



Coleford Community Regeneration Plan

UK SPF Project Evidence

2023-24

1. 1 no. Youth feasibility study



Coleford Youth Investment Feasibility Study

March 2024



**Funded by
UK Government**

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1 Purpose

Coleford Town Council, in partnership with Forest of Dean Youth Association, has asked Chris Jones Regeneration to undertake a feasibility study into a youth investment project in Coleford town centre, specifically a space for a youth hub.

This work is part of the Coleford Community Regeneration Plan and is funded by the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund, as part of the Levelling Up Programme.

The study has set out to:

1. Understand current youth provision run by Forest of Dean Youth Association;
2. Engagement with young people to understand their needs, now and in the future;
3. Discussion with Forest of Dean Youth Association on their operational requirements;
4. An assessment of two town centre buildings, specifically using a design brief generated by the young people;
5. To recommend a preferred option and associated management/governance arrangements.

2 Study Process

This focussed piece of work has involved the following tasks and activities:

- Desktop review of town statistics that relate to young people;
- Desktop review of policy, programmes and studies relating to young people and support/outreach services;
- Discussions with Forest of Dean Youth Association staff, specifically:
 - Youth Development Officer
 - CYP and Families Development Officer
 - Youth Association Manager
 - Fundraising and Communication Manager
- 2 no. workshops with young people of a primary school age and comprehensive school age, held on the 7th and the 14th of March;
- Development of high level spatial plans for St John's Ambulance Hall and 4 Musket Walk;
- Preparation of this document.

3 Policy/Programme Context

The following policies, programmes and activities have been reviewed to understand their relationship to supporting young people in Coleford.

Gloucestershire Youth Support Team

The Youth Support Team works with approximately 6,000 vulnerable young people.

It targets specific groups of young people who are the most at risk of not making a successful transition into adulthood. It also delivers statutory services, and operates across Gloucestershire through its youth support centres, schools, and with families and young people in their homes.

Its multi-disciplinary team is made up of youth workers and family support, health and careers specialists, police and probation officers. Acting as an integrated team, it identifies identify young people who are most at risk and intervene early to prevent issues and problems from escalating. More than 90% of young people supported by our team say it has made a difference to their lives.

The Youth Support Team is run by Prospects, part of Shaw Trust, which provides a wide range of education, employment and skills services in the UK and internationally. It works on behalf of Gloucestershire County Council, in a partnership which is the first of its kind in England. It has been providing services since 2008.

The success of the unique partnership between Gloucestershire County Council and Prospects was recognised at a national level, when we won the Best Public/Private Partnership award at the national 2014 Local Government Chronicle (LGC) awards.

As a large organisation, at the Youth Support Team it helps young people in many different areas.

- Education – Learning for life
- Employment and training – Finding the right opportunities
- Health and wellbeing – Helping young people look after themselves
- Being a young parent – Supporting young people and their children
- Sexual health – Staying safe and enjoying good relationships
- Problems with drugs and alcohol – Help in overcoming them
- Housing and homelessness – Helping young people find the right place to live
- Being (or being at risk of being) in trouble with the police – Advice and support if things go wrong
- Running away – Helping young people stay safe.

Forest Voluntary Action Forum (FVAF)

FVAF stands for Forest Voluntary Action Forum. It offers support to local people and community groups to do the things that matter most to them. Including:

- support and development advice
- training
- information
- networking meetings
- facilitating representation
- volunteer recruitment
- volunteer placement and support

It also runs many projects with and for the local community, such as the Forest of Dean Youth Association, Holiday Activity Campaigns, ESHO, The Forest Compass Directory, Walking with Wheels and many more.

Its four strategic aims are:

- Establish a positive presence and reputation throughout the Forest of Dean
- Support stronger, resilient and sustainable communities
- Establish 'what works', tell the stories and demonstrate the value of strong communities across the country
- Build capacity with the focus of facilitating productive conversations with communities

The Forest Youth Association

The Forest Youth Association is governed and managed by FVAF. Along with weekly youth outreach, which included walkabouts to engage with young people and running regular youth clubs, the HAF Programme, and it has Service Level Agreements with Town and Parish Council, such as Coleford Town Council. which has enabled it to expand its grassroots community youth provision.

In early 2023 it welcomed two new Youth Development Officers to the team. During this period, it also supported CANDI (Cinderford based youth group) on a weekly basis with its Projects Officer and also facilitated the employment of Youth Worker on behalf of Tidenham Parish Council.

Holiday Activities and Food Programme (Haf)

The Forest Youth Association co-ordinated a packed programme and fun and educational activities in the school holidays. Funded by Gloucestershire County Council, the Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) is open to all school aged children, who live in the Forest of Dean, and who qualify for free school meals. In 2022/23 we:

- offered over 5500 sessions
- reached over 3000 unique C&YP
- 72% of which were on benefits related Free School Meals and 10% of those are SEND

Building on feedback from families, over 2022/23 it expanded the range of HAF activities offered and saw a significant increase in the number of young people aged 12years+ accessing HAF. This was achieved through its increased community youth

club presence and the one-off trips which included indoor golf, bowling, swimming, and dry slope skiing.

Forest of Dean Youth Association Operating Manual for Youth Clubs

This manual has been produced by Forest of Dean Youth Association, which is one of the projects under Forest Voluntary Action Forum (FVAF).

In reviewing these are some of key considerations when setting up and running a voluntary youth project.

What Do Young People Want?

When asking a young person why they would attend a club is so they can learn how to become a responsible citizen, is something you are not going to hear. When consulted, young people are going to talk about the following:

- Fun – Having a laugh
- Excitement – things to do
- Having a break – chilling, hanging out and relaxing with mates
- Friendships – making and meeting friends
- Relationships – boyfriends/girlfriends
- Opportunity – things to do and learn new skills
- Freedom and Independence – away from home/school
- Warmth, Security, Food and Safety
- Good people – empathic staff with positive skills
- A non-judgmental environment
- Buzzing atmosphere
- Somewhere of their own to go
- Safe/nice environment
- Looks and feels good – well maintained and decorated

The manual highlights the Six Key Principles of Youth Work, through some unique selling points:

Youth-led – young people’s voices are central to the provision offered to them. They can choose to attend a variety of services on a voluntary basis, building a sense of autonomy and trust in practitioners that encourages engagement with further work where needed.

Inclusivity, equality, and diversity – young people feel included in their local area and can access the support they need as they progress towards adulthood. No young person feels marginalised or isolated because of disability, sexuality, nationality, socio-economic status, special educational needs, mental health issues, religion, or any other characteristic.

Respect – Young people are a valued and respected part of the community whose needs and wishes are considered equally with those of other groups.

Quality, safety and well-being – Good quality services are provided by staff with appropriate safeguarding training, linked to a wider network of support. Ideally this includes professionally qualified youth workers with the skills, expertise, and competencies to support safe, quality services with appropriate levels and types of intervention.

Empowerment – Services empower young people to progress and engage in employment, education, and training, and to take an active role in their local communities.

Positivity – Services are strengths-based and focus on developing the skills and attributes of young people, rather than attempting to ‘fix a problem’.

The Building

The manual also discusses how a building needs to accommodate youth provision.

Regardless of the premises, whether it be a shared community asset or a purpose built, exclusive centre, there are certain factors that need to be taken into consideration:

- Is the building fit for purpose and suitable for the target audience?
- If possible, have young people been consulted with regarding the lay out and how the space should be use?
- Is the building safe and meets all necessary legislation?
- Is the building secure and safe regarding offering the young people who are attend a relax and comfortable space that they can call their own?
- Is it warm and clean?
- Is it visually attractive and as far as possible provide a bright, airy, clean and accessible environment?

One of the key outcomes of a successful club is to encourage a sense of belonging in the young people attending. It is their club, and the hope is that they will take pride

in the club and building. Members who feel they belong are more likely to help keep the club clean and tidy and help maintain the fabric of the building.

Remember keeping the premises neat and tidy also extends to the outside of the building as well. First impressions are important and the outside of the premises will be the first thing a new member or a potential supporter will see. Therefore, the club entrance area should be well maintained and well lit, particularly if young people are likely to be waiting outside for the club to open. Litter, rubbish and graffiti are definitely things which must, as far as possible, be avoided because of the negative connotations they will imply to members and the wider community.

The outdoor area(s) should be seen as being a key part of the overall club. The front of the club is likely to be in full view of the public. How they see young people behaving will have a bearing on how they see young people generally. Bad or anti-social behaviour outside the premises will reflect on the club's standing, so it is an essential area to be considered when planning how the club is to operate.

If the club operates a policy whereby young people can enter or leave the building during sessions, then the outside of the building needs to be 'staffed' to some degree.

Shared Premises

It is quite possible that due to the number of people and different organisations using a shared spaces things will be missed as everyone involved will think someone else is looking after certain aspects of the building. If the premises is not yours, then care and attention needs to be given to the **hiring or letting agreement** so that all parties involved know who is responsible and for what. A hire agreement should be an essential and live document and cover the minimum of the following:-

- Insurance – buildings, contents
- Hours and days of use
- Cost of the hire
- Opening and securing the premises (key holders)
- Cleaning and maintaining the building
- Storage of equipment
- Use of different areas of the building e.g. Kitchen
- Use of general equipment – tables, chairs, crockery etc.
- Notice boards – what can and cannot be displayed.
- Emergency contacts and procedures.
- Fire extinguishers and First Aid – who provides and maintains.
- Outdoor areas – who cleans
- Disposal of rubbish, recycling
- Reporting processes for minor repairs and incidences

The Atmosphere and Environment

There should be a positive atmosphere during opening times. The club needs to feel warm, welcoming, inclusive and non-threatening. The ambience should be one of nurturing, leading to members gaining a sense of belonging and ownership.

The club should never feel flat and deflated rather there should be a vibrancy leading in itself to feelings of excitement and expectancy – a buzzing atmosphere about the place.

Behaviour policies and the constant and consistent implementation of these policies, leading to acceptable patterns of behaviour, are essential requirements if the right atmosphere and environment is to be created.

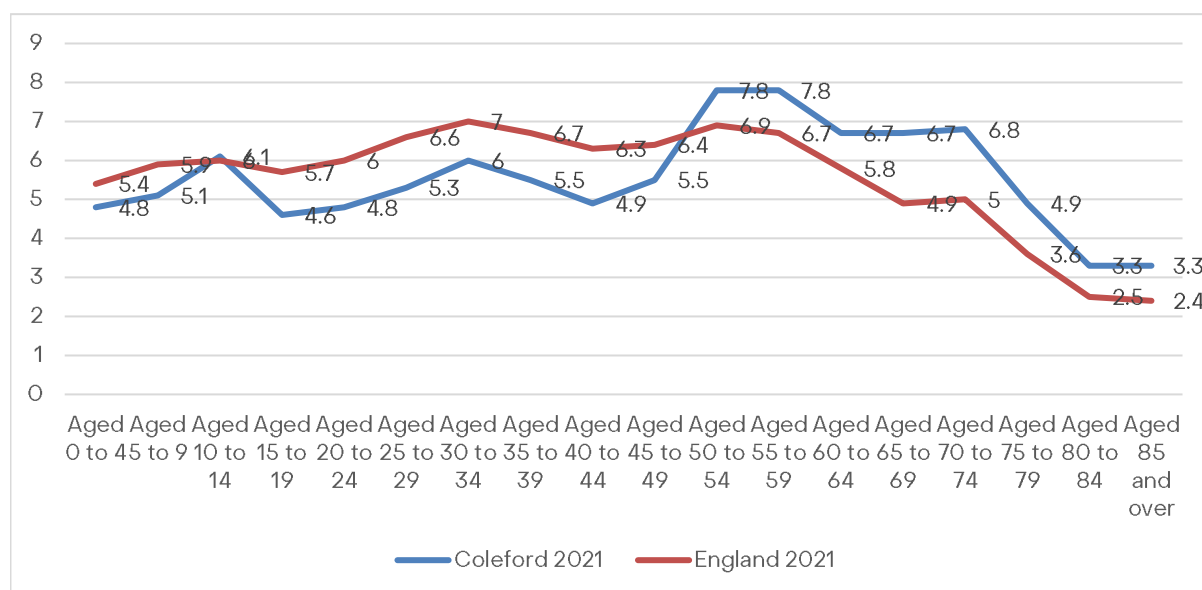
Coleford – A Community Profile

The following charts illustrate some specific statistics that relate to young people and their pathway in Coleford.

Figure 1 indicates to us that Coleford is below the English average for those under the age of 10, meeting the average at age 10, and dropping again between the ages of 11 upto the age of 19. This trend continues (1.3% points below) upto the age of 50, when it then reverses with people aged over 50 to 85 being some 1% to 1.8% percentage points higher than the English average. This illustrates the lack of retention of young people within Coleford, post-secondary education, with people tending to return later on in life, perhaps establishing their family due to quality of life and well-being reasons.

Recent census data re-enforces the below England average (20.4%) for young people in Coleford with 16.1% of the population being schoolchildren and full-time students.

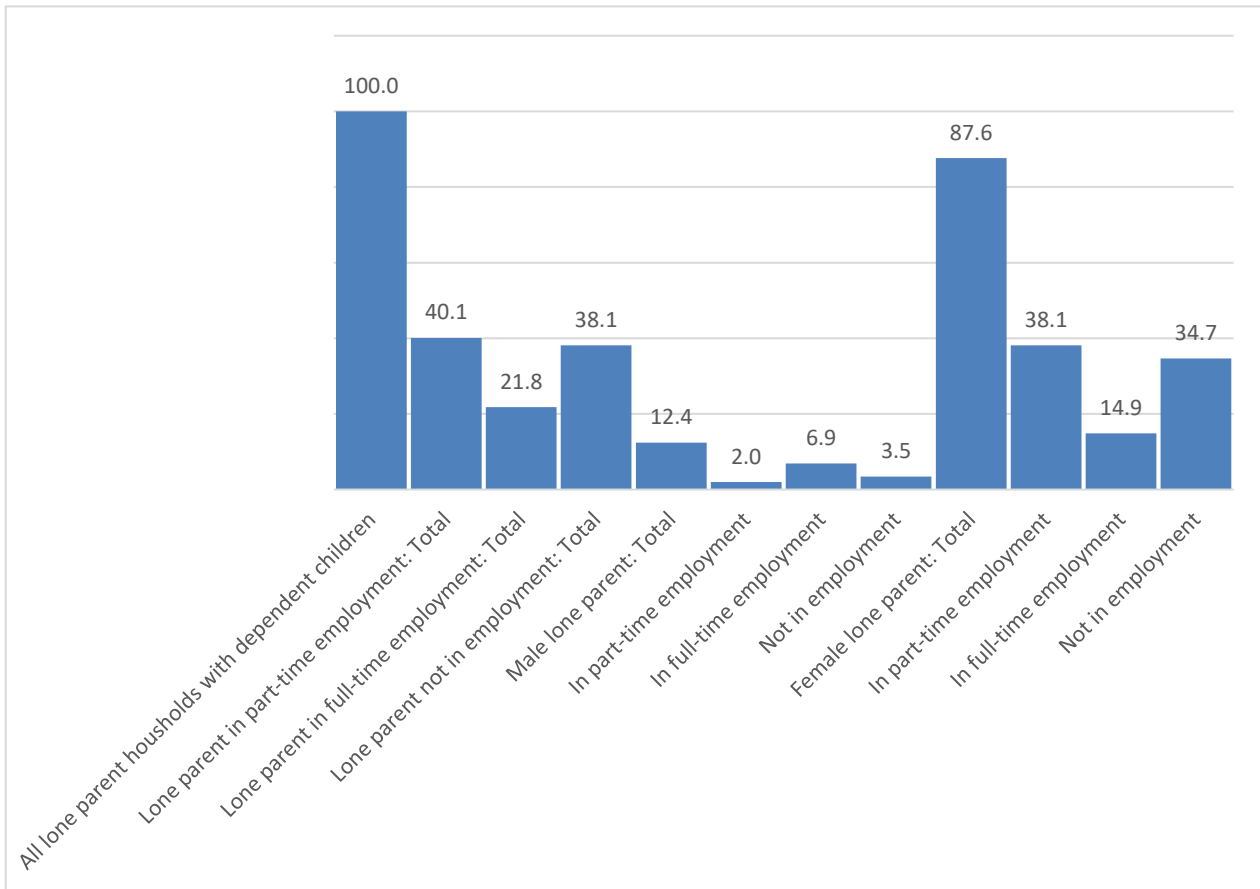
Figure 1 – Population by Age Cohort, Compared to England 2021



Source: Census 2021

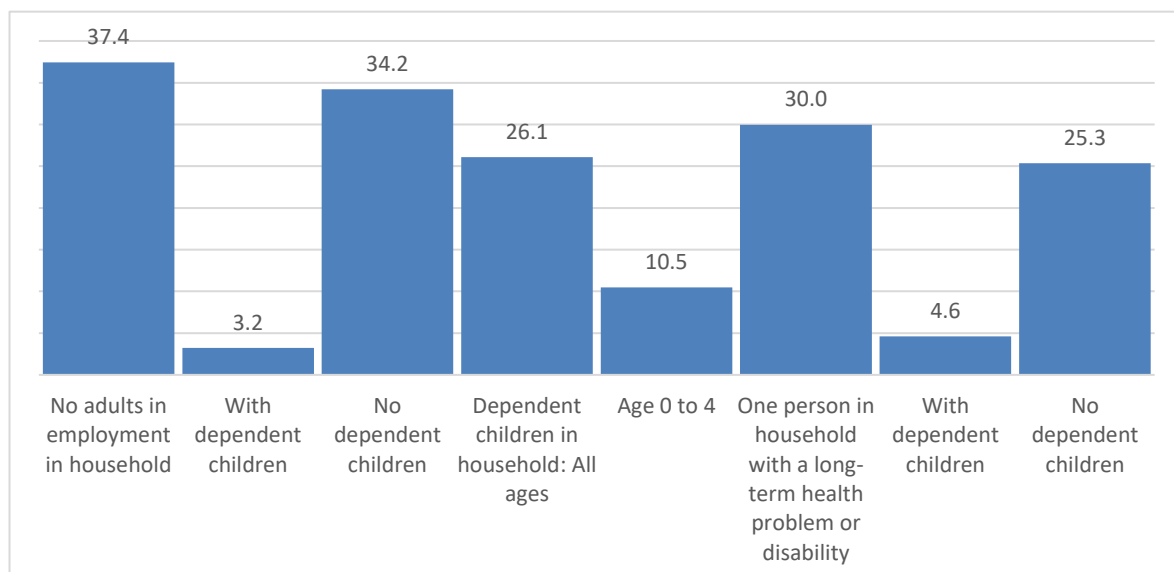
Figure 2 overleaf indicates the number of lone parents by gender and by employment, with Figure 3 showing those that parents not in employment and for those that have long term health issues or a disability and have dependent children. This does have an impact on the level of activity for the young person, with youth related services important to improving accessibility and opening up pathways for those people inhibited to participate in physical and mental well-being activities.

Figure 2 –Lone parent households with dependent children



Source: Census 2011, Nomis

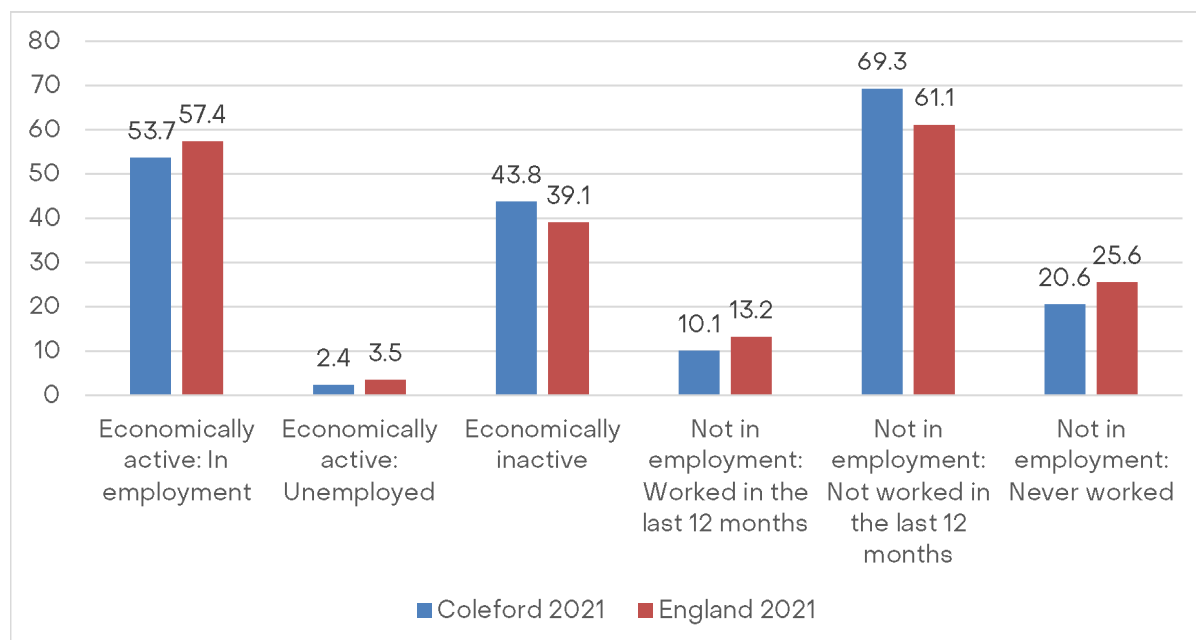
Figure 3 –Adults not in employment and dependent children and persons with long-term health problems or disability for all households



Source: Census 2011, Nomis

Figure 4 below indicates the levels of people employed and those not in employment, with unemployment rates below the English average, with economic inactivity is higher due to higher than average levels of retired people.

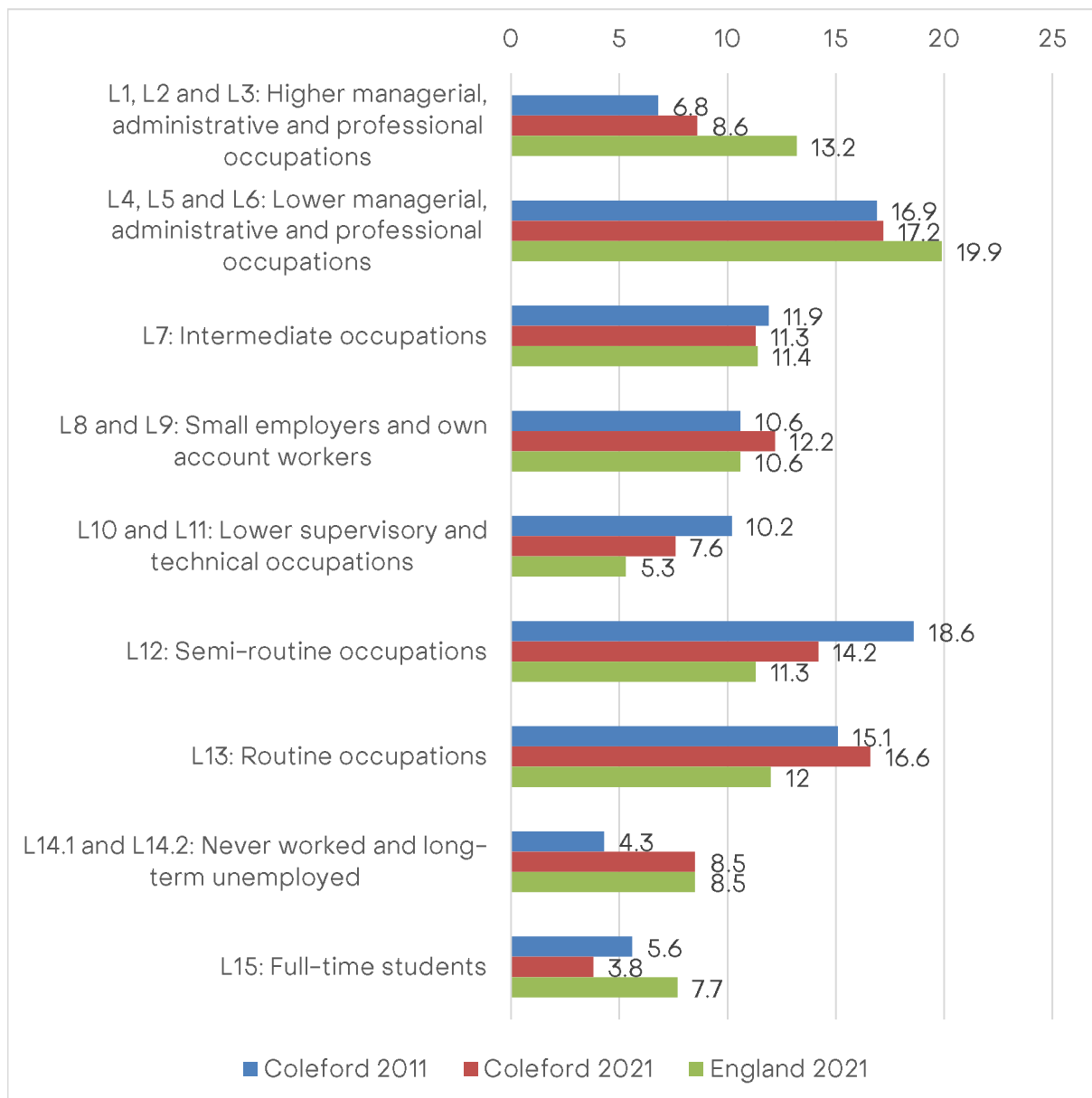
Figure 4 – Economic Activity in Coleford



Source: Census 2021

Figure 5 overleaf shows us the level of full time students in Coleford has dropped since 2011 and is some 50% below the English average. There is still a propensity towards more manual and routine occupations rather than managerial and professional occupations. It is worth noting the drop in full time students between 2011 and 2021 which could be a result of the closure of Gloucestershire College site at Berry Hill that may be due to a drop in the cohort of younger people within the Coleford catchment as shown in Figure 1. There is therefore a case to provide an accessible and diverse youth provision in the town that directs young people onto positive pathways and their retention within the community.

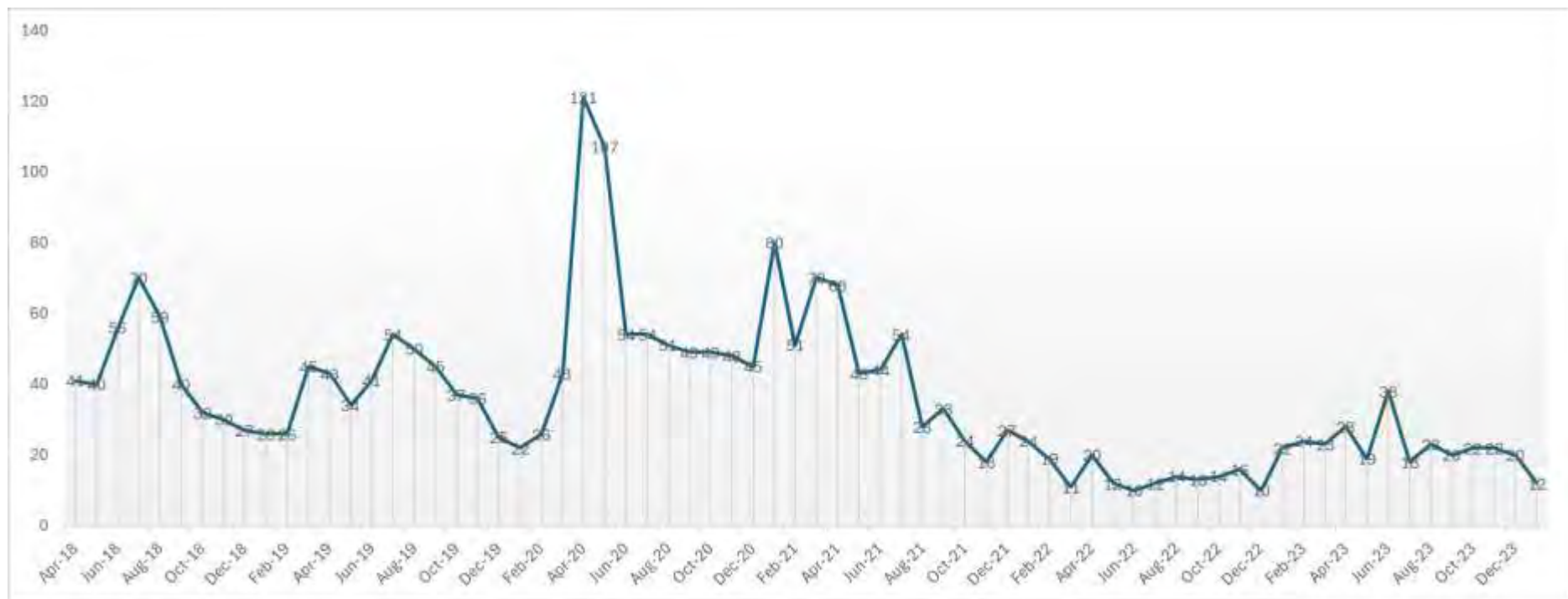
Figure 5 – Occupations Type



Source: Census 2021

Figure 6 below shows the number of anti-social behaviour incidents reported (all age groups) from April 2018 to December 2023. You will note the spike in incidents in the summer of 2020 due to Covid-19 and again in early 2021 which relates to lockdowns. There is a general tapering off over recent years, but summer months do tend to see increased incidents.

Figure 6 – UK Crime Stats, Coleford Town – Anti Social Behaviour Category



Source: Crime Stats UK 2024

Discussions with the local policing team at Gloucestershire Constabulary identify a group of young people that are known to them, as they gather in the town centre, specifically around Newland Street, Market Place and High Street. These groups cause nuisance behaviour, environmental-related damage and more seriously arson, setting light to waste bins and garments in the street.

The location of a town centre youth hub would provide a visible place for young people specifically during the evenings, with an opportunity to participate in positive activities as well as just having an indoor place to meet friends and hang out. Such a town centre facility may also provide a space for multi-agency working around anti-social behaviour as well as rooms for 1 to 1 discussions, counselling and wider preventative support for individuals.

Previous Studies

Youth Provision – Feasibility Report – University of the West of England, 2022

This report covered a project co-created between members of the Youth of Coleford, a group of Architecture Masters Students from UWE Bristol, Coleford Town Council and the Forest Youth Association.

There was an overall need for youth provisions in Coleford and this project set out to bring in the ideas of the local youth community to form proposals for schemes which would be cherished by those in the community that use it.

The Forest Youth Association helped set up valuable youth engagement sessions for us to hear as many voices as possible within the youth community in Coleford.

From the feedback and ideas provided during our engagement with youth of Coleford and the public, these ideas and proposals encapsulate the main and recurring desire that the people of Coleford feel is missing or required to help occupy and engage the youth of Coleford in beneficial pastimes.

Some ideas that were generated from consultation with the town's young people that would work within an indoor setting included:

A Communal Kitchen

A communal/training kitchen would provide a space where the youth of Coleford can learn life skills that they can carry forward for the rest of their lives.

This idea would also provide a valuable opportunity for the youth to engage and interact with older generations, providing a new bond and reducing negative perceptions of antisocial behaviour.

Whilst Coleford already has a well-equipped community kitchen it does not currently get used to its potential.



A Café

A cafe in an accessible location may provide Coleford with a new sociable space for the residents and youth of Coleford to grab a drink or food in a supervised area.

With an opportunity to link this to a training kitchen, it would thereby allow the youth to engage with older generations and provide for the community.

Art Studio

A means to provide an opportunity to grow the creative thinking in the Coleford youth.

This idea benefits from the ability to be included in a multiple use space that doesn't solely act as just an art studio.

This idea also would work in any indoor open space with storage.

Cinema Room

The youth enjoy media consumption and therefore put forward the idea of a cinema room where they can watch movies and socialize in a comfortable space.

Coleford does have a cinema located close to the town centre, however a cinema room could be incorporated into a multi-purpose space and allows for pop up functions or presentations as well.



Media Room

Following on with tech wants, some of the youth put forward the idea of a media room, where they could video play games, do homework and browse, all whilst being in a social location rather than at home in a room on their own.

This intervention also opens up to possibilities for lessons, where the youth can teach older generations how to use new technology.

Arts and Crafts

Similar to the art studio idea, a space for arts and crafts was wanted to help engage with the youth's creativity where they can produce a tangible product.

This idea would likely take the form of supervised classes that the youth can turn up to.

4 Appraisal of Current Youth Provision in Coleford

Wider Youth Provision

In reviewing other youth provision across Coleford, these are other existing groups and organisations in Figure 7 below. These may want alternative and additional space across the week and year, that their current facilities cannot offer, which could be catered for within a new youth hub provision. This may help with sharing resources and equipment that would support sustainability within the respective groups.

Figure 7 – Wider Coleford Youth Provision



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

Youth Hub

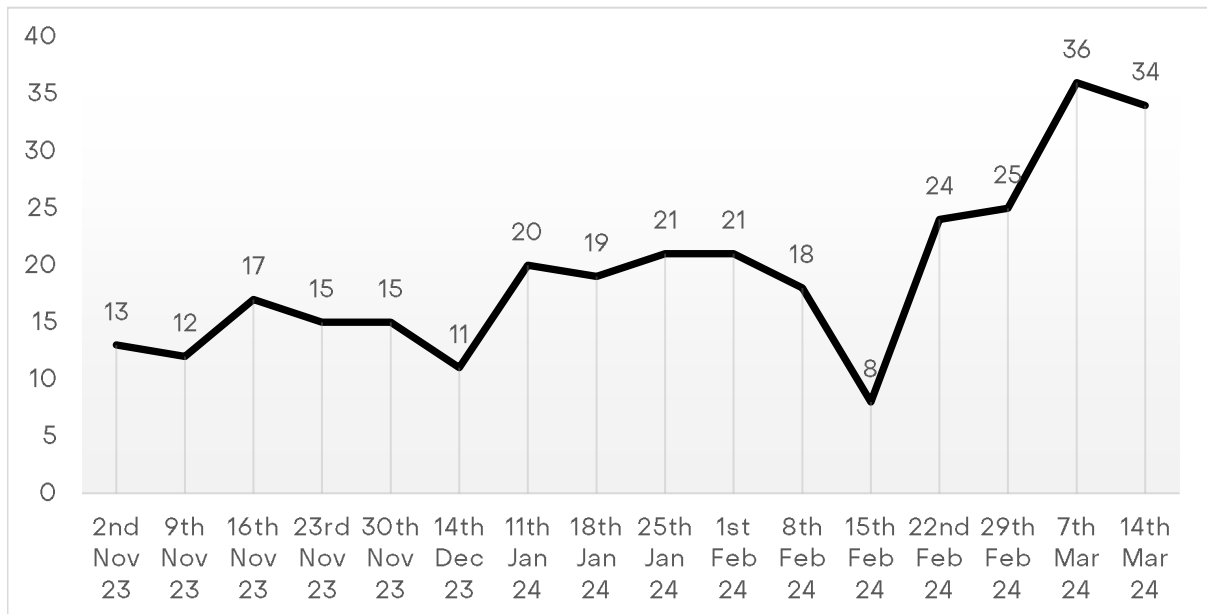
The current Youth Hub started as a trial in October 2022 at Cafe 16, Bank Street, Coleford. Average numbers for the first 6 months were between 2 and 6 young people.

The Hub moved to Coleford Baptist Church on Newland Street in April 2023 with numbers growing ever since. It has between 15–25 attending each week, with quieter weeks if there is something going on at the school for example. Figure 8 below shows the number of young people attending with rising attendance in February and March 2024. The current sessions are for primary school age, with the initial sessions for teenagers not working due to conflict with other Church users and some behavioural issues.

The sessions commence at 4pm, finishing at 6pm with youth workers helping with initial registration, managing activities and invited activity leads with a tuck shop provided halfway through the session.

Since the summer of 2023 it has run a number of different activities including Face painting, Pumpkin decoration, arts and crafts, and both a Halloween and Christmas party. It has also run a number of workshops such as drama, first aid, innovation lab and our latest increase the peace workshop. It has also run different trips such as Cinema, 10 Pin Bowling, Bathurst open air Swimming Pool, Indoor Crazy Golf, and trip to the Matson Ski Centre.

Figure 8 – Coleford Youth Hub Membership



Source: Forestry Voluntary Action Forum

5 Understanding Current and Future Needs

To understand the current and future needs of young people, a number of workshops were held with young people on the 7th and 14th of March.

Workshop 1 – 7th March

On the 7th of March, Chris Jones Regeneration attended a Thursday youth hub session at Coleford Baptist Church with young people of primary school age. Supported by youth workers, 2 breakout sessions were facilitated with groups of about 16 young people. This session focussed on the following key questions:

- What do you like about the current Youth Club?
- What don't you like?
- What would you want to see in a new youth club space?
- What don't you want to see in a new youth club space?
- What individual spaces do we need – large, medium and small?
- Discussion on buildings
- How do you want to feel in it?

The young people volunteered their experiences and ideas as well as using images and words to create mood boards to help them visualise a future youth hub and its activities.

On the same evening, Chris Jones Regeneration supported by a Coleford Town Councillor met 7no. teenagers who normally gather around Mushet Walk and the High Street area of the town centre. They were invited into the upstairs space of no.4 Mushet Walk where an informal discussion was held using the same questions and prompts as the previous sessions. The walls were used to write down ideas with large sheets of paper used on the floor to mark up how such a space could be used, looking at the rooms located off the main upper hall space, the kitchen area and other side rooms.

The comments and feedback are outlined below.

Primary School Age

What Do You Like About the Current Youth Hub?

Session 1

- | | |
|---------------|------------------|
| ▪ Friends X 4 | ▪ Free |
| ▪ Food | ▪ Not on devices |
| ▪ Food X 4 | |
| ▪ Books | |

Session 2

- Fun X 4
- Its only children
- No teachers
- Fun activities
- Its free X 4
- Roller skating
- Tuck shop
- You can do whatever you want to do as long as it's appropriate
- Snacks
- X 3
- Food X 3
- You don't go on your devices as much
- Your friends are here
- activities

What's Missing?

Session 1

- Gaming room X 4
- Boba
- Gymnastic area
- Hair salon
- Swimming pool
- DJ Booth
- Tennis
- Nail salon
- Football pitch
- Video recording studio
- Music studio
- Fortnite room
- Nerf guns
- Green screen
- Table tennis
- Dance room
- Bowling
- Small football pitch
- Rock climbing wall
- Beanbags

Session 2

- Recording room
- Football
- You tube room
- Gymnastic space
- PlayStation
- Bed and hammocks
- Nerf gun arena
- Ball pit
- Trampoline
- Rage room
- McDonald's
- KFC
- Laser tag
- Quiet room
- Skate court
- VR googles
- People house
- X box
- Activities
- Toilet
- Origami
- Colouring and art room
- Boba

Secondary School Age

Current Provision – Where Do You Meet?

- Meet friends in town
- Walk around and meet friends
- At weekends in the pub
- Meet on the street

Image 9 – Workshop Mood boards – Current Provision – What's Good? What's Missing?



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

Figure 10 – Word Clouds from Young Peoples Workshops



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

What Does a Future Youth Hub Look Like?

