harvesting

of shellfish does compete with the licenced fishing industry and is another threat to its economic viability locally.

- Quota and EU Discard ban – Recent changes to the Common Fisheries Policy are impacting on the whole industry across Europe, including the industry in Leigh-on-Sea. The core principle of significantly reducing the amount of fish discarded (often dead) is something that most people would understand and agree with. The impact of the Discard Ban is only now really starting to affect the industry locally (from January 2016) now that demersal fish (bottom feeders) are included. The challenge for the industry, and particular small-scale inshore fishing, is to ensure that fishermen have the quota for particular catch that will enable them to legitimately land everything. There is currently some confusion (not confined to Leigh) over what can be thrown back and therefore not landed under what is called the de minimis allowance (some fish will survive after being caught and can therefore be returned alive). The industry locally is engaging with the Marine Management Organisation on this, and it is not an area that the CCT can have a major impact on, other than understanding the issue and helping to make representations in a coordinated way where appropriate.
- Diversification – The fishing industry locally is a highly skilled sector, and many of those working in the industry have transferable skills. Diversification is a term associated throughout Europe with small-scale inshore fishing fleets, and it can focus on a range of issues such as creating higher value for catch, changing fishing methods to target different stock, or the industry diversifying into non-commercial fishing activity out of season (tourism, training, research for example). Targeting

different stock in the Thames Estuary is unlikely to be an option, but other options may be available. This is something that could be explored through the FLAG or a similar Community Led Local Development initiative.

The Scale of the Industry in Leigh-on-Sea

The full impact of the fishing industry on Leigh and the wider area of Southend has never been studied economically. Direct employment in the industry is one indicator of the scale of the sector, but this by no means tells the full story in terms of its contribution to tourism, culture as well as the hospitality and retail sectors. The Southend-on-Sea Local Economic Assessment from 2013 recognises that the industry *‘contributes significantly to Leigh-on-Sea, both in terms of its heritage and identity, and as a key visitor attraction’*.

Those employed directly by the fishing industry in Leigh are around 50 full-time equivalents, and this has been fairly stable for a number of years. The industry is located largely in the areas of Cockle Wharf, Theobalds Wharf and Bell Wharf – all areas of Old Leigh. Leigh Marina is also an important area for repair and overhaul as well as providing secure moorings for boats of all kinds.

The Kent & Essex Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (KEIFCA) currently issue 14 licences for cockle fishing across the whole Thames Estuary Cockle Fishery Area. Eight of these are held in Leigh-on-Sea demonstrating the strength of the area for cockle fishing. Fishing for cockles is generally restricted to around 45 to 50 days each year starting in June and ending in early October.

Although there is a good demand for local cockles amongst visitors and residents in

the area, the majority of the cockles are sold outside of the UK with France, Spain and the Netherlands particularly good markets. The cockle industry therefore is a major success story in terms of international exports. With such an emphasis in recent years on cockles, the 'yield' is all important. The yield is the amount of meat (sometimes accounted for as a %) that is collected after processing from the total weight of the catch. The total weight includes the shells which have very limited commercial value.

A 1000kg bag of cockles in a good year can have a yield of up to 80% which ensures excellent returns for the industry. In other years, and 2015 was one, the yield can be as low as 40% with the cockles inside the shells being small. It is not clear exactly what environmental factors affect the yield, but this could be an area for future research. In a good year the total value of the cockling industry in Leigh is as much as £2,200,000 (this just relates to the direct value of the processed catch, not the wider industry and supply chain). This represents a considerable input to the local economy, and indeed a much larger contribution to tourism and culture.



Bell Wharf in January 2016 looking south towards the north Kent coast

Southend Fisheries Strategy June 2002

The last Fishing Strategy that was produced for the Southend area was in 2002 – The Southend Fisheries Strategy. This was commissioned by Southend-on-Sea Borough Council in partnership with the Crossbow Partnership. In terms of direct action and projects it is notable that since publication very little has been achieved in terms of the aspirations set out. The Leigh Port Partnership, which was established following this study, has managed to keep important issues on the agenda, many of which form the basis of this section of the CCT economic plan.

'In cultural terms, the fishing industry is a significant element of the heritage of both Southend and Leigh. It has shaped the physical fabric of Old Leigh and whilst Southend has taken on a more contemporary role within the economy of the local area, there are still strong physical and cultural manifestations of the importance of the fishing industry evident today.' (Southend Fisheries Strategy 2002)

Many of the aspirations set out in this Economic Plan that relate to the industry can trace their origins at least as far back as the Southend Fisheries Strategy. This includes improving facilities at Cockle Wharf, the need for dredging of the creek, considering the future use of public spaces and car parks in Old Leigh, direct selling from boats to the public and greater interpretation of the industry and its heritage.

'The integration with leisure and tourism is really a development of the industry's current attraction as the focal point of the 'working fishing community' of Leigh. Visitors are attracted to Leigh, even on cold winter days, because of its living associations with the sea. In the summer season, the crowds are present throughout the long days and give the place a

holiday character which brings trade and income. The improvements for the industry need to incorporate more access for the public and interpretative features to enhance this aspect.' (Southend Fisheries Strategy 2002)

Collaboration in the Industry

The CCT is building on momentum gained through a number of years of collaboration focused on the fishing industry locally. The Leigh Port Partnership has worked hard to bring different industry representatives together, as well as wider stakeholders, to identify priorities as well as generate some much needed initiative and drive in the hope of securing funding and investment in priorities. Most recently this has resulted in the successful bid for the North Thames FLAG, securing £800,000 for 3 years towards the sustainability of the fisheries and maritime sector around Leigh on Sea.

The NTFLAG is being managed in partnership with Thames Estuary Partnership (TEP) who have a long-established TEP Fisheries Action Group which provides excellent insight into the challenges of inshore fishing in the wider Thames area. The principle of Community Led Local Development is as relevant to the CCT as it is to the FLAG, so the success of the FLAG has helped to grow momentum for sustaining the future of Leigh on Sea and focusing on diversification for the industry.

Fishing is a competitive industry by its nature which is also bound up with legislation and guidance which has as a major impact on all commercial fishing businesses. However, all partners are clear locally that collaboration and clarity on priorities is critical at this key stage. Some of the issues that affect the industry are complex and generally not well

understood by those outside of the industry, so clarity is important and this requires collaboration. The CCT recognises the importance of achieving clarity for all partners as the best way of securing a broad consensus (industry, other local stakeholders, local authority, sector authorities, regional bodies and Government). The projects set out in the Action Plan are those that the CCT and its partners can have a direct impact upon. These are projects that, if taken forward, will help with sustaining this important local industry.



7. Leigh's Coastal Economy

As a CCT there is clearly a primary focus on projects and issues that affect the main coastal location of Old Leigh, including the important fishing industry. However Leigh-on-Sea is a much larger area than Old Leigh, and the CCT is particularly interested in how the coastal offer of Old Leigh in particular is relevant, culturally and economically to all of Leigh. This is of course very difficult to measure, particularly for businesses who quite naturally will have differing views on what drives their business and customer base. The point is that identifying local distinctiveness – that particular offer or cultural base that makes Leigh-on-Sea different from other places, even within the Southend Borough – is very important and is a key concern of the CCT.

Southend-on-Sea Local Economic Assessment 2013

The Local Economic Assessment document was refreshed and updated on behalf of Southend Council in 2013. It sets out the key opportunities and challenges facing the wider Southend Borough economy, recognising that there are many different sectors with opportunities for growth including tourism. The Economic Assessment complements and has informed the Economic Growth Strategy 2017-22 that is referenced above (Section 5).

Within the document there are some interesting references to Leigh-on-Sea which are helpful to the CCT. There is important recognition of the role that the Fishing Industry plays in supporting the Leigh-on-Sea economy which supports the CCT Objective 1.

'The fishing industry, although small, contributes significantly to Leigh-on-Sea, both in terms of its heritage and identity, and as a key visitor attraction.'