The Experience

- Diverse
- Engaging
- Flexible
- Technological
- Works for all ages

Design Considerations

- Break-proof
- Sound-proof
- Adaptable
- Storage
- Lighting – changes to activity
- To be adaptable for other activities and uses outside of young peoples' activities

The Space and Uses

- Large flexible space that can be zoned or used for a single activity
- Zoning approach
 - Sofa, bean bags, hammocks
 - Activity corner – punch bag, light exercise, gymnastics
 - Cool board games
 - Pool table
 - Indoor swing
- Time out/Quiet Room/Counselling
 - Cosy seating
 - Soundproof
 - Ambient lighting
- TV/Gaming Space
- Film and Music Recording Space
 - DJ mixing desks
 - Video suite
- Resource room
 - Books, music and games
- Adaptive wall for creative activities
 - Mini stage
 - Green space
- Mini rock climbing wall
- Kitchen

- Hatch to serve/buy from
 - Hot and cold food
 - Learn to cook space
 - Cake making space
 - Drinks dispenser
 - Communal table area
- Youth hub staff
 - Administrative space
 - File space
 - Storage

Image 11 – Future Youth Hub Mood boards



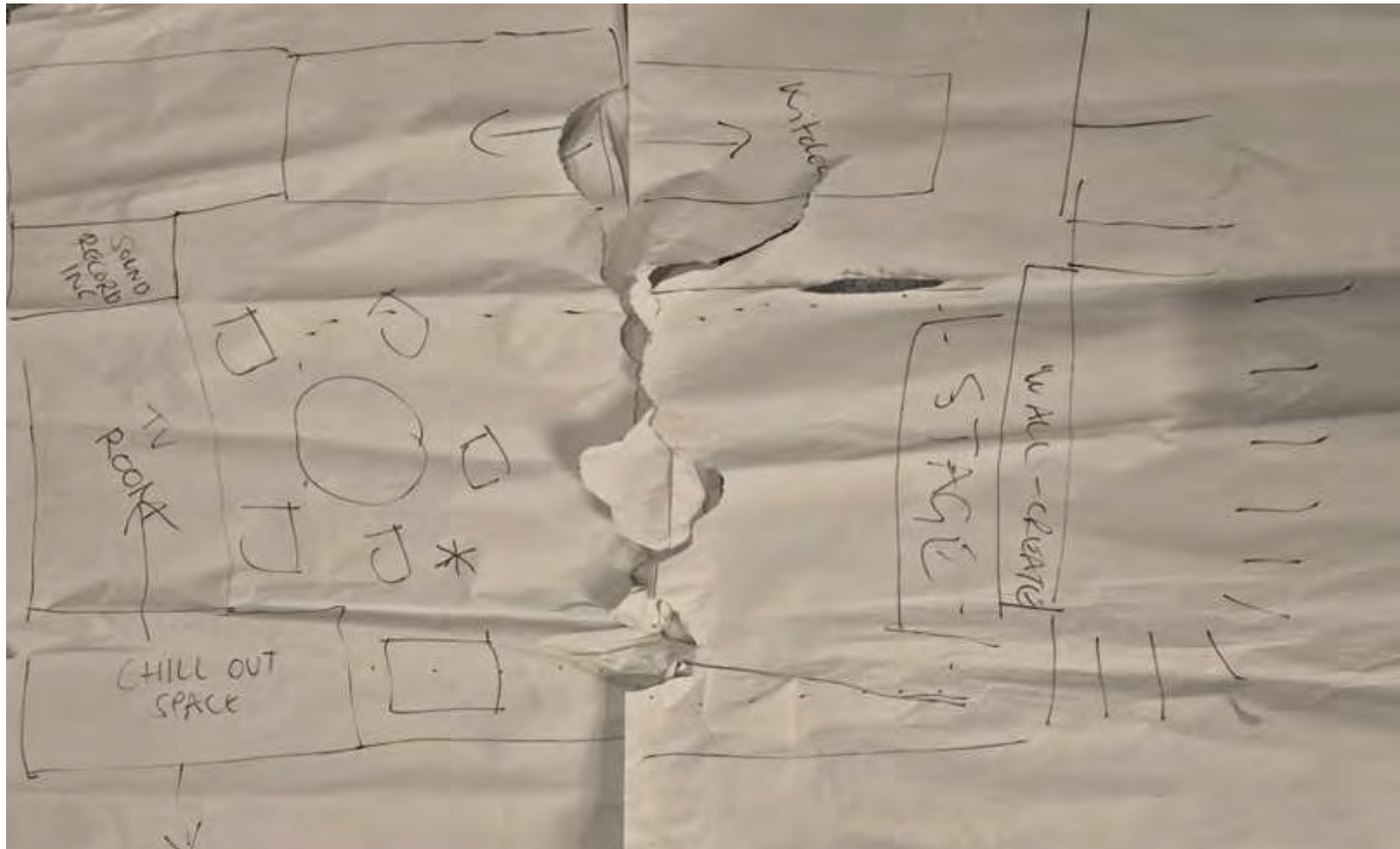
Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

Image 2 – Future Youth Hub Mood Boards



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

Image 3 – Sketch from Teenagers Workshop



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

Workshop 2 – 14th March

A return visit to the Youth Hub at Coleford Baptist Church provided the opportunity to present how the consultancy team had used the comments and feedback from the young people and started to turn them into mood boards and also layout plans for the two buildings: St Johns Ambulance Hall and no.4 Mushet Walk. 5 breakout sessions were held across the two hour session.

Figure 12 – Mood-Boards 1 and 2



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

Figure 13 – Mood-Boards 3 and 4



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

Figure 14 – Mood-Board 5 and Layout Plans



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

The mini breakout sessions focussed on sharing the mood boards of images, to get a reaction to the activities and experience that a new Youth Hub space could create. Plans for the two buildings were shared and the young people were asked to pick the best building for a youth space. It should be noted that the young people had not visited the two buildings and gave us their views on solely viewing the plans and the proposed ideas for uses and activities. These were their comments:

What's Good About the Ideas?

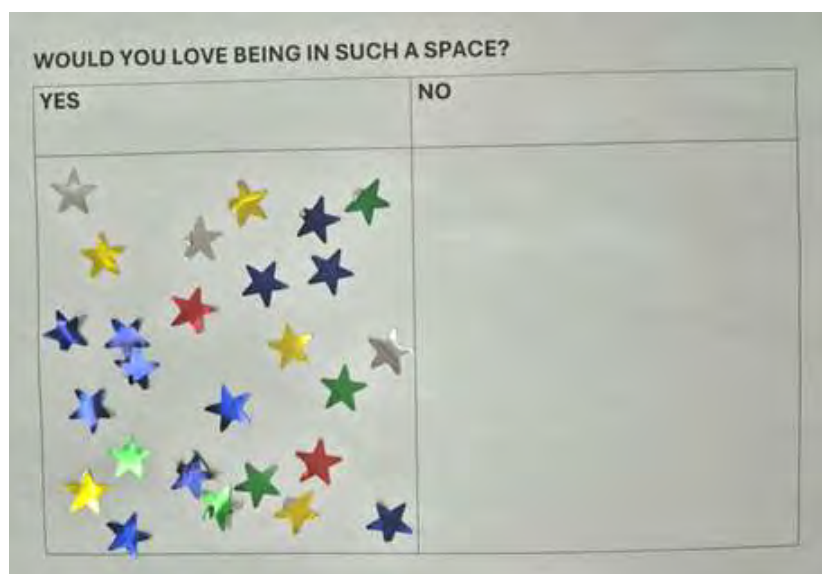
- We can do anything
- Bigger...more space X2
- Love sofa den
- Feels calm in places
- Its bigger and better
- Comfy
- Loved
- Bigger, closer, sofa and love stage
- Cool
- Bigger opportunities X3
- Love gaming – roblox and fortnite

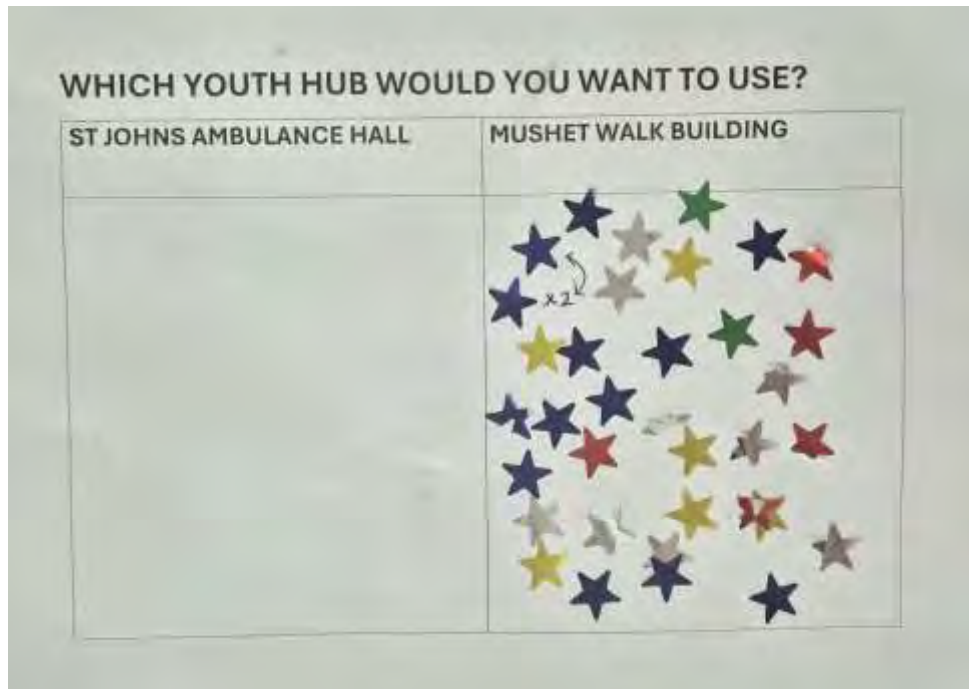
What's Missing?

- If we had a rage room I would be able to let off steam X3
- Inside football pitch
- Soundproofing
- Books and colouring books and pens – book space
- Bigger toilet?
- Basketball hoop
- Punch bag

The young people were asked to rate the type of space we are trying to create and also choose their preferred building. The results are shown in Figure 15 below.

Figure 15 – How Young People Rate the Space and Building Options





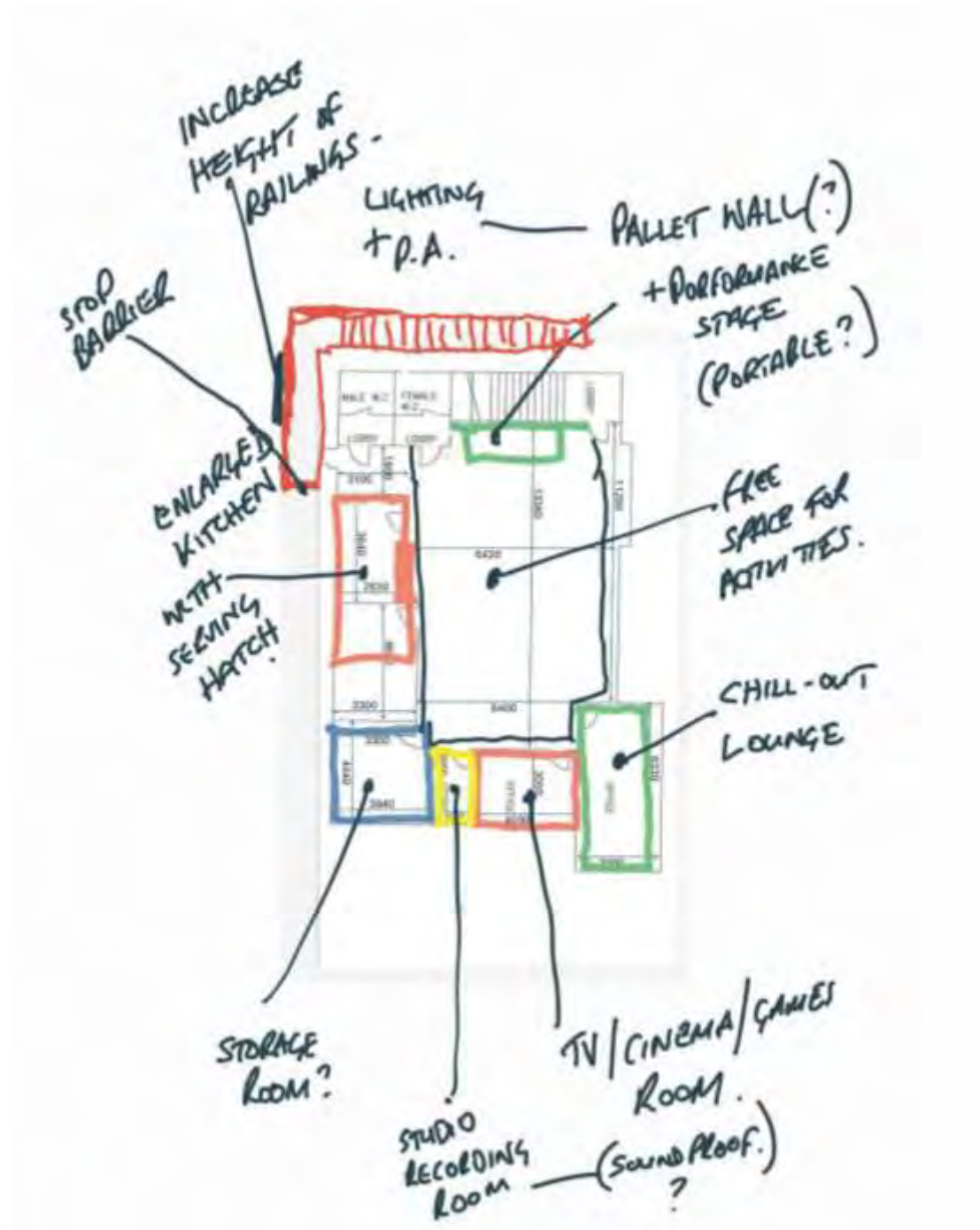
Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

Image 4– Photo from Young Peoples’ Workshop



Source: FVAF

Figure 16 – Feedback from Teenagers on Proposed Space



Source: Coleford Town Council

Feedback from older teenagers centred on space that supported their creativity through music, video and gaming. An enlarged kitchen area will help create a communal cooking and eating space with serving hatch. The need to chill out is seen as important with the room projecting over the Mushet Walk building entrance preferred. The end wall is identified as a canvass for projections as well as performance stage.

Key Findings

The series of young peoples' workshops has provided a real opportunity for meaningful conversations on what young people like about their current youth space and what they want to see in the future if a new building could accommodate their needs.

Young people of primary school want a space that is fun, active and engaging that can provide a diversity of activity. Older teenagers want somewhere to meet friends, socialise in and if needed seek out advice and support. The space therefore needs to be welcoming to all ages.

The following series of diagrams outlines the key components of a future youth hub space.

Activities/Uses

Meet n Greet

A space where youth workers can register young people as they attend, an information board/screen and a "welcome to" piece of artwork.

Toilets/Changing Facilities and Showers

Separated gender toilets would be recommended, with a large toilet for disabled users or for young people with specific needs. Whether showers could be provided or elsewhere within the building would help with those people travelling by bike or taking part in an activity.

Large Flexible Space

This is detailed further on.

TV and Gaming Room

A room that is separate and soundproofed that would accommodate a TV screen and separate gaming screens with plug in points for PlayStation, X-box and devices. Storage cupboards alongside gaming chairs and sofas and other seating furniture. Facilities to change lighting levels would be useful.

Music/Video/Creative Suite

A music/video recording suite that can allow young people to create their own music, film and other creative activities e.g. DJ Room, that allows editing and previewing recorded material.

Resource Room – Books, Music, Materials

A resource room that provides wall space for books, music loaning, arts and creative supplies with wipe down tables and chairs.

Kitchen – Cook, Bake, Eat, Share

A kitchen that youth workers can use to serve refreshments and food from as well as a training facility for young people. Equipment would include a cooker, sink, fridge freezer, microwave, worktop area with plug in ceramic rings for cooking clubs as well as an equipment storage area. A hatch facility would support the selling and serving of food and drink. If space allows a large communal table area which would support cookery classes as well as larger groups eating together.

Chill Out Space

A calm and quiet space that allows young people to chill out on their own with comfy furniture, wall art and ambient lighting. The room can also be used for 1 to 1 counselling or tailored group sessions.

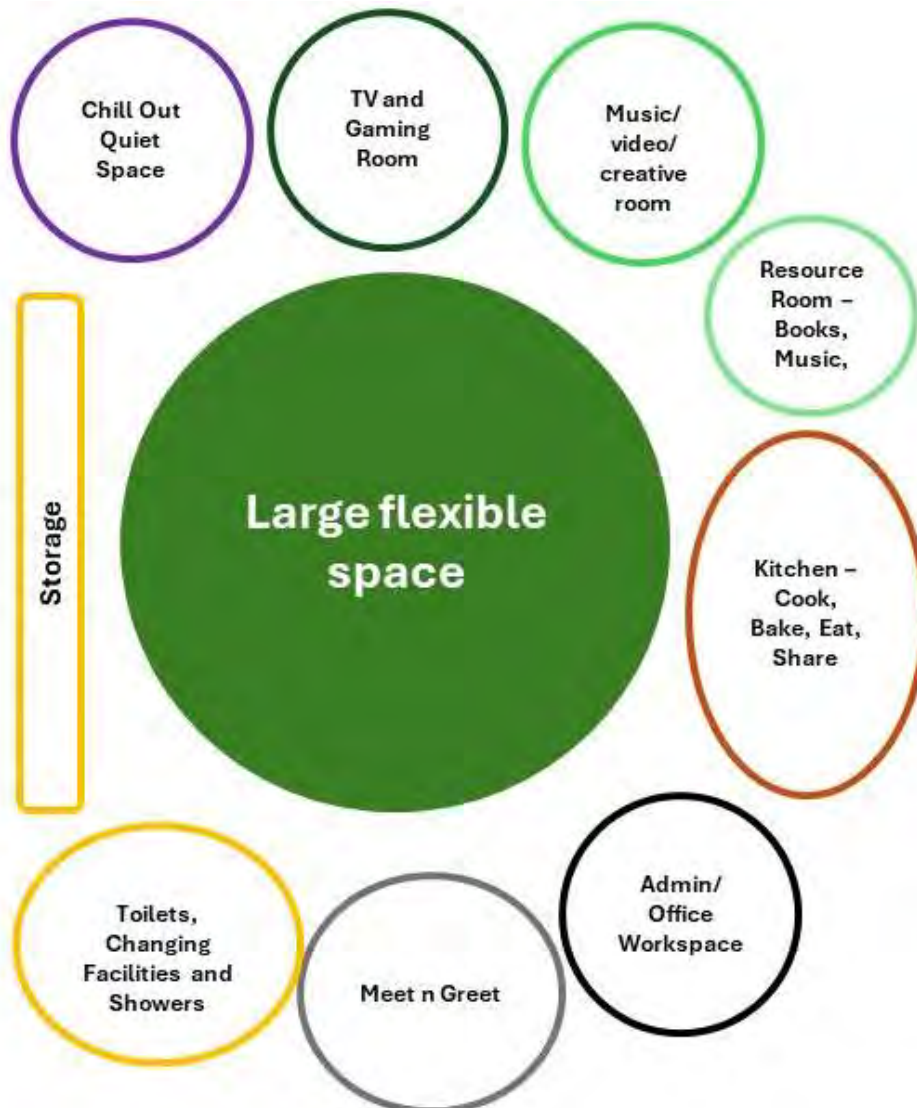
Admin/Office Space

Youth workers will need the facility to manage, record and develop the youth hub space with the need for a desk space that has a printer/scanner and plug ins for laptops and secure storage.

Storage

A critical success factor for such a space is storage that either integrated into the walls or held within a room with wheeled equipment, containers and other items.

Image 5 – Youth Hub Component Activities



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

The Flexible Space

The core space to the youth hub needs to be flexible and adapt to the youth activity programme as well as other users that may want to use the space, outside of youth related activities. The flooring needs to be durable so that equipment and furniture can be moved around.

The flexible space could have some fixed items on the side and corners which would include:

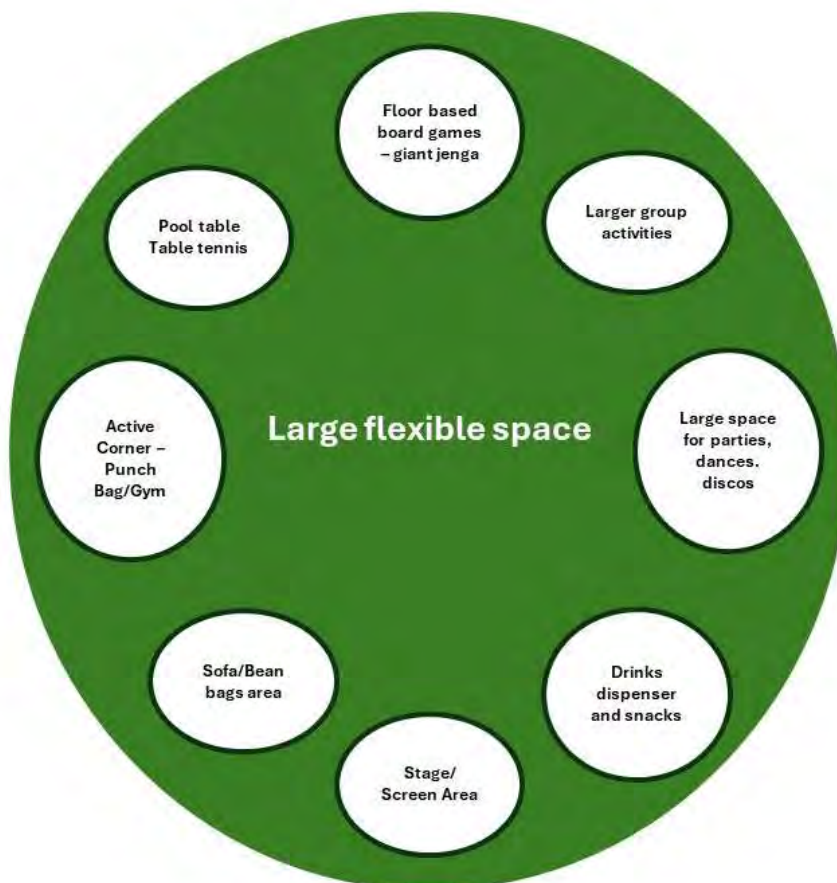
- Sofas, bean bags
- Hammocks
- Shelving
- Green screen

- Pull down screen and projector
- Pool table, table tennis (corner, foldaway, covered)
- Wall fixed basketball hoop
- Low climbing wall (dependent on wall structural strength)
- Water cooler

Adapting the space for activities would involve:

- Staging units
- Gym mat and mobile gym equipment
- Large board games
- Arts and crafts activities
- Trestle tables and chairs
- Other large group activities

Image 6 – Flexible Space Activities



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

6 Options Appraisal

Applying Design Brief from Young People

The young peoples' design brief has provided direction for the consultancy team, specifically Roberts Limbrick architects in applying the menu of ideas to the two identified buildings.

This has involved creating CAD plans of the existing buildings from estimated measurements obtained by Coleford Town Council, and then reviewing the proposed uses and recommend the best fit and positioning.

The workshop process has led the young people to choose no.4 Mushet Walk over the St John's Ambulance Hall. Nevertheless, it is worth appraising both buildings before recommending a preferred building.

Range Of Identified Buildings/Sites

St John's Ambulance Hall

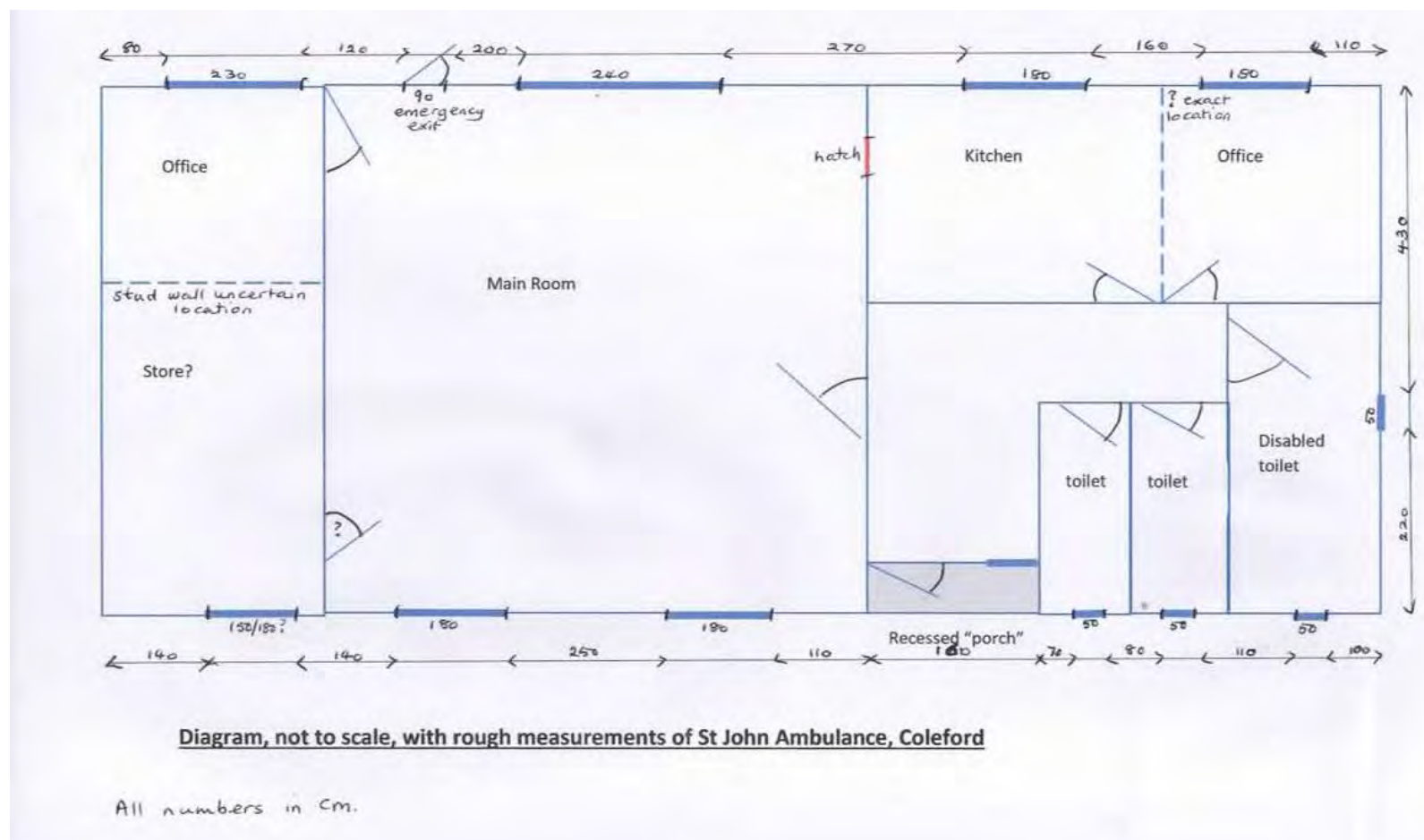


The building is owned by St John's Ambulance and is located within the campus of the Forest of Dean District Council headquarter offices off the roundabout junction with Cinder Hill and High Street. It is on raised area of ground with steps and a ramped access to the building.

The single storey building has an internal square area of approximately 98.58sqm (1061.10 sqft), with Figure 17 showing the existing entrance and layout/sizing of rooms.

There is parking alongside the building which forms part of the District Council offices site. A public car park is within 250 metres at Railway Drive.

Figure 17 – Existing Plan – St John's Ambulance Hall



Source: Coleford Town Council

Proposal

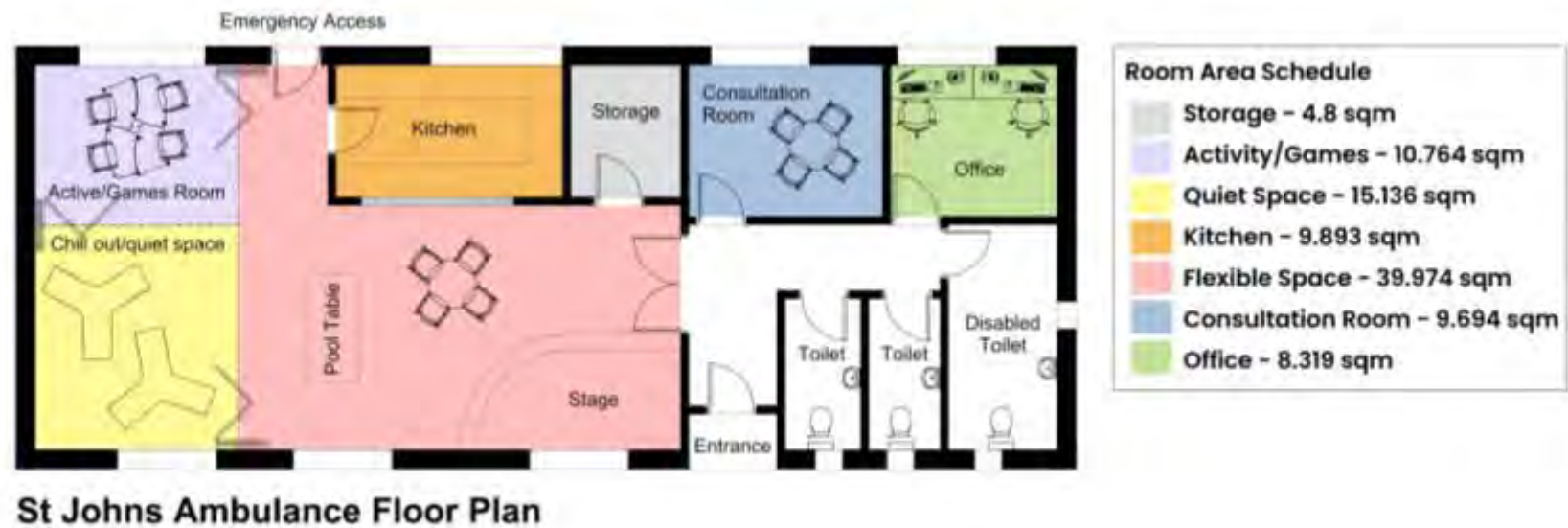
The Proposal centres on:

1. Use of the existing entrance
2. Retention of existing toilets and existing disabled toilet
3. Existing kitchen to become a consultation room, alongside office space
4. Main room to be divided off on top edge to create the kitchen and storage space
5. Existing storage and office space on left hand side of building to be converted into chill out/quiet space and active/gaming room
6. Main area to be a flexible space for activities, seating and a stage

Mini SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Good access and movement to and from ▪ Standalone, self-contained building that could be solely for youth activities ▪ Manageable size ▪ Parking nearby ▪ Overseen by Council offices – self policed ▪ Conversion costs would not be significant 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Unknown repair costs due to leaking heating system ▪ Building has an association with the District Council offices – would the young people want to be associated? ▪ Building style – bland but could be enhanced ▪ Footprint of building – not expandable due to plot size
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Relationship of young people and local democracy/citizenship due to proximity to District Council offices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Future long term use unknown

Figure 18 – Proposed Use Layout for St Johns Ambulance Hall



Source: Roberts Limbrick

4 Mushet Walk



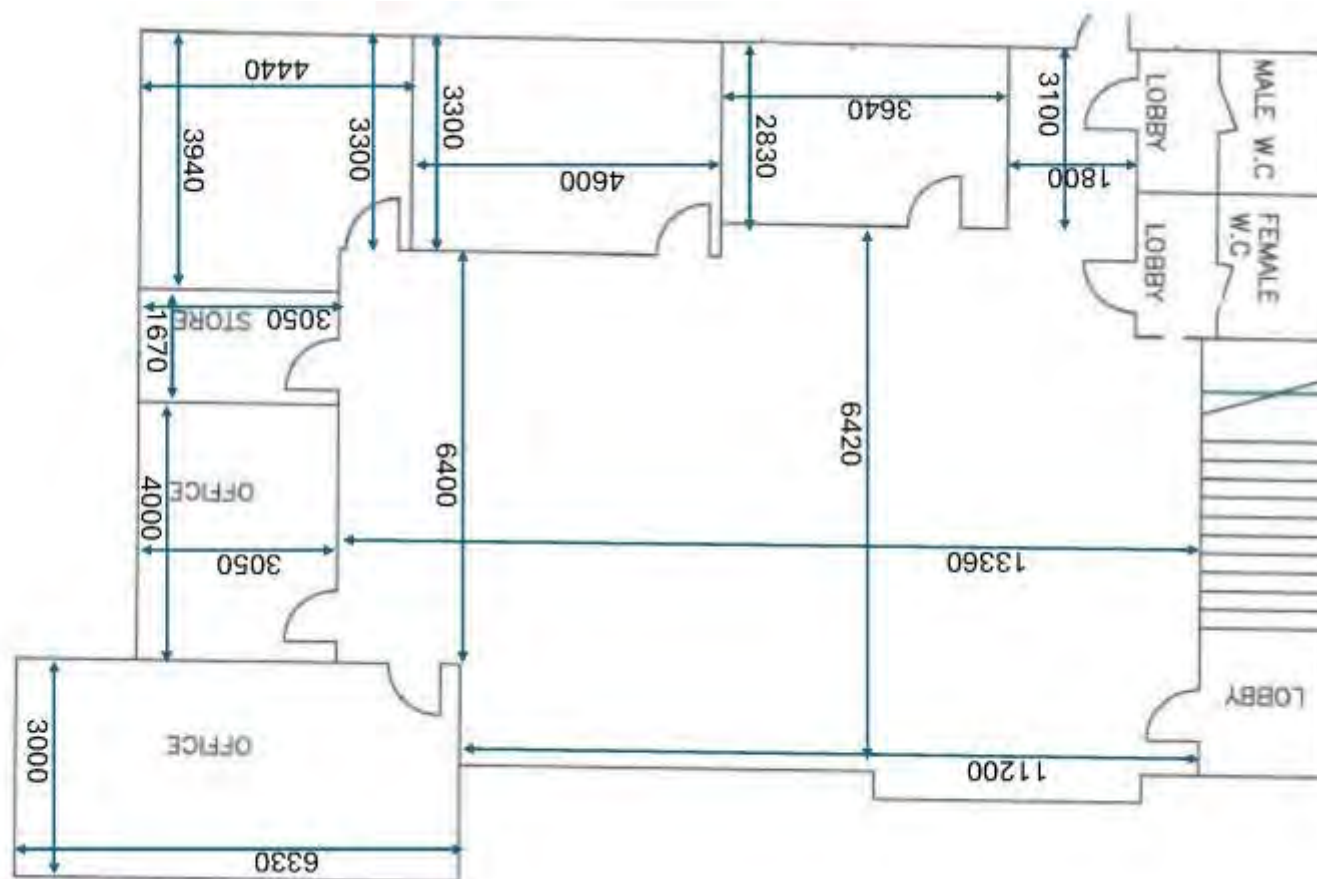
This town centre building is owned by a private landlord with Coleford Town Council recently signing upto a 10 year lease on no.4 Mushet Walk which is the right hand side section of the building (ground and upper floor). A local hospice charity leases out the left hand side as seen in the photograph above.

The building is on a main pedestrian thoroughfare which links two main town centre car parks with the Market Place, High Street and the iconic Clocktower structure.

The Town Council intends to use the ground floor space for its administrative, meeting space and Council Chamber, in addition to relocation of the tourist information centre.

The first floor space can be accessed internally or from an external staircase and rear doorway. It has an internal square area of approximately 173.68 sqm (1864.48sqft) with Figure 19 illustrating the existing entrances, layout of space and associated sizes. There are existing toilets, a kitchen space with the building's windows overlooking Mushet Walk.

Figure 19 – Existing Plan – No.4 Mushet Walk



Source: Coleford Town Council

Proposal

The Proposal centres on:

1. A contained lobby from the external entrance which is recommended to avoid conflict with ground floor uses
2. The lobby area provides access to the toilets
3. The former kitchen is proposed as a chill out/quiet space with an activity/games room alongside
4. In the top left hand corner is a large storage space
5. The kitchen is in a visible location on the left hand side which draws you through the main central, flexible space
6. In the bottom left hand corner is an office space and a quiet consultation room
7. The main central space is framed by sofas on the window edge with a stage/screen to the far right hand side with movable tables, chair, games tables etc
8. If required, you can access via the lobby stairs

Mini SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Central, accessible and visible location in town centre ▪ Already a natural gathering area for teenagers ▪ Town Council has secured the lease on the ground floor and first floor space ▪ Large space that is a mix of flexible and structured room that don't require major modifications ▪ Parking nearby ▪ On a proposed active travel route ▪ Feels part of a community hub ▪ Alternative users would generate income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Young people would need to recognise other space users' needs ▪ It's a large space that needs programming and co-ordinating ▪ Needs DDA improvements to make it inclusive to all
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inter-generational working ▪ Close working with Town Council – young people and local democracy ▪ Springboard for other initiatives and projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Freehold could be sold

Figure 20 – Proposed Use Layout for 4 Mushet Walk



Source: Roberts Limbrick

Do Nothing – Stay at Baptist Church

A final option is to stay at the current Coleford Baptist Church on Newland Street.

This would mean the continued use of the main hall space, side rooms and kitchen area, working with other Church users and space commitments. Whilst the main space is flexible its tone and feel are not engaging for young people and does not allow for any physical expression of youth based activities.

It probably has the footprint of space to accommodate current demand but would not be able to meet any significant growth. The space does not allow for the storage of youth related equipment which is a current operational challenge for youth workers.

Mini SWOT

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No large capital investment needed ▪ Young people are familiar with space and venue ▪ Continuity of service ▪ Accessible building with parking alongside 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Space is not dedicated to young peoples' activity ▪ Competing with other demands on the church space ▪ Does not allow for future growth
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None arising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Attendance levels may drop off as young people want a more youthful and active space

7 The Preferred Youth Hub

The study has provided the opportunity to understand current youth provision in Coleford and has provided a series of meaningful conversations with young people to understand their needs now and in the future.

The feedback through the workshops and from our own options appraisal points to a youth hub provision that is central to the town centre, feels active and diverse and needs to provide a bright, airy, clean and accessible environment. The dialogue has also demonstrated the need to create space for inter-generational working, so that young people feel part of their community, can influence local decision-making with organisations such as Coleford Town Council continuing to nurture these relationships.

In addition to the youth provision that can be accommodated at no. 4 Mushet Walk the space will have the facilities for other groups and organisations to use it as spillover space for existing town groups e.g. Scouts, Guides, Cadets. It can also provide administrative and hot desking space for other youth organisations to work from, whether this be day to day administration or if the space can support strategic meetings for other youth delivery groups such as the Forest of Dean Scouts District Executive and to provide rooms for support services such as Teens in Crisis and Young Minds, amongst others.

No.4 Mushet Walk meets this brief in terms of physical location in the town centre, provides a visible welcome to young people, has the right size of space and opens up opportunities for developing cross community well-being. It can also lead to other multiplier benefits for the town centre that could link into other activities such as youth enterprise, meanwhile uses, arts and cultural activities, and more.

No. 4 Mushet Walk – Its Development

Notwithstanding, the building needs refurbishment and modifications works to the ground floor for the Town Council uses and activities, the empty first floor is available for young people to visit and start to visualise and co-design what they require from the space. This document provides some visuals and plans as a starting point with the need to progress into what a phased refurbishment looks like and how can young people get involved.

The current youth hub can continue to be held at Coleford Baptist Church with young people visiting Mushet Walk to help shape, guide and even make things that become their space.

Cost Areas

Cost areas that the project needs to consider include:

Area	Item
External	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Signage to Upper Floor (potential youth project – name of space) ▪ Structural survey of external stairs, balconies, railings and balustrade; cleaning of surface area ▪ External lighting
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ DDA improvements to upper floor e.g. stairlift from internal ground floor entrance ▪ Toilets – refurbishment ▪ Other equipment, furniture and fittings to be accessible throughout
Room Division /Modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review and agree any room/wall (non-structural) changes (subject to landlord agreement) ▪ Building works and decoration ▪ Electrics and lighting
Main Flexible Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider flooring material ▪ Decoration ▪ Wall space – fixtures, fittings, green wall, screen ▪ Furnishings – sofas, shelving, tables and chairs ▪ Play equipment – pool table, games, etc ▪ Ceiling fixed projector ▪ Electrics and lighting
Equipment	<p><u>Kitchen</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any modifications to sink, oven, worktops, etc ▪ Fridge/freezer ▪ Any additional equipment/plug ins ▪ Crockery and cutlery, glassware ▪ Storage and pantry ▪ Communal table and chairs <p><u>Chill Out/Quiet Space</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Furniture ▪ Lighting ▪ Decoration ▪ Storage <p><u>Music/DJ/Creative suite</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Audio/visual equipment ▪ Storage ▪ Desk/chairs

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Electrics ▪ Soundproofing <u>TV/Gaming Room</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ LED screen tv ▪ Gaming consoles ▪ Gaming equipment ▪ Gaming chair and sofa space ▪ Storage ▪ Speakers and soundproofing <u>Office/Admin</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Desk and chairs ▪ Printer and scanner ▪ Lockable storage ▪ Stationery and shelving <u>Storage</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rack shelving system ▪ Storage crates ▪ Sack trucks and other mobile
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Digital infrastructure ▪ Controlled lighting areas

Initial discussions between Coleford Town Council and Forest Youth Association would centre on:

- Understanding hire/rental space demand for youth related activities – needs, frequency, programming, any fixed physical requirements
- Initial set up/establishment works
- To agree a phased approach to any refurbishment/modification works (subject to funding)
- To understand any division of work/supply of equipment/furnishings/mobile fixtures
- To design work packages and identify opportunities for young people to be involved in design and delivery
- The procurement, appointment of building works contractors and fit out
- Implementation of work packages (whole or phased approach – funding dependent)

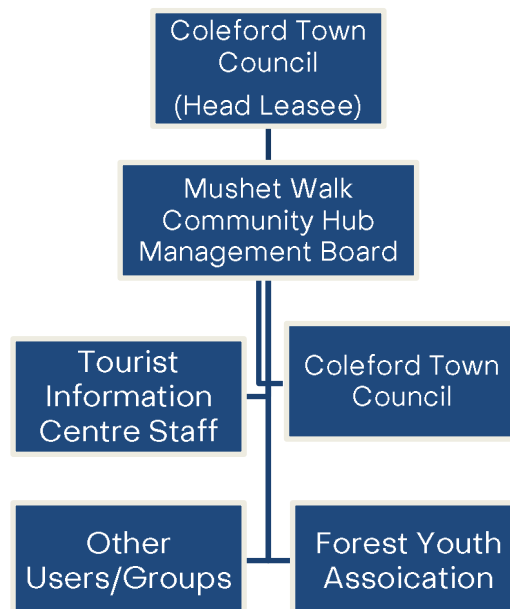
The Town Council will also need to consider how the space is used, outside of youth hub hours, with the main flexible space, some side rooms and the kitchen being available to other groups and organisations. This will need to

be considered in the design/refurbishment process in terms of the look and feel and how storage works to facilitate a diversity of users.

Operation and Management

Following on from the need to co-ordinate the upper floor space, the operation and management of the space is critical to its success and viability. The Town Council needs to consider how key stakeholder groups such as Forest Youth Association form part of the overall governance and management structure for the building so that respective parties understand their roles, responsibilities and contribution to its daily running, activities and growth.

Figure 21 – Mushet Walk Community Hub Governance



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

There is also a need for young people to play an active role in the curation, programming and delivery of an integrated community building. This helps develop their skills and knowledge and leads to them being active citizens in their community, alongside the Town Council, other organisations and sections of the local community. This needs some consideration in terms of membership, terms of reference and other details.

Funding Opportunities

Some examples of available funding are outlined below:

Rural England Prosperity Fund – Community Space Grants

Forest of Dean District Council has allocated over £100,000 from the government's Rural England Prosperity Fund towards improvements to

village halls and community buildings with £25,000 for 2023/24 and £175,000 allocated in 2024/25.

Grants are to be between £3,000 and £25,000, with 20% match funding required from applicants. The council is particularly keen to support decarbonisation, energy efficiency and digital connectivity projects, but will consider any capital project to improve a community building.

- NEW Grant Application Deadline – 5pm on 15 April 2024
- Panel Meeting – 8 May 2024.

Application forms and guidance notes are available below or from the Gloucestershire Rural Community Council who are administering the grant on the council's behalf, email info@grcc.org.uk or go to <https://www.grcc.org.uk/>

The National Lottery Fund: Reaching Communities England

TNLF fund projects and organisations that work to make positive changes in their community. By community it means people living in the same area, or people with similar interests or life experiences. It offers funding that starts at £20,001. It can fund projects or organisations that'll do at least one of these things:

- bring people together to build strong relationships in and across communities
- improve the places and spaces that matter to communities
- help more people to reach their potential, by supporting them at the earliest possible stage.

We want to be flexible and respond to your community's needs. So it'll offer funding:

- for the long or short term
- for a specific activity, or for broader costs to help your organisation or community
- for one organisation or to bring organisations together
- to support people, communities and organisations most affected by the cost-of-living crisis
- to help organisations address the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on how they work, now and in the future.

Area: England – Suitable for Voluntary or community organisations

Funding size: £20,001 or more, for up to five years

Application deadline: Ongoing

<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/reaching-communities-england>

Visualising Success

The need to understand what success looks like is important with a project focussed on young people, as it shows the softer outputs and outcomes, in addition to the harder numbers and statistics. Visualising success is also good for motivation and to rally around a common purpose, building trust and relationships. It also importantly demonstrates to those organisations that are funding projects, that you are attaining your outputs and outcomes and shows a return on investment.

We have identified overleaf several suggested outputs and outcomes that this project could generate.

Table 1 – Suggested Project Outputs and Outcomes

Theme	Output	Outcome	Impact
Youth Hub Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Scale and size of youth facility ▪ Quality of youth facilities ▪ Hours open, days of week ▪ Number of users 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perceptions of local demand for youth services ▪ Open and positive activities for young people ▪ Financial security and sustainability of youth based organisation ▪ Local community involved in youth facility ▪ More joined up and sustainable youth sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Youth facilities still be used and providing activities ▪ Youth facilities with a long life span and benefit local community ▪ Levelling up of youth provision

Theme	Output	Outcome	Impact
Youth Hub Services and Capacity Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Positive youth activities per year ▪ No of train staff and volunteers ▪ No of marketing and funding plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increase in diversity of activities available to young people ▪ Ability of youth organisations to generate income ▪ Increased satisfaction in youth services in Coleford ▪ Increase in volunteering ▪ Level of ambition to expand youth services ▪ Young people can access a youth facility in their local area ▪ Short term improvements in well-being ▪ Developing new relationships between young people and youth staff volunteers ▪ Young people feel safe in Youth Hub facility 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Improved skills for life and work ▪ Improved mental and physical well-being ▪ Less demand on NHS ▪ Less demand on criminal system

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Young people more active in their local community ▪ Increased well-being of local people ▪ Increase in social and emotional skills of young people ▪ Increase in practical transferable skills ▪ Increase in supportive training relationships 	
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Recommendations

Recommendation	Action
1	To receive feasibility study findings and recommendations, specifically to agree to the upper floor of no.4 Mushet Walk as the preferred location for Coleford Youth Hub activities
2	Consider section 7 of the study in terms of next steps specifically formal discussions with Forest Youth Association
3	To consider the governance and management of the Youth Hub with the overall Town Council footprint of the building lease
4	To consider funding opportunities, their timetable and requirements
5	To obtain feasibility cost estimates for the proposed refurbishment and modification works



People Make Places

15 Nevill Street
Abergavenny
Monmouthshire
NP7 5AA

+44 (0) 1873 880666
+44 (0) 7968 943084
chris@chrisjones.studio
[@chrisjonesplace](https://www.chrisjonesplace.co.uk)
chrisjones.studio

2023-24

2. 1 no. Community Regeneration Plan



COLEFORD COMMUNITY REGENERATION PLAN



Funded by
UK Government



**chris
jones**

rl.
Roberts Limbrick



Funded by
UK Government

Author:	-
Project:	11070
Revision:	Coleford Regeneration Plan V5
Issued:	11 April 2025 2:25 pm



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This report has been prepared by Roberts Limbrick Architects on behalf of Coleford Town Council.



Project Team

1 Coleford Town Council



Client

2 Chris Jones

**chris
jones**

Regeneration

Place Making

3 Roberts Limbrick



Roberts Limbrick

Masterplanning

Urban Design





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Executive Summary

The purpose of this Community Regeneration Plan is to present an evidence based approach to a series of town centre proposals that the local community has engaged with helped guide future areas for action.

The aim of the Plan is “to grow the wider well-being of Coleford town centre through using local assets, building on our Forest Identity, partnership working and placing our community and visitors within our streets, squares, local businesses and local services.”

The Plan has been shaped by a comprehensive understanding of the town centre but also how it relates to the wider town and its location within the Forest of Dean. It has many positive assets and opportunities but like many town centres it faces challenges that are seen at a UK wide level. Successful town centres are about places and its people within them, that create experiences for all. This Plan is about creating the Coleford experience.

To ensure the Plan has ownership, the process has provided opportunities for strategic and local organisations to get involved, as well as opening conversations around need and ideas with the wider community. Community drop in sessions, an exhibition at the Town Council offices and digital opportunities have been provided as well as discussions with the local business community. This has help us refine the Plan and where priorities should focus.

The Plan’s Vision is “Coleford town centre will have a range of interesting shops which provide local and regionally produced foods, goods and gifts for residents and visitors. There will be attractive gateways to the town and comfortable green places to sit and relax, surrounded by the well conserved natural and built heritage. Health and social support services will be easily accessed through good transport infrastructure and communication networks. Visitors of all ages will remember their enjoyable experience of a wide range of interesting tourist events and heritage trails around the town and surrounding countryside.”



Our Objectives are:

- To support town centre businesses and amenities by providing the right foundations for them that help visitors arrive, explore, spend time and create a memorable experience
- To provide opportunities for people of all ages within the town centre that creates unity, belonging and pride
- To maintain the character and identity of the town centre that appeals to residents and visitors alike
- To create streets for people that supports events, festivals, markets and social life
- To connect the town centre with its neighbourhoods and villages through active travel but also to make it a convenient place for all to visit
- To support the town and the Forest of Dean in reaching its carbon neutral target by 2030

Its key themes and proposals are centred on 1) Streets and Spaces 2) Green and Active Community 3) Opportunities for New Uses 4) Community Life and Wellbeing and 5) Supporting Local.

Some of the proposals have ambition and will take time to develop, secure funding and implement – others providing us with smaller, bite-size actions that can benefit our town centre. Activities such as a new town map, cases, improved signage and investing in active travel have been some recent investments the Town Council has made. We want to build on this, but we want to maximise the impact with greater partnership working. The Plan outlines the need for closer ways of working between the public, private, community and voluntary sector so that we can collectively ensure Coleford is an attractive and enjoyable experience for all.



Key steps going forward are set out below in order of priority:

Communication and Working Together

- Support town centre business in reforming their traders group/network
- Help shape a town centre campaign and joint activity plan
- Closer working between all strategic and local organisations

Information and Promotion

- Working with town centre business group, FoDDC, GCC and other partners to develop the Coleford story and how this is delivered within the town centre, the wider community and digitally
- Continue to invest in town centre information such as additional maps, cases, signage, events board, interpretation, etc
- Implement and develop the Hidden Coleford heritage trail across the town centre, linking into town centre businesses and attractions

Town Centre Environment

- Complete active travel investments with cycle shelter, stands and missing link on Milkwall route by Pyarts Court
- Review and address town centre seating, opportunities for water refill points, etc
- Review town centre gateways, arrival spaces, key public spaces and frontages for greening opportunities that co-ordinate with seating and other furniture
- Work with FoDDC and town centre business on a practical design for buildings so that a co-ordinated palette and signs are developed

Town Centre Experience

- Working with town centre businesses, develop a themed markets campaign that complements shops, eating places and services and becomes a regular date in the Coleford calendar
- Build on the year round events programme that harnesses creativity, resources, capacity and benefits for the town centre

Development Physical Projects

- Need to work on consultation findings with FoDDC, GCC and local business community and agree on information needed to inform design process for St John's Street and Market Place e.g. traffic data
- Test some activities through other themed projects such as greening, events and improved seating
- Discuss the feasibility of the respective projects including the use of a trial before moving onto more significant works

What is a Community Regeneration Plan?

Regeneration is the long-term upgrading of existing urban, rural, industrial and commercial areas to bring about social and economic change.

For places like Coleford, regeneration is needed due to economic decline, changes in migration and deindustrialisation. Some semi-rural areas have a lack of opportunities for young people, create social isolation of minority groups and physical isolation due to a lack of reliable public transport and services.

Community regeneration works to improve areas facing these challenges. Some ways that this can be achieved are through the development of services, better transport links and improvement of the economy of a town.



What is the purpose of this Community Regeneration Plan?

The purpose of this Community Regeneration Plan is to present an evidence based approach to a series of town centre proposals that the local community has engaged with helped guide future areas for action.

Aim

To grow the wider well-being of Coleford town centre through using local assets, building on our Forest Identity, partnership working and placing our community and visitors within our streets, squares, local businesses and local services.

Objectives

- To support town centre businesses and amenities by providing the right foundations for them that help visitors arrive, explore, spend time and create a memorable experience.
- To provide opportunities for people of all ages within the town centre that creates unity, belonging and pride.
- To maintain the character and identity of the town centre that appeals to residents and visitors alike.
- To create streets for people that supports events, festivals, markets and social life.
- To connect the town centre with its neighbourhoods and villages through active travel but also to make it a convenient place for all to visit.
- To support the town and the Forest of Dean in reaching its carbon neutral target by 2030.

Tasks

This plan is centred on a number of key tasks:

- To assess and identify issues affecting both the town centre and the Conservation Area.
- To prepare an amended vision for the future of the town and its economy that reflects the increased sustainability and carbon-free agenda.
- To produce a strategic plan which realises the Coleford vision, noting what has worked well in similar places elsewhere.
- To identify development opportunities for key sites.
- To make recommendations for using existing or any new partnerships or management models.
- To identify appropriate sources of funding and write bids.



↑ Coleford Town

↓ Coleford Market Place



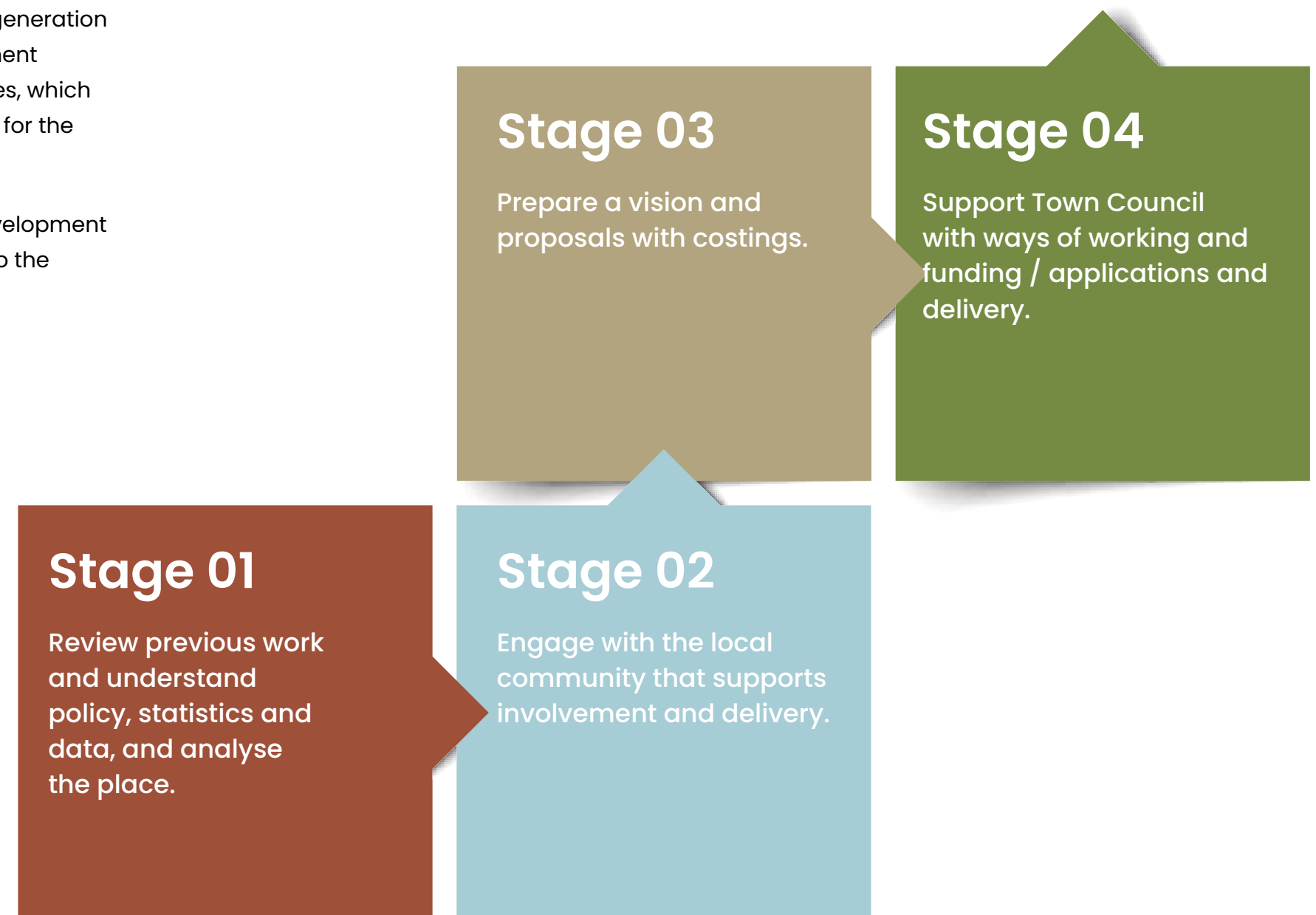
The Plan Process

Regeneration is the long-term upgrading of existing urban, rural, industrial and commercial areas to bring about social and economic change.

These are the key steps in the Community Regeneration Plan process:

1. To review previous studies, plans and projects within the town.
2. To review current policy at a national, regional and local level.
3. To analysis statistics and data that helps understand the well-being of the town.
4. To analyse the physical place, specifically the town centre and its relationship to its neighbourhoods and outlying villages.
5. To design, organise and host effective community engagement leading to greater community involvement, including the business community and key stakeholders.
6. To develop a community regeneration plan based on the engagement results and other local studies, which includes an amended vision for the future of the town.
7. To devise costed project development plans and bids as annexes to the main plan.

COMPLETE REGENERATION STRATEGY



Why does Coleford need a Community Regeneration Plan?

The Forest as a whole has seen different phases of development, from iron mining using charcoal to steel using local coal and iron, tramways and railways. The industrial heritage in Coleford peaked with the Mushet family and continued well into the twentieth century. The Deputy Gaveller, who is responsible for the remaining Freeminers, is still based at Forestry England midland HQ in Bank St. The Scheduled Monuments at Dark Hill and Whitecliff feature along with Puzzle Wood and Perrygrove Railway as tourist attractions now. Coleford has the only Tourist Information Centre for the whole Forest of Dean and Wye Valley AONB, funded through the Town Council.

Coleford takes a strategic approach to regeneration: with a Neighbourhood Plan (NDP) in place, a number of studies have given data and opportunities for ways forward. Coleford NDP is annually reviewed at its Annual Assembly and Full Council. The Council supports a strong events programme through the year, from the Carnival of Transport at Easter via the July Music Festival to the Christmas Lights. Coleford is also twinned with St Hilaire de Riez (Vendee) exchanging visits with schools, choirs and sports teams as well as making friends.

Coleford is a strong community, with independent small traders, significant tourist attractions, a mining and cultural heritage and distinctive Forest character. Post Covid, and with the current the economic pressures and a significant increase in population, we need to realise the potential for varied employment. The trends would be to increased tourism, better/ different local services for people choosing to live here and work from home, and bring the Forest theme into town. Given the Town Council's concern with climate change and sustainability, it wants to enable local people to walk/cycle from the edges into town and neighbouring settlements. This is a time of rapid change, so even with a resilient base, we need to be clear and effective in our drive to regenerate. Significant opportunities which will not come again must not be missed but maximised now.

The Forest of Dean District Council Local Plan and FoDDC publishes annual town audits that reflect changes in the town over time. The People and Places Insight Ltd benchmarking report in 2020 suggested the following areas for improvement:

- **Footfall**
- **Business Confidence**
- **Transport**
- **Car Parking**
- **Public Toilets**
- **Physical Appearance**
- **Retail Offer**
- **Leisure Facilities**

The University of the West of England Masters Architecture and Planning students over the last five years have also carried out a series of studies for the Town Council:

- 1) Assessing youth provision and giving options for improvement,
- 2) Providing a new hub focus, and
- 3) Potential for improving local linkages to support Coleford as a cycle, and walking centre for the Forest of Dean Public toilets.

Location Context and Setting

Coleford is in the Forest of Dean, West Gloucestershire, only four miles from the Welsh border.

It is strategically located in the heart of the Forest of Dean and conveniently positioned within the South West.

The Forest of Dean, or 'The Forest' as it is known locally, has a rich natural and industrial heritage being within the Forest of Dean and Wye Valley AONB, and in the Dean National Forest Park.

The Forest surrounds the town, and many people visit/move here because of the green environment.

The market town lies in a central bowl at the confluence of streams which filter into the River Wye.

The surrounding settlements: Five Acres, Mile End, Broadwell, Milkwall are found in a semicircle from north to south.

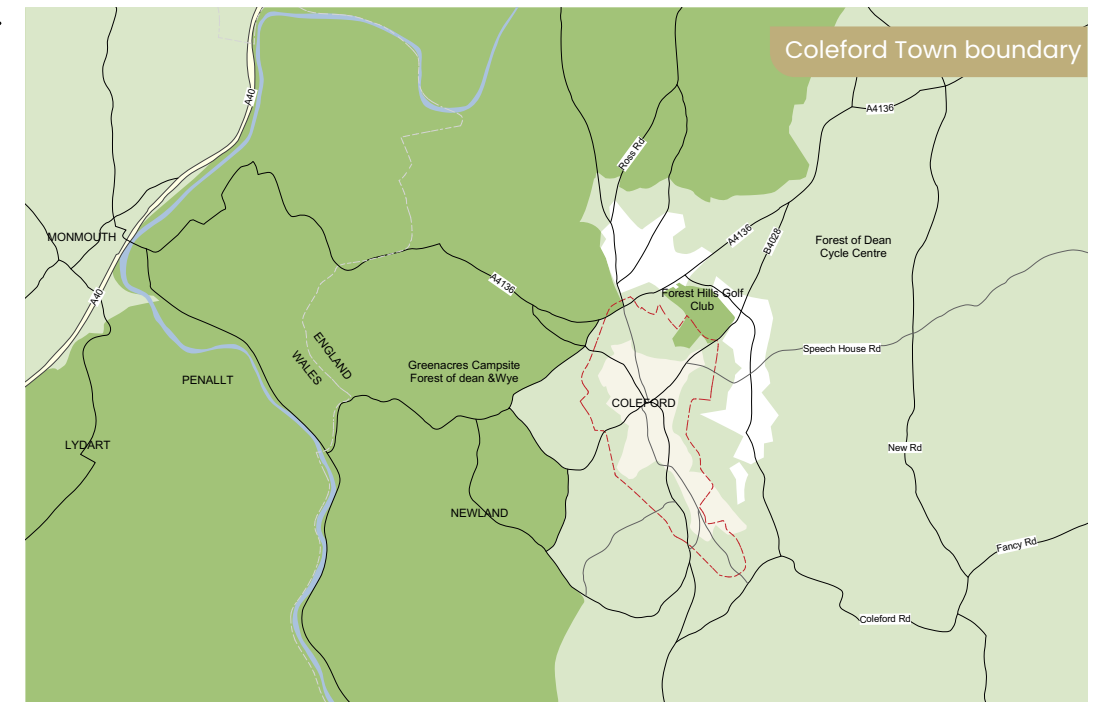
These originate from coal and iron mining, which has mainly died out, but leaves a spokes and wheel road pattern linking hamlets/villages with distinctive identities.

In 2011 the Parish population was 8359 but had risen by 2021 to 9275, almost 10% in the last ten years.

The Conservation Area in the town centre includes about 20 listings (mainly Georgian buildings/streetscapes) and is focussed on the Marketplace. The Clock Tower and Cross indicate where the central octagonal church once stood.

The Market House (Town Hall) was pulled down and the centre altered in 1968 for highways improvements. St John Street is one-way, with a cohesive street scene of independent shops/cafes/pubs.

Coleford town boundary inset →



↓ Coleford's strategic location within the south west



Policy, Studies , Data and Place

The policy setting for a place such as Coleford is important. It shows the relationships to national, regional and local agendas, providing strategic direction and alignment. It also shows the strategic opportunities and limitations to a place and its development.

Policy Setting

The planning policy documents relevant to the development of Coleford includes:	
1. National Planning Policy.	4. Emerging Local Plan.
2. National Regeneration Policy and Programmes.	5. The Adopted Neighbourhood Plan for Coleford.
3. The current Local Plan which includes the Core Strategy and the Allocations Plan.	6. Other Local Town Documents.

Planning Policy Summary

The following summarises the applicable policies however a comprehensive detailed policy analysis can be found at the end of this document.

Planning and Regeneration Policies

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023) emphasizes sustainable development, economic growth, town centre revitalization, affordable housing, environmental conservation, and promoting healthy communities.
- The UK Levelling Up Fund has allocated £20 million to infrastructure projects in the Forest of Dean, including transport, town centre regeneration, and cultural assets.
- Local Plans such as the Forest of Dean Core Strategy (2012) and the Allocations Plan (2018) set out housing and employment targets, promoting modest growth in Coleford while protecting green spaces and heritage sites.

Key Development Priorities for Coleford

1. Town Centre and Economic Growth
 - Support for independent businesses, tourism, and retail expansion.
 - Enhancing Coleford’s role as a service hub while balancing competition with nearby towns.
 - Policies to promote employment growth, including industrial and commercial site development.
2. Housing and Infrastructure
 - 650 new homes planned by 2026, with 40% designated as affordable housing.
 - Several residential sites allocated for development, including Poolway Farm, Lawnstone House, and King’s Head Public House.
 - Active travel improvements, including cycle and walking routes linking Milkwall and the town centre.

3. Community and Youth Support

- Development of The Hive at 4 Mushet Walk as a creative space for young people, arts, and music.
- Feasibility studies for youth-oriented facilities like skate parks, a community kitchen, and an art studio.

4. Heritage and Environment

- Restoration of the Coleford Clock Tower to improve accessibility and maintain its role in town events.
- Conservation efforts to maintain Coleford’s natural environment and green spaces.

5. Transport and Accessibility

- Enhancing sustainable transport options, including cycle routes and better public transport connectivity.
- Addressing town centre accessibility and improving pedestrian-friendly infrastructure.

6. Challenges Identified

- Anti-social behaviour and lack of youth provisions.
- Limited leisure facilities and town centre events.
- Need for better parking, transport links, and retail diversity.

The policies outlined at the end of this document provide a road map for Coleford’s future development, balancing growth with heritage conservation, economic sustainability, and community well-being.

Other Local Studies and Plan

These study processes need to acknowledge any previous or current studies to be considered in development the community regeneration plan.

Coleford Clocktower Project

Coleford Town Council (CTC) owns and maintains the historic clock tower standing in Coleford Market Place. The tower is a listed Grade II building, and a historic feature of the town's Conservation Area. It provides access to some storage and facilities, anchors and is the focal point for a wide variety of events.

The tower has sustained damage due to water ingress and wear and so has been closed to the public until appropriate repair and restoration can be carried out. Whilst emergency repairs have been made to prevent further damage, the Council have decided that the tower should be repaired and restored to a sound condition that allows the town the use of the facilities as described. As a listed building, any repairs or restoration will be subject to listed building consent and will be the subject of a more extensive project, than the emergency works.

To facilitate this the Council, in the first instance, it has secured the services of a conservation architect to assess the tower and develop a set of proposals that not only repairs and restores the structure but improves general accessibility, interpretation and its engagement with the immediate public realm.

At the time of writing this Plan document, the Town Council has submitted an expression of interest to National Heritage Memorial Fund for Townscape Heritage funding.

Planning permission and listed building consent is being obtained for the restoration works.

↓ Clock tower

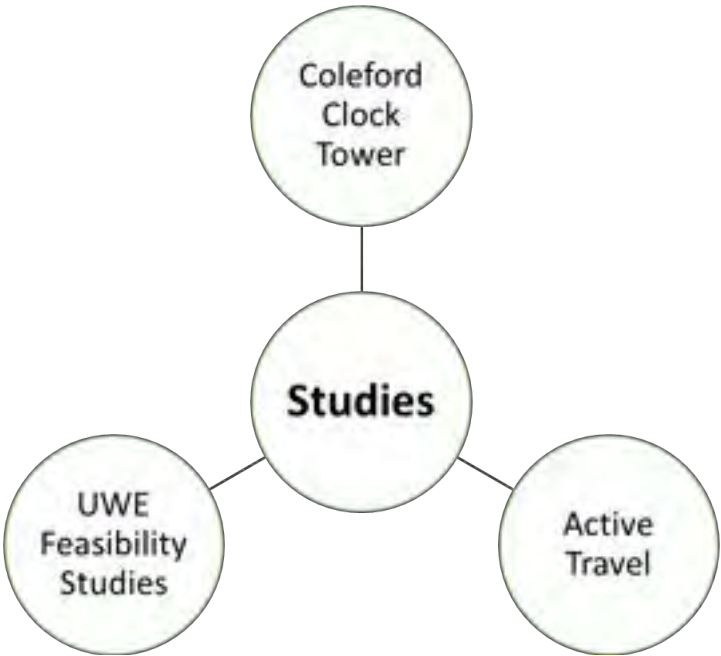


Active Travel Project

There are a number of active travel proposals that are in various stages of development:

- Mushet Walk cycle extension from Old Station Way where Gateway 7 cycle path finishes into town centre. This has consent from some landowners with the need for further design development prior to future implementation.
- Other Active Travel routeways and progress includes:
 - Carrying out work on Perrygrove to Puzzlewood pavement/paths.
 - Progress Christchurch routeway with various landlords.
 - Explore Capacity fund (possible £40,000 ringfenced for Active Travel)/ other funding streams for feasibility work.
 - Walkers are Welcome have made contact with GCC PROW officer, and quick progress made with footpaths, stiles.

- Bus schedules/routes/stops Action BON/WJ to follow up real time passenger information at stops.
- Cycle hub. Following UWE feasibility work, need for investment ready project to move forward. CTC to forward link with Newnham group who have achieved grant from Community Ownership Fund to see if that is way forward.



UWE Studies

Youth Provision Feasibility 2022

This report covered a project co-created between members of the Youth of Coleford, a group of Architecture Masters Students from UWE Bristol, Coleford Town Council and the Forest Youth Association.

There is an overall need for youth provisions in Coleford and this project set out to bring in the ideas of the local youth community to form proposals for schemes which would be cherished by those in the community that use it. The Forest Youth Association helped set up valuable youth engagement sessions for us to hear as many voices as possible within the youth community in Coleford. The engagement involved Thursday Youth Hub at Café 16, Drawing and Modelling activities, a Town Centre walkabout and feedback from the Pride of Coleford Awards. A number of ideas and proposals were identified that included:

- A skate park cover
- A communal/training kitchen
- Café
- Art studio
- Pump track
- Planters

- Green space
- Communal garden
- Green walls
- Covered outdoor seating

Some of these proposals were developed further to look at short to longer term proposals for a youth provision building that included Bell’s Field and at the Main Place. The outdoor and green/amenity centred ideas centred on Bell’s Field.

↓ Example of Youth Provision Idea



Coleford as an Urban Forest

As part of an 8 week programme, students from the University of the West of England were tasked to come up with ideas for a regeneration scheme in Coleford, that would be developed in collaboration with Coleford Town Council.

These interventions aim to reflect the ideals and values of Coleford Town Council and the end users and to draw upon the extensive research already undertaken as part of the Coleford Neighbourhood Development Plan.

SITE ANALYSIS – WEAKNESSES & OPPORTUNITIES

TOWN CENTRE GREENERY

When compared to other parts of Coleford, the town centre lacks greenery. As shown on the

map to the right, there are only a couple trees along the town centre’s active frontages – the High Street and St Johns Street.

MISSING GENERATION

During our conversations with Coleford Town Council, we have identified the challenge of ‘the missing generation’. As shown below in the table, Coleford attracts an older age range of over 65’s more than the English average. This could be due to a lack of spaces willing to make provisions for young adults. As illustrated in the image from a site visit to Main Place in Coleford below.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Within the town centre, there are many sites which the council and members of the community are eager to develop.

St John Church – reserved for community space with an emphasis on artistic activities. The Next Generation study showed the Community art and well-being not feasible due to cost of structural repair and was a discarded idea. The Church is currently under consideration for planning as 12 apartments.

UWE Studies

Coleford as an Urban Forest (contd)

KEY PROJECT THEMES

HERITAGE AND TOURISM

Coleford has a rich history with a number of historic attractions, especially in the town centre, with the most obvious being the clock tower and others such as the Old White Hart Inn.

Enhancing local historic assets and improving their connection to surrounding attractions, such as puzzlewood and pedlabikeaway, is important for consolidating local identity and heritage and attracting tourists.

COLEFORD: AN URBAN FOREST

The woodlands of the Forest of Dean are one of Coleford's biggest assets, and yet there exists a lack of unity between the town and the woodlands surrounding it.

Therefore, the main aim of the project is to bring in aspects of the forest and visa versa: bringing Coleford into the surrounding woodland.

PROVISION FOR COLEFORD'S YOUTH

Observations of Coleford show a lack of safe and sheltered spaces where 16-25's are welcomed or encouraged to spend time.

Providing for all age groups of a community is vital for a cohesive society, which will be reflected in the final proposals.

PROJECT AREAS

LOCAL BUSINESS BAG DESIGNS:

One side should include all logos from shops in Coleford (to avoid competition/conflict regarding bag choice) and therefore will further emphasise the idea of a cohesive/unified Coleford. Develop the paper bag to a bag for life, that shop owners can sell as it is longer lasting, and people will be more likely to hold on to it.

SHOP FRONT DESIGN GUIDE:

Request for a suggested colour palette.

LINKS TO THE FOREST:

Make wayfinding markers interactive for example with a QR Code. More small maps to explain where you are in relation to surrounding attractions (could even be on lampposts)

TOWN CENTRE GREENING & PEDESTRIANISATION:

- Widen the crossing that links the central island to the Mushet Walk (as this is where majority of people will walk through from parking their car)
- Requested for a covered area/canopy in the centre
- Suggestions for using Corten steel & making the canopy sculptural to link with the industrial history of Coleford

COLEFORD YOUTH CENTRE:

Various locations for youth provision in the town centre are being considered and are subject to a separate youth feasibility study.



↑ Clock tower illustration

UWE Studies

Coleford- Our Story Live Project Studio University of the West of England, January 2025

The Brief

The goal is to revitalize and rebrand Coleford through inclusive community engagement that listens to all demographics- residents, tourists, and service

providers. By understanding the town's strengths and challenges, we'll work with Coleford Council to bring their vision to life. Focusing on the town's heritage, we'll use visual storytelling to highlight its history and architecture, fostering pride and encouraging longer visits. The project aims to educate future generations and visitors while nurturing local culture, supporting events, improving connectivity, and providing a framework for Coleford's long-term regeneration.

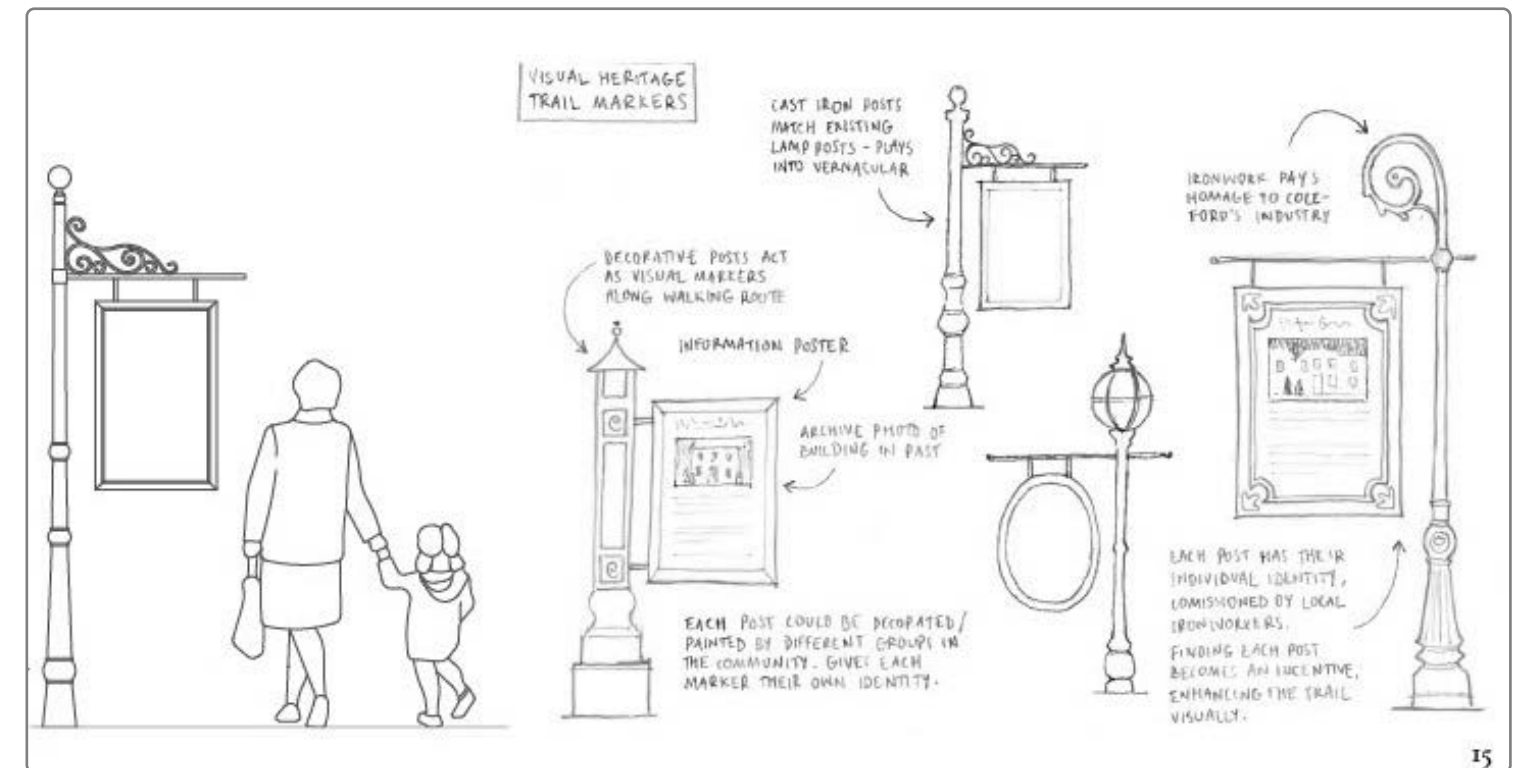
First Site Visit Findings

Benefits:

- The town's growth is driven by its reputation as a scenic and affordable location
- A desirable area for individuals seeking a quieter lifestyle or tourism.
- The town's historical identity adds into its attractiveness.
- Tourism is also contributing to its desirability.
- Friendly community.

Drawbacks:

- Lots of unused spaces.
- Limited community engagements happening in the area which distances the interactions between all age groups.
- Many new residents are unfamiliar with Coleford's history and traditions which weakens the cohesion between long-term residents.