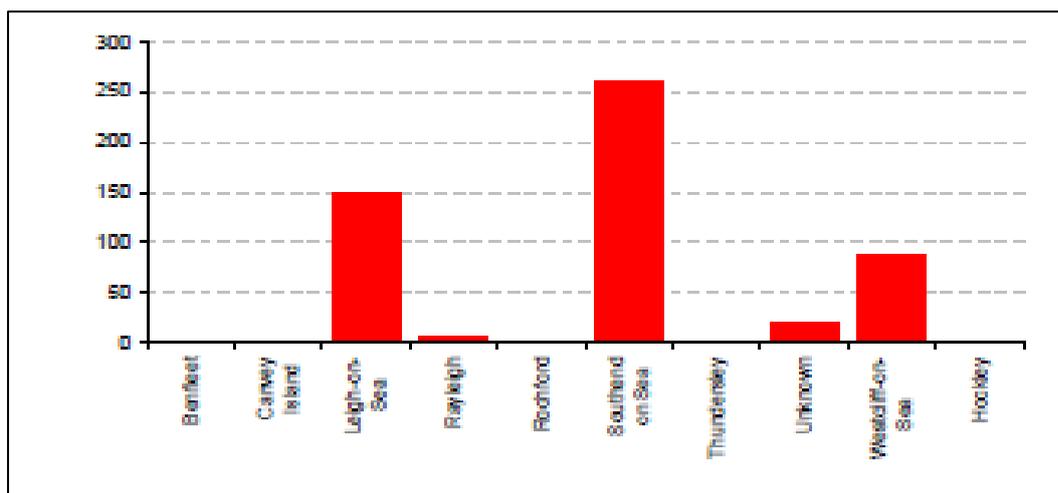
It is clear that Leigh-on-Sea also has an important independent and boutique retail offer that is important to the local economy, as well as its cultural vibrancy.

'The retail offer in Southend-on-Sea is varied across different geographical centres, with a higher concentration of independent traders in Leigh-on-Sea than in the town centre.'

Further to this the Assessment notes the importance of independent retailers in the Leigh area in relation to the 'multiplier effect':

'It is recognised that independent retailers generate a greater return for the local area per pound of turnover than national chains, in an effect known as a local multiplier effect. Small local businesses tend to purchase a greater proportion of their goods and services from nearby firms than larger national and international businesses, and the profit generated locally is more likely to be spent locally.'

Leigh is also recognised as having a higher concentration of creative and cultural businesses than many other areas of South Essex, and this is something that is visually apparent in the core Leigh retail areas. The graph below, taken from the Local Economic Assessment, compares Leigh-on-Sea to other areas:



Graph showing cultural and creative firms across South Essex – taken from the SEPP Creative and Cultural Mapping 2010.

The cultural and creative sectors are important to the whole of the Southend economy, and Leigh with its diverse cultural, heritage and hospitality offer is well placed to benefit. This is reflected in the Southend-on-Sea Cultural Strategy 2012-20:

‘The town has a significant concentration of creative and cultural businesses located in the Borough, particularly in the town centre, and the centres of Leigh and Westcliff. Whilst the creative and cultural industries have significant employment and wealth generating capacity, experience from elsewhere suggests that they also have the ability to create a step change in the economy, attracting new, ambitious people to Southend and helping the town retain some of the spending power of residents that work in London.’

The Impact that the CCT can have on the Local Economy

It is very well known that Leigh-on-Sea is a popular destination for visitors from within Southend and wider Essex, London and beyond. All partners in the CCT are clear that this is at least partly due to the distinctive character of Leigh-on-Sea,

particularly Old Leigh, with its fascinating blend of active fishing industry and local cockles, an excellent hospitality offer and a wealth of local independent shops and cafes. Leigh-on-Sea also has a great number of the cultural events that drive interest and visits to the area, particularly in the summer months including Leigh Folk Festival, Leigh Maritime Festival and Leigh Regatta.

There are many factors that can affect local economies such as Leigh-on-Sea - local, regional national, European and international. The CCT can have an impact on the all-important issue of local distinctiveness which is critical to the future success of the local economy, and important to the wider Southend economy. Issues such as the future of the local fishing industry, ensuring that the cultural and heritage offer of the area continues to thrive and develop where opportunities exist, considering the importance of transport for businesses and visitors, as well as developing the Leigh-on-Sea brand through a Destination Management process for example – these are all part of supporting and developing that economic base which is built to an extent on that local distinctive offer.

More needs to be done to link the offer at Old Leigh to the main retail, restaurant and small businesses areas around The Broadway, Leigh Road and Elm Road. This can be achieved through local businesses initiatives, improved signage as well as proposals for expanding the current Leigh Heritage Trail (see Projects). The two areas are separated but linked through Church Hill which is only suitable for pedestrians, as well as by other residential roads; the main challenge being the steep incline or decline (depending upon which way you are walking – up from Old Leigh or down from the Broadway).



Church Hill looking down from the Broadway to Old Leigh

Leigh-on-Sea's economy has sectors that are seasonal, although much of the retail and other service and creative sectors are not particularly affected. Pubs in Old Leigh do much more business in the warmer months and will often double their staff numbers during the summer. The Festival programme provides a major boost to trade in Old Leigh as well with 1000s coming from all over the UK for the Leigh Folk Festival, for example. The Heritage offer is based largely around the Leigh Heritage Centre, which is run entirely by volunteers. Developing the indoor heritage offer, as the embryonic Leigh Maritime Museum, would complement the Heritage Centre and support visits throughout the year.



The crowds, musicians and dancers at the Leigh Folk Festival in Old Leigh

High level analysis of Southend Council's Non-Domestic Rates Database demonstrates that Leigh-on-Sea (the two relevant Wards) has a high number of businesses compared with some other parts of the Borough, and that there high percentage of businesses classed as 'Shops / Shops & Premises', as well as a relatively high percentage of businesses classed as 'Office Accommodation'. As the data does not provide any information on individual businesses it is difficult to make any clear assessments. However it is clear that the area has a strong smaller retail and business sector with retail an important cornerstone of the local economy.

CCT Business Survey

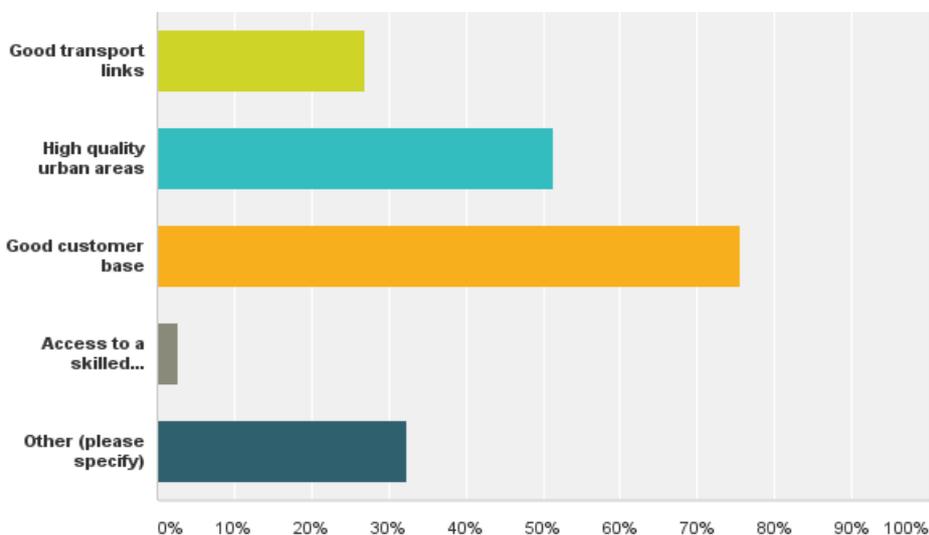
A survey of local businesses in the core retail areas of the Broadway and Elm Road was begun in January 2016, and this is continuing. The aim of this initial survey is to get a basic insight into the local business view of the area, and to pick up any particular trends that may be of importance to the CCT and its partners. The survey is being undertaken primarily face to face by CCT representatives and volunteers going into business premises (mainly shops). Some have been completed online, and this remains open.

Below is a simple summary of some of the initial findings. Of the 38 businesses completing the survey, the majority were retail and had been trading in the area for

more than 10 years. The findings are clearly only a snapshot at this stage but do provide an interesting insight for the CCT.

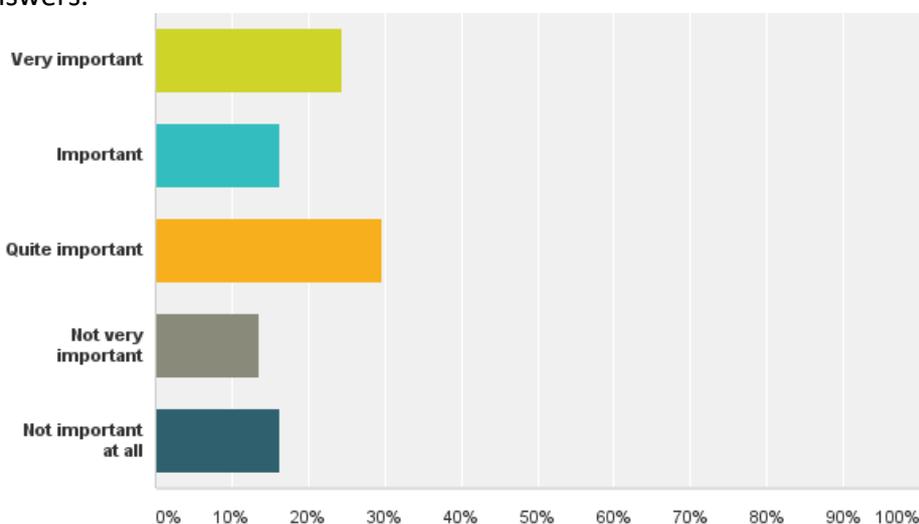
Question 2 – In your view what makes Leigh-on-Sea a good place to do business?

This question clearly assumes that the business owners consider that Leigh-on-Sea is a good place to do business as they are operating in the area and have done for some time. The most popular choice was ‘a good customer base’ which shows a good level of confidence in the area. Very few (only one in fact) chose ‘access to a skilled workforce’. The ‘Other’ option included a number of references to the area’s independent retail and business base.



Question 4 – How Important are Tourists / Visitors to your business?

The responses to this question show that the majority recognise that visitors are important in some way to their business, although there is a fairly even spread across all of the answers.



Question 5 – Are there any issues that make operating your business from Leigh challenging?

This was an open question and business owners could respond as they wished. The main issue, as it often is in retail areas, was to do with car parking. The majority of respondents referenced this, whether in relation to recent changes to on street parking that mean there are now two hours free rather than one, or simply not enough availability. The nature of Leigh Broadway and the other retail areas, with shops, cafes, pubs and restaurants set out along the road in a linear fashion means that there is high competition by shoppers and visitors for the on street parking spaces that are available. Free parking is available outside most of the retail areas, currently limited to two hours. There are two relatively small public car parks in Elm Road and North Street, with other public parking available along Belton Way and within Old Leigh.

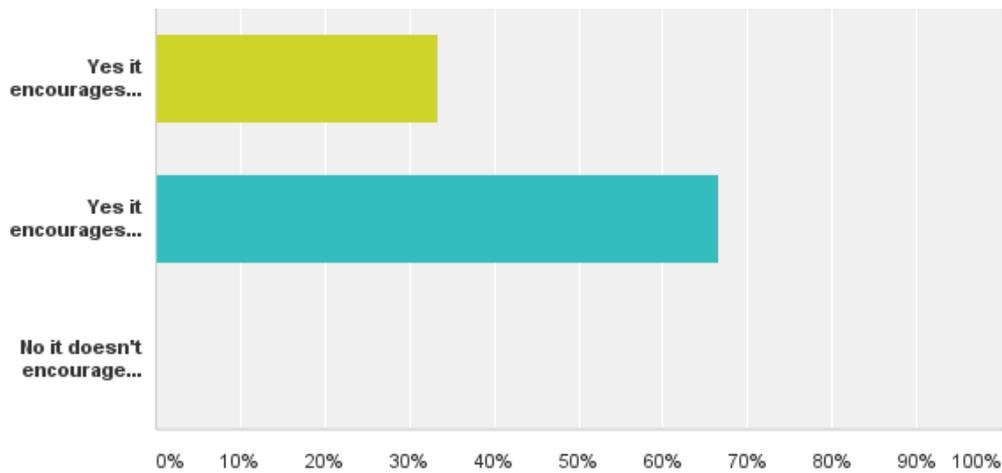
The main issue with the recent change from one hour free parking to two hours is that this may impact more heavily on smaller retailers who rely upon a quick turnaround of visitors and shoppers to the area to drive trade. Longer stays may be beneficial for cafés, restaurants, hairdressers etc. in the area. This issue cannot be resolved by the CCT, but the CCT does recognise the importance of transport as one of the Objectives and a key issue for the local economy.

Question 6 – Do you think that Leigh’s heritage as a port and fishing village encourages visits and supports business?

The responses to this question are revealing in that the vast majority were clearly not directly related to the fishing industry locally, but all recognised that Leigh’s heritage as a port and fishing village was indeed important in terms of attracting visitors to the area and for business (the two are clearly linked). This is important for considering measures to support the ‘coastal economy’ of Leigh as the CCT can support projects and initiatives contributing to the culture and heritage vibe of the area and therefore support the wider economic base (including retail). More consultation with businesses in relation to this needs to be undertaken by the CCT however in early 2016.

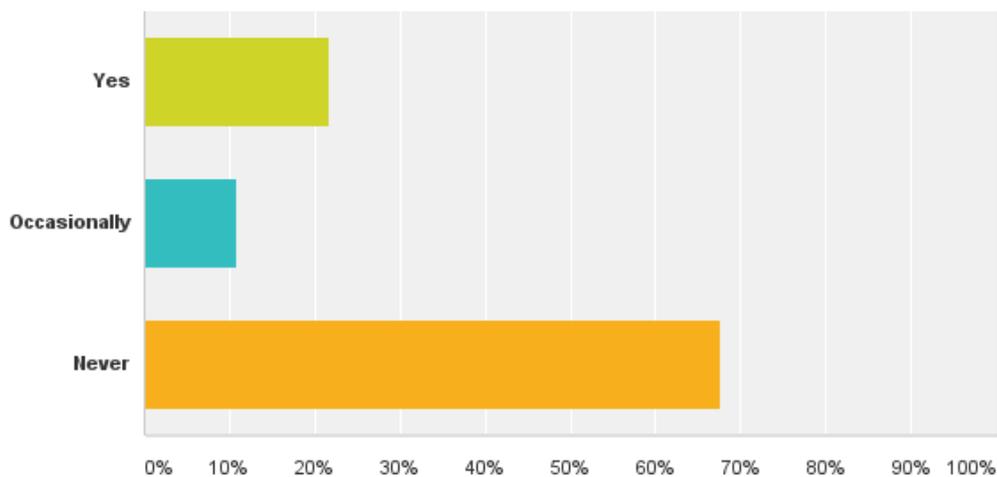
The options for this particular question were:

- Yes it encourages visits and directly supports my business
- Yes it encourages visits but does not support my business
- No it doesn’t encourage visits or support my business



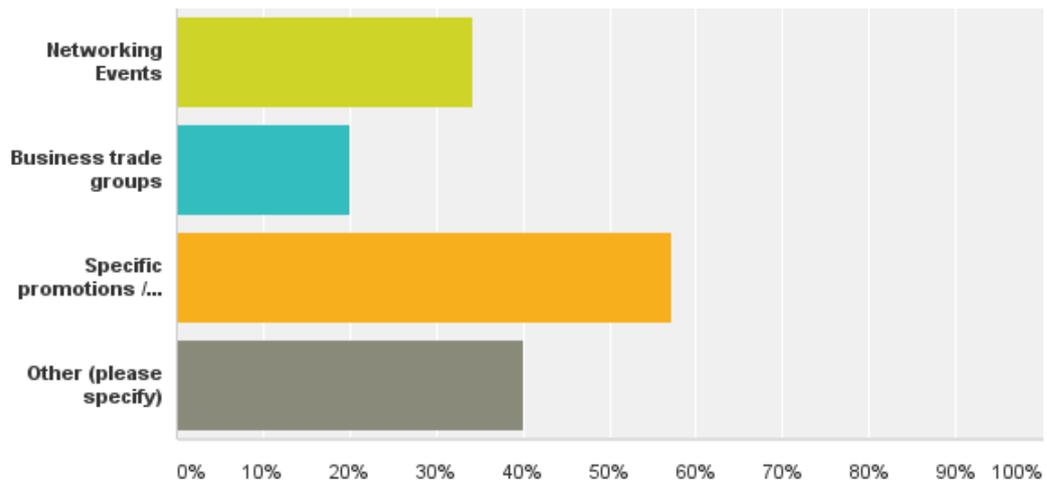
Question 8 – Do you trade with other businesses locally?