Site Findings + Demographics

Based on the demographic charts:

- Coleford experienced an outstanding population increase by over 10% between 2011 & 2021 which highlights its rising appeal but also show its unique demographic and social challenges.
- The demographic trend in Coleford is its aging population where it increased by 5% between 2011 and 2021 which brings opportunities such as keeping up with local traditions and enhancement of community stability.
- Antisocial Behaviour has been a repetitive concern for Coleford where issues such as vandalism, public disturbance and similar incidents have been reported around, particularly in the urban areas of the town.

UWE Studies

Events Analysis Community Engagement

As part of our research in Coleford, we identified key heritage sites and visited nearby shops and establishments to gather testimonials from workers, visitors, and residents. Our goal was to collect insights from a diverse range of people- newcomers, long-term residents, and lifelong locals- across different age groups, to guide the project.

The Heritage Trail Scheme

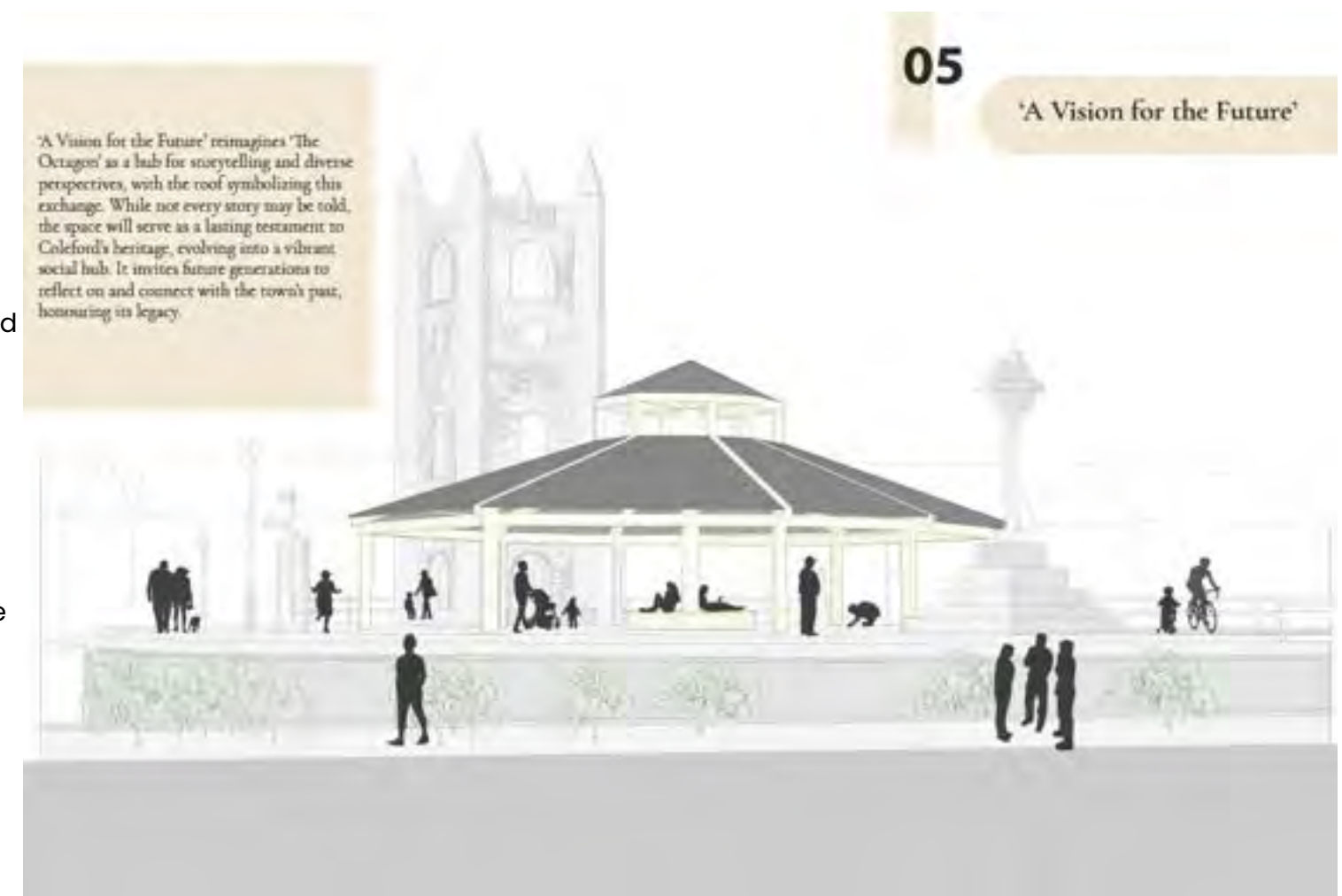
Following community feedback, we reviewed the existing 'Hidden Heritage' App, which was intended as a trail for exploring the town but is underused.

After discussions, we decided to revamp the trail. The new route will guide visitors and residents around Coleford, with an audio guide that provides information about key buildings. The trail will be marked by 'Visual Heritage Trail Markers' attached to existing lamp posts, highlighting 24 points of interest. This will raise awareness of local heritage in daily life.

Event Structure

Inspired by ideas from the Notre Dame Du Haut, this manifesto outlines the concept of a pop-up museum located at 'The Octagon' roundabout in Coleford. It proposes a prefabricated structure that can be easily transported by the local community, designed to showcase the views and stories of the town's historic listed buildings. This idea was central to our research, ultimately evolving into our final design.

'A Vision for the Future' reimagines 'The Octagon' as a hub for storytelling and diverse perspectives, with the roof symbolizing this exchange. While not every story may be told, the space will serve as a lasting testament to Coleford's heritage, evolving into a vibrant social hub. It invites future generations to reflect on and connect with the town's past, honouring its legacy.



Challenges and Opportunities

Place Based Data

Data and statistics are a part of understanding the well-being of a place like Coleford, its relationship to all England figures, and where consistency of the parish area boundary exists, we have compared 2021 census data with 2011. The following charts and figures illustrate some of the data behind Coleford, its place and its people.

People and Demographics

Coleford has a population of 9275 in March 2021 compared to 8359 in March 2011, which is an 11% rise in population over the ten-year period. The gender split is the same as the English average with 51% female and 49% male.

Figure 2 below shows the age distribution for Coleford compared to the English average with the chart showing on average a 1% drop after the age of 15 to 45. There is then a 1% increase for those people aged between 50 and 80, with almost a 2% increase in people aged 65 to 74. Coleford therefore experiences an out-migration of people leaving the town between school leaving age and adults in their 50s, with people returning to live here in their mid-50s as a result of quality of life and retirement plan choices.

Housing

Figure 3 illustrates the type of housing accommodation people live in and the type of tenure.

Close, to the English average, 89% of residents live in a whole house or bungalow, a greater propensity of people living in 1 bedroom accommodation (1.3% above English average) yet fewer people live in 4 or more-bedroom.

Figure 2 – Age Distribution for Coleford

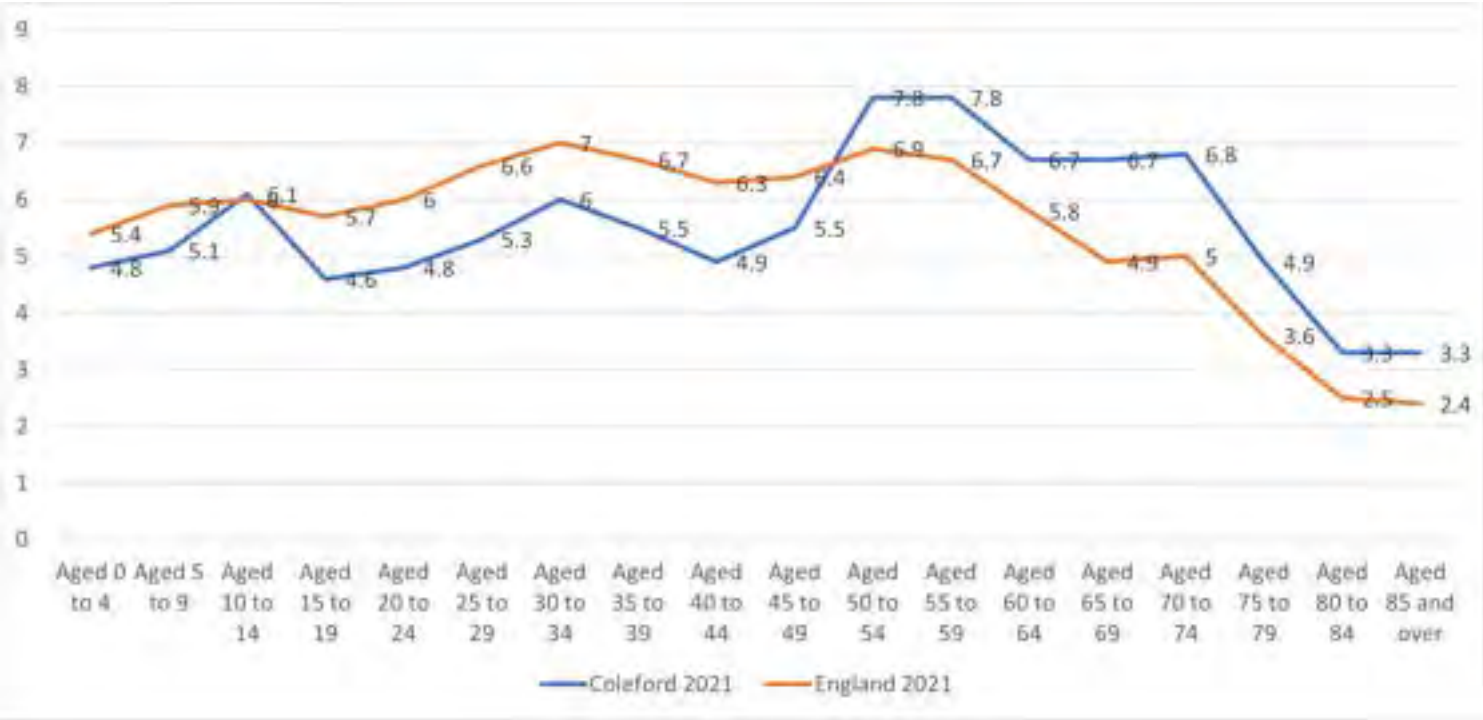
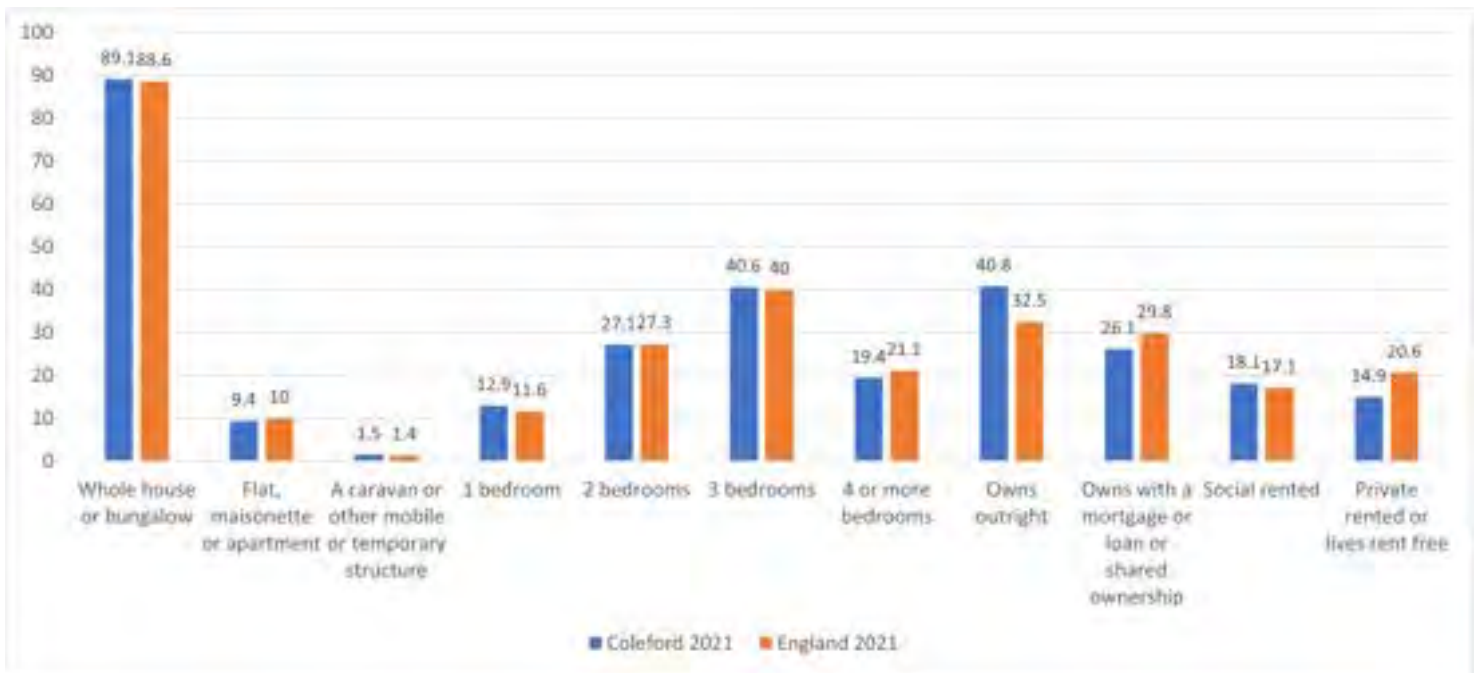


Figure 3 – Housing Accommodation and Type of Tenure



Sources: Census 2021

Challenges and Opportunities

Place Based Data

Health

When asking residents about their health, Figure 4 alongside shows to us that the town is above the English average for good and fair health but increases by 1% percentage point in terms of experiencing bad health.

There is however higher than normal levels of disability in the community, estimated at 20%.

Education

An indicator on the skills levels of those economically active within a town like Coleford is qualifications with Figure 5 showing how the town is performing compared to 2011 figures, and against the English average. It is clear there has been a swing on recent years from those with no qualifications, some 10% points above the English average, to a rise in apprenticeships and those with Level 4 qualifications and above (HNC, HND and Degree, amongst others).

Figure 4 - General Health of Residents

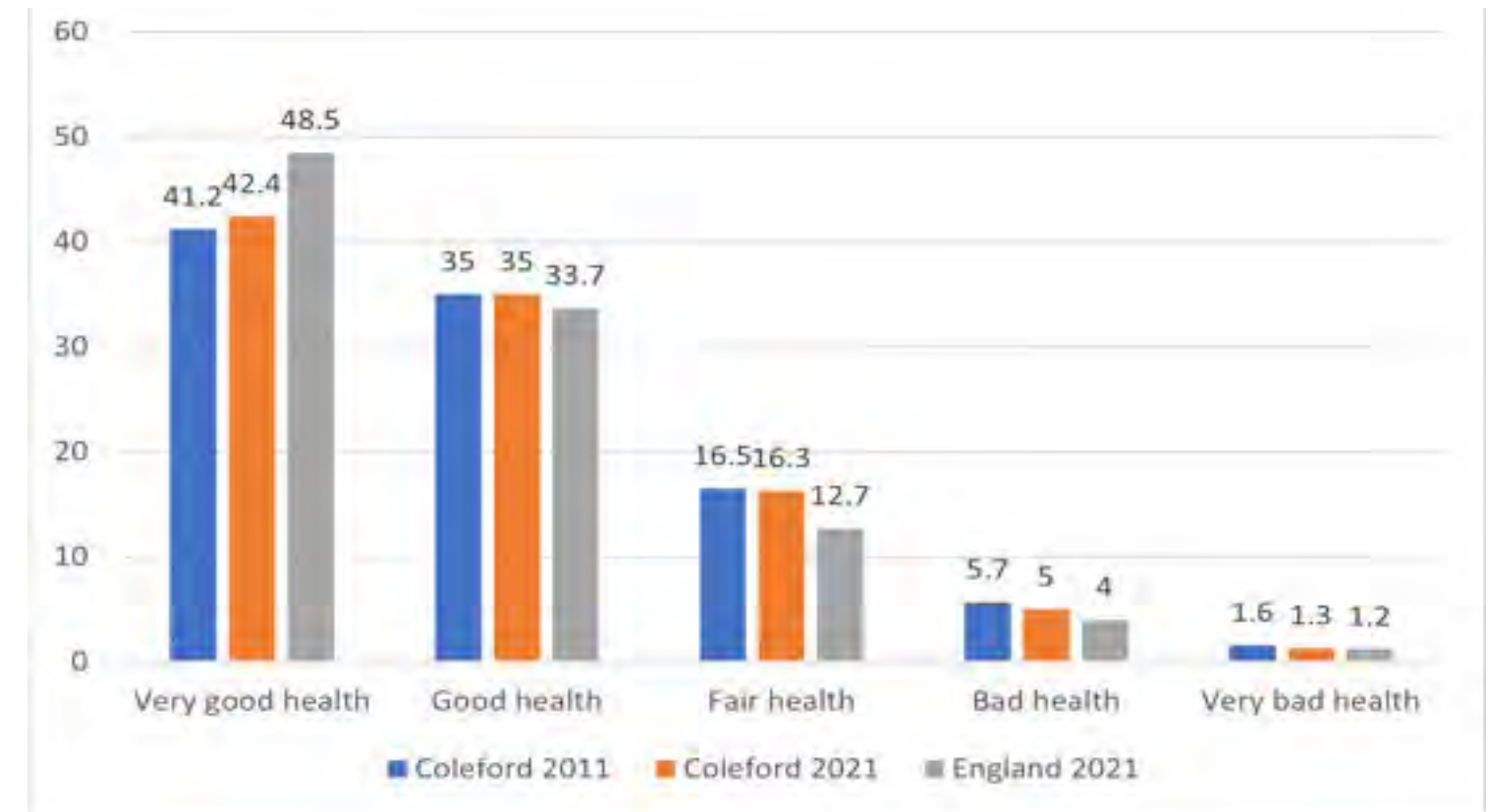
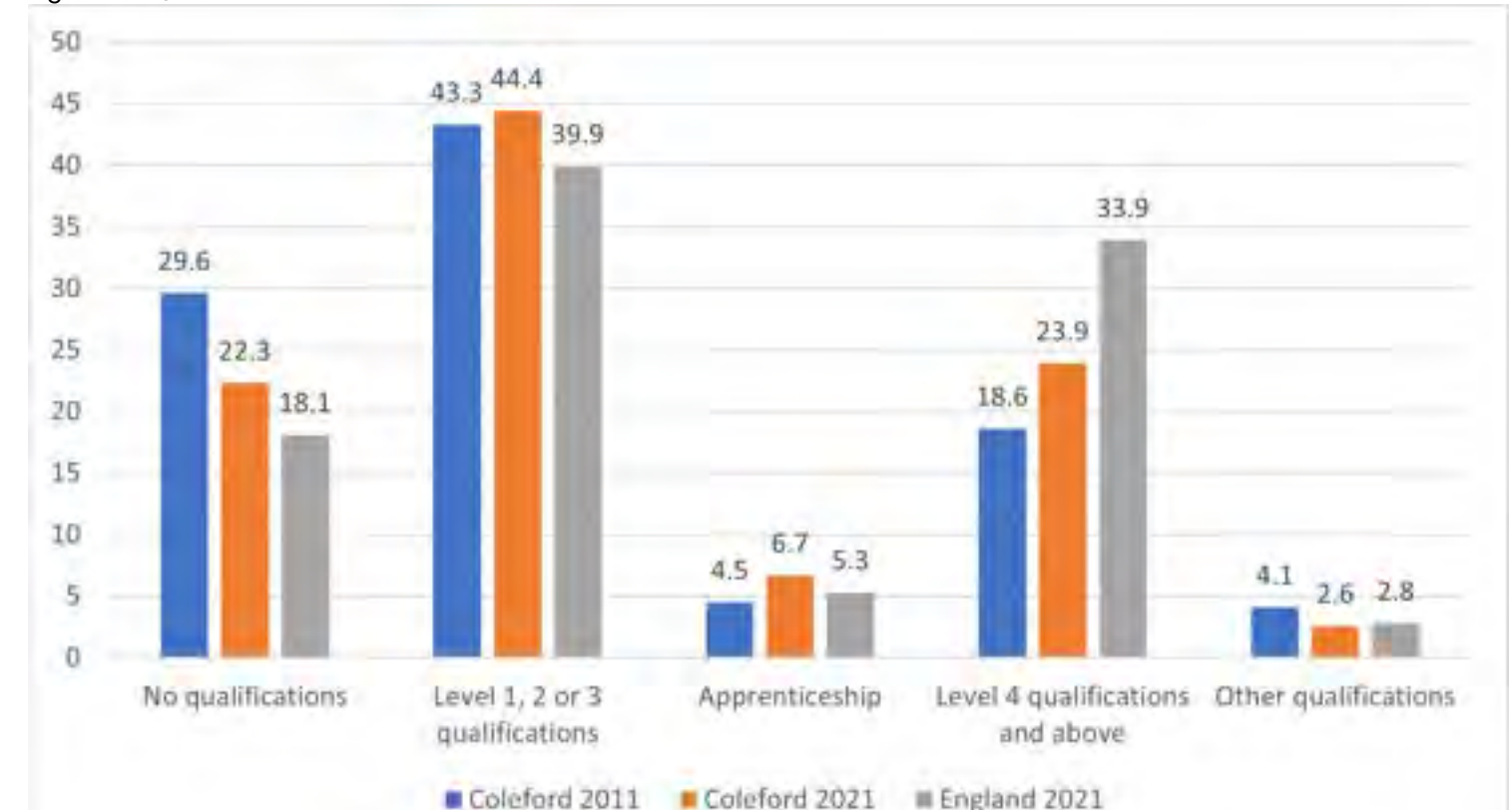


Figure 5 - Qualification Levels



Source: Census 2011 - 2021

Challenges and Opportunities

Place Based Data

Economic Activity

Figure 6 indicates that there are marginally higher levels of inactivity compared to all England averages which is related to the bias in the older age cohorts, as well as other structural factors. There is 8% more than the English average of people who have not been in employment for the last 12 months, but 4% lower for those who are never worked.

Types of job occupation have a pattern with Figure 7 illustrating that Coleford has less representation in managerial and professional occupations with a greater proportion of people working in skilled trades (5.2% above English average), service occupations (2.8% above English average) and process, plant and machinery some 3.3% above the English average.

Figure 6 – Economic Activity Levels

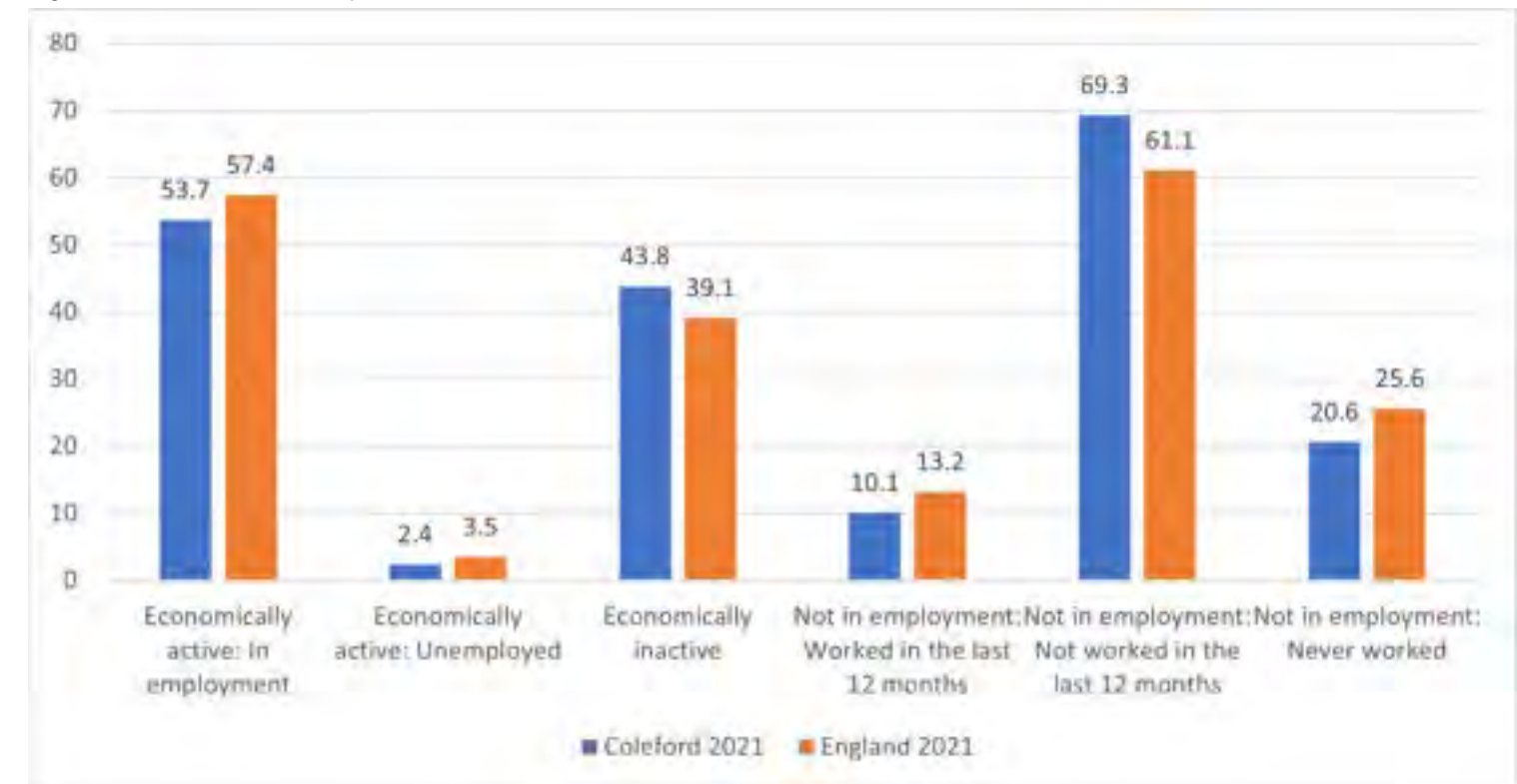


Figure 7 – Occupation Type

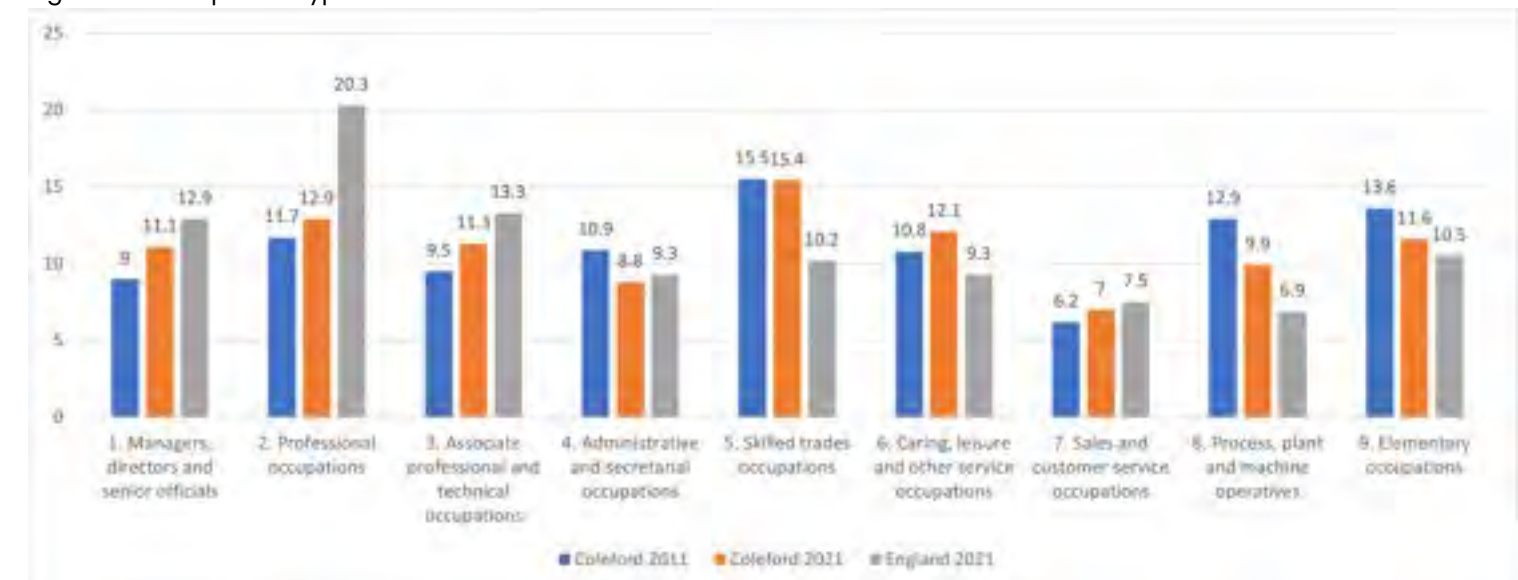


Fig 6/ Fig 7 Source: Census 2011 - 2021

Challenges and Opportunities

Place Based Data

Transport and Mobility

Figure 8 indicates that 16.6% of the town's population has no access to a car/van compared to 23.5% of the English population, with 40.2% and 29.4% of residents owning 1 or 2 cars/vans respectively, with the latter being above the English average. This relates to the semi-rural nature of the Forest of Dean, with the need to have access to a car for employment and other activities.

Figure 9 illustrates to us that residents work outside of the town, with almost 18% travelling 10km to less than 30km and 7% travelling over 30km. There is a marked 10% drop in those people working at home, compared to the English average of 31.5%.

In addition to this, there is a poor level of public transport for the town, with time taken to reach Gloucester and Cheltenham by bus, and commuting by train via Lydney not explored.

Figure 8 – Levels of Car and Van Ownership

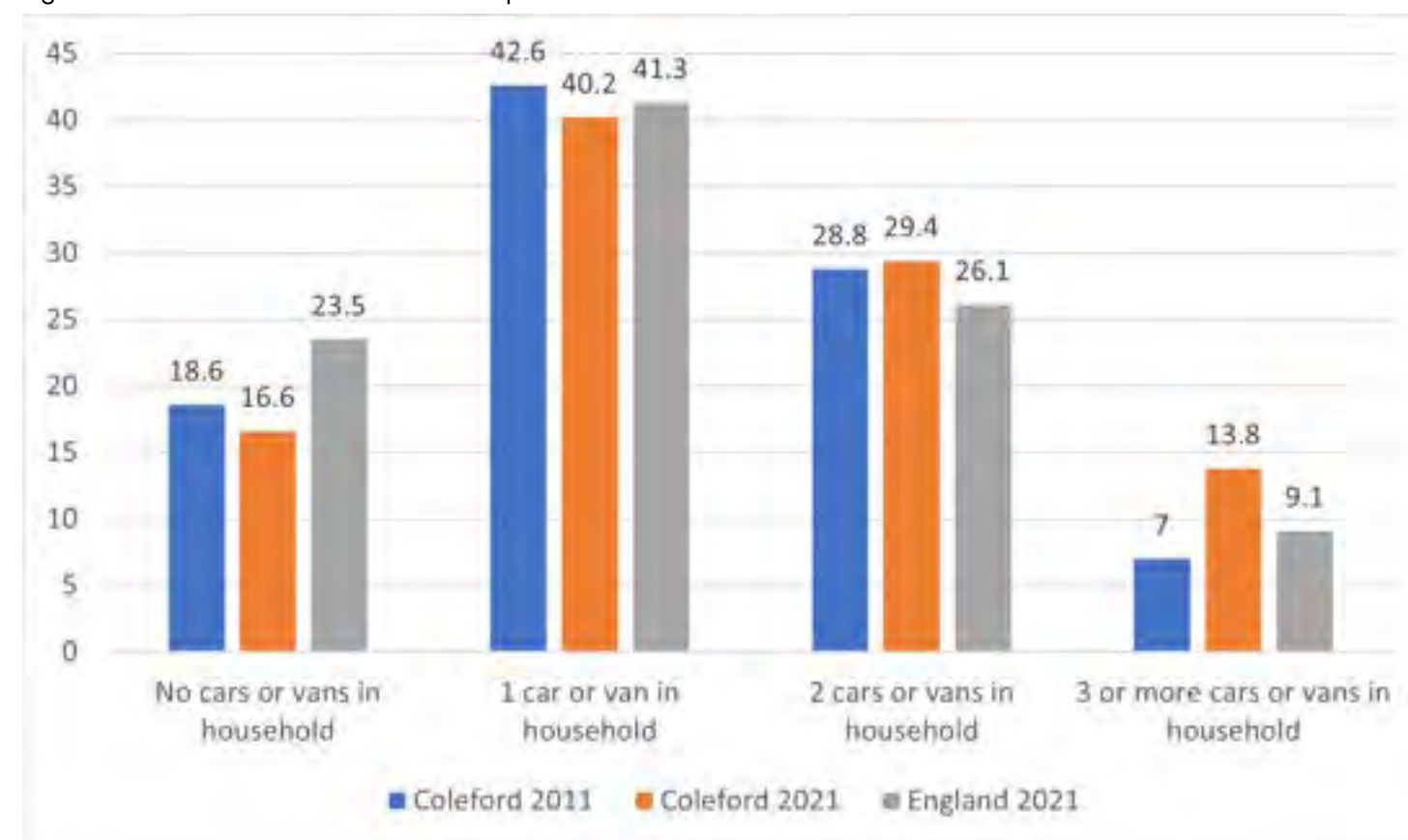
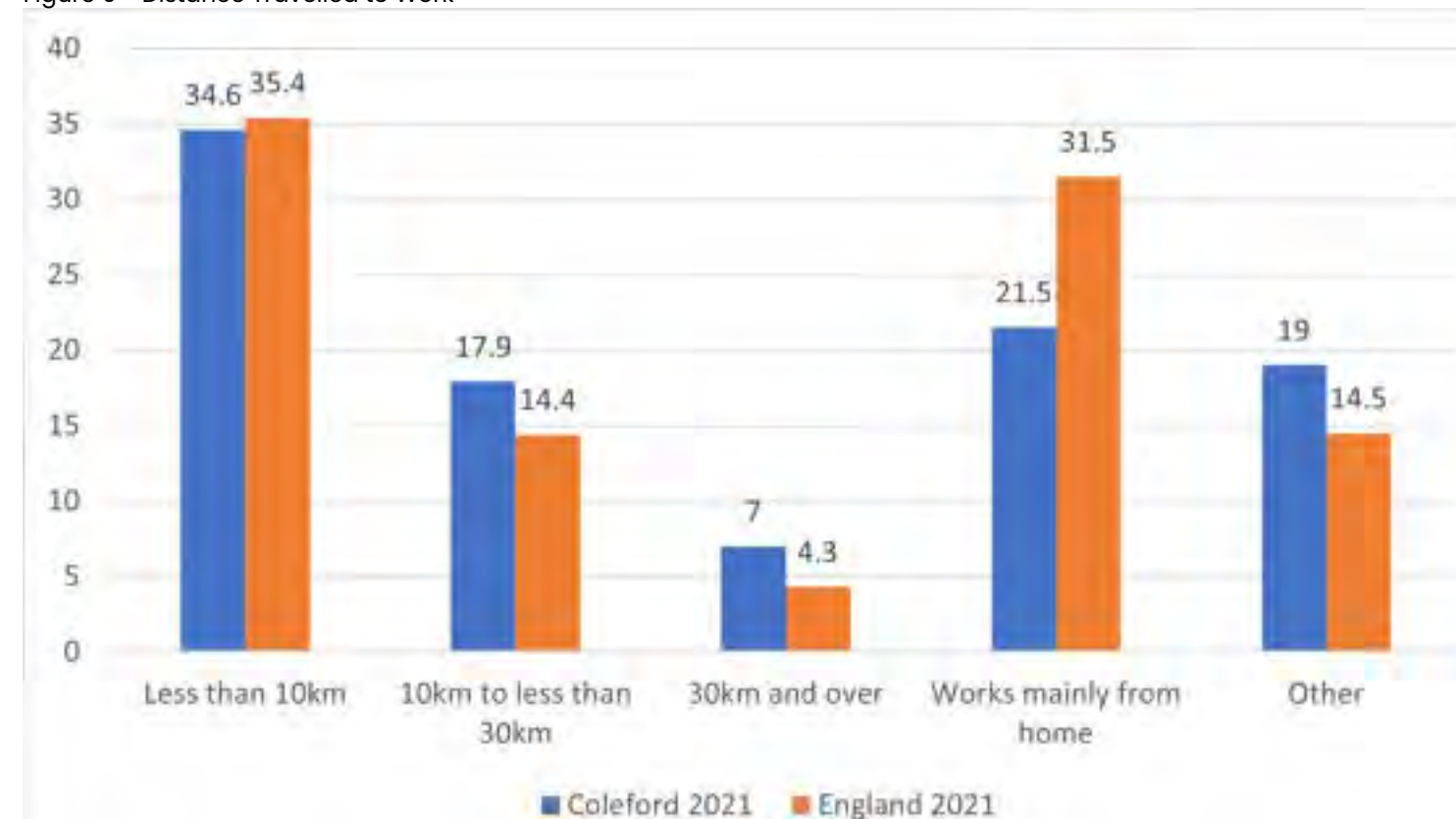


Figure 9 – Distance Travelled to Work



Source: Census 2011 – 2021

Challenges and Opportunities

Place Based Data

Figure 10 shows the main mode of travel to the workplace with 62.5% of residents driving by car/van which is 18% higher than the English average, with 4.7% being a passenger in a car or van. Only 1.6% use a bus/minibus or coach and 1% use a bike. For those that work in the town, 6.5% walk to work, which is like the English average of 7.6%.

Community Safety

Figure 11 - Crime Categories - 2019-2022 outlines crimes reported in Coleford during 2019 to 2022. Incidents where crime has dropped over the years include anti-social behaviour, drug related and vehicle crime. Categories which have risen include public order, shoplifting and violence and sexual offences.

These rates are generally low compared to similar size towns and locations.