The answer to this question demonstrates that although there is some trading between businesses, many have not done this. This may be for a number of reasons such as the need to source stock beyond the area, so more analysis will have to be done as well as further survey work to better understand this issue.



Question 10 – What kind of support / business initiatives would support your business?

There was broad interest in all of the options below, with the most popular being specific promotions / joint marketing opportunities. This is something that can be consulted upon in more detail and the CCT and its partners may be able to develop some specific approaches in partnership with local business.



8. Consultation

The CCT recognises the importance of consultation when developing priorities and projects and securing funding. The CCT has representation from many representative groups and organisations in the area, but it will seek to expand membership over the next few months. Given the representation the CCT is convinced that the priorities and projects outlined in this document do respond to real local challenges and opportunities and provide an excellent basis to continue partnership working.

Now that this stage has been reached there is much to be gained from undertaking further consultation with local communities, businesses and visitors, and this will be taken forward over the next few months and will inform the development of this document. It will be important for the CCT to engage with visitors particularly during the late spring and early summer months when the area is full of visitors.

Southend Borough Council is currently working with a range of partners to support the establishment of the Leigh Partnership – with a clear focus on supporting collaboration and programmes of support for local business in the Leigh-on-Sea area. As part of this work a major survey is being undertaken (early 2018) to inform the Leigh Partnership priorities, and the CCT has fed into the development of this survey. Highlight results will feature in a future update of this strategy document.

Further to this, the North Thames FLAG process has engaged 100s of residents and visitors at a number of high profile events (including the Leigh Folk Festival in

2017). Given the close working relationship between the NTFLAG and the CCT, the results of this ongoing engagement on project and programmes will inform the Leigh CCT strategy.



Public Launch event for the North Thames FLAG in March 2017 – Leigh-on-Sea. Pictures includes MP for Southend West Sir David Amess, Marine Management Organisation, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council, Thames Estuary Partnership, local fishing industry representatives, Thames Tideway, Cultural Engine and NTFLAG Staff.

9. Projects and Action Plan

Ultimately the CCT is all about the projects that will make the difference to Leigh as a coastal area and destination.

All of the projects set out below have been identified by the CCT working as a partnership, and considering what will have a positive impact on Leigh as a coastal destination and a place to live. Projects are set out under each of the Six Key Objectives. As part of this the CCT has undertaken a brief analysis of opportunities and challenges which provide something of a logic chain to the identified projects. All of the projects are those that the CCT and the partners within the team can have a realistic opportunity to progress and each project will be subject to consultation.

Objective 1: Ensure the future sustainability of Old Leigh as an active Fishing Port

Challenges: The main challenges relate to the infrastructure that is required to support an active port of any kind – good facilities, good access by water.

Opportunities: The main opportunity is that there is an active fishing industry in place that has a long history of operating in the area, a commitment to Leigh and is keen to collaborate with all partners to secure the investment necessary in the area. An apparent opportunity at present is proposed investment in coastal defences at Old Leigh which could support facility improvements for the industry.

There is also more to be made of the 'local' brand for the local catch, working with the industry to raise the profile of all of its commercial catch, not just the cockles. This is essential for tourism as well as for the industry itself.

Objective 2: Enhance the cultural and heritage offer of Leigh-on-Sea

Challenges: There is a challenge of space and capacity and, of course, funding. Old Leigh does not have a lot of space to develop new heritage and cultural attractions. There is a possibility for the new Maritime Museum to go into an existing property that is currently vacant adjacent to the improved Strand Wharf area. The improvements to the area as a public place for visitors and residents, with the Heritage Centre and potential Maritime Museum flanking the Wharf, will be a strong draw to the Old Town.

Capacity is a challenge for any small heritage charity as volunteers are critical to the success of any facility such as the Heritage Centre, and its project plan for the Centre contains a full programme of rejuvenation and improvement to the heritage offer. As the Maritime Museum develops there is of course the opportunity to collaborate on developing volunteering capacity, and to work with other partners on this.

Funding is a challenge for heritage and culture, but clarity over priorities and well developed business cases will always support funding bids to the Heritage Lottery Fund for example. The CCT is working with both the Leigh Society and Leigh Maritime on this.

Opportunities: There is great experience within the CCT in terms of managing heritage attractions and working with volunteers, principally through the Leigh Society, Leigh Town Council and also members of the Endeavour Trust who are represented on the CCT through the Leigh

Port Partnership. There is also excellent professional heritage, industry and architectural expertise within the Leigh Maritime CIC.

More work will be done through consultation to more fully understand the links between the heritage and cultural offer of the area and economic/business opportunities, but there is already a clear recognition that the two are interlinked, and this provides a great basis for justifying external funding investment.



The Leigh Heritage Centre 'The Smithy'

Objective 3: Develop local business initiatives and support the local economic resilience of Leigh

Challenges: The main challenge, as with all local business initiatives, is working with business owners who are very busy running their business. Any new opportunities for initiatives, promotions or events must come with support and as much clarity as possible on what the intended outcomes will be.

The obvious challenge for the main retail areas of the Broadway, Leigh Road and Elm Road is that there has not been an effective trader group for a number of years. It will take time to build some momentum, and again it is important to provide support.

Opportunities: The emerge of Leigh-on-Sea Independent Traders Association (LOSITA), followed by the broader Leigh Partnership offers many opportunities from 2018 onwards to support business promotion, identifying key programmes that can help to ensure that businesses in Leigh have a strong collaborative voice.

Objective 4: Ensure that Leigh has the highest quality open spaces and public realm and community facilities

Challenges: The main challenges are, of course, funding and capacity (which are linked). Capacity includes volunteering, and volunteering capacity is at present already stretched. All of the CCT priorities under this objective require funding, but given the potential impact with social, environmental and economic outcomes, there are good arguments for future investment.

A specific challenge for Two Tree Island in particular is the scale of the location – over 640 acres of open space that consists of scrub, reedbeds, lagoons and grassland. The challenge of accommodating a range of uses is considerable, and to restrict anti-social behaviour and fly-tipping, for example, will require resources that are not currently in place. Collaboration, notably through TWIG (local group) who are liaising with Southend Borough Council and Veolia, is supporting the challenge of cleaning up Two Tree Island in particular.

Opportunities: The main opportunity clearly relates to the fact that there is a need to find solutions to the management of Two Tree Island. The clear need creates opportunities for funding. Essex Wildlife Trust are very experienced at securing funding and in working in partnership with local partners, and there are highly experienced and knowledgeable

volunteers who will put their time and effort into making the case for funding and delivering projects on the ground.

Objective 5: Improve the Promotion and Marketing of Leigh as a Tourism Destination

Challenges: The main challenge for the CCT is one of capacity in putting together a Destination Management Plan (DMP). However a lot of work has been done through this Economic Plan to identify the priorities for action, and the process of working through a DMP is similar in many ways to the process of a CCT economic plan.

There is also a challenge that could emerge from differing views on priorities, but again this is probably outweighed through the process that the CCT has gone through to identify priorities for this Economic Plan.

The other challenge is one of securing funding for promotions, and perhaps also to secure expert advice on the DMP process.

Opportunities: The main opportunity now comes in the form of the Southend Tourism Partnership, which is the Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for the Borough of Southend. Both Leigh and Shoeburyness CCTs will form a sub-group of the main DMO Board and feed in to strategy development and the delivery of 'Destination Southend', the Tourism Strategy for Southend published in 2017. This new opportunity largely replaces the need to develop a Destination Management Plan for Leigh.

Objective 6: Work with partners to achieve a coherent approach to transport to support the local economy

Challenges: The main challenge with transport is one of influence and leverage by the CCT on an issue that requires significant buy-in from a range of partners including Southend Council. However the aspiration is to work with partners in a coherent sense from this point onwards, benefitting from the work done on identifying the opportunities to be gained in this document.

Another challenge is clearly funding for any new scheme. However working in partnership with the key players and supporting them to identify a viable business case or funding proposal is the best approach.

Opportunities: There is clearly some demand from local businesses for some new initiatives relating to parking. Although new parking spaces is not on the agenda, it may be possible to look at using existing assets more productively (for example the Leigh Station car park which is in private ownership - NCP).

There is clearly much to be gained by the CCT working in partnership with key partners including Southend Council to support proposed cycling projects. This would add a new dimension to the Leigh-on-Sea offer to visitors (sustainable tourism), help to better link up Leigh to other visitor destinations in Southend and Castle Point, and also potentially play a role in relieving pressure on car parking and the local roads at peak times.

The following section sets out all of the priority projects for the CCT in the form of an Action Plan from February 2016 onwards. This will be constantly updated

by the CCT as projects are progressed and new opportunities arise.



A busy Broadway with parking outside the main retail areas.

Leigh-on-Sea CCT Action Plan – February 2018 onwards

Objective 1: Ensure the future sustainability of Old Leigh as an active Fishing Port

Objective 2: Enhance the cultural and heritage offer of Leigh-on-Sea

Objective 3: Local business initiatives and support the local economic resilience of Leigh

Objective 4: Ensure that Leigh has the highest quality open spaces and public realm and community facilities

Objective 5: Improve the Promotion & Marketing of Leigh as a Tourism Destination

Objective 6: Work with partners to achieve a coherent approach to transport to support the local economy

Progress to date:

Objective 1

The North Thames FLAG was established with funding provided through EMFF in November 2016 and was launched in March 2017. The CCT played a major role in informing the lead partners of coastal improvements and fishery related projects that the CCT could support as a group. The FLAG requires a board to pass decisions and help steer the direction of the FLAG which the CCT has positively influenced, as the CCT has encouraged residents and organisations to understand the importance of the Leigh fishing community. Most of the projects included in Objective 1 are on the agenda for the NTFLAG funding as they align with the NTFLAG LDS and EMFF funding scheme. However, the Leigh CCT group will continue to support these projects through engaging the local community and the NTFLAG has already played a part in encouraging new members to the CCT.

The NTFLAG provides a unique opportunity to plan for the future of Old Leigh and ensure that existing and potentially competing uses are better understood. Old Leigh is unique in the context of the Borough of Southend and if the fishing industry is to have a future alongside hospitality, retail, non-commercial boating, events and residential, then some planning for the future may be required. This would also support business cases for investment in infrastructure, providing a structured way to demonstrate need and rule out alternative proposals. Projects that have been removed since the 2016 Economic Plan:

1. Bell Wharf Surface Improvements

Delivered by Southend Borough Council, funded by the EMFF, Match funding provided by SBC

2. Take forward FLAG

Thames Estuary Partnership and Cultural Engine in partnership with local organisations, successful in November 2016, launched March 2017. Funding is provided by EMFF to deliver CLLD with £800,000 from 2017 to 2020.

3. Study to determine cost of access improvements to Leigh Creek

This is being funded through the NTFLAG – EMFF to begin work February 2018, march funding provided by Shoreline strategy (EA and SBC)

4. Consider Protected Origin for Leigh on Sea Cockles

Following the establishment of the FLAG the 14 cockle license holders agreed that MSC would be the most suitable certification and NTFLAG – EMFF and the individual cockle license holders will match fund the remaining.

5. Research on Estuary Environmental Change

The environmental priority of the NTFLAG has put aside some funding to survey the Estuary with an ambition to develop a robust and independent information and data resource to establish how the Estuary has changes (or is changing) over recent years. A changing Estuary has a direct impact on the fishing industries.

Objective 1: Ensure the future sustainability of Old Leigh as an active Fishing Port

This was a central priority for the CCT in 2015/16 and remain so for 2017/18 and onwards. The work undertaken by partners to develop the North Thames Fishing Local Action Group (NTFLAG) has elevated the priority to a wider audience, and has provided a mechanism, funding and some additional capacity to take projects and programmes forward. This did not exist in 2016 so this is a major step forward for Leigh as a location with an active port and fishing industry.

It is important that this priority continues to be seen in the wider context. The continued survival of the fishing and cockling industry in Old Leigh is important for local jobs (approximately 50 fte employed at any one time directly and in local supply chains). However, given the likely requirement for infrastructure funding to sustain the industry in the future, a wider issue is the impact that the active fishing industry and port has on the cultural identity of the Southend and wider South Essex area. This is now recognised in both the Southend Tourism Strategy ‘Destination Southend’, and in the Economic Growth Strategy 2017-2022. There is also recognition that there are existing and future skills needs for the industry in the draft Southend Skills Strategy 2017.

The majority of projects listed below will be taken forward by the NTFLAG (and by the partners within this) utilizing European Maritime & Fisheries Funding (EMFF) where possible. The CCT however retains an important role to continue promoting the priorities under this Objective to a strategic and wider audience as the importance of the fishing industry and the wider port are critical to Leigh, Southend and South Essex and across many different sectors including hospitality, tourism, culture, heritage and education.

Project 1			
<p>Title: Old Leigh infrastructure improvements for safety</p> <p>Estimated cost – Unknown at this stage.</p>	<p>Outcomes: Resurfaced wharf to allow articulated lorries into Cockle Row</p>	<p>Time-scale 1 year to allow for planning, permissions, funding and resurfacing</p>	<p>Partners Southend Borough Council Leigh Town Council Fishing industry Veolia Thames Estuary Partnership South East LEP</p>
<p>Brief Description: To provide facilities that are non-existent in the port at Old Leigh and improve facilities that are available. At present, although there are over 15 vessels that use the port daily there is little in the way of standard harbour facilities for example waste tanks for marine litter and used engine oil. The accessibility for articulated lorries is unsafe due to the weak infrastructure. The area is used for landing, maintenance and loading supply lorries with catch. This area requires re-surfacing, levelling and a clear barrier at the side of the wharf. CCT sourced funds could be matched funded with EMFF to support this project to move forwards.</p>			
Project 2:			
<p>Title: Spatial Plan for Leigh Port</p> <p>Funding likely provided by North Thames FLAG/EMFF</p>	<p>Outcomes: A clear and visual representation of ownership, planning requirements, protections, ideas and suggested projects – a requirement for all infrastructure projects in old Leigh to provide understanding to stakeholders.</p>	<p>Time-scale 4 months</p>	<p>Partners The North Thames FLAG All users of the port; fishing industry, sailing clubs, businesses, residents</p>
<p>Brief Description: Enable all stakeholders in Old Leigh to clearly understand the needs and opportunities relating to land around the port. To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current pressures of land use, land ownership and planning - Access and transport challenges - Existing and future needs of the fishing industry - Existing and future needs of other sectors - Access to the creek and moorings 			

Consider how such a proposal would fit in with any Borough wide or local planning exercises (Local Plan for example)

Project 3

<p>Title: Storage facilities for the fishing industry</p> <p>Funding required: £10,000</p>	<p>Outcomes: Storage facilities for the industry, improving port safety and reduced traffic for the fishermen whose storage is often far off-site</p>	<p>Time-scale 1 year to allow for planning, permissions, funding and building</p>	<p>Partners Southend Borough Council North Thames FLAG Fishing industry Thames Estuary Partnership</p>
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Brief Description: The fishing industry require storage facilities that are not available at the port currently. This project will lead on from the Spatial Plan to find the most suitable site and understand the barriers that will need to be overcome such as lease agreements and permissions from network rail. Funding required for this will be 50% EMFF and 50% other sources (could include CCF).

Project 4

<p>Title: Marine Stewardship Council certification for Thames Estuary cockles</p> <p>Funding secured for the application process through EMFF</p>	<p>Outcomes: Blue ecolabel for Thames Estuary cockles</p>	<p>Time-scale 1 year for Acoura to complete the certification once the MMO have approved the project.</p>	<p>Partners Southend Borough Council North Thames FLAG 14 cockle license holders</p>
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Brief Description: A partnership between cocklers in Essex and Kent to secure MSC accreditation for their catch. Would raise the profile of cockles landed in Leigh, supporting tourism and the local economy, showcasing a sustainable, well-managed fishery.