Figure 10 - Method of Travel to Workplace

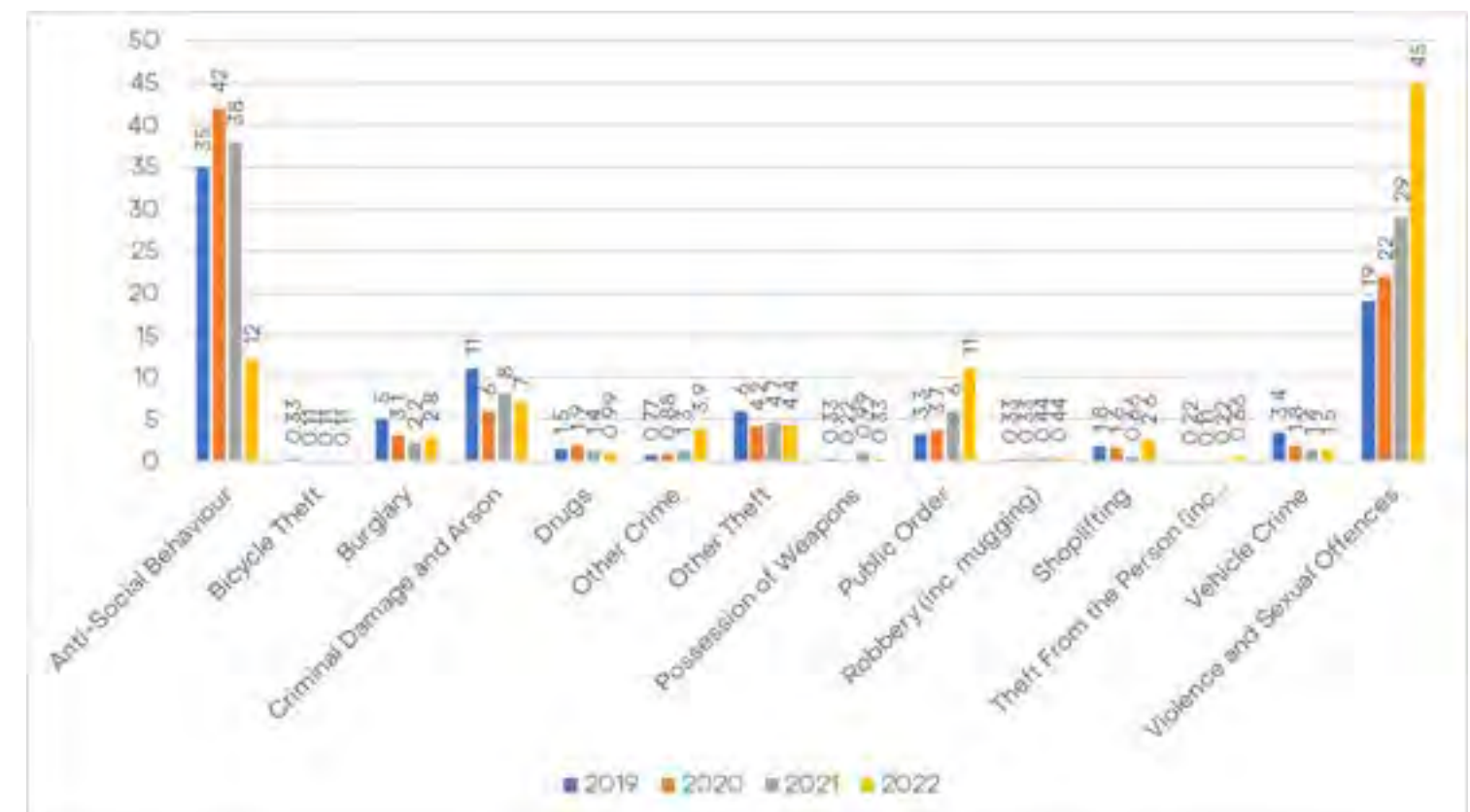
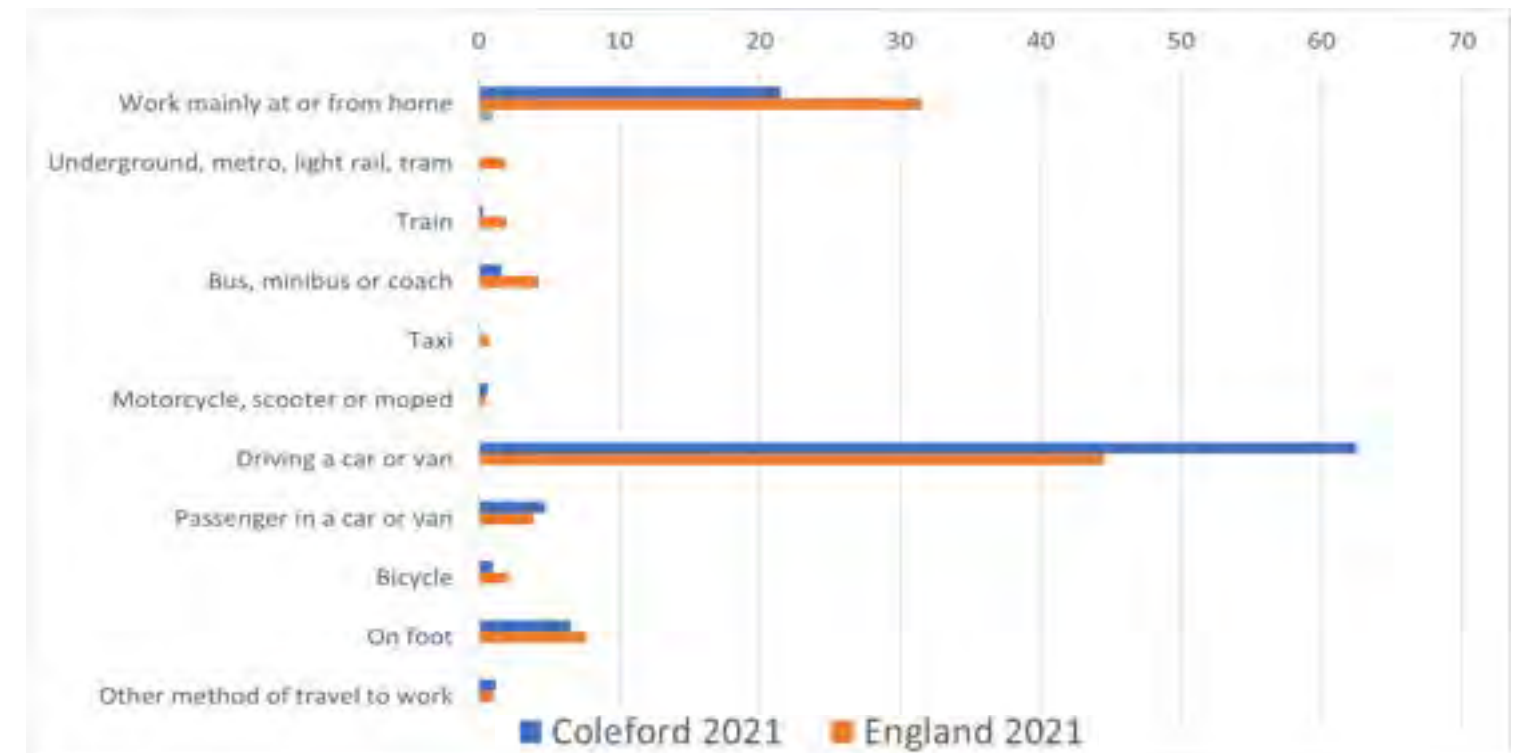


Figure 11 - Crime Categories - 2019-2022 Source:Crimerate.co.uk 2019-2022

Challenges and Opportunities

Place Based Data

Figure 13 overleaf else shows the breakdown of the same number of town centre units by sector with 10% being convenience such as a butchers, bakers or food store, 23% being comparison such as clothing, gift, hardware and other non-food items. 34% are services which include food and drink, health and beauty and professional services.

Figure 14 – Breakdown of Town Centre by Type of Activity shows the breakdown by type of activity of activity with the following ranking by frequency 1) health and beauty 2) coffee shops and cafes 3) foodstore/convenience and 4) homeware and DIY.

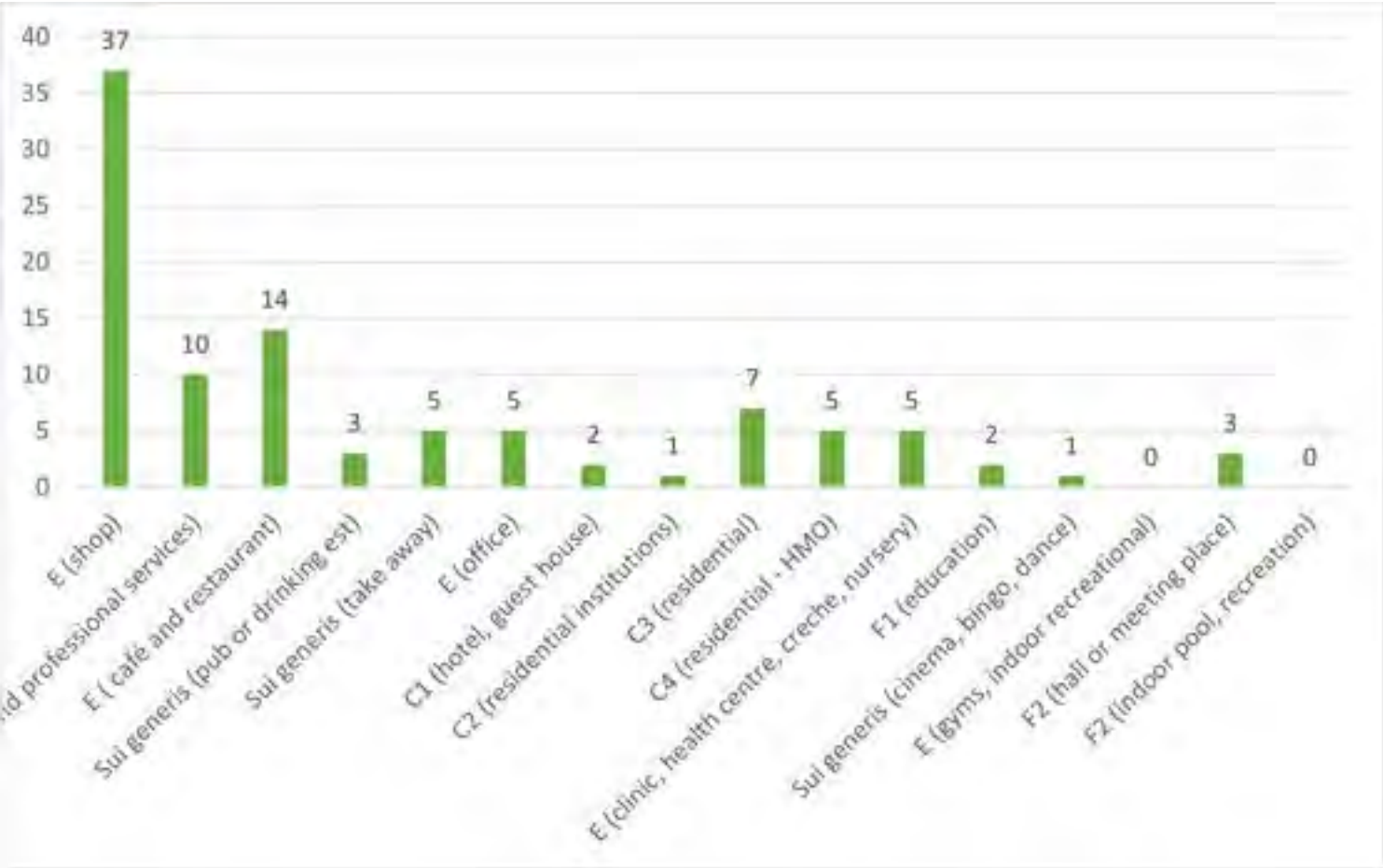
From our assessment, 7% (7 no.) of town centre properties are vacant which is relatively low compared to the UK average of 14.5%.

Town Centre Vitality and Viability

An independent assessment of the town centre uses and activities has been undertaken which is in addition to the District Council’s annual town centre audits. The survey was undertaken on the 26th September 2023.

Figure 12 shows the breakdown of uses by the English use class order which indicates that over 40% of the uses relate to shops, over 20% for café and restaurants, with 7% being takeaway and 10% being office.

Figure 12 – Breakdown of Town Centre Uses by Use Class Order



Challenges and Opportunities

Figure 13 – Breakdown of Town Centre Uses by Sector

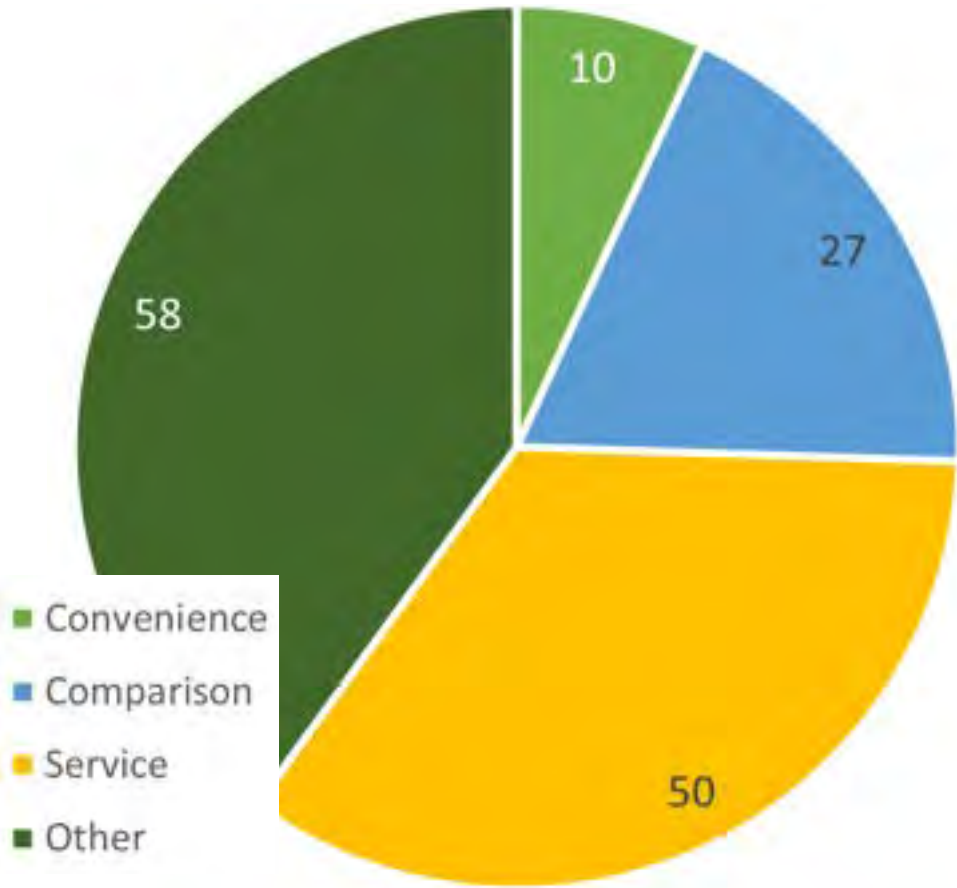
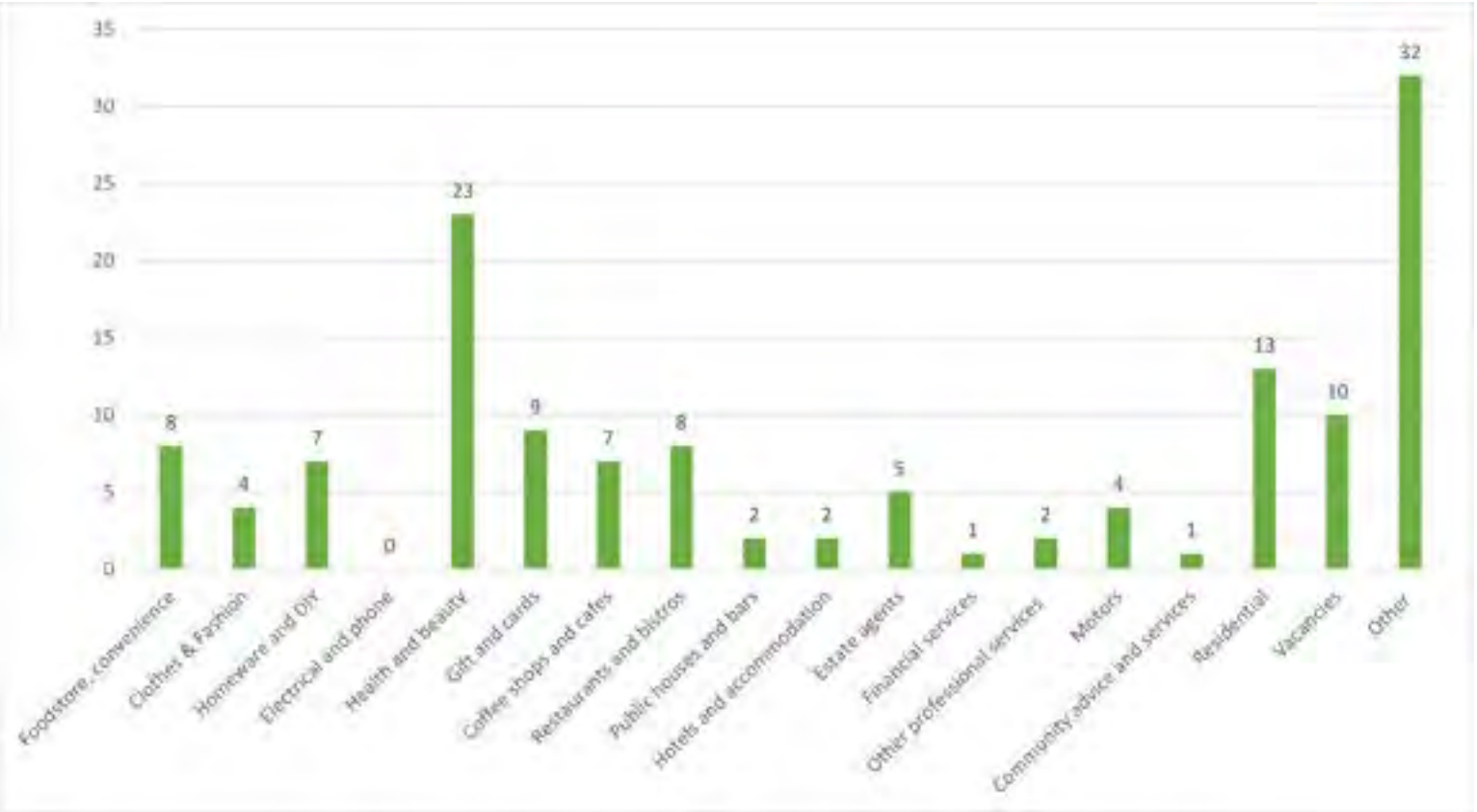


Figure 14 – Town Centre Uses



Figure 15 – Breakdown of Town Centre by Type of Activity



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration, September 2023

Place Analysis

Settlement and Wider Town

Coleford has a unique structure and context, with the identity of settlements derived from historic mineheads which is now protected by a green ring as outlined in the adopted neighbourhood development plan. The settlement consists of a main Town Centre and then a series of outlying neighbourhoods. Nothing particularly unique about this, however, these neighbourhoods are physically separated from the town by a 'ring of green' space. This engenders a feeling of mini settlements in their own right rather than a series of anonymous suburbs:

- Town Centre then, starting in the south,
- Milkwall
- Coalway
- Broadwell
- Mile End
- Although outside the Coleford 'settlement', Berry Hill to the north.

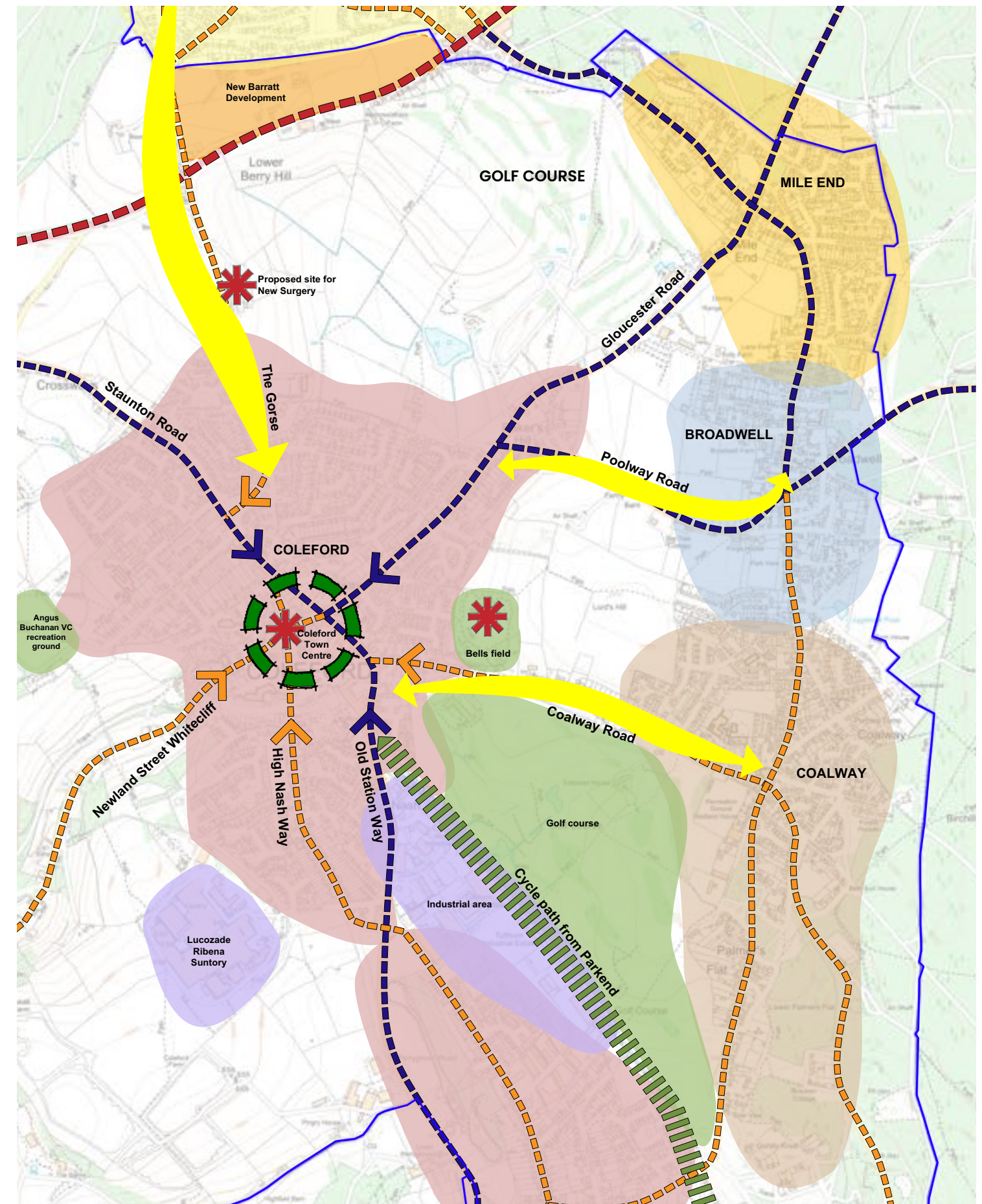
Each settlement offers its own range of local facilities including:

- Small convenience stores
- Community halls
- Pockets of employment
- Public houses
- Sport and recreation fields and clubs

Coleford town centre is, however, very much a primary hub for the outlying settlements. It sits in a bowl with a series of 'spokes' which radiate out from its centre, connecting to the outer settlements on higher ground. Then, in turn, an outer 'rim' links the settlements together.

The main employment uses are located to the south of the town centre with Tufthorn industrial Estate and the Lucozade Ribena Suntory factory which is the largest employer in the area. These benefit from being within walking and/or cycling distance of the town.

In addition to the 'spokes' which connect out to the wider settlements, there is also a pedestrian/cycle link which comes in from the south via a disused railway line. This offers both active travel and recreational links out to the wider forest area to the south and southeast.



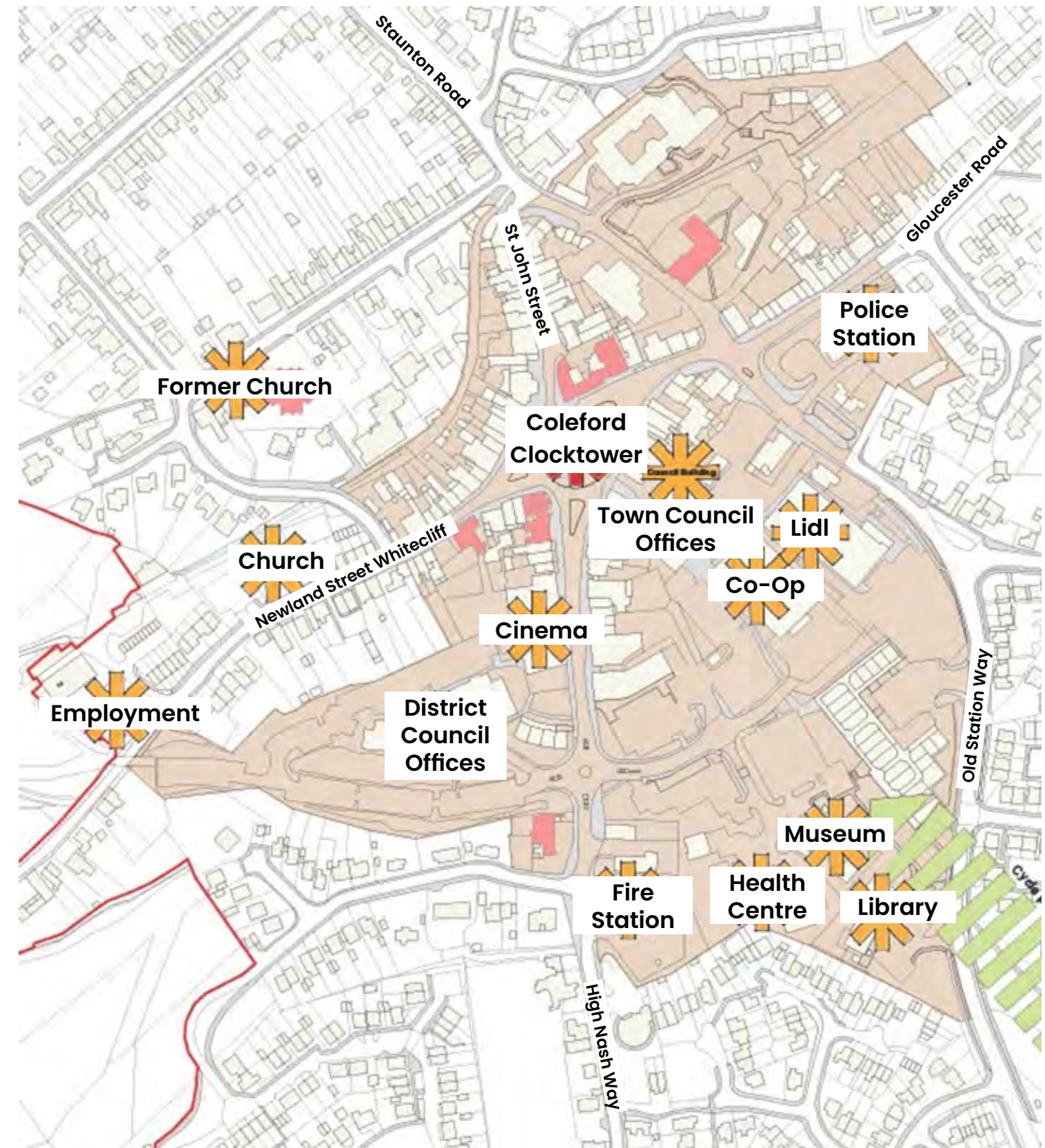
Place Analysis

Settlement and Wider Town

The town centre has a diverse offer including a number of successful independent retailers. This gives the town a comforting 'local' feel. In addition to this local offer, the town also benefits from a number of essential services and wider national offers. These are all located within the town centre giving residents and visitors easy access to them:

- Forest of Dean Council offices
- Coleford Town Council offices
- Various churches
- Employment
- Health centre (to be relocated to the northern edge of town)
- Library and Main Place building
- Museum
- Cinema
- Police station
- Ambulance station
- Fire station
- Bells Field recreation space
- Lidl food store
- Co-op food store

As discussed, the uses are all located within the town providing the opportunity for one stop multi-purpose visits. As opposed to the settlement of Coleford which reaches out to the wider neighbourhoods, this also gives the town a feeling of compactness.



Movement

Vehicular Movement

As previously discussed, the town centre acts as a 'wheel hub' with a series of 'spokes' leading to the outlying neighbourhoods which are, in turn, connected by a 'linking rim'. As can be seen on the Vehicular Movement diagram, many of these spokes culminate at the lighted junction of Bank Street, Gloucester Road and Lord's Hill, making this a key vehicular nodal point within the town. As such, it is a very vehicle dominated area that is unfriendly as a pedestrian or cyclist.

Newland Street and High Street merge at the central clock tower square. This is the heart of the town and was the original setting of the market, named the Market Place. The clock tower now sits in a public space in the centre of a traffic gyratory, this leads to issues around vehicle pedestrian conflict, noise and air pollution.

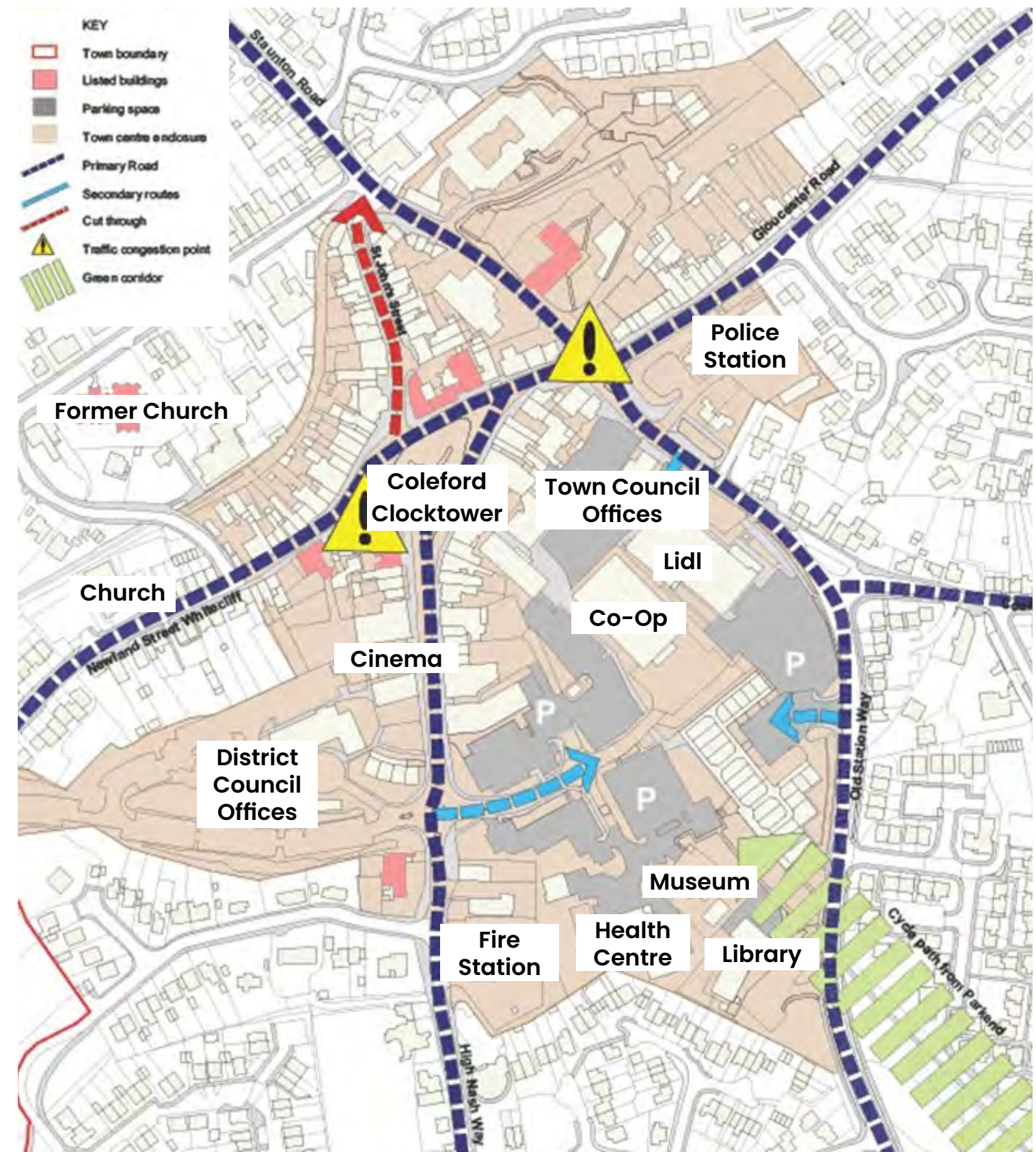
Leading off the Market Place is St Johns Street. This is a narrow and intimate street with a real sense of character. The Street is one way and links Newland Street to Staunton Road. In doing so it by-passes the busy lighted junction at Gloucester Road / Old Station Way / Staunton Road. As such it is used as a rat run or cut though for traffic leaving the town and heading

northeast. This makes the street busier than it ought to be with, potentially, 90% of its traffic using it for this purpose rather than actually stopping in the street for its services.

For visitors to the town by car, their initial destination would be one of the towns car parks. The town centre is well served by car parks:

- Public - Railway Drive Car Park - Paid - 107 standard, 15 disabled, 4 parent and child
- Public - Lord's Hill Car Park Free - 48 standard, 3 disabled
- Public - Newland Street - 19 standard, 1 disabled
- Private - Co-op car park - free
- Private - Lidl car park - limited stay
- Private - Pyart's Court - limited stay

Signage and wayfinding to these car parks is generally poor. Coming from the north, east or west to the main public car park, necessitates going through the Market Place exacerbating the volume of traffic in this area.

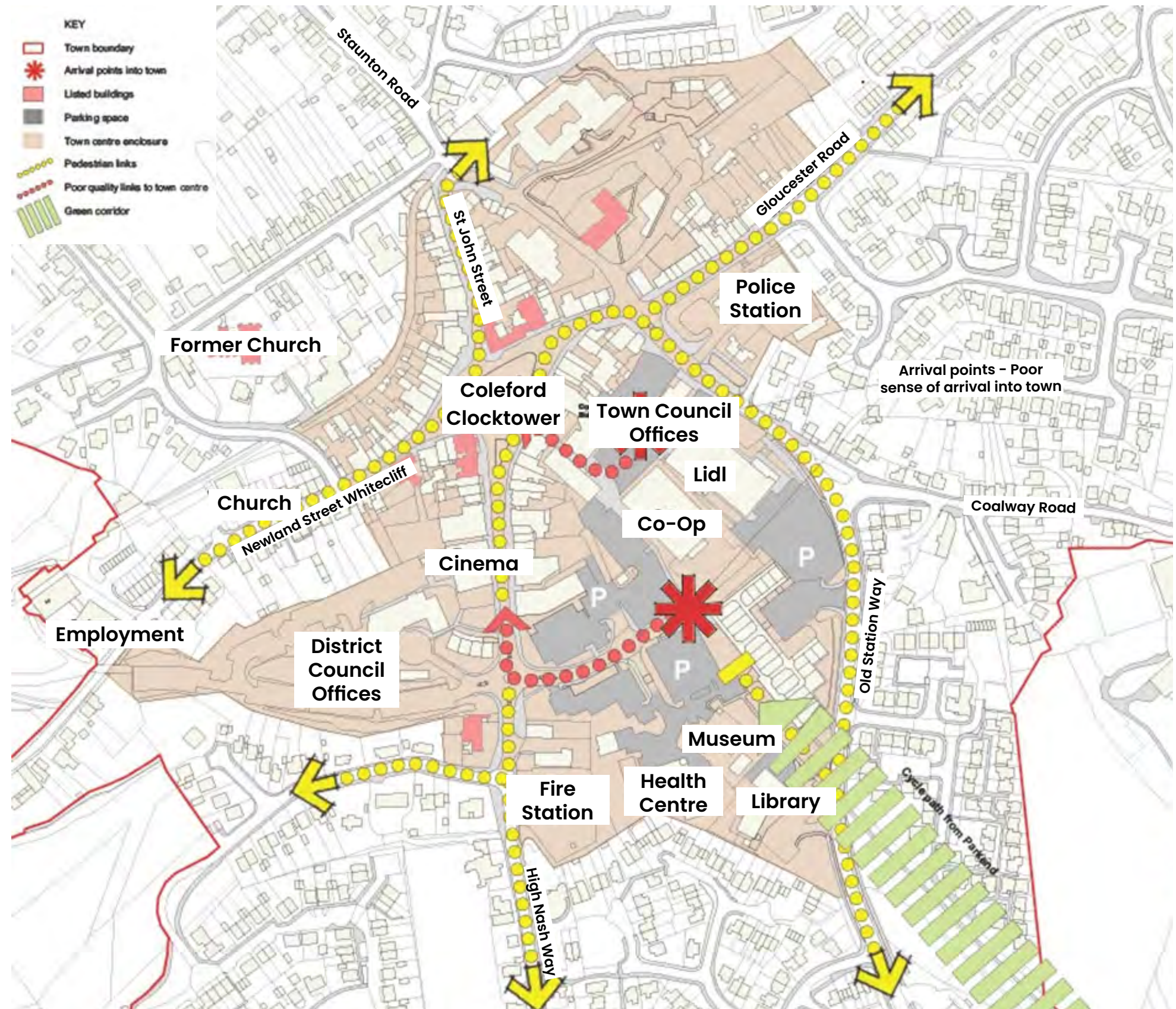


Movement

Pedestrian Movement

With the town movement being based around a hub and spoke concept, there are a good number of pedestrian access links leading into the town centre. These are, however, mainly via footpath to busy roads. As such, these can be noisy, intimidating and stressful for pedestrians and cyclists. There is an existing car free active travel route which comes into the town centre from the south, linking past the library and museum. This currently ends abruptly just alongside Pyarts Court.

With many visitors to the town arriving by car, links from the car parks to the town centre are important. Currently the car parks and the pedestrian links from them to the town centre, lack any sense of arrival. The routes are not obvious and feel of a low quality. They are, however, short and direct.



Street Scene

In terms of quality of street scape / scene, Coleford Town Centre has a high starting point. Its historic core is generally intact with an interesting blend of building types, facades and characters combining to create a characterful place. The diagram overleaf categorises the quality of the streetscape:

1. Best
2. Better
3. Lower
4. Lowest

Even the lowest quality is lower only due to era and style rather than state of repair. This can be found at the south-eastern tip of High Street. This does, however, impact on the gateway into the town from the south or from the main public car park. Having said that, the view down the High Street to the prominent clock tower does draw your eye in this location giving a far better first impression of the place.

As can be seen from the diagram, generally the western side of the town 'feels' better than the eastern side. With the exception of the southeast tip, this is not necessarily due to the character of the built form, which is generally high, but more to do with the quality of the uses on offer.

To the north of the town is St John Street. This has the 'best' feeling within the town. It is a narrow characterful street with a mix of local independent shops and services.

There has been some improvements to the public realm which is contributing positively to the character of the street. As previously mentioned, however, the feel of the place is compromised by the volume of traffic using it as a cut through to avoid the main town centre lighted junction for those travelling northeast.

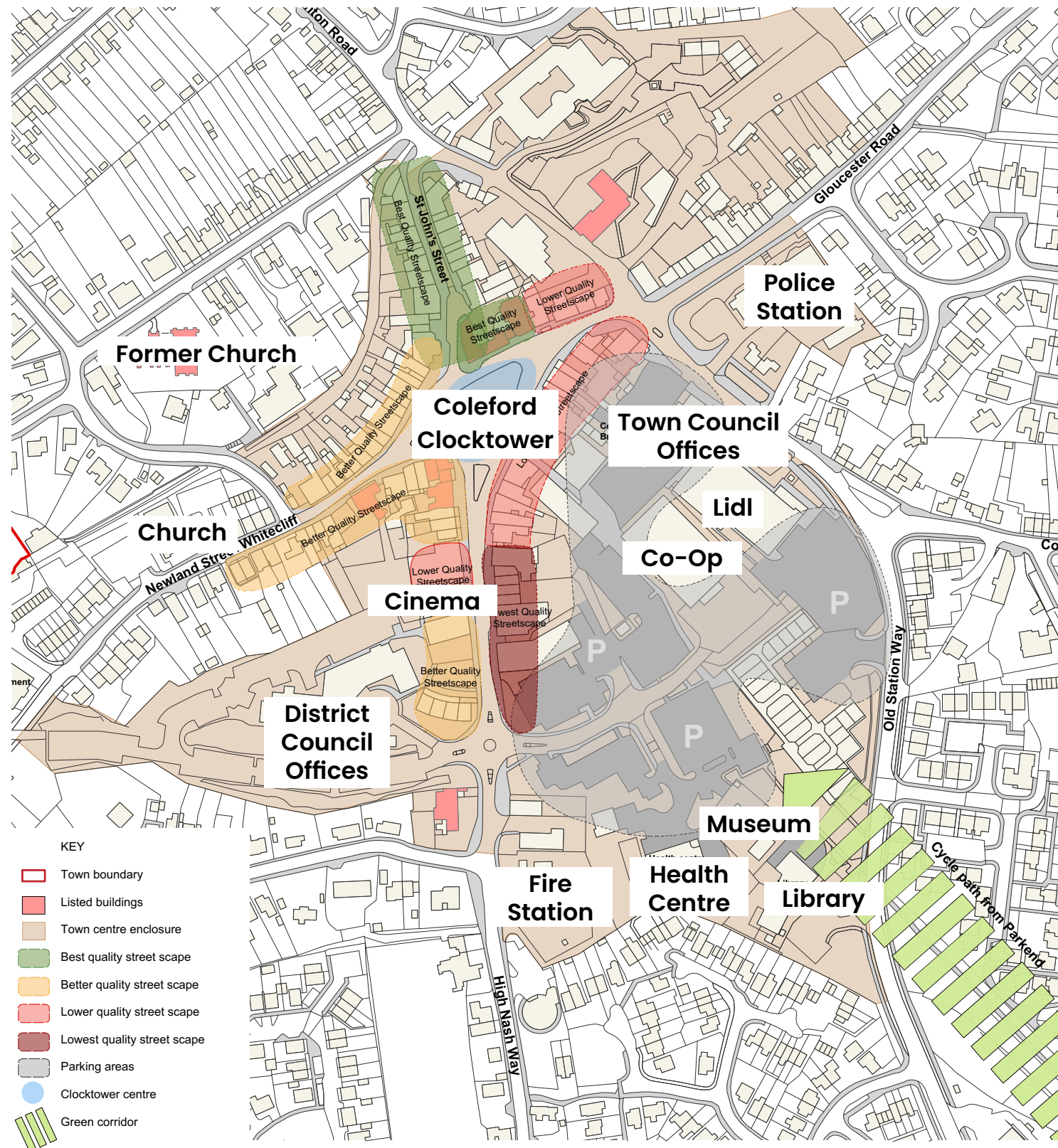
Good quality street scene along St John Street. Opportunity here for a robust shop front design which will add to the character of this street.