Project 5			
<p>Title: Leigh Port Infrastructure Feasibility and Options Appraisal Study</p> <p>Funding secured; the application has been accepted by the MMO.</p>	<p>Outcomes: To identify the most appropriate strategy for ensuring that the port remains accessible via Leigh Creek.</p>	<p>Time-scale 12 weeks commencing February 2018</p>	<p>Partners Southend Borough Council North Thames FLAG All port users Mott Macdonald Cultural Engine Leigh Port Partnership</p>
<p>Brief Description: A study to be undertaken alongside the Southend shoreline strategy plan delivered by Southend Borough Council contracting Mott Macdonald. The process will require data collection, consultation with key stakeholders and producing an objective strategy for phase 2.</p>			
Project 6			
<p>Title: Investigate the potential for direct selling of catch by Leigh fishermen</p> <p>Funding required: £3000</p>	<p>Outcomes: Support local industry, promote local seafood, increase footfall for old Leigh. Purchase smokery and market facilities for old Leigh.</p>	<p>Time-scale: 6 months for implementation and procurement</p>	<p>Partners Southend Borough Council North Thames FLAG Leigh Port Partnership Local fishermen and groups Thames Estuary Partnership</p>
<p>Brief Description: Currently in old Leigh although there are boats landing their catch there is only two fishmongers and no current method to purchase catch directly from fishermen. There should be the opportunity and facilities to do this such as a market space and smokery. This has been investigated by the North Thames FLAG but cannot apply for funding due to EMFF funding for retail being prohibited by DEFRA.</p> <p>Risks: Environmental Health issues may need to be resolved Difficulty in predicting catch in advance with implications for promotion. Unable to find suitable location for direct sales.</p>			

Project 7			
<p>Title: Bell Bay</p> <p>Funding Required: £300,000</p>	<p>Outcomes: Support the ongoing viability of the Port at Old Leigh, maintaining the Port as a employment location for the fishing/cockling industry, while also supporting wider maritime activity.</p>	<p>Time-scale: 6 months delivery</p>	<p>Partners Southend Borough Council NTFLAG Fishing Industry</p>
<p>Brief Description: Essential work required to facilitate commercial and non-commercial boats to use the bay area between Bell Wharf and Victoria Wharf in Old Leigh. Hard standing and washing down areas and repairs to base of the wharves All designs completed and costed. Planning permission being required (schemes has already had planning permission but this lapsed). The scheme would be ready to go from November 2016 onwards. A new planning application has been submitted following consultation with SBC Planners</p>			
Project 8			
<p>Title: Improvements to Cockle Wharf including access.</p> <p>Funding Required: Estimate over £1m depending upon scale and scope.</p>	<p>Outcomes: Resurfacing and improvements to facilities and sea defences on Cockle Wharf, including improvements for vehicular access.</p>	<p>Time-scale: Delivery timescale likely to be up to 6 months.</p>	<p>Partners Southend Borough Council NTFLAG Fishing Industry Other Port stakeholders Leigh Port Partnership</p>
<p>Brief Description: Cockle Wharf is where much of the fishing industry activity is based and the famous Cockle Sheds back on to the wharf with the frontages making up the famous Cockle Row. The Wharf has been made up over the years (much of it is upon cockle shells) and requires investment if it is to be a safe and efficient space for the industry to operate from over the coming years. Details will emerge from the Spatial Plan and further engagement with the industry through the North Thames FLAG. Significant consultation will also need to take place with non-commercial partners.</p>			

Objective 2: Enhance the cultural and heritage offer of Leigh-on-Sea

This remains an important priority for the CCT as the cultural heritage offer is of critical importance for the wider economy including retail, tourism and hospitality, and it is clear that there are opportunities to enhance the current offer further. The Heritage Centre remains a strong and important element, but there is clearly a need to improve interpretation and engagement with communities and visitors on the maritime and port history of Leigh, not least as it will help with wider community and business understanding of the continuing importance of the fishing industry and port to the area.

The ambition for a new ‘museum’ to showcase and promote the maritime heritage of the area remains a longer-term aspiration. However, in order to support this kind of proposal it is important to raise the profile through smaller heritage and engagement projects. The NTFLAG has a Culture & Heritage budget which could be utilised strategically to lever in Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), Arts Council or Coastal Communities funding to support a range of heritage and arts activities, all of which could support and promote the longer-term aspirations. Therefore it is important to see Objective 2 as a coordinated programme of activity to maximise any future investment.

Project 1			
<p>Title: Improved interpretation on the maritime heritage of Leigh on Sea</p> <p>HLF as match for NTFLAG/EMFF funding.</p>	<p>Outcomes: Raising the profile of the maritime heritage and engaging 1000s of residents and visitors would support the NTFLAG outcomes (increased understanding and engagement with the fishing and cockling industry locally), while also providing evidence of demand for a new permanent space (museum or visitor experience of some kind) based in Old Leigh.</p>	<p>Time-scale: Two years</p>	<p>Partners Leigh Society North Thames FLAG; Culture and Heritage Working Group Leigh-on-Sea Town Council Southend-on-Sea Borough Council Leigh Port Partnership Leigh Maritime CIC</p>

<p>Brief Description: This could develop as a series of projects and events to improve community engagement with the 1000 years of maritime heritage of Leigh-on-Sea. This could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oral history projects - Historic Boat Restoration - Temporary exhibitions <p>There is still the desire for new museum/exhibition space in the Old Town, and this aspiration could very well be supported through some of the actions above, testing and developing the core proposition.</p> <p>The Leigh Society has demonstrated for many years that the Heritage Centre is viable. The key issues are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Physical improvements to Heritage Centre and Plumbs Cottage - External advice on display with new display cabinets to support tiered displays for all ages, AV displays - Archive digitisation and new publications 			

Project 2			
<p>Title: Expanding the Leigh Heritage Trail</p>	<p>Outcomes:</p> <p>Take forward plans for Heritage Trail in connection to improvements planned for the Heritage Centre</p> <p>Investigate other successful heritage trails including digital trails in the UK</p>	<p>Time-scale:</p> <p>Include within funding applications for Heritage Centre (at least initially)</p>	<p>Partners</p> <p>Leigh Society North Thames FLAG Culture and Heritage Working Group</p>

Brief Description: This may be connected to the above proposal to improved engagement with the maritime heritage of Old Leigh. However, the scope of the Leigh Heritage Trail would be broad, and a trail could encourage exploration by visitors and residents, linking the Broadway to Old Leigh for example by foot.			
Project 3			
Title: Building at Leigh Library Gardens	Outcomes: Increase footfall between the Broadway and Old Leigh and raise awareness of the fishing fleet.	Time-scale and risks: NTFLAG to fund the feasibility study with SBC providing a match	Partners Southend Borough Council North Thames FLAG
Brief Description: A prominent location to promote the work of the NTFLAG, run consultations, promotional events relating to the port, promote heritage and cultural events/trails, and cooking demonstrations. Undertake feasibility study to determine whether a future 'community' use for the building as currently envisaged is appropriate in terms of planning and practical.			

Objective 3: Local business initiatives and support the local economic resilience of Leigh

This became a CCT priority as the main retail/business areas of Leigh Coastal, including Old Leigh, Leigh Road, Broadway and Elm Road, had not had a functioning representative group that could advocate for the business community effectively for some time. Excellent work has taken place over the last year overseen directly by businesses, and the Leigh-on-Sea Independent Traders (LOSITA) now exists and is beginning to gain some important momentum. The needs of businesses in Leigh, particularly the independent traders, are important as the area has become associated with a independent retail and hospitality offer, and this attracts people from all over Essex and London each week throughout the year.