Good quality shop front design. Font is in keeping with the town character, colours and style keep the Market Town charm



Street Scene



← Good quality street scene examples

Lower and Lowest quality street scene examples
↓



Key Buildings, Services and Destinations

The town centre has a diverse offer including a number of successful independent retailers. This gives the town a comforting 'local' feel. In addition to this local offer, the town also benefits from a number of essential services and wider national offers. These are all located within the town centre giving residents and visitors easy access to them:

- Forest of Dean Council offices
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- Various churches
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As discussed, the above uses are all located within the town providing the opportunity for one stop multi-purpose visits. As opposed to the settlement of Coleford which reaches out to the wider neighbourhoods, this also gives the town a feeling of compactness.



Cinema



Fire Station



FOD Council



Railway Museum



Police Station



The Main Place (Library)



Lidl Supermarket



Bells Field

SWOT Analysis (People)

WEAKNESSES

- Proud people and strength of community spirit
- Population has grown by 11% between 2011 and 2021 indicating local growth
- The town is above the English average for reporting its health as fair to good
- There has been a reduction in residents having no qualifications, some 7% points lower than the 2011 census
- There has been an increase in residents having Level 4 qualifications, being 5% points higher than 2011 figures
- The town is above the English average for households owning more than two cars or vans (3.4% higher)
- Crime incidents related to anti-social behaviour, drug related and vehicle crime have dropped off in recent years
- Major employers such as Lucozade Ribena Suntory
- Coleford Town Council is a proactive Community Council that has project managed some keynote schemes and led on the NDP
- Good working relationship with University of the West of England Architecture and Planning students over the last three years
- Outmigration of people between 16 and 50, with a climb in people returning, post 65 with residents aged 70 and over, two points above the English average

- Outmigration of people between 16 and 50, with a climb in people returning, post 65 with residents aged 70 and over, two points above the English average
- Higher than the English average for residents that are economically inactive which is linked to greater proportion of retirees in the community but these still contribute through volunteering
- Less representation in managerial and professional occupations with a greater proportion in skilled trades (5.2% above the English average)
- 7.9% of population travel between 10km to 30km to get to work
- People tend to drive to work (62.5%) compared to 1% who uses their bicycle
- Crime incidents related to public order, shoplifting and violence and sexual offences has risen
- Dependency on some large key employers

STRENGTHS

SWOT Analysis (People)

THREATS

- 21.5% work mainly from home, which is 10% less than English average but still an opportunity to tap into
- There is a mobile segment of the community that need to be drawn into town centre offer
- Building on “Forest” brand and identity
- Micro businesses that craft, make and produce in the rural Forest – direct them to showcase and trade in the town centre
- Neighbourhoods close to town centre
- Active travel network routes that connect communities and attractions
- Develop the town centre as a “community”

OPPORTUNITIES

- Cost of living and trends in shopping activity and use of online
- Diversity of employment not attractive to young people to be retained
- Diminishing public sector expenditure and changing priorities
- Travel to work patterns leads to leakage of activity and spend

SWOT Analysis (Place)

STRENGTHS

- Setting of the town within the central area of the Forest of Dean
- Outlying communities look into the town centre
- Strong heritage story in mining and other Forest industries
- Strong visitor offer nearby with Perrygrove, Clearwell Caves, Beechenhurst and outdoor activities and the Wye Valley
- Bell's Field Park is a key community asset on eastern side of town centre, with Angus Buchanan VC Playing Fields located to the western edge
- Key strategic facilities such as FODC main Council offices, Forest of Dean Police Station located in the town centre
- Neighbourhood Development Plan adopted in 2017 that guides the FODC Local Development Plan with site specific policies
- The clock tower "symbol" of the town centre
- Town centre experiences a low vacancy rate compared to UK average
- A town of "convenience" and "local services" and feels "community"
- A two screen cinema on the main High Street
- Food stores close to the High Street
- Some notable independent businesses
- Strong street scene and keynote buildings
- Generally, a good quality of streetscape within historic core
- Good number of parking spaces available within the town
- Outlying neighbourhoods are settlements in their own right rather than suburban
- Mix of independent shops supported by national retailer
- Compact centre offering all local services

WEAKNESSES

- Road network and connectivity not direct to and from Coleford
- No train line or station – poor public transport
- The town's topography does create physical barriers for more sustainable forms of transport e.g. walking and cycling
- Arrival into town centre not clear at key gateways
- Journey from main long stay car park at Railway Drive not coherent
- Key public spaces dated and vehicle dominated
- Key edges and sites need improvements
- Some significant runs of commercial frontages need improvement
- Car parks lack a sense of arrival
- Pedestrian links from car parks lack legibility and are of a poor quality
- Exposed and unsightly recycling centre blights sense of arrival and gateway
- St Johns Street marred by cut through use
- Main town car park is over engineered: Whilst it has green infrastructure there is a high proportion of hard surfaces (tarmac) when compared to the number of spaces available
- Town Council office lacked sense of civic presence at previous location
- Main market square feels very traffic dominated. Noisy and unrelaxing – not a place that encourages dwell
- Active travel links into the town centre are very limited with most being on roads or footpaths to roads.

SWOT Analysis (Place)

- Allocations plan has indicated 379 units with the Coleford settlement area
- To celebrate the town being in the Forest through brand and activity
- Some redundant buildings could meet community needs
- Heritage led approach to regeneration
- Creation of more legible pedestrian links from car park
- Consider improvement to market square: traffic flow, public realm, dwell, events, green infrastructure etc
- Improve civic presence of Town Council
- Creation of 'Shopfront Design Code' linked to improvement grants to raise quality and create better co-ordinated shopfront streetscape
- Rationalise main town car park to create more GI and a far greater sense of arrival
- Better integrate active travel routes to the town centre
- Stop and/or discourage traffic through St John Street
- Improve main lighted junction on Gloucester Road – gateway to town
- Seek alternative uses for derelict church
- Redevelopment site: 14 Newland Street – opportunity for mixed use. Good traditional shopfront
- Creation of 'arrival collection place' at intersection of pedestrian routes from town council and main public car parks
- Provide new or improved public toilets
- Improve and relocate recycling centre
- Future proof town centre facilities e.g., car charging points, convenient cycle parking and infrastructure, dealing with surface water drainage and flooding, green infrastructure to help mitigate climate change
- Better promotion of the town as a destination within the Forest: improved visitor facilities – eating, drinking, cycling infrastructure etc

OPPORTUNITIES

THREATS

- A perception that the town is not a priority for investment
- Climate change and watershed nature of town e.g., run off and flooding
- Sense of losing community and social infrastructure with growing housing demand
- Relocation of GP practice away from town centre will impact on linked activities
- Doing nothing: Town currently feels like it has reached a standstill point. Doing nothing may tip the town into receding
- Shopping habits and cost of living may reduce trade further. Potential for businesses to close leaving empty shops and the sense of downward spiral
- Evolution: town centres are changing and becoming more social. Coleford needs to continue to adapt and evolve

Community Consultation

Coleford Town Council provided several opportunities for the local community to get involved and to have their say.

This was a mixture of face to face consultation in the town centre and out in the town neighbourhoods. Digital opportunities were also provided through the Town Council’s website which hosted electronic versions of the consultation material and an online survey.

The consultation ran from Friday, the 15th of November to the 6th of December 2024.

Attendance

A total of 162 people engaged face to face with the community regeneration plan, as shown in figure 1 below.

On the 15th of November the community engagement was held at the Town Council offices in Mushet Walk.

On the 16th of November the community engagement was held at Milkwall play area, followed by a session at Broadwell AFC.

From the 18th of November until the 6th of December, the consultation display was brought back to the Town Council offices in Mushet Walk which was attended by members of the public, FoDDC officers, the local MP and District Councillors.





YOUR TOWN CENTRE, YOUR SAY

Coleford Town Council is developing a **Community Regeneration Plan** for its town centre. We want to hear from you as a resident, local business, voluntary organisation or someone who has an interest in the future of our town centre. This is your opportunity to look at our ideas and give us your views.



10am to 8pm, Friday, 15th November
Community Drop In Session
Coleford Town Council Offices, Mushet Walk



10am to 5pm, Saturday 16th November
Roaming Consultation – Look Out for Us

- 10am to 1pm Foxglove Garden Play Area, Milkwall
- 2pm to 5pm Broadwell Football Club



10am to 1230pm, 18th to 22nd and 25th to 29th November
Display in Coleford Town Council Offices



Visit Town Council Website to view plans and fill in our survey
<https://www.colefordtowncouncil.gov.uk/home>



Get In Touch
Email chris@chrisjones.studio or 07968 943084

Find out more here:



Scan Me



Survey Closes: Sunday, 1st December



Funded by
UK Government



↑ Publicity poster created to advertise the Public Consultation in November 2024

Community Consultation

Face to Face Consultation

At the face to face consultation, members of the public were provided with several ways to engage in the consultation. Before providing comments, a series of display panels outlined the background and need for a community regeneration plan and asked people to rate their town centre today in terms of its uses, activities and getting around. The focus of the panels was on several key areas in the town centre, asking people to rate ideas and prompted to consider several questions. The main headings for the panels were:

- Welcome – How Can You Help
- Rate the Place
- Vision and Aims
- Ideas for the Town Centre
- Time to have your say
- Resourcing the Regeneration Plan

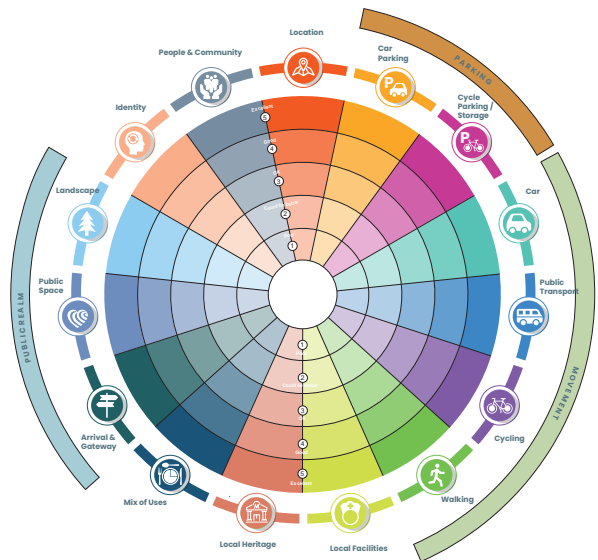
Ways for people to provide feedback included:

1. Talking to a Town Councillor or consultancy team member, with post it notes used to note comments

2. Rating the town centre by using a spider chart means of scoring
3. Rating the options for St John Street and The Market Place by using voting coins in labelled tubes

4. Completing a hard copy of the feedback survey

5. Providing attendees with a survey card that had a QR code or link to the online survey



‘Rate The Place’ too. Locals and residents were encouraged rate the place by placing coloured dots in the relevant section



Completed ‘Rate The Place’ following the engagement events



This figure shows us how people rate aspects of the town centre that are perceived as being strong, and some that need to be improved.

Community Consultation

Key messages

Strengths

- Whilst the location can present some difficulties in terms of accessing some services, the setting of Coleford close to the “Forest” landscape was seen to outweigh any negatives.
- This is followed by the people and community feel which is recognised by those that were born in the Coleford town area and by those that have chosen to move and live here.
- All the above contributes to a strong identity with a real sense of pride in the place.
- Followed closely behind, people rate the landscape, public space, local heritage, opportunities for walking and cycling (albeit areas for improvement) and finally car parking in relation to supply, location with mixed views on payment and charging.

Weaknesses

- Within movement, cycle parking and storage, routes into the town centre and public transport were rated poor to average, with the latter related to frequency, timetable, routes and general quality of service.
- Arrival and gateway into the town centre, mixes of uses and local facilities score average with a general feeling that the town has lost services and facilities over time.

Other Ideas from the Community

- Town centre business environment
 - Outdoor activity market – maximise more the role of the town in the Forest and its visitors
 - Develop a town Wi-Fi scheme
- Town centre buildings
 - Develop a town centre painting scheme for buildings
- General building maintenance
- Better shop frontages and signage
- Improve public toilets
- An inclusive and accessible town
 - Dementia-inclusive design approach
 - Older and disabled people – accessibility

Our Vision

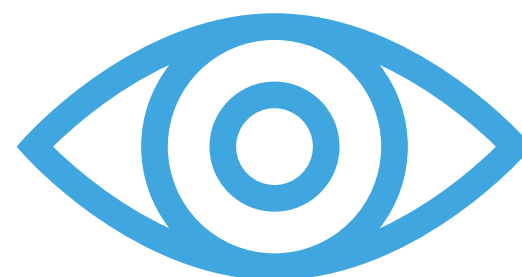


Coleford town centre will have a range of interesting shops which provide local and regionally produced foods, goods and gifts for residents and visitors.

There will be attractive gateways to the town and comfortable green places to sit and relax, surrounded by the well conserved natural and built heritage.

Health and social support services will be easily accessed through good transport infrastructure and communication networks. Visitors of all ages will remember their enjoyable experience of a wide range of interesting tourist events and heritage trails around the town and surrounding countryside.

Our Aims



To grow the wider well-being of Coleford town centre through using local assets, building on our Forest Identity, partnership working and placing our community and visitors within our streets, squares, local businesses and local services.

Our Objectives

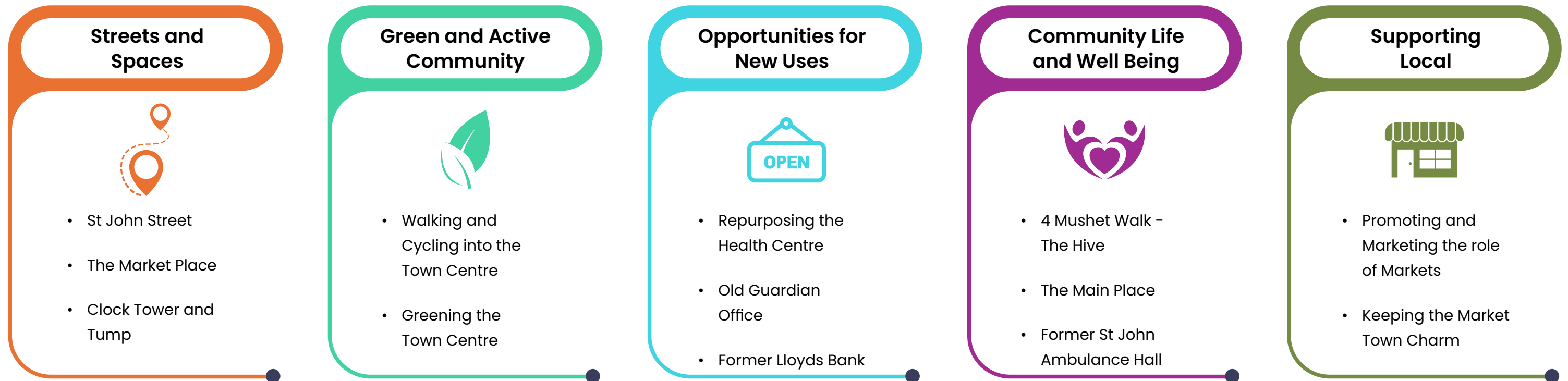


- To support town centre businesses and amenities by providing the right foundations for them that help visitors arrive, explore, spend time and create a memorable experience
- To provide opportunities for people of all ages within the town centre that creates unity, belonging and pride
- To maintain the character and identity of the town centre that appeals to residents and visitors alike
- To create streets for people that supports events, festivals, markets and social life
- To connect the town centre with its neighbourhoods and villages through active travel but also to make it a convenient place for all to visit
- To support the town and the Forest of Dean in reaching its carbon neutral target by 2030

Our Goals

- A place where Forest arts, culture and heritage is thriving
- A resilient town centre which uses local assets, ideas and its location in the Forest to its full potential
- An identity that is memorable and has a quality and warm reputation that is of The Forest
- A place of local well-being that is accessible to all
- Community passion that is about working together and getting things done

Key Themes



Proposals Diagram

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>1 Re-imagining how traffic works in St John Street</p> <p>2 Opportunities for planting and gateway landscaping to direct cars towards Gloucester Rd junction</p> <p>3 Re-imagining movement towards the Gloucester Rd junction</p> <p>4 Opportunity for shop fronts to become cohesive and 'of the place' thorough a shop front design code</p> <p>5 More space outside businesses will allow 'spill out' onto the street</p> <p>6 Opportunity site - Guardian office. Potential to continue run of houses along Newland Street here</p> <p>7 Clock Tower, Market Square and Tump. Opportunity for public realm improvements and creating a 'place' here rather than just being a 'roundabout'</p> | <p>8 Improved planting and green landscaping to create a place people want to spend time in</p> <p>9 Creating a strong link through Mushet Walk</p> <p>10 Opportunity for way finding outside toilet block - creation of an arrival space within the carpark</p> <p>11 Spaces to dwell, have a picnic and opportunity for play along this new green corridor</p> <p>12 Strong links to wider cycle routes</p> |
|--|--|



Streets and Spaces



St John Street

Challenges:

The street is strong in terms of diversity of use, some eating and social spaces but could have a better trading environment.

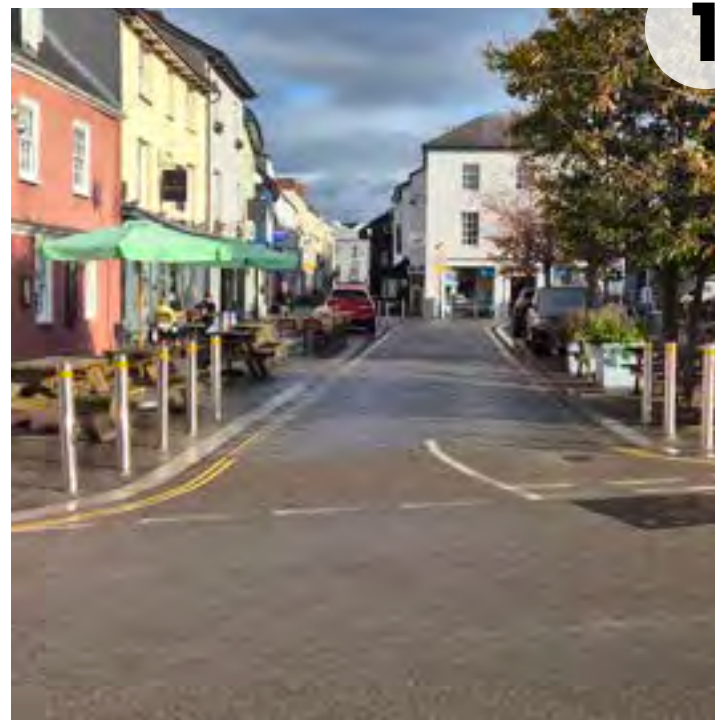
The street is used as a cut through by those vehicles that want to head north-west and avoid the traffic lights at Gloucester Road.

Three ideas were proposed at the public consultation. These are:

1. Reimagined junction
2. Part pedestrian (times) street
3. No change

Idea 1 and 2 would be aided with a street market and programme of events / agreed closures that forms part of a town centre events programme.

The use of pop-up seating, tables, stalls and items to animate the street during closure.



Change the junction of Market Place so vehicles have to negotiate at the junction of Market Place and St John Street to discourage cut-through traffic.

Opportunities to extend pavement space, whilst still providing for on-street parking and also larger vehicles such as loading.

Street trees and planted areas to continue Forest into the town.



Idea 2: Pedestrianisation of the street, with access only for example before 10am and after 4pm. This image of a similar street in Abergavenny shows how this can be achieved. Cars / deliveries would still be able to use the street at certain times and 24 hr emergency access would still be accommodated.

This idea would focus on places to sit out and enjoy the street increasing dwell time and encouraging a pedestrian mainly focused environment.

Street trees and planted areas would be used the green the street and continue Forest into the town. Trees and planting would also boost the biodiversity of the street and create opportunities for sustainable urban drainage.



Idea 3: Leave the street as it is with the same junction off the Market Place.



↑ Note the large portion of the street given over to cars and car parking and small area allocated to pedestrians and footpaths. No opportunities for planting, seating or public realm.

Streets and Spaces



St John Street

- 70% of people at face to face consultation want the street to be pedestrianised between specific hours e.g. 10am to 4pm
- 64% of people who responded through the survey either want

street based improvements that discourage cut-through traffic or pedestrianise the street between 10am and 4pm with 36% wanting no change and to leave it as it is

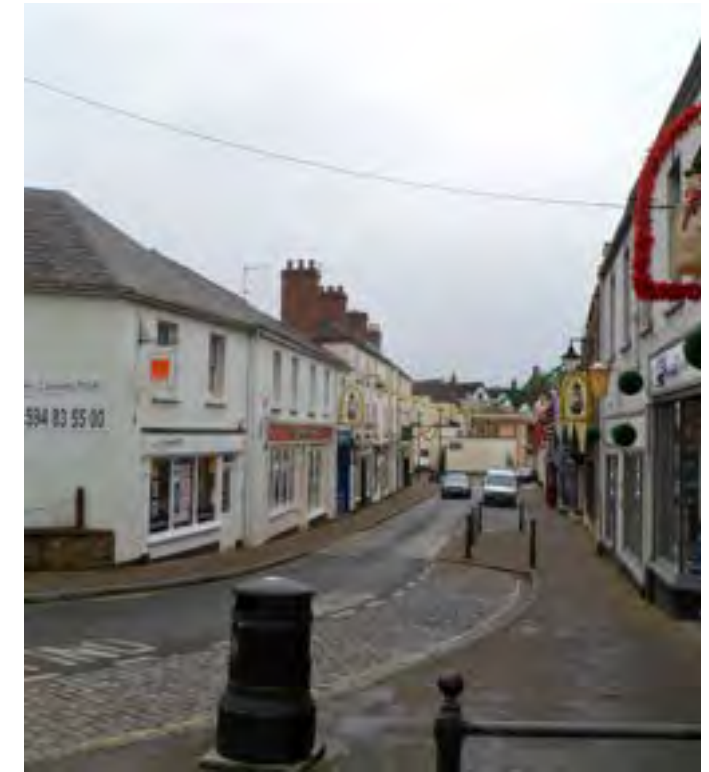
Arising Actions & Recommendations

- To understand business needs within St John Street, specifically servicing and customer patterns across the day and week.
- To organise with Gloucestershire County Council the gathering of traffic data for the immediate highway network so there is an understanding on how vehicles use St John Street and its relationship to the Gloucester Road junction and other roads,
- To discuss with St John Street businesses how a trial scheme could be developed that:
 - Supports their trading environment;
 - Opens opportunities for additional outdoor space;
 - Provides street-based events that leads to increased activity for businesses;
 - Considers how a timed closure could be implemented – the way it is physically closed for example between 10am and 4pm;
 - To agree a way forward.



↑ St John Street (1950's) Note how people and cyclists are using the space as there are fewer cars and more room for people

→ Less animation (today) fewer spaces for pedestrians to gather and dwell



↑ St John Street (2024)

Streets and Spaces



St John Street



Place Making.

Potential resurfacing to reinforce this street is not vehicle focused.

Allowances still made for emergency vehicles etc and loading / cars during permitted times.

Opportunity to create a 'place' which will increase footfall, spend and dwell time.



Community and social facilities.

Opportunity for places to stop, sit and spend time promoting a cohesive community.

Improved opportunities for gathering.

Community focused activities eg markets / spill out stalls could be accommodated.



Active Travel.

Fewer cars will promote more walking leading to a healthier and happier Coleford.

Active travel and cycling will be promoted as the street will be more pedestrian focused.

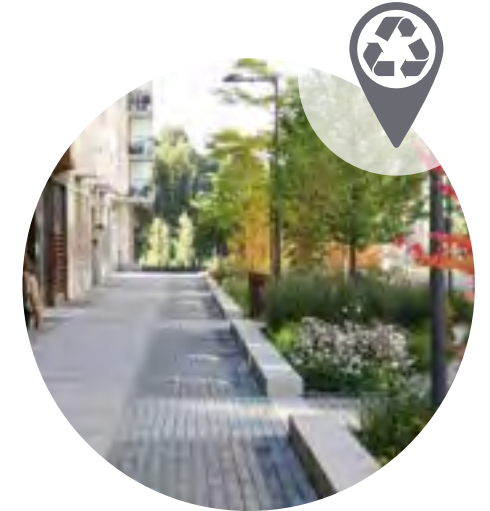
Fewer emissions lead to a more attractive place for shops and shoppers – improved spending.



Biodiversity Net Gain.

Forest into the town – opportunities for planting, rain gardens and trees to bring the forest into the town.

Promote a healthy and biodiverse place to be through native species selection.



Altered road junctions and paving.

New paving will help direct cars to wards the Gloucester Rd junction.

Paving materials could mark out parking bays (which could become market stalls on certain days)

Surface treatment can reinforce pedestrian and cycle priority.

Streets and Spaces



The Market Place

Challenges:

The Market Place is a large roundabout where traffic does not contribute to a positive experience.

Clock tower needs a better heritage setting.

Some long-term vacant properties and new vacancies.

Full potential for regular events, festivals and market is not achieved.

Key ↓

- 1 Rationalised junction to promote cars to continue east
- 2 New paving to reinforce clock tower
- 3 Dedicated pedestrian priority crossing
- 4 More space for shops to 'spill out'
- 5 Increased pavement width
- 6 On street - short stay parking bays
- 7 Dedicated crossing to Mushet Walk
- 8 Placemaking trees - forest into the town
- 9 Opportunity for kiosk
- 10 Planting and strategic landscape reinforces level change
- 11 Opportunity for integrated seating
- 12 New bus stop
- 13 Possible temporary, pop-up structure to provide focus and shade in the Market Place and to link with Clock Tower

Think about the relationship with St John Street?

There is an opportunity to change the junction into St John Street and still retain on-street parking (limited stay).

Introduce new street trees and ground planting which will green the area and create a public place around the clock tower

Create a space in lower Market Place for regular markets, events and activities.



↑ Maintain one-way clockwise traffic flow. Extend the pavement areas on the edges of Market Place specifically the western and northwestern sides.

Streets and Spaces



The Market Place

- 63% of people at face to face consultation want to maintain the one way around the Market Place but with wider pavements
- 53% of people who responded through the survey also want to maintain the one way clockwise traffic around the Market Place but create wider pavements; 31% want no change – leave it as it is

Small footpaths and not →
a lot of space for shops
to 'spill out' into the
street

Opportunity to
rationalise this space
and create a heart
Market Place for
Coleford



Arising Actions & Recommendations

- To understand business needs specifically on the north western edge of the Market Place which has the greatest opportunity for better shop frontages, widening the pavement and public space;
- To discuss with Gloucestershire County Council an affordable and attractive way of widening the pavement area that provides increased public space that is safe, flexible and allows for mobile seating, planting amongst other measures;
- To develop an events, markets and activities programme for the central Market Place that supports the town centre's economy and immediate businesses around the space;
- To present a co-ordinated plan to Market Place businesses that forms part of a trial project which implements temporary changes that are monitored to understand their impact.



Streets and Spaces



Clock Tower & Tump

The Town Council is working up a Heritage Lottery funding application to restore, improve access and tell the story of Clock Tower. The Town Council is keen to bring activity nearby and link with the tower.

The Coleford Clock Tower, a Grade II-listed structure, is undergoing a significant refurbishment project in collaboration with Coleford Town Council. This was originally part of an 1821 church which was demolished in 1882.

The refurbishment aims to preserve and enhance the tower's structural integrity and historical features.

Approved plans include:

- Repairing existing structures, reinstating both internal and external historic elements, and improving the rainwater drainage system to protect the building from water damage.
- Increasing public accessibility, safety enhancements will be made to the narrow internal staircase, and the ground floor will be opened during

planned events. Additionally, the east entrance will be reopened, accompanied by a redesign of the existing war memorial.

- Implementing an accessible first-floor education room, providing space for exhibitions detailing the history of the clock and the tower.

The tower holds significant cultural value for the Coleford community and its refurbishment is seen as a vital step in preserving the town's heritage and ensuring that this iconic landmark remains a source of pride for residents and visitors alike.

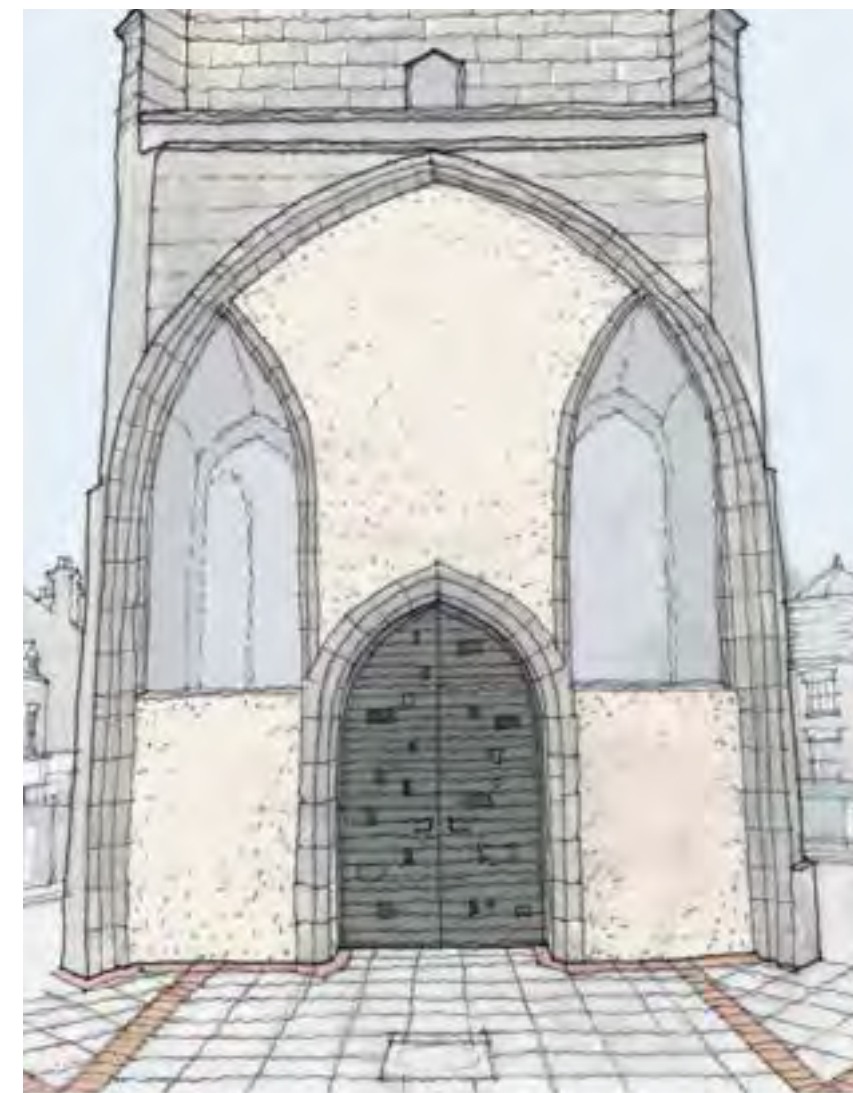
There is also potential for pop ups and temporary building which can help underpin the historic trail.



Proposed North East Elevations of Clock Tower (Source: Dittrich Hudson Vasetti Architects)

Artist impression of the potential new facade of the tower – a new doorway and glass will enhance the clock tower

Artist impression of the inside of the clock tower detailing new stairs providing views out over the market square



Streets and Spaces



Clock Tower & Tump

- 62% of people who responded through the survey are in favour of a covered area outside the Clock Tower;
- 62% of people who responded through the survey are in favour installing the bells in the Clock Tower.

Arising Actions & Recommendations

- To develop an activity plan on how a covered structure could be used across the year and how it could complement the events, markets and activities programme for the central Market Place space;
- To hold initial discussions with the District Council's planning and conservation officers on the suitability of such a proposal;
- To consider the idea of installing bells in the Clock Tower as part of Heritage Lottery Funding bid.



↑ Coleford Clock Tower



Lancet window in the north external wall ↓

↑ Interior view of the second floor belfry with the bell and roof structure visible
↓ Metal balustrade detail to the stair



Green and Active Community



Walking and Cycling into the Town Centre

Challenges faced:

- Short trips still being made by car.
- Climate change is bringing us more intense rainfall and higher temperatures.
- Biodiversity and nature is at risk from development.

The Town Council, with the support of the Forest of Dean District Council, is committed to completing the final section of the active travel route from Milkwall into Coleford town centre. This project aims to improve accessibility and connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists, ensuring a safer, more convenient route that encourages sustainable travel. By finalizing this key link, the town hopes to make it easier for both residents and visitors to travel to and from the centre without relying on cars, helping to reduce congestion and promote a cleaner environment.

The completion of this route will have significant benefits for local businesses and the wider community. By improving footfall in the town centre, local shops, cafés, and other businesses

will see increased activity, strengthening the local economy.

The proposed improvements will include several key upgrades to ensure safety, convenience, and accessibility.

A safe shared route crossing on Old Station Way will be introduced, making it easier for pedestrians and cyclists to cross this busy area without risk. Outside Pyart Court, a new amenity space will provide a welcoming area for people to gather, relax, or take a break during their journey.

The final active travel link into Mushet Walk will be completed, ensuring seamless connectivity between different sections of the route.



Additionally, better cycling facilities and infrastructure will be introduced, making it easier and more appealing for cyclists to use the route, whether for commuting, leisure, or exercise.

Overall, these improvements will create a more vibrant and accessible town, ensuring that Coleford remains a welcoming and dynamic place to live, work, and visit.



← Cycling and walking along the dedicated corridor will bring Active Travel into the town centre

↑ Opportunity to include secure and attractive bicycle stands to promote cycling along the new route



↑ More places to stop, dwell and spend time as a community incorporated with planting

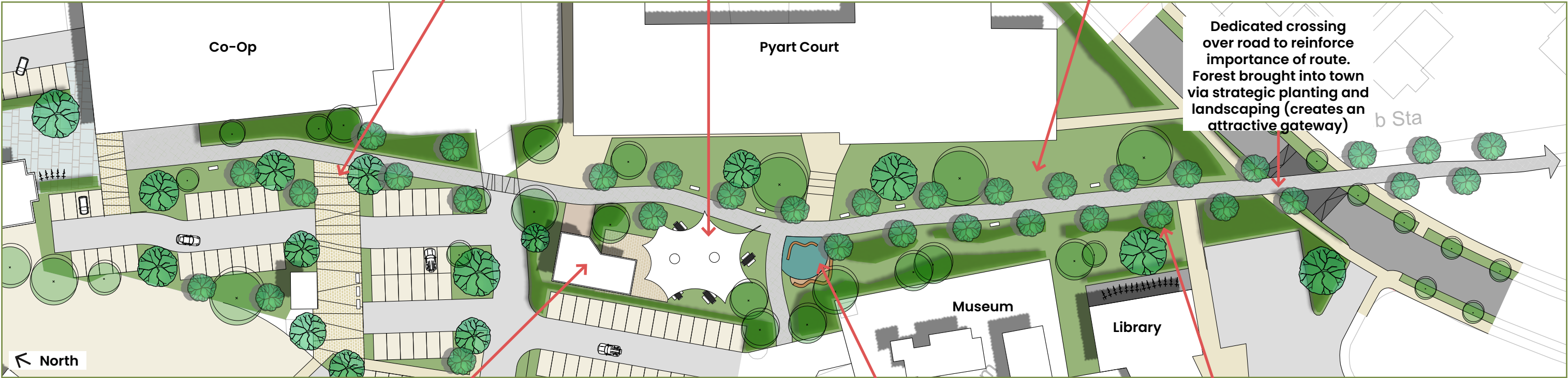
Green and Active Community

Walking and Cycling into the Town Centre



The improved infrastructure will create more opportunities for people to engage with community life, whether by visiting markets, attending events, or simply enjoying the town's amenities.

A well-connected active travel network also contributes to a healthier lifestyle, encouraging people to walk or cycle rather than drive, which in turn supports physical well-being and mental health.



↑ Active travel - green route to town concept plan



A new cycle space could be created outside Pyart Court providing a space for users to leave bicycles and helmets etc. This space could provide lockers and changing places to promote day trips via the cycle route into the town.

Stronger links via green corridor to Pyart Court, opportunity for some informal natural play here. Links to museum and Library here.



A comprehensive wayfinding and signage strategy is also included to promote travel along this stretch as well as signposting further destinations (to Milkwall to Coleford Town Centre)

Green and Active Community



- 27% of people who responded through the survey want more town centre seating;
- 18% want a water refill point;
- 15% want more cycle stands;
- 75% want to see more planting at entrances into the town centre.

Arising Actions & Recommendations

- To explore locations for additional seating (benches and picnic tables) in the town centre;
- To support active travel investments (walking, cycling) in the town centre such as cycle stands/shelters, water refill points and other facilities;
- To develop a town centre greening scheme that identifies civic planting, wildflower areas, growing areas and other landscaping; suggested locations from the public include:
 - Market Place, Pyart Court, Mushet Walk, Boxbush Road, Gloucester Road and Various car parks.
- To consider town centre areas that are prone to flooding:
 - Newland Street / Lower end of Boxbush Road
 - St John Street pooling near White Hart
 - Bank Street
 - Poolway area outside of town centre
- To install heritage information, town maps and event notice boards.
- Some flood work improvement is already underway, with two sites to give protections along Thurstans Brook at the Gloucester Road junction.

Developing a town centre that is green, not only makes it attractive, but also brings some of the Forest character into the heart of the town. It also helps with climate adaptation, reducing surface run-off and providing shade with trees, amongst other benefits. We also want to find ways of harvesting and recycling rainwater in the town centre in order to water civic planting.



↑ Opportunity for water point

← Way finding boards highlighting ecology / biodiversity

↓ Opportunity to bring re forest into the town



Opportunities for New Uses



Repurposing the Health Centre

The Railway Drive Health Centre is likely to become surplus in a few years’ time. As part of the consultation process, NHS Properties will be seeking uses for the building and immediate land when it becomes vacant.

Challenges faced:

- Long standing vacant buildings contribute negatively to the overall town centre experience.
- Town centre facilities need to provide for peoples’ health and well-being.

Community feedback for repurposing includes:

- Child focussed and soft play
- Community crafting and social activities
- A health, therapy and wellness hub
- A convalescence space

Arising Actions & Recommendations

- To discuss with NHS properties on their process to dispose of the building and how options can be considered, and funding can be sought.

Health Centre which is currently located within
↓ the Railway Drive Carpark



Opportunities for New Uses



Former Lloyds Bank

This former bank is on a prominent corner looking onto Market Place and St John Street.

An active use would help confidence in the town centre and spill out into the neighbouring public space in Market Place.

Challenges faced:

- Ownership may be a challenge
- More detailed surveys would be needed of the internals of the building for example
- Some buildings such as banks are complex to re purpose and reuse.

Community feedback for repurposing includes:

- A banking hub or multi-agency banking hub
- An indoor market – space for business start ups
- A bistro or restaurant
- An arts, crafts or performance space
- A gym, yoga studio or fitness centre

Arising Actions & Recommendations

- To work with some interested parties and the building owner to develop their ideas and proposals.



← Internal image of the Grade II Listed bank building

The former Lloyds Bank building – a prominent location adjacent to the
↓ Clock Tower



Opportunities for New Uses



Old Guardian Office

Ideas for the redevelopment of the Guardian Office site that improves this edge of the town centre that brings to life this corner with Bowen's Hill and leads to commercial improvements within Newland Street.

Community feedback for repurposing includes:

- Affordable housing
- Community art space – craft studios, workshops, music and drama, art galleries
- Walkers/cyclists bunkhouse
- Speciality retail space – bike shop, book shop and antiques
- Café and gathering space

Arising Actions & Recommendations

- To share consultation findings with the owner of the Old Guardian Office and explore a way forward for the building.



Front elevation
of existing
building –
opportunity for
redevelopment? →



Approximate
location of
Guardian
Office and site
to rear ↓



Community Life and Well Being



4 Mushet Walk – The Hive

Arising Actions & Recommendations

- Town Council to consider alongside other options for first floor of Mushet Walk building.

The redevelopment of 4 Mushet Walk, known as The Hive, will focus around, fostering creativity, inclusivity, and community engagement.

The area above the Town Council Offices, has the opportunity to become a vibrant creative space that supports young people, the arts, music, and wider community initiatives.

This project will address some key challenges facing the town, including pockets of anti-social behaviour, limited opportunities for young people, and a lack of accessible, functional spaces.

One of the primary motivations behind The Hive is to provide a positive and inspiring environment for young people. Currently, Coleford has few varied provisions for youth in the town centre, leaving many without engaging

activities or spaces to express themselves. By offering a dedicated venue for music, art, and creative projects, The Hive will give young people a place to develop their talents, socialise in a safe setting, and engage with constructive activities that foster personal and professional growth.

The Hive can also serve as a multi-functional hub for the entire community filling a gap in the town.

This could be through workshops, performances, exhibitions, and collaborative projects aimed at fostering new opportunities and community cohesion.

Community feedback for repurposing includes:

- Multi-use space
- Local history centre
- Community and arts hub
- A craft market hall



↑ The Hive sits above 4 Mushet Walk which is the home of Coleford Town Council

Community Life and Well Being



Former St John Ambulance Hall

(Next to District Council Offices)
A practical space for designing, creating and making.

Community feedback for repurposing includes:

- Youth centre and activities
- Volunteer and group hub
- Social and wellness space
- Small business support space
- Arts and crafts space and workshop
- Bike centre and outdoor activities

Arising Actions & Recommendations

- Town Council to consider in its options appraisal for the building.



The Main Place

(Off Old Railway Drive) space for youth groups and individual support.

Community feedback for repurposing includes:

- Skills development and life skills
- Technology and gaming
- Arts, music and drama
- Youth orientated space

Arising Actions & Recommendations

- Town Council to consider in its options appraisal for other town centre buildings.



← The former St John Ambulance Hall



↓ Coleford Library - The Main Place

Supporting Local



Role of Markets

Markets bring vibrancy and visitors to Coleford, and we aim to develop speciality markets that complement, not compete with, existing businesses.

The types of goods and themes that the local community that would attract them to use a market include:

- Local food and produce that does not compete with established town centre businesses
- Craft and handmade goods
- Sustainable market – recycled and upcycled goods
- A monthly farmer's market
- Antiques and collectibles
- Vintage clothing, items and records
- Clothing – general, school uniform, footwear, vintage fashion
- Incorporate live music, workshops, entertainment, demonstrations
- Branding Coleford – the market is a part of the town's story and messaging

Actionable Points could include:

- Engage the community to shape market themes and working with businesses to ensure a positive economic impact.
- Promoting markets widely to attract more visitors.

Coleford's festivals and events bring people together and boost the economy. We'll continue to expand the programme, partner with local artists, and improve event infrastructure to enhance the town's unique charm and identity.

Coleford is set to become a leading example of how markets and events can support community, business, and heritage for a thriving future.



↑ Varied markets could take hold →
selling local and artisan items
etc

↓ St John Street on a
bustling Faddle Fair day



Supporting Local



Market Town Charm

The local heritage and character of the town centre is part of its main appeal.

Working with the District Council we want to develop a practical way to support building owners and tenants by improving their frontages, so that it is attractive to visitors and feels part of the Coleford experience.

Supporting town centre businesses that are established as well as attracting new enterprise is important to our local economy and community

Recent market research conducted by Forest of Dean District Council, states that “Coleford is unique as the only Market Town where Events and Festivals is not only considered a top 5 strength but is also recognised as the foremost strength of the town (65%), by both Coleford and residents and those from other towns.

The independent and artisanal nature of the shops, cafe and bars also contribute to making it uniquely special.

A **shopfront design code for Coleford** could enhance the town’s character by guiding businesses toward high-quality, heritage-sensitive designs. Inspired by best practice from

towns like Ludlow and Cirencester and Coleford itself, this would promote traditional materials, sympathetic proportions, and handcrafted signage to create a cohesive streetscape.

Key elements could include:

- Local fonts inspired by the Forest of Dean’s industrial heritage, with hand-painted or gilded lettering.
- A natural colour palette reflecting the local landscape, avoiding overly bright or modern tones.
- Architectural details such as pilasters, cornices, and traditional awnings to maintain historic character.

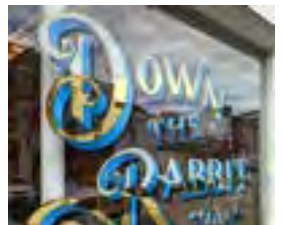
By ensuring consistency without uniformity, the code would strengthen Coleford’s identity.



COLEFORD
QUALITY & *artisan*



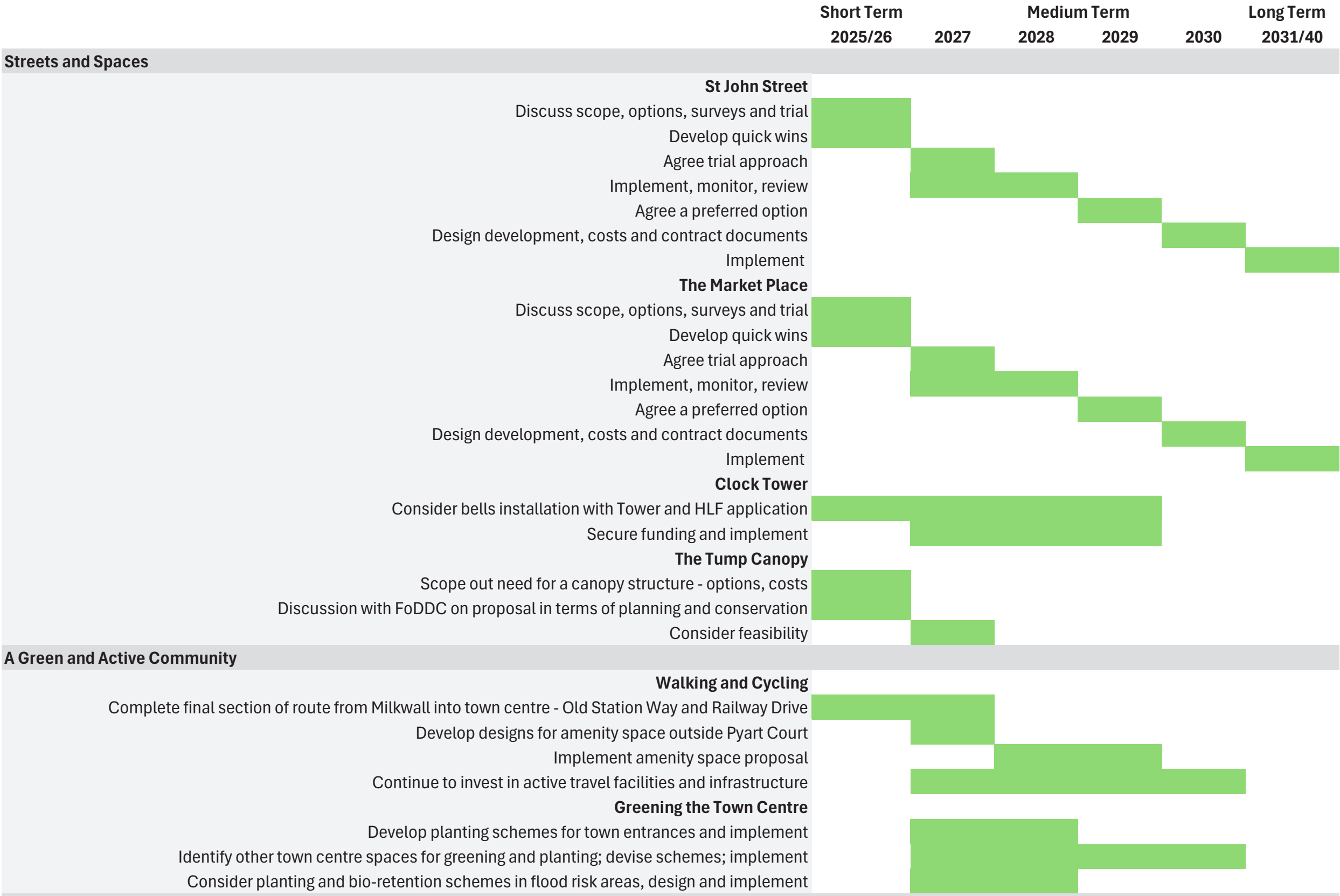
Strong signage, fonts and colours are unique yet cohesive

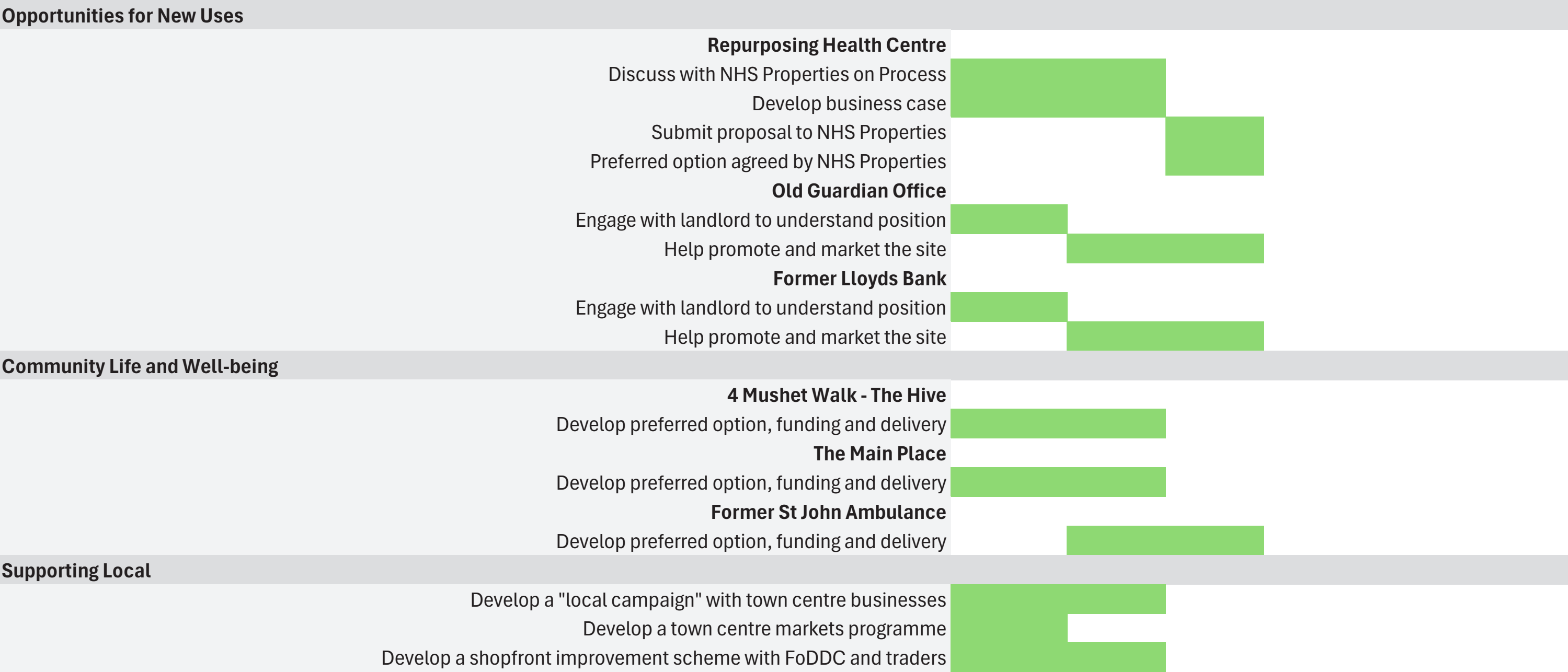


Shopfront Design Code Guide



Project Programme





Measuring Success

The need to understand what success looks like is important when you are enabling and delivering change within a place like Coleford.

It helps to understand the outcomes that you are reaching and the process you need to follow to meet these.

Visualising success is also good for motivation and rally around a common purpose, building trust and relationships.

It also importantly demonstrates to those organisations that are funding projects, that you are attaining your outputs and outcomes and shows a return on investment.

The diagram following, shows examples of outputs and outcomes by theme, which form part of an evaluation framework that a place based partnership would use to monitor progress.



Visualising Success

Type	Town Centre Opportunities				
Theme	Streets and Spaces	Green Active Community	Opportunities for New Uses	Community Life and Wellbeing	Supporting Local
Outputs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total surface area of public realm improved Total surface area of green infrastructure added or improved as a result of support Diversity of town centre uses and activities No of events and activities Pedestrian footfall Vacancy rate Town centre user dwell time Town centre user spend Town centre satisfaction Change in town centre user perception 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linear metres of active travel routes created or improved Total surface area of green infrastructure added or improved as a result of support No of walking/cycling movements Linear metres of active travel routes created or improved Air quality count 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversity of town centre uses and activities Number of community enterprises supported No of businesses receiving financial support No of energy efficient business premises No of businesses receiving business support/coaching/mentoring Diversity of town centre uses and activities Local business growth Vacancy rate No people economically active No of people employed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sqm of new community facilities improved or created No of community building users No of community groups supported No of new community groups formed No of people engaged in training No of people engaged in volunteering No of organisations receiving non-financial support No of people with improved social inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No of businesses receiving financial support No of businesses receiving business support /coaching / mentoring Diversity of town centre uses and activities No of events and activities No of markets per year No of new supply chains developed Local business growth No people economically active No of people employed Vacancy rate Pedestrian footfall Town centre user dwell time Town centre user spend Town centre satisfaction Change in town centre user perception
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater sense of place and local destination Local economic growth and sustainability Improved health and well-being for the local community Increased mobility across the whole community Increased resilience to climate change Increased feeling of community safety Increased sense of welcome and community cohesion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased resilience to climate change Greater levels of local biodiversity Increased mobility across the whole community Improved health and well-being for the local community Local economic growth and sustainability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhanced economic and social well-being Greater opportunities for local enterprise and entrepreneurship Greater sense of place and local destination Increased sense of welcome and community cohesion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater sense of community cohesion and welcome Greater inter-generational working and partnerships Enhanced community/social enterprise activity Improved health and well-being for the local community Increased feeling of community safety Pathways are opened to learning, employment and other activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greater sense of place and local destination Increased sense of welcome d community cohesion Local economic growth and sustainability Capacity within the local community enhanced Greater inter-group working and networking Improved partnership working Organisations are more viable and sustainable

Delivery

Development and Delivery

Relationship of Community Regeneration Plan to CNDP

The current Coleford Neighbourhood Plan (CNDP) is now seven years old and runs until 2026, so Coleford Town Council has decided it needs a Review.. This Plan, which covers the whole Parish, is included in the FoDDC Development Plan used to make planning decisions that will affect the way the settlements grow and flourish. The shape and look of the town, and the way it functions – and could be regenerated – is central. From January 2025 onwards the Review process will start with checking out the vision for Coleford, given changes which have already happened, and potential numbers of housing needing to be planned in. Initial consultation has begun, and as each theme

of the current CNDP is assessed as to how it is working, any improvements needed, or gaps to fill, there will be more opportunities for consultation. The following themes will be addressed: Town Centre; Economy; Housing; Communities and Community Facilities; Historic Environment; Natural Environment; Transport and Infrastructure, and all through a climate change lens. The Steering Group will comprise a mix of Councillors and local residents/workers/ business people of Coleford who will bring together a final draft, submitted through the Town Council, and which it is likely will be voted upon at referendum. CNDPReview@outlook.com is the main contact route.



Delivery of this Coleford Community Regeneration Plan is dependent on a partnership approach where strategic and local organisations bring their own individual objectives into a collective set of proposals that mutually benefit each other and importantly benefits Coleford town centre and its immediate neighbourhoods and villages. The opportunities within this town centre vision and strategy require different mixes of partners, resources and timetable for development and delivery.

The Town Council has taken a lead role in developing the Plan with the support of the respective local authorities and other community group and organisations. From here on, the key success factors for delivery within a town centre setting includes:

- Understanding individual strengths including knowledge, expertise and physical assets and how these can be aligned.
- Communication and co-ordination at both a strategic and implementation level.

- Working to a common design code that ensures consistency in built environment and public space and meets respective climate change and sustainability targets.
- Connecting the needs of local residents with various pathways to learning, health and well-being, physical activity and employment.
- Presenting a unified identity for a place like Coleford that appeals to its residents, business and visitors.

Delivery

Town Centre Operational Management

Town centres are complex areas with multiple stakeholders that need to be effectively managed if they are to function effectively.

Examples of ongoing day-to-day operational functions that are vital to Coleford town centre include:

- Highways, parking, traffic, public transport, highway inspectors, street lighting etc
- Policing, addressing crime and disorder, speeding, vandalism, theft, CCTV etc.
- Public toilets, litter bins, dealing with dog fouling, littering, street cleansing etc.
- Trading standards, licencing, planning consent, enforcement, building regulations etc.
- Grass cutting, managing green space and trees etc.

This list is not exhaustive and other operational functions are also important, including events and business support. The key public agencies involved are Gloucestershire County Council, Forest of Dean District Council, Coleford Town Council, and Gloucestershire.

Market Towns Officer

The Forest of Dean District Council is dedicated to creating a vibrant and sustainable future for our community. Its priorities are centred on fostering thriving communities by empowering and engaging residents, enhancing infrastructure, promoting community well-being, and ensuring social equity. At the time of writing this Plan, the District Council is recruiting a Market Town Officer that will help with the delivery of its Sustainable Economy Strategy, particularly through the Market Towns Regeneration Framework (MTRF).

The postholder will play a key part in driving initiatives that foster thriving and inclusive markets, tidy and accessible towns, and community wealth-building projects. Utilizing recent research on the sentiment, opportunities, and challenges faced by its four Market Towns, you will help implement the MTRF's objectives.

Responsibilities will include collaborating with town councils, businesses, and stakeholders to enhance the retail, leisure, and recreational offerings in our towns, while ensuring effective communication and partnership-building within the community.



Town Centre – Ways of Working

There is also a need to reform a town centre focussed business, so that there is one collective voice for town centre businesses that can coordinate and take action between themselves and importantly be a representative body that works with the Town Council, the District Council and other organisations. This business group should contribute and guide the day to day needs of the town centre as well as shaping some of the physical projects within this plan, in addition to marketing and promotion.

This group or network of businesses needn't be too formalised but will be of real value to the co-development and delivery of initiatives and projects going forward. In time it could become a formally constituted group such as a town team, business/community enterprise, community interest company type model or even formed on the principles of a business improvement district. It does need to reform and be organised in a way that is simple yet effective.

Such a group can therefore be:

- A Voice for Town Centre Businesses – lobbying and campaigning
- Talking amongst businesses – networking, cross-marketing, finding joint solutions

- Collaborating with Coleford Town Council, Forest of Dean District Council, Gloucestershire County Council and other strategic organisations
- Accessing funding once it becomes constituted
- Developing and co-ordinating ideas and action

Its focus could be on:

- Developing and rolling out the Coleford brand and story through a menu of promotional and marketing material
- Communicating to local residents and visitors what's on including promotions, events and activities
- Working with the Town Council on civic pride – planting, spring clean, painting, keep Coleford tidy, pockets of public realm
- Shape commercial frontage design codes that work for businesses, the respective authorities and the wider town centre experience
- Contributing to a year round calendar of events, festivals, markets and activities

Delivery

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- Shape commercial frontage design codes that work for businesses, the respective authorities and the wider town centre experience
- Contributing to a year round calendar of events, festivals, markets and activities
- Help shape some of the physical projects within the community regeneration plan



Delivery

Case Study: Example of Nevill Street Traders Group, Abergavenny

Nevill Street Traders Group is located in Abergavenny town centre and feeds into the wider Y Fenni Business Community group. It was formed, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic with an aim to reopen the town centre for shopping, eating out and other services.

After an initial meeting, an emerging group of retail, food and drink and office sector businesses was set up and organised through a WhatsApp group and held initially monthly meetings. A trading bank account was set up with 25 businesses now contributing £50 a year to the street based campaign.

The range of activities and support the traders' groups gets involved with includes:

- Running social media campaigns on Facebook and Instagram
- Providing daily advice through WhatsApp on commercial waste, compliance, rates and other business issues
- B2B activity and cross-marketing
- Help start-up businesses in the street
- Developing a Litter Free Street initiative with Keep Wales Tidy

- Painting maps cases, bollards and fingerposts
- Developing feather flags and street banners that promote the street and town centre
- Developing an annual Christmas campaign that has involved:
 - ◊ A reindeer trail within the street and wider town
 - ◊ A Christmas Market which after 3 years has 50 stalls, community music stage, charity fundraising and more
- Aligning itself to the annual Food Festival
- Other marketing events, activities and street animation
- Represented on Town Council events committee group



Acknowledgements

The following organisations and people are recognised for the roles in developing this Community Regeneration Plan and other activities that have been delivered through this project:

With thanks to

→ Forest of Dean District Council,



→ Gloucestershire County Council



→ Coleford Town Centre Businesses, and,

→ The Residents of Coleford.



↑ Coleford Market Place and Clock Tower

Coleford Community Regeneration Plan

March 2025



Appendix 1

PLANNING POLICY ANALYSIS



Funded by
UK Government

**chris
jones**

rl.
Roberts Limbrick

Policy, Studies , Data and Place

National Planning Policy (NPPF 2023)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023) sets out the government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The guidance contained in the NPPF relating to the different themes is outlined below:

Achieving sustainable development

The NPPF considers that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has 3 overarching objectives:

- an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy,
- a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities; and
- an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment.
- Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

NPPF seeks to support the government’s

objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, including affordable housing. Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community needs to be assessed.

Building a strong, competitive economy

NPPF requires that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt and set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth.

Ensuring the vitality of town centres

The NPPF stipulates that planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. Planning policies should define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability – by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to changes in the retail and leisure industries.

Promoting healthy and safe communities

The NPPF considers that planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which: promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other.

Promoting sustainable transport

The NPPF encourages that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that: the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed; opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued.

Achieving well-designed places

The NPPF considers good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the

process.

Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

The NPPF encourages the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk etc.

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

The NPPF stipulates that planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity; recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, and the NPPF considers that they should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

Policy, Studies , Data and Place

The policy setting for a place such as Coleford is important. It shows the relationships to national, regional and local agendas, providing strategic direction and alignment. It also shows the strategic opportunities and limitations to a place and its development.

Policy Setting

The planning policy documents relevant to the development of Coleford includes:	
1. National Planning Policy.	4. Emerging Local Plan.
2. National Regeneration Policy and Programmes.	5. The Adopted Neighbourhood Plan for Coleford.
3. The current Local Plan which includes the Core Strategy and the Allocations Plan.	6. Other Local Town Documents.



National Regeneration Policy and Programmes

UK Levelling Up Fund

Announced in the UK Budget in March 2021, the Levelling Up Fund (LUF) will invest in infrastructure that improves everyday life across the UK. Nationally, the £4.8 billion fund will support regeneration and town centre investment, local transport projects, and cultural and heritage assets. Projects should be aligned to and support the Government’s Net Zero goals demonstrating low or zero carbon best practice.

The Levelling Up Fund is a competitive process open to all UK local authorities. Forest of Dean District is identified as a priority place in terms of the need for LUF capital infrastructure support. In June 2021, the District Council submitted a multiple project bid containing three interrelated projects and successfully secured £20 million capital grant support.

The Forest of Dean bid

As from April 2021 the Local Economic Partnerships no longer had the role of administering the Growing Place Fund and in its place local authorities were able to bid from the Levelling Up Fund. The Levelling Up Fund was announced at the 2020 Spending Review to focus on capital investment in

local infrastructure thereby building on and consolidating prior programmes such as the Local Growth Fund and Towns Fund. The fund was initially for smaller transport projects that make a genuine difference to local areas; town centre and high street regeneration; and support for maintaining and expanding the UK’s world-leading portfolio of cultural and heritage assets. The fund aims to invest in public transport, active travel, bridge repairs, bus priority lanes, local road improvements and major structural maintenance and accessibility improvements.

Forest of Dean District Council worked in partnership with Hartpury University and Hartpury College and Cinderford Town Council to prepare the successful bid.

Forest of Dean Capital Project Portfolio

To identify the final three projects included in the successful Levelling Up bid the council invited local organisations to submit expressions of interest (EOI).

A total of 16 EOI’s were submitted and were assessed against the Government criteria to

The bid aims to:

- Build connections across the Forest, helping to join our communities
- Help our local entrepreneurs and homegrown talent find a home in the Forest, growing our economy and providing jobs by developing new, suitable space for businesses
- Provide more and better leisure opportunities, helping people stay active and healthy through new leisure facilities and active travel options
- Provide new further and higher education opportunities so our young people have more choice to get a good education
- From the outset, all 3 project locations were designed with carbon reduction, renewable energy and electric vehicle/bike charging points in mind to help to tackle the climate emergency.

make sure they were eligible before the final bid proposal was pulled together, which the Council believes will have the best chance of success.

Projects that were not included in the Levelling Up bid have been compiled in a new Capital Project Portfolio. This document identifies a pipeline of short, medium and longer term projects and is intended to be a dynamic document.



Local Planning Policy

Current Local Plan

The current Local Plan for the Forest of Dean comprises the Core Strategy (CS) adopted in 2012 and the Allocations Plan (AP) adopted in 2018 which look forward to 2026. They provide policies which identify specific areas of land whether for protection or for development.

Adopted Core Strategy (2012)

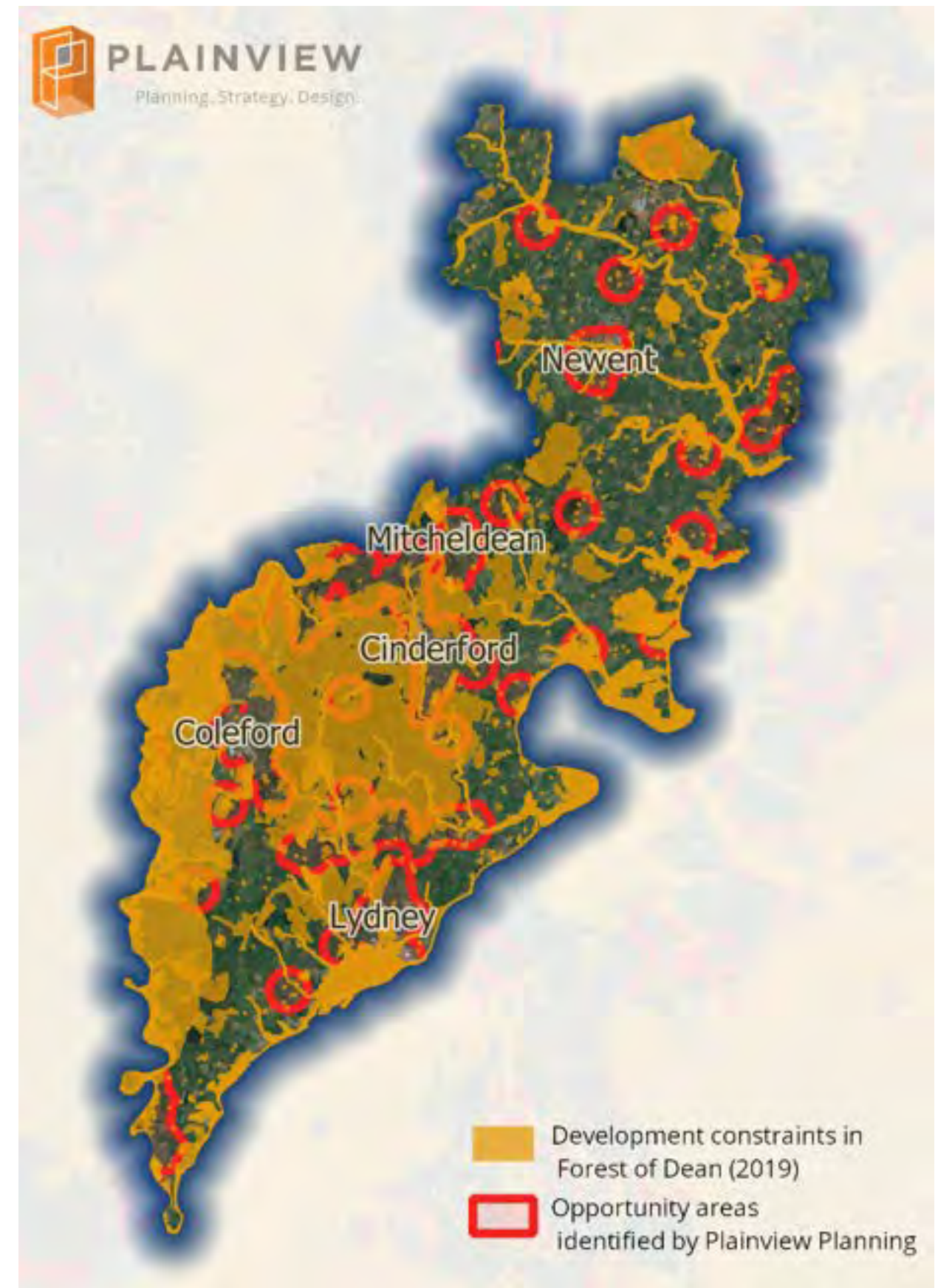
The adopted (2012) Core Strategy is the principal document in the current Local Plan for the Forest of Dean.

The Core Strategy recognises that the four towns within the Forest of Dean lose much retail trade to nearby larger centres such as Gloucester. While the strategy relies on developing the four towns as more self-contained centres it recognises that they need to complement one another while developing. This is especially true of the three southern towns, (Cinderford, Coleford and Newent) which are closely interrelated. It is recognised in the Core Strategy that undue competition between the towns could undermine the strategy and not make the best out of the assets that each of the towns possess, so their different characteristics

must be used in a positive manner. Lydney has greater capacity for change and can offer scope for a wider range of good employment sites than Cinderford, Coleford or Newent. It is considered that Coleford due to its location and nature is best suited to modest growth and further development of its service role.

The strategy is to support Coleford, to increase its range of employment, including tourism enterprises and to widen its service base.

The Core Strategy contains policy CSP.14 that is specific to Coleford and requires 650 new dwellings over the period to 2026 with 40% of those being affordable housing be sought. The policy also seeks to enable 6.8ha of employment land to be developed, including service provision and continue to support the development of tourism facilities or accommodation. Also, to support the continued redevelopment of the town centre including areas for mixed uses and further retailing (up to approximately 1200m² convenience and about 1300m² for comparison goods).



Local Planning Policy

Current Local Plan

Allocations Plan 2006 to 2026 (Adopted June 2018)

The Allocations Plan (AP) shows how the proposals in the Core Strategy will be implemented. The Allocations Plan addresses the scale and sites for housing, employment, shopping and other built development but also areas that need to be protected including the green spaces within settlements and sites of ecological and historical importance.

The majority of the policies in the AP are site-specific, however, there are some which apply across the whole district in certain circumstances, or which apply to certain types of development or alternatively have more general themes. Several policies form a bridge between the CS (strategic) or the NPPF and the local (AP/ NDP) scale.

Within the Allocations Plan there are two main types of allocation, those which cover a particular site for a given use or uses and those which identify a particular area for a specific policy or policies to be applied.

The following sites not within or adjoining settlements are proposed to be allocated:

AP 28 'Christchurch/ Berry Hill Cycle Route' and Coleford/ Berry Hill – Policy to allow and encourage establishment of cycle route(s)

The majority of the allocated sites are located at settlements within their defined boundaries. They conform to the CS in terms of the general scale and location of the development proposed. The main allocations for development are listed below:

- AP 61 'Tufthorn Avenue and Pingry Coleford Farm – Employment sites' (Industrial area inc Old Station Way junction, Tufthorn Ave, Pingry Farm) – employment generating uses – 22.5 ha.
- AP 60 'Land Adjoining Suntory Factory Coleford employment generating uses – 6.7 ha.
- AP 62 'Staunton Road, Employment and Hotel Site – Coleford Employment or hotel – 1.7 ha.

- Development sites allocated for housing at settlements:

- AP 56 'Lawnstone House' Coleford conversion – mixed development including housing – 12 units, 0.2 ha .

- AP 57 Former Courts and Police Station The former courts and current police station site is allocated for community uses, which may include the use of all or part of the site as a place of assembly. In the event that the adjoining dwellings are also proposed to be redeveloped, then new housing (up to one third of the site area) will also be permitted.

- AP 58 'King's Head Public House' Coleford – 12 units, 0.04 ha.

- AP 63 'Land at Poolway Farm, Coleford' Coleford housing – 140 units 5.9 ha.

- AP 64 'Land at Ellwood Road Milkwall' – 48 units, 1.6 ha.

- AP 65 'North Road Broadwell' Coleford

housing – 70 units, 2.4 ha.

- AP 66 'Kings Meade Coleford' AP 66 'Kings Meade Coleford' Coleford housing – 48 units, 1.6 ha.
- AP 61 'Tufthorn Avenue and Pingry Farm – Employment housing – 60 units, 1.8 ha.

Local Planning Policy

Forest of Dean District Local Plan Second Preferred Option July 2022

The Second Preferred Option document sets out the revised (draft) strategy for the Forest of Dean District (FODD) Local Plan. The plan review commenced with a consultation on issues and options in 2019 and another on a preferred strategy in 2020. Following that consultation, the strategy has been reviewed and this revised (2022) version sets out the overall approach for the Local Plan (LP) for the period 2021–41.

In its broadest sense the LP strategy for the FoDD is to meet the needs of the area in the best way possible that achieves the LP's aims and objectives. These include general aims and objectives e.g. reduce the impact of climate change and sets the overall approach for a LP which will provide planning policies and proposals for the FoDD for the period to 2041.

The revised LP strategy provides a direction for the LP and sets its overall approach as well as identifies the main spatial elements which will be taken forward in its proposals. The strategy proposed includes supporting and sustainable mixed-use developments at major villages and towns including Coleford.

The Strategy considers that Coleford (and Cinderford), in particular, are physically constrained and are not able to accommodate large-scale peripheral development.

The emerging strategy suggests the distribution of new housing for the towns and major villages including Coleford whereby the number of 107 units suggested which would be added to the existing commitment of 487 units.

The Second Preferred Option document also includes proposed general policies relating to sustainable development, town centres, economic development and housing development.



Local Planning Policy

Coleford Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) 2017–2026

The Coleford NDP was prepared taking into consideration extensive community engagement and involvement and is effective for the period 2017–2026. It contains the following vision for Coleford:

The Neighbourhood Development Plan Objectives are as follows:

1. To support a dynamic, vibrant and thriving town centre with an accessible, attractive environment for all.
2. To support the existing local economy and promote employment and growth in new businesses. In particular, tourism, by building on Coleford’s position in the Forest using its outstanding built and natural heritage assets.
3. To promote sustainable development to meet local needs in terms of affordability and house types.
4. To enhance local services (public, private and statutory) and community facilities and to support investment in new services where needed.

5. To protect and enhance the unique historic environment of Coleford and to ensure the rich heritage assets are promoted as part of Coleford’s growing role as a visitor destination.
6. To protect and enhance Coleford’s natural environment and green spaces in the town and surrounding parished area for the benefit of wildlife and people.
7. To improve the appearance and function of the town’s gateways and to improve car parking and public transport.
8. To increase the infrastructure such as for education, health, safety and well-being to cater to the increased needs of residents and visitors.
9. To improve accessibility for residents and visitors in all ways from safe pathways or routes, improved signposting, to broadband capacity.

The Neighbourhood Plan contains the following policies:

Policy CTC1 – Site Allocations in the Town Centre

Proposals for development on the five sites

listed below will be supported where they are consistent with the following development principles:

Marshes, Lords Hill. This site has permission for a retail convenience store to improve the range of existing town centre provision.

Lawnstone. This site comprises the land area remaining after demolition of Lawnstone, the Annex to the north and the Bungalow and garden to the south. The site is identified as site 5 on Map 5. The emerging Allocations Plan (Policy AP56) identifies land including Lawnstone as allocated for retail, business and/or community use and for starter homes (flats).

Old Guardian Office. This site is within the town centre Conservation Area with Grade II listing to the frontage onto Newland Street. It is allocated for re-use/redevelopment for mixed town centre uses such as retail/museum/business premises with residential accommodation above with some additional space for development (possibly residential) to the rear.

Kings Head. The Allocations Plan identifies

the King’s Head Public House as allocated for redevelopment and conversion to residential use. The building is within the town centre Conservation Area and is a Valued Heritage Asset.

Police Hub. Policy AP 57 Former Courts and Police Station in the Allocations Plan identifies the former courts and current police station site as allocated for community uses, which may include the use of all or part of the site as a place of assembly.

Policy CTC2 – Site Allocations on the edge of the Town Centre

Proposals for development on the two sites listed below will be supported where they are consistent with the following development principles:

St John Church. This former traditional church building is allocated for community and visitor uses.