There are challenges to the independent nature of Leigh-on-Sea, including spiraling rents (and house prices) which may make Leigh unattractive in the near future to smaller businesses. Other continuing issues include parking/transport and marketing & promotion, and all of these issues will benefit from a collaborative independent traders group. It is important therefore that the CCT maintains this Objective as it ensures that the issues relating to the Port, fishing industry and culture & heritage relate to the wider economy of Leigh, and that any

investment in other Objectives should also benefit the wider area. If future investment is to be secured in infrastructure in Old Leigh, it is likely that any future business case will need to be clear on benefits to the broader sectors in Leigh and Southend. It is also important for the wider business community (and communities) to be aware of the challenges facing Old Leigh as a port and to recognise the role they can play in supporting the fishing and cockling industry (through improved local supply chains for example).

Project 1			
<p>Title: Promote and support Leigh-on-Sea Independent Traders Association (LOSITA).</p>	<p>Outcomes: Projects and initiatives that can be developed to support local economic resilience, developing local branding and offer etc.</p> <p>Also can work with LOSITA to inform any potential way-finding strategies across and through Leigh, particularly relating to link between the Old Town and the Broadway.</p> <p>Support for the newly established Leigh Partnership which is a wider group representing businesses from across the Leigh area.</p>	<p>Time-scale: Ongoing</p>	<p>Partners Leigh Town Council Southend Business Partnership Southend Borough Council Leigh Partnership</p>
<p>Brief Description: The CCT can provide a strategic forum for LOSITA to raise specific issues, opportunities and challenges. Where there are opportunities to develop projects, securing funding or develop particular strategies, the CCT can provide a platform and potentially support for this. Continue to consult with the business community in the key retail / hospitality areas (Broadway, Elm Road, Leigh Road, Old Leigh), focusing on the Vision and projects emerging through the CCT Economic Plan.</p>			

Project 2			
Title: Promote and support the fishing industry in old Leigh.	Outcomes: Promotional information for local businesses and community organisations. This could be a video/documentary and/or information leaflets and guides for local businesses and other important partners.	Time-scale: 2018	Partners North Thames FLAG Leigh Port Partnership Fishermen
Brief Description: Support and training for local businesses (particularly in the hospitality sectors) to make them more aware of the fishing and cockling industry, improve supply chains etc. and create more advocates			

Objective 4: Ensure that Leigh has the highest quality open spaces and public realm and community facilities

With the regeneration of Strand Wharf having been completed in 2016 by Leigh Town Council, the major emphasis for this Objective is clearly on the future of Two Tree Island. The main concern being that there are many pressures impacting negatively on the island, which is the largest accessible open space in Leigh and therefore very well used. The island is home to important wildlife, as well as being utilised as a recreation space for walkers and dog walkers in particular. Anti-social behavior, rubbish dumping and dog mess is proving a considerable challenge for all stakeholders with resources stretched. Real progress has been made over the last 12 months however with the formation of the Two Tree Island Group (TWIG), a community led movement to engage all stakeholders and seek to resolve ongoing challenges. Supporting TWIG and all stakeholders to take forward initiatives and applications for funding and investment will remain a priority of the CCT. Two Tree Island does remain operational as a location for boating, and a lack of clear strategy around the infrastructure on the Island needs resolving.

Project 1			
Title: Two Tree Island	Outcomes: The project requires a strong partnership between the CCT,	Time-scale: The main funding challenge is for resources that will enable	Partners

	<p>Essex Wildlife Trust and Southend Council. A full management plan will be produced recognising the excellent work that EWT has already undertaken but recognising current resource challenges.</p> <p>Support the work of Two Tree Island Group (TWIG) and seek specific funding opportunities as priorities for stakeholders emerge.</p> <p>Clearly articulate the short and longer-term outcomes and aspirations for Two Tree Island and identify funding sources.</p>	<p>Essex Wildlife Trust to employ paid wardens and to train more volunteers.</p> <p>Funding for improved signage and improved paths in some areas</p> <p>Lack of resources/funding to ensure that new initiatives are enforced and monitored.</p>	<p>Essex Wildlife Trust Leigh Town Council Leigh Society Southend Council TWIG</p>
<p>Brief Description: Two Tree Island is the largest open space and nature reserve in the Leigh area, and is also an important part of the experience for visitors. Currently the public experience of the Island is often negative due to issues such as fly-tipping and some instances of anti-social behaviour. There are opportunities to make improvements to enhance the area as an important nature reserve while also providing a great experience for visitors but also to make improvements to more public spaces such as car parks.</p> <p>The Island remains an operational space for some maritime activity, and Southend Council have invested in maintaining the slipway on the Island. The infrastructure to support any increase in maritime activity is limited, and therefore a proper strategy for Two Tree Island needs to emerge to enable all partners to better understand how all existing and potential future uses can coexist.</p>			

Project 2

<p>Title: Belton Hills Nature Reserve</p>	<p>Outcomes: There has been a deterioration in recent years of Belton Hills as a prominent open space. The CCT will monitor any deterioration of path, steps and handrails, as well as management of the nature reserve, and seek to support Southend Council in any future fundraising or volunteering activities.</p> <p>Improvements to steps and handrails and paths cleared.</p>	<p>Time-scale:</p>	<p>Partners Southend Borough Council Leigh Town Council</p>
<p>Brief Description: Belton Hills is a locally important open space of 63 acres, and a wildlife haven for rare plants and insects (some of national importance). A Local Nature Reserve (LNR) and Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). Belton Hills is the first major space that visitors see when coming out of Leigh Station, and it is used daily by walkers and commuters (walking from residential areas to Leigh Station).</p>			

<p>Project 3</p>			
<p>Title: Recognise the major problem and challenges associated with Plastic waste and rubbish in the Thames Estuary – including Two Tree Island.</p>	<p>Outcomes: Great awareness of the challenge from plastic and rubbish in the Thames Estuary and support for strategies and actions to tackle the problem.</p>	<p>Time-scale: Ongoing</p>	<p>Partners: Southend Borough Council TWIG Veolia Thames Estuary Partnership Thames21 North Thames FLAG</p>

			Leigh Town Council
<p>Brief Description: What is happening along the Thames is part of a global challenge. Some areas closer to London (in particularly around Concrete Barges at Rainham) have an ever more visible presence of plastic and rubbish - single-use plastic bottles, mouldings, polystyrene, cans, bottle tops, straws, wet wipes and cotton buds all dumped, thrown overboard or flushed down loos and washed up on the strand line. The CCT will support initiatives to address this challenge, recognising that there are local organisations and voluntary groups who are already doing excellent work and need more support and promotion. Rubbish in the Estuary is also a challenge for the fishing industry who regularly 'catch' significant amounts.</p>			

Objective 5: Improve the Promotion & Marketing of Leigh as a Tourism Destination

The CCT has managed, through the Economic Plan and working collaboratively with partners including Southend Council, to have a major impact on Southend's Tourism Strategy – 'Destination Southend', published in 2017. The core argument is that if the Borough of Southend is to attract more and/or higher spending tourists to the area, then a varied offer that promotes what all areas of the borough has to offer is going to be important. This includes the west of the Borough (Leigh-on-Sea with the ancient fishing village and port, active industry and independent retail and hospitality offer), and the east of the Borough (Shoeburyness with its open space and coastal/military heritage offer for walking and cycling). This is now Council policy and recognises that keeping Leigh-on-Sea as an attractive and unique proposition for visitors is important to the whole Borough's economy. To an extent therefore, work on a dedicated Destination Management Plan as envisaged prior to 2016 is potentially unnecessary. However, all of the Objectives set out in this Economic Plan support this Objective, so the Economic Plan is an essential part of this process.

Project 1			
Title: 'Destination Southend' – Leigh-on-Sea Focus	Outcomes: Actions and Monitoring that the Council will be undertaking to support the delivery of Destination Southend.	Time-scale:	Partners Leigh Town Council Leigh Society Leigh Port Partnership Southend Council

Brief Description: Continue to engage with Southend Council on developing the ‘Destination Southend’ strategy. In particular continue to develop the ‘West and East’ strategy in partnership with Shoeburyness CCT, ensuring that both areas are promoting as having a distinctive offer that is an essential part of the visitor (and community) offer of Southend. This includes promoting the fishing and cockling industry to the communities in and around Southend, ensuring that their survival and that of the port is a core component of any future Tourism related actions led by Southend Council and/or other partners.

Risks: Need to ensure that any strategy engages with wider Borough tourism strategies

Project 2

<p>Title: Develop a robust understanding of the economic, social and cultural impact of the Port and Fisheries on the wider area – with a particular focus on the benefits to tourism and place-branding of Leigh (and Southend)</p>	<p>Outcomes: Funded through the North Thames FLAG – a new piece of work in partnership with Greenwich University to capture the extent of the influence of the Port and Fishing industry to the tourism and wider sectors of Leigh and Southend.</p>	<p>Time-scale: Commission work in April 2018 Completed report late 2018</p>	<p>Partners Leigh Port Partnership Southend Council North Thames FLAG Greenwich University</p>
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Brief Description:
The Port and the Fishing Industry have a clear impact on the nature of Leigh-on-Sea as a visitor, cultural and heritage destination for visitors from within and beyond Southend. The impact of the Port and Fishing Industry therefore is inextricably linked to the success of the wider economic, and tourism, culture/heritage in Leigh and Southend (and indeed South Essex). What is needed however is a more focused economic analysis of this impact, as this will support wider investment and the development of robust business cases for funding to support infrastructure improvements for the Port

Project 3

Title: Engage with Shoeburyness CCT	Outcomes: Two collaborative meetings with Shoeburyness in 2018 – developing the East and West Coastal Tourism narrative and developing a shared understanding of CCT priorities.	Time-scale:	Partners Shoeburyness CCT Leigh-on-Sea CCT Cultural Engine Southend Council
Brief Description: Continue to engage proactively with the CCT for Shoeburyness to deliver the strategy for tourism – West and East.			

Objective 6: Work with partners to achieve a coherent approach to transport to support the local economy

This was initially identified as a priority for the CCT in recognition that the current transport system locally impacts significantly on the way that Leigh operates, both in the main retail areas (Broadway, Leigh Road) and the Old Town. The emergence of LOSITA may well provide a useful forum for coordinated trader input into issues such as parking, and the NTFLAG provides a mechanism for better understanding and potentially resolving some of the long-term challenges over space and access in the Old Town (for example access to Cockle Wharf for larger vehicles). The Council’s developing Shoreline Strategy to be completed in 2017 will provide some context for future decision making relating to the long-proposed Cinder Path project which could support an enhanced cycling offer into and through Leigh.

Project 1			
Title: Cinder Path (National Cycle Network 16)	Outcomes: Seafront route	Time-scale:	Partners Southend Council

Funding in place through Southend Council capital programme for Phase 1 which will involve moving the railway fence back, resurfacing up to 4m wide in most areas.			
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Brief Description:

The Cinder Path project represents a great opportunity for Leigh as it will complete an effective seafront route that runs right through Old Leigh east and west. Widening work to be undertaken by Southend Council in partnership with Network Rail. The CCT to be clear in its support for the project and to encourage developments between Southend Council and Network Rail. (February and March 2016)

Project 2

<p>Title: Traffic management plan for Old Leigh</p> <p>Only funding required could be related to 'Spatial Plan' under Objective 1.</p>	<p>Outcomes:</p> <p>Car park strategy for Old Leigh – which car parks are essential to the economic viability of Old Leigh?</p>	<p>Time-scale:</p> <p>Must work in partnership with Southend Council and local stakeholders and businesses to identify the opportunities.</p>	<p>Partners</p> <p>Leigh Town Council Southend Council Leigh Port Partnership Local businesses Fishing industry</p>
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Brief Description:

Old Leigh is very popular with visitors throughout the year and this creates traffic. There are generally no restrictions to cars even when Old Leigh is at its busiest and very little information available when the car parks are full. This often results in cars on the High Street during busy periods even when no parking is available. More use could be made of NCP car park with promotion of walking options from Leigh Station.

Risks: May not be possible, or indeed desirable to make any changes to current arrangements.

Project 3

<p>Title: Parking Strategy for Leigh</p> <p>No funding required at this stage.</p>	<p>Outcomes:</p>	<p>Time-scale: May not be possible to find operator for Park and Ride, or indeed a sustainable business plan.</p>	<p>Partners Leigh Town Council Southend Borough Council NCP C2C</p>
<p>Brief Description: Recent survey work has demonstrated that traders consider that parking is an issue. This is not unusual in busy retail areas but there do appear to be opportunities. It may be possible for to make better use at peak times of the NCP Station car park as a ‘Hub’ location for access to many of the key destinations – Two Tree Island, Old Leigh, The Broadway and even Hadleigh Country Park. Investigate the viability of a Park and Ride Scheme for Leigh based on visitors parking at the Station and coming in by bus. Better promotion of walking opportunities from station to Old Leigh and retail areas (The Broadway).</p> <p>Risks: May not be possible to get all stakeholders to agree on strategy</p>			

10. Governance and Next Steps for the Coastal Community Team

The Leigh-on-Sea Coastal Community Team has worked as an effective partnership since October 2015 to put together its priorities and projects, all of which are represented in this document. The CCT will continue to meet regularly and to develop projects, undertake consultation and continue the evolution of the team. This evolution will mean moving from an informal group to a new Governance structure which is able to continue the important work that starts from now.

As the Leigh CCT is not a constituted organisation it remains relatively informal in terms of Governance and ongoing management. The CCT Board oversees the key issues relating to the Economic Plan and have updated this document (last updated January 2018), in particular the Action Plan section.

The CCT has agreed that there will be a Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson, and these have been in place since 2016 and the publication of the original Economic Plan.

The Chairperson will be Peter Wexham who represents the Leigh Port Partnership and is also a Leigh Councillor. Peter has been working on the FLAG proposals, and is in close liaison with many of the key partners including Thames Estuary Partnership, Marine Management Organisation and the Kent & Essex IFCA.

The Vice-Chairperson will be Councillor John Lamb. John is a Leigh Ward Member and also Chair of the Kent & Essex IFCA. The IFCA will be an important partner in terms of engaging with the FLAG process

while also playing a role in identifying research and diversification opportunities relating to the fishing industry. John Lamb is also on the Leigh Port Partnership.

Future Budget for Administration and Support for the Leigh-on-Sea CCT

There is currently no funding in place for the Leigh CCT to support ongoing management and administration, or project delivery. The Leigh CCT continues to be supported by the Cultural Engine CIC which is a not-for-profit organisation based in Southend-on-Sea.

The Cultural Engine CIC is also engaged in the NTFLAG which does have an administration budget as well as access to some funding for priority projects. Progress on the NTFLAG priorities directly supports those of the Leigh CCT, and vice-versa.

www.culturalengine.org.uk

The CCT will work with its partners, including Southend Borough Council, to identify any potential sources of funding. This includes working alongside Essex County Council to organise pan-Essex CCT collaboration meetings to discuss how all Essex and Southend-based CCTs can feed in to Regional strategy for coastal regeneration, and identify potential sources of funding to support ongoing costs of managing CCTs. The first meeting of this group was held in Maldon on the 22nd January 2018.

Ongoing support funding is a common challenge for all CCTs across England.

Appendix A – Main Contact and Other Information on Leigh-on-Sea CCT

Single Point of Contact for the Shoeburyness CCT

Giles Tofield

Cultural Engine CIC

giles@culturalengine.org.uk

The Cultural Engine CIC support the work of the Leigh-on-Sea CCT, as well as working on North Thames FLAG and other local initiatives.

Chairperson of the Leigh-on-Sea Coastal Community Team

Peter Wexham

Telephone: 01702 711958

Address: 119 Vardon Drive, Leigh-on-Sea, SS9 3SH

Email: peter.wexham@outlook.com

Accountable Body Contact

The Accountable Body for the Leigh-on-Sea CCT is Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Contact Person: Scott Dolling (Head of Service – Economy, Regeneration and Tourism)

Email: scottdolling@southend.gov.uk

Telephone: 01702 534826

Areas of Specific Interest for the CCT (for England wide collaboration where appropriate)

The CCT would be very interested in the following working national CCT groups:

- Tourism and Marketing (in particularly managing and developing a brand through Destination Management)
- Small scale inshore fishing industry and Fishing Local Action Group (or other examples of Community Led Local Development)
- Heritage and Museum Development
- Transport