Coleford House. This former school building is allocated for a mixed-use conversion or for redevelopment for residential, services and

Local Planning Policy

Coleford Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) 2017–2026 (contd)

tourism uses.	the location, are designed to be proportionate to the location in terms of scale and type n in particular, reflect Coleford’s unique industrial and other built heritage assets.	Policy CC1 – Retaining and Enhancing Community Facilities	Character
Policy CTC3 – Enhancing Coleford Town Centre			
Proposals for development which allow for the enhancement of the public realm within the Town Centre including: shop front enhancements including restoration of traditional shop fronts and signage; provision of public art; introduction of areas of soft landscaping, planting, covered areas and seating to the area around the Clock Tower Improved signage and accessibility including interpretation linked to the town’s heritage.	Policy CE2 – Protecting and Supporting the Development of Local Employment Outside the Town Centre	The Plan will support proposals that will safeguard and/or enhance the community facilities in the neighbourhood area. Proposals which enhance existing community facilities will be supported.	New development will be required to respond positively to the local context, be in conformity with the Forest of Dean District Council Residential Design Guide, Allocations Plan policies AP4 and AP5.
Policy CTC4 – Supporting Town Centre Retail and Service Provision	The Plan supports the retention and the improvement of the economic well-being of the neighbourhood area. Proposals to improve or expand existing employment-generating uses will be supported when they: are sensitive to the distinctive character of the location; are designed to be proportionate in terms of scale and type; would not have an adverse impact of the natural environment and biodiversity; and are designed to mitigate any traffic impact or congestion	Policy CC2 – Shops and Services in the Arc of Settlements within Coleford Parish but outside the Town Centre	Policy CNE2 – Green Ring
Proposals for new retail and service facilities which enhance the vitality and viability of the existing town centre of Coleford.		Proposals to enhance existing convenience shops and service uses will be supported when they do not have a detrimental impact on residential amenity, the natural or historic environment or public access to the facility concerned.	The Neighbourhood Plan identifies a Green Ring to protect the historic and natural setting of Coleford.
Policy CE1 – Supporting Tourism Development	Policy CE3 – Improved Connectivity	Policy CC4 – Maintaining the Separation and Distinctive Identity of Settlements	Policy CNE3 – Green Infrastructure
Proposals which expand and/or maintain the existing tourism and related facilities as part of the area’s economic development and growth will be supported provided that they: are sensitive to the distinctive character of	Subject to such proposals complying with other development plan policies new residential, employment and commercial development will be supported where it incorporates new digital connectivity or improves the existing provision.	Development in all of Coleford town’s surrounding settlements should seek to retain and, where possible, reinforce the distinct identity of the settlement(s).	Development proposals should safeguard protected species and habitats. Subject to other development plan policies development proposals will be supported where they safeguard protected species and habitats.
		Policy CHE1 – Protecting and Enhancing Local	Policy CITPA1 – Transport and Movement
			Subject to other development plan policies development proposals will be supported where they can be satisfactorily incorporated within the existing highway network or where appropriate mitigation works can be undertaken.

Local Planning Policy

Coleford Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) 2017–2026 (contd)

Policy CITPA2 – Through Routes and Gateways

Development proposals which would have adverse impacts on through routes or gateways will only be supported where they: Incorporate appropriate design of new building sympathetic to the streetscape and local character as defined in the character assessment for the area (Enhance landmark buildings/ views of landmark buildings; Use a mix of appropriate low maintenance, hard and natural landscaping; Improve safety, ease of access and environment for pedestrians and cyclists; Review use of signage and street furniture to reduce clutter and, where possible, help reinforce the identity and distinctiveness of the area; Incorporate public art; Opportunities for developer contributions could be used.

Policy CITPA3 – Local infrastructure for health and well-being

The Neighbourhood Plan supports the development of a primary care health centre and the Forest of Dean hospital in the neighbourhood area.

Monitoring and review reports are carried out every year since 2018.



Local Planning Policy

Forest of Dean Monitoring Project (2021–2022)

This document is the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for the Forest of Dean District Council and covers the period of 1 April 2021 through to 31 March 2022. The main purpose of this report is to review the extent to which policies within the Local Plan are being successfully implemented, and how effective this implementation may be in meeting stated policy goals. This report will monitor the implementation of the Core Strategy and Allocations Plan, and the progress of emerging and completed Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs).

Policy CSP14: Coleford is reviewed in the AMR. The AMR states that there has been no major or significant applications in Coleford for this period. Applications have mainly been for single dwellings, some of which have been refused, as well as a refusal on an outline for 5 dwellings at Coalway. In terms of housing there is a target of 650 dwellings over plan period and of the 58 houses completed to 31 March 2021 all were affordable.

The following table taken from the AMR provides details of the class uses within the town of Coleford between 2020 and 2022 for retail and commercial offer (use classes):

Uses Classes	2020	2021	2022
E	93	92	93
F.I	3	3	3
Sui Generis	30	31	30
Total Units	126	126	126

The vacancy rate of retail units in the town centre in 2022 was 12 units which 8.6% of the 138 units surveyed, the same number as when surveyed in 2021.

Other Local Documents

Town Benchmarking, Coleford, People and Places Insight 2020

Coleford Town Council commissioned People and Places Insight Limited to undertake a Town Benchmarking Review, First Time Visitor Review and Disability Access Audit in the Town Centre. The detailed results of the Benchmarking Review can be found in the following report whilst the Executive Summary provides the headline findings.

Commercial Offer

- 46% of the occupied ground floor commercial units in Coleford are A1 Shops
- 75% of the A1 Shops mainly sell Comparison Goods which is 7% lower than the National Small Towns average.
- 80% of the A1 Shops are unique to Coleford, 19% higher than the National Small Towns average.
- 8% of the ground floor units were vacant at the time of the Audit in October 2020 which is 1% lower than the National Small Towns average.

- Over half of the Businesses surveyed have 'Changed opening hours' as a result of Covid-19 and will be continuing with this change.

60% of the respondents generally visit Coleford Town Centre for 'Convenience Shopping' which is 16% higher than the National Small Towns average.

Car Parking

- On the Market Day 29% of all car parking provision was vacant, similar to the National Small Towns (27%) figure. On the Non-Market Day vacancy rate increased to 37%, 4% higher than the National average.

Town Centre Use

- Replicating the National Small Towns trend of frequent visitors 85% of Town Centre Users travelled into Coleford at least once a week.
- 71% of Town Centre Users surveyed travelled into Coleford by Car which

is 16% higher than the National Small Towns figure.

- 87% of Town Centre Users stayed in Coleford for less than 2 hours, 8% higher than the National Small Towns average.

POSITIVE

Visit Recommendation

82% of Town Centre Users would recommend a visit to Coleford, 10% higher than the National figure.

Local Customers

Following the National pattern over three quarters of Businesses reported that 'Potential local customers' were a positive aspect of operating in Coleford whilst over half stated that 'Sense of local community'.

Potential Tourist Customers

69% of Businesses stated that 'Potential tourist customers' were a benefit of trading from

Coleford, 33% higher than the National Small Towns figure.

Lack of Crime

84% of Businesses reported that they had not suffered from any crime over the last 12 months.

Communication

88% of Businesses rated Communication with the Town Council as either 'Good' or 'Very Good'

Customer Spend

Perhaps highlighting the regular use of the Town Centre by locals for Convenience Shopping, 35% of respondents stated that on a normal visit they spend £10.01-£20.00 in Coleford with 32% spending £20.01-£50.00, 6% higher than the National average.

Commercial Offer

The commercial offer in Coleford is rated highly with 59% of Town Centre Users rating 'Retail Offer-Independent Shops', 43% 'Retail Offer-Supermarkets' and 49% 'Access to Services' as

Other Local Documents

Town Benchmarking, Coleford, People and Places Insight 2020 (contd)

positive aspects of Coleford.

Physical Appearance

‘Physical Appearance’ (47%) and ‘Cleanliness’ (52%) were considered positive aspects of Coleford by Town Centre Users.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT

Footfall

Footfall in Coleford on the Market Day, 39 persons per 10 minutes, is significantly lower than the National Small Towns average (110). On a Non-Market Day, the Coleford footfall figure (29) is a 72% reduction on the National Small Towns average (105).

Business Confidence

38% of Businesses reported that their Profitability had ‘Decreased’ from March 2019 to March 2020. In regard to Business Confidence, three quarters of respondents indicated that over the next 12 months their Turnover would ‘Decrease’, 56% higher than the National Small Towns average.

Transport

48% of Businesses stated that ‘Transport Links’ were a negative aspect of operating from Coleford, 33% higher than the National Small Towns average.

Car Parking

43% of Businesses and 36% of Town Centre Users stated ‘Car Parking’ was a negative aspect of Coleford. Qualitative comments highlighted the want for ‘Free Parking’.

Public Toilets

27% of Town Centre Users stated ‘Public Toilets’ (27%) were a negative aspect of Coleford.

Physical Appearance

Qualitative comments illustrated that Town Centre Users felt that the appearance of some buildings within Coleford needed to be improved.

Empty Units

39% of Businesses reported that ‘Number of Vacant Units’ was a negative aspect of Coleford.

Retail Offer

Despite quantitative figures highlighting that Town Centre Users were happy with the ‘Retail Offer’ a large number of qualitative comments indicated the need for this to be improved with both better independent and named stores. Specific reference was made in terms of attracting clothes shops to the town.

Leisure Facilities/Events

43% of Town Centre Users rated ‘Leisure Facilities’ as a negative aspect of Coleford, 16% higher than the National Small Towns average.

Town Centre Users indicated that they would like more events based in Coleford.

Other Local Documents

Forest of Dean Town Centre Audit 2021/22

The annual monitoring report made the following conclusions.

People and Footfall

The footfall data shows a clear indication of how the High Street is recovering from the national restrictions imposed during the Covid-19 pandemic. The analysis shows a clear indication of the rate at which the footfall returned to the High Street following these restrictions which ended in July 2021 with some months' figures doubling.

The data collected shows a steeper increase in footfall return in 2021/22 compared to the more cautious return in the previous period. The average visit length for the High Street was between 20-40 minutes indicating the main use of the High Street was targeted shopping. It is noted that the tracked area for footfall included both supermarkets (Co-Op and Lidl). This is a trend that is consistent throughout the 4 Forest of Dean market towns.

Whilst Coleford shows a lower level of footfall than Cinderford and Lydney trend lines suggest that in the subsequent period, this may vary.

Based on a monthly recording for car parking, the average ticket sales for Coleford between June 2021 and June 2022 have increased by 30%.

Diversity and Vitality of Place

The town centre's retail and commercial offer has changed since 1999 and this is consistent with national trends and the variety of ways consumers choose to shop, providing a level of resilience for the town of Coleford.

The District Council has compared 2021 & 2022 data and the results are very similar with very few variations.

Coleford's High Street has retained a strong presence of independent and non-national chain retailers with only 3.9% of the High Street being occupied by national chains.

Coleford saw a number of its annual events returning to the High Street, with 13 events licensed this year.

Coleford Town Centre has a strong culture and leisure offer. This collaborated with the Active Lives &2QU published in 2017 which indicated the Forest of Dean District has a strong participational relationship between the arts and cultural projects.

The number of reported crimes has decreased over the past year with an average of 11 crimes per month compared to 17 per month in the year previous. Mirroring last year's data, violence and sexual offences and anti-social behaviour are the most common types of crime.

Economic Characteristics

The vacancy rate for 2021/22 has remained the same as the previous year with 12 of the 138 vacant commercial units (at the time of the audit), compared to 13 in the 2019/20 period. This equates to a 8.6% vacancy rate which is also favourable when compared to the National High Streets Vacancy figure of 14% (source: Local Data Company).

Coleford Community Regeneration Plan

March 2025

2023-24

1. 1 no. Project Signage Strategy



Coleford Signage Strategy

Coleford Town Council

March 2024



**Funded by
UK Government**

Chris Jones

01873 880666

chris@chrisjones.studio

15 Nevill Street

Abergavenny

NP7 5AA

www.chrisjones.studio



@chrisjonesplace

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1 Purpose

The purpose of the Coleford Signage Strategy is to audit existing visitor attraction and town centre information and wayfinding signage, identify areas for improvement and new signage.

The strategy needs to present an integrated approach to town signage that signs visitor attractions to and from the town centre, so wider economic benefits are generated from linked activity.

2 Study Process

The signage strategy has centred on a number of tasks and activities:

- Desktop appraisal of Gloucestershire County Council tourist signs guidance;
- Desktop review of respective visitor attractions identified by Coleford Town Council;
- Physical audit of visitor attraction signage and town centre information and wayfinding signage, undertaken on the 21st and 27th February 2024;
- Discussions with Gloucestershire County Council on signage audit findings;
- Follow up discussions with respective visitor attractions;
- Writing up signage strategy.

Coleford Town Council has also asked that Chris Jones Regeneration discuss, negotiate and agree the location of some town centre signage within the four respective sites of Clearwell Caves, Puzzlewood, Perrygrove and Hopewell Colliery.

3 Audit of Existing Signage

On the 21st and 27th February, a physical site audit was undertaken of:

- Existing visitor attraction signage – advanced, gateway, repeater and directional;
- Town centre signage – arrival, orientation and directional.

Visitor Attractions Signage – Advanced and Directional

Guidance on Tourist and Leisure Facilities Traffic Signs

Gloucestershire Tourism Signs Guidance Notes

Responsibility for approving 'Tourism' traffic sign applications within Gloucestershire rests with Gloucestershire County Council (GCC). Although it may seem a simple matter to have a sign put up near your business, please remember there is road safety, quality and 'sign pollution' issues to assess before an application is approved. There is an application process, and your application will be judged against a range of eligibility criteria, as well as against road safety and traffic management factors.

Brown and White traffic management signposting is not allowed for advertising purposes; they are only intended to help visitors from outside the local area to find defined classes of tourism facilities easily and safely. These signs should supplement rather than duplicate information already provided on existing directional signs.

An eligible tourism facility is defined, for this purpose, as:

“a permanently established destination or facility of recognised quality and/or importance that attracts or is used by visitors from outside the local area, and which is open to the public without prior booking during its normal opening hours.”

Signs will be considered from the most appropriate road and for rural facilities will not occur further than five miles away unless there are exceptional circumstances. There must be continuity of signing from the first sign to the destination.

The decision will be final, and will relate to:

- Visual impact, traffic management and road safety issues
- The number of other attractions qualifying for signs in the area • The location of the facilities

There is a range of standard symbols available, which represent the most common types of tourist attraction. Symbols are not obligatory, but when a facility requires more than one sign one standard symbol must be used on all its signs to ensure continuity.

Facilities will be signed individually where appropriate. However, subject to visual impact and traffic management considerations generic (e.g. ‘High Street Hotels’) or shared signing will be used if there are a number of facilities along a particular route or in one area to avoid over proliferation of signs.

Eligibility criteria for the tourism signs is found in the appendices to this report.

The Visitor Attractions

These are the visitor attractions within and on the edge of Coleford town.

Puzzlewood

Puzzlewood, located south of Coleford is a famous woodland used in many films such as Star Wars and the Merlin series. It has a free car park that can hold approximately 70 cars. There is an on-site café as well as three separate places to stay that accommodate four, four, and eight people respectively. There is a network of paths with barriers for visitors as to not ruin the landscape.

<https://www.visitdeanwye.co.uk/things-to-do/puzzlewood-p1309611>

Perrygrove Railway

Perrygrove Railway, located a mile south of Coleford, is an attraction aimed at children under the age of 10. It has multiple play areas and offers train rides on its miniature train. Entry costs £10. There is a car park, an on-site café that uses local produce, toilets with disabled access, and a picnic site.

<https://www.perrygrove.co.uk/>

Clearwell Caves

Clearwell caves situated about a mile and a half south of Coleford is a network of old iron mines turned into a tourist attraction. They offer guided tours and a caving experience. Refreshments are sold on site. There is free parking and toilets with disabled access.

<https://clearwellcaves.com/>

GWR Railway Museum

A small museum with a bookshop, car park and railway shop that offers guided tours and train rides.

<https://www.gwrmuseumcoleford.co.uk/>

Dark Hill Ironworks

An old, abandoned ironworks credited with making the first Tungsten Steel. There is an unsignposted car park, but no other facilities.

<https://www.strollingguides.co.uk/books/gloucestershire/walks/darkhill.php>

Hopewell Colliery

Hopewell colliery is a former freemine that offers guided tours. It has an on-site cafe, a well signposted car park and a gift shop. The mine is still operational to those that have a freemining license.

<https://www.hopewellcolliery.com/>

Scarr bandstand

The Scarr bandstand is an amphitheatre style bandstand that is over 100 years old. There are no facilities on site. <https://www.visitdeanweye.co.uk/things-to-do/scarr-bandstand-p1356151>

Green Acres Campsite

Green Acres Campsite is a campsite north of Coleford that accommodates tents of a variety of sizes, motorhomes and caravans as well as a cabin to stay in. There is an on-site café, toilets, a heated shower complex, fire pit hire, children's play area, a dishwashing area, laundry on site and chemical waste disposal.

<https://greenacrescampsite.co.uk/facilities/>

Bracelands Campsite

Bracelands Campsite is located northeast of Coleford and has a variety of tent pitches and can accommodate motor homes and caravans. There are glamping pods to stay in, an on-site café, book swap, toilets and showers, Wi-Fi, a picnic area and a regularly visiting pizza van. <https://bracelandscamping.co.uk/facilities>

Forest Holidays

Forest Holidays are a set of luxury accommodation of varying sizes located around Coleford. Each accommodation has a hot tub, shower, toilet and beds. There are 120 cabins on site in total. On site there is a play area, restaurant/bar/café, and a shop.

<https://www.forestholidays.co.uk/locations/gloucestershire/forest-of-dean/>

Forest Hills Golf Club

A golf club and wedding venue, located on the outskirts of Coleford with a clubhouse that has two bars, a restaurant, toilets, Wi-Fi and room hire, it has a clubhouse, pro shop and driving range and the PGA holds regional events there such as the Forest Classic and attracts golfers from Monmouthshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire

as well as from Bristol and Cardiff. <https://foresthillsclub.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Forest-Hills-Golf-Club-brochure.pdf>

<https://foresthillsclub.co.uk/>

Bells Hotel and Country club

Bells Hotel and country club is located on the outskirts of Coleford. It has electric car charge points, hotel rooms, toilets, a restaurant and a golf course.

<u>Attraction</u>	<u>Toilets</u>	<u>Café</u>	<u>Car Park</u>	<u>Gift Shop</u>	<u>Other</u>
Puzzlewood	*	*	*		Accommodation
Perrygrove Railway	*	*	*		
GWR Railway Museum	*		*	*	
Darkhill Ironworks					
Hopewell Colliery	*	*	*	*	
Scarr Bandstand	*				
Green Acres Campsite	*	*	*	*	Accommodation
Bracelands Campsite	*	*	*	*	Accommodation
Forest Holidays	*	*	*	*	Accommodation
Forest Hills Golf Club	*	*	*	*	Competition Golf course, Wi-Fi, Room Hire
Bells Hotel and Country Club	*	*	*		Restaurant, Electric Car Charging, Accommodation
Clearwell Caves	*	*	*	*	

Audit of Existing Visitor Attractions Signage

The following visitor attractions are fully advanced and directionally signed within the Coleford town area:

- Clearwell Caves
- Perrygrove
- Dean Heritage Centre

The following visitor attractions are partially signed within the Coleford town area:

- Puzzlewood
- Hopewell Colliery
- GWR Railway Museum

Visitor accommodation that are signed:

- Bells Hotel
- Forest Holiday campsite

The following maps and tables show the existing visitor attraction signage on key approaches and in and around the town centre.

Requests for Additional Visitor Attraction Signage

The Town Council has asked that the following be reviewed:

- Darkhill Ironworks
- Scarr Bandstand

Having reviewed the size of these visitor attraction, we do envisage these to meet the Gloucestershire County Council eligibility requirements specifically visitor numbers and the lack of associated visitor infrastructure to support visits.

Staunton Road (A4136) Approach

Arriving on the Staunton Road from the west, Clearwell Caves is signed with an advanced sign at the junction with the B4228, but the other attractions of Perrygrove, Puzzlewood, Hopewell Colliery and the Railway Museum are not signed. A directional sign at the junction is also provided.

Staying on the A4136 road, the next visitor amenity to be signed is Forest Holidays campsite which has a directional sign at the junction with Grove Road. There is an additional advanced sign on Grove Road, 0.25 miles from the turn into the campsite. A double sided directional sign is situated at the junction with the campsite access road.

At the same junction with the B4228 is The Gorse Road which has a gateway sign installed to on the rear of a large sign plate. The visitor attractions sign is relatively small and hard to assimilate. There is also a need to cut back some of the tree planting as it is starting to obscure the sign.

Approaching Coleford on the A4136 from the East and Edge End, you come to a junction with the B4028. There is an advanced sign, followed up by a directional sign

at the junction. Perrygrove and Puzzlewood are signed here to the B4028 but Puzzlewood, Hopewell Colliery and the Railway Museum are not signed. Forest Holidays caravan and campsite is signed, informing drivers to stay on the A4136 westbound.

B4208 Approach

At the Mile End approach on the B4208, there is gateway sign prior to Forest Hills Golf Club. There is a visitor attractions sign plate with symbols which is of the right size to the scale of sign and highway.

B4332 and Speech House Road

The B4332 road services those attractions on the eastern edge of the town, specifically Hopewell Colliery. The only sign for Hopewell Colliery is at the junction with Speech House Road with no continuity signage on this road, nor a directional sign into the Hopewell Colliery site. An advanced sign would be required at the junction of the B4028 and B4332, directing visitors onto the B4332.

B4228 (South)

The B4228 to the south of Coleford town centre is a key axis for a number of visitor attractions being Perrygrove, Puzzlewood and Clearwell Caves. The road draws visitors from the south, including A48 corridor as well as those coming through Coleford town centre.

At the junction with Tufthorn Avenue, there is a large advanced directional sign that on the main sign plate has Puzzlewood and Clearwell Caves, with Perrygrove as a lower plate that has been separately installed.

As you approach Perrygrove, there is a double-sided directional sign onto their site.

As you approach Puzzlewood there is no directional sign, albeit the car park and entrance are visible from the road. There is an opportunity to investigate a double-sided directional sign on the Puzzlewood verge side of the road.

As you continue southbound on the B4228, prior to the junction with Lambsquay Road, there is an advanced directional sign to Clearwell Caves. From the opposite direction, there is an advanced directional sign to Clearwell Caves, with Puzzlewood and Perrygrove signed straight on. The Railway Museum and Hopewell Colliery are not signed. There is a further directional sign to Clearwell Caves, but this is past the junction down Lambsquay Road. On approaching Clearwell Caves car park there is a double facing directional sign onto the site.

Newland Street Approach

The Town Council has asked that Whitecliff Ironworks be considered for signage. The site is some 800 metres from the town centre. It has no off-street car park, no toilet provision or other visitor infrastructure.

If it was to be signed it would need to be added to the visitor attraction inventory with advanced and directional signage from the junction of High Street and Newland Street. We would not expect this attraction to meet the Gloucestershire County Council eligibility criteria, but the Town Council could look at providing some local signage.

B4228 (North)

To ensure equity across campsite/caravan site providers, the Town Council has asked that Greenacres campsite to the northwest of the town be considered, as there is no existing signage. If there was signage it would be at the junction of the B4228 and Scowles Road, with a final directional sign opposite the entrance to the site. A black and white directional sign could be provided at this junction.

On Site Marketing Signage

The Town Council has also asked the signage strategy to consider opportunities to mutually promote and market the town centre and some of its key visitor attractions.

The visitor attractions audit has identified gaps in the advanced and directional highways signage which need to be addressed by the respective authorities.

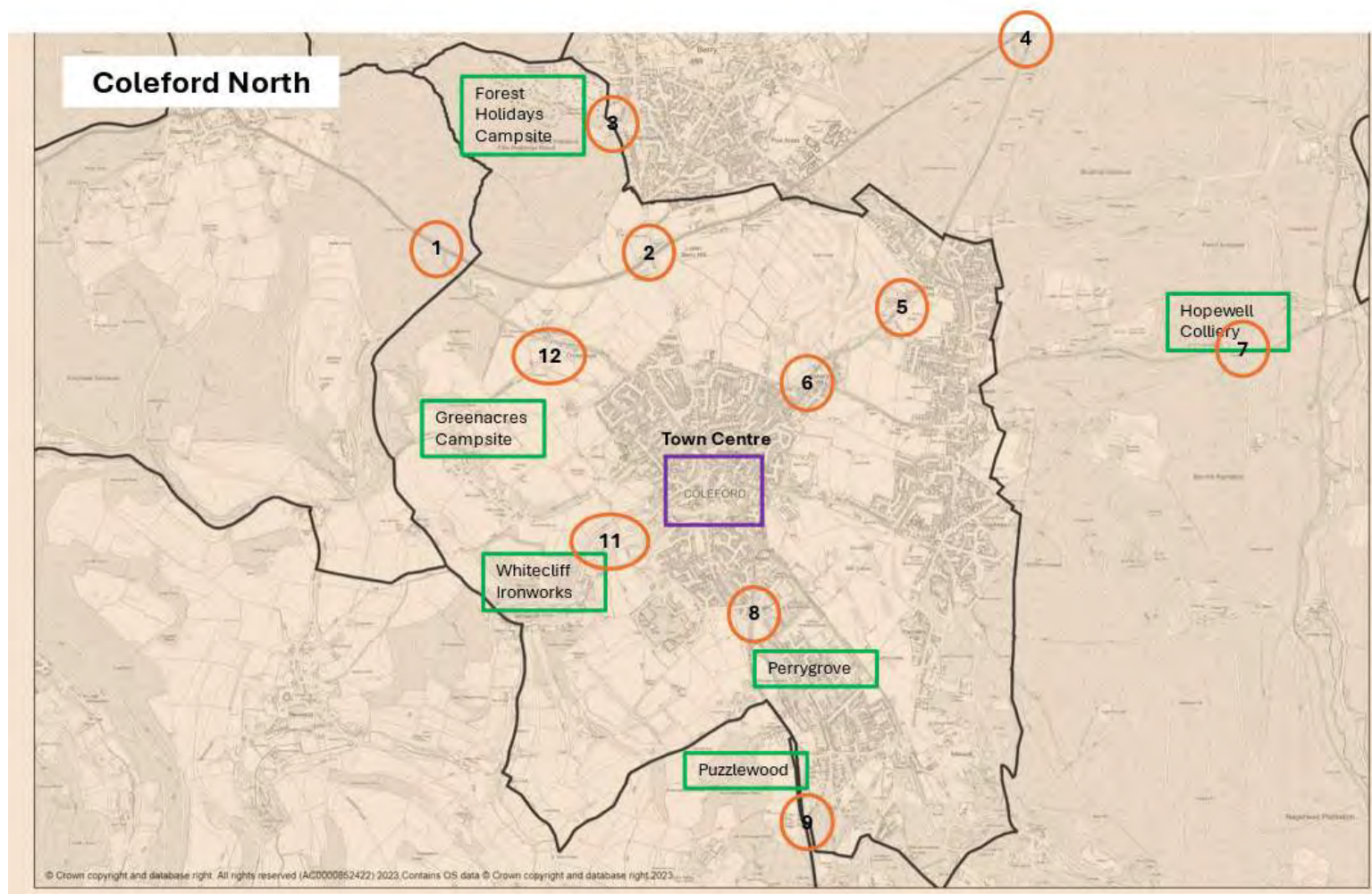
The additional Town Council request is to identify locations within the visitor attraction sites that encourage linked activity with the town centre. These could be near the on-foot visitor entrance or within the car park area. These would link in with visitor information points in Coleford town centre so that there is an integrated marketing campaign that talks across the Coleford destination area. An example of directional and information based signage is shown below. Coleford Town Council would need to liaise with FoDDC on their market insight research work, as there is some overlap on understanding the Unique Selling Points for Coleford, use of colours, and typeface, amongst other items. The sign would be post mounted with agreement from the respective attraction owner.

Image 1 – Example of Town Centre Marketing Signage






Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

Figure 1 – Coleford Town – Central and North









Source: Parish Maps Online, Coleford Town Council license




Location No.	Location Description	Image	Notes
1	Staunton Rd (A4136) Junction with B4228		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perrygrove, Puzzlewood and GWR Museum, Whitecliff Ironworks. Hopewell Colliery not signed ▪ Sign damaged on bottom right hand corner; needs cleaning
1	Staunton Rd (A4136) Junction with B4228		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Puzzlewood and GWR Museum, Whitecliff Ironworks, Hopewell Colliery not signed
2	A4136 with Grove Road		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Double sided directional sign to Forest Holidays campsite

Location No.	Location Description	Image	Notes
2	The Gorse		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undergrowth could be cut back Brown and white sign not large and hard to assimilate for driver
3	Grove Road		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nothing to report Could be a need for repeater signs before the advanced directional
3	Grove Road		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Double sided directional sign Nothing to report




Location No.	Location Description	Image	Notes
4	A4136 with B4028		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Puzzlewood, GWR Museum, Whitecliff Ironworks and Hopewell Colliery not signed
4	A4136 with B4028		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Puzzlewood, GWR Museum, Whitecliff Ironworks and Hopewell Colliery not signed
5	B4208 Mile End Rd approach		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town gateway and visitor attraction icons

Location No.	Location Description	Image	Notes
6	B4432 and Speech House Road		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Dean Heritage Centre signed
7	Speech House Road to Hopewell Colliery		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of repeater signs ▪ No directional signs into Hopewell Colliery
8	B4228 and Tufthorn Avenue junction		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Perrygrove is an additional plate and not a significant X height for size of sign

Location No.	Location Description	Image	Notes
8	B4228 -Perrygrove		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Double facing sign installed opposite entrance/exit
9	B4228 - Puzzlewood		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No double facing directional sign to Puzzlewood site
9	B4228		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nothing to report

Location No.	Location Description	Image	Notes
9	B4228		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GWR Museum, Whitecliff Ironworks and Hopewell Colliery not signed Signs could do with a clean but acknowledge proximity to main road
9	B4228		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directional sign is past the junction to Clearwell Caves
10	Lambsquay Road		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Double faced directional sign into car park



Location No.	Location Description	Image	Notes
11	Newland Street		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ironworks are not signed currently ▪ There is no advanced or directional signage from town centre ▪ This would need to be added to listing if attraction meets requirements
12	B4228 and Scowles Road		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Greenacres campsite not signed from B4228
12	Scowles Road and entrance into Greenacres Campsite		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Greenacres campsite not signed from Scowles Road

Town Centre Visitor Attraction Signage

The following maps and tables show the existing visitor attraction signage in the town centre.

B4228 Town Centre Approach

Prior to the traffic lit junction, an advanced directional sign identifies Perrygrove, Puzzlewood and Clearwell Caves. Hopewell Colliery and Railway Museum are not signed. If approved, a new sign plate would be needed. A lower footer sign plate to the main town centre car park is provided here, directing vehicles through Market Place.

As you approach the junction there is a small directional sign to the main car park on High Street that is offset and hard to see, until you are upon the sign.

B4028 Junction with B4228

Coming down into the town centre on the B4228, there is sign directing visitors to Perrygrove, Puzzlewood and Clearwell Caves. There is no sign directing people onto the Railway Museum, via the Market Place and High Street.

At the same junction there is a directional sign pointing eastbound up the B4028, that does not sign Hopewell Colliery.

B4228 Junction with Lord's Hill

The advanced directional sign is correct with Perrygrove, Puzzlewood and Clearwell Caves properly signed. Bells Hotel is also signed at this junction.

From the opposite side, Bells Hotel is signed prior to the junction with Lord's Hill.




Town Centre

Within the town centre, the only visitor attraction that is signed is the Railway Museum with a directional sign at the junction of Market Place and High Street and at the roundabout off Cinder Hill. All other attractions are signed along the B4228 corridor. Town centre car parking is also signed within the same family of signs.

Figure 3 – Coleford Town Centre



Source: Parish Maps Online, Coleford Town Council license

Location No.	Location Description	Image	Notes
1	B4228 – town centre approach		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hopewell Colliery, GWR Museum and Whitecliff Ironworks would need to be added to/or new sign installed
2	B4028 junction		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It generally works
2	B4028 junction		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hopewell Colliery not signed

Location No.	Location Description	Image	Notes
3	B4228 and Market Place		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town centre directional offset from junction – not very visible
4	B4228 and junction with Lord's Hill		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nothing to report
4	B4228 and junction with Lord's Hill		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hopewell Colliery and campsites not signed

Location No.	Location Description	Image	Notes
5	Cinderhill and Railway Drive roundabout		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of a directional sign southbound prior to roundabout
6	High Street		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ First mention of railway museum ▪ Need for advanced and continuity signage from wider road network

Town Centre Pedestrian Signage

The main visitor arrival point in the town centre for vehicle-borne trips is the Railway Drive car park which is accessed off Cinder Hill (from the south) and from High Street (from the north).

Bus borne traffic would alight in the Market Place for the town centre.

The only off road walking and cycling route is the Milkwall to Coleford route which finishes before Pyart's Court, in the south eastern corner of Railway Drive car park.

Arrival, Inform and Orientate

There are no town centre maps or tourist information points within Railway Drive car park, with visitors having no information to plan how they explore the town centre. Opportunities exist at the main pay stations as these are the initial visitor touchpoints. This is where you could provide some key information on town centre facilities such as toilets, public transport, tourist information centre and links to digital apps or town trails. This could be a simple information panel that is single post mounted.

Once visitors have paid for their parking, our physical observations on pedestrian footfall show people moving towards the existing toilet block in Railway Drive car park and Mushet Walk link. This is a natural gathering area for visitors once you have moved through the car park area with an existing fingerpost tending to anchor a small, grassed area on the edge of the Co-op car park area. An opportunity for a town map to be located here would help visitors to understand where they are, and what is ahead of them in terms of the town centre offer, amenities and attractions. The refurbishment works to the toilet block could either enable a wall fixed map case or a free standing one within the nearby grassed area. Examples of town map cases are shown overleaf. The map could form part of an accessible case structure that could promote events and town centre activities in or could be a sealed powder coated map unit.

Other locations for town map cases and information points include:

- Junction of St John's Street and B4228;
- Junction of Newland Street and Bowes Hill;
- Upper High Street area of the town centre.

As seen in the photos in Image 1 overleaf, the existing town map case close to the Clocktower in the Market Place either needs repainting or replacement. As with the existing fingerposts the gold lettering on a black base paint does not provide enough contrast for those with a visual impairment. Painting the lettering white would be a quick fix in the interim until such time you wish to introduce a new set of town maps and signage furniture.

If a new town map system was to be developed you would need to create the artwork for the town map, manufacture it and then agree on the design of the map case furniture, specifically material, map fixing and installation details. The colour of the map case would need to work with an agreed town palette. The town map could also integrate with a town trail which could either be QR based, an audio based phone

app or through physical markers around the town centre. This could link into Coleford's Hidden Heritage App <https://colefordtown.net/what-to-see/colefords-hidden-heritage/>

Image 2 – Arrival, Inform and Orientate Signage



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

Image 3 – Examples of Map Furniture (Free-standing and Wall Fixed)



Source: Fitzpatrick Woolmer

Directional

Existing town centre way-finding systems (directional) are generally tired across the town centre.

Type

The main way-finding system is Victorian in character, with column kits, collars and finial details. They have a black base paint with gold lettering and relief edging. The gold lettering has faded and is not that legible for those that are visually impaired and for those that have no eyesight deficiencies. Some of the arms have been moved which has worn off the grub screw/fixing point over time.

The other type of way-finder is a single type used outside the toilet block. This is a simple system in green with white lettering, with an additional arm attached with jubilee clips for the Milkwall/Parkend cycle/walking route. Distance to the various destination is shown in metres which is difficult for people to interpret. We would recommend using time taken as it is an easier metric to understand.

Image 4 – Existing Town Centre Wayfinding Systems



Source: Chris Jones Regeneration

Information

The current facilities and destinations that are signed are:

- Public Toilets
- Tourist Information
- GWR Museum
- Town Centre Shops
- Community Centre
- AOG Pentecostal Church
- Cycle Route
- St John's Church (now closed)

Additional places to consider if a new system was to be installed are:

- The Market Place
- Recreational Ground (Angus Buchanan)
- Whitecliff Ironworks
- Coleford Baptist Church
- Town Council Offices
- District Council Offices

Location

The images and audit overleaf show where existing way-finding systems have been installed, our appraisal of them and where new installations are needed.

Some of the existing locations are correct, with some not that effective or visible. Suggestions include:

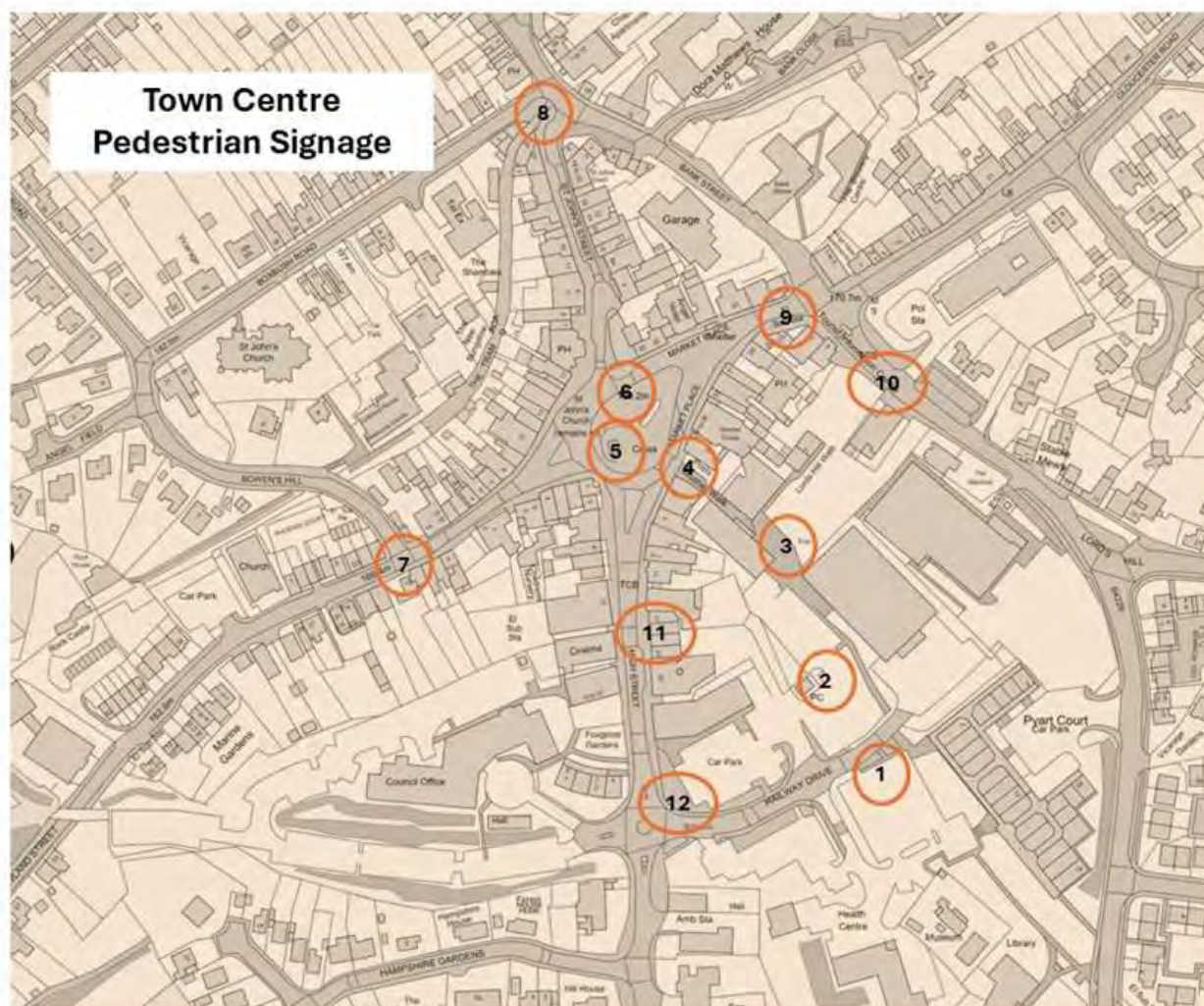
①	New fingerpost in upper middle section of Railway Drive car park
②	Replace existing green way-finder outside toilet block (link into new town map)
③	New way-finder in Mushet Walk (existing one in wrong place as its offset from main thoroughfare)
⑤	Refurbish or replace existing way-finder in upper section of Square
⑥	Consider new way-finder on lower section of Square
⑦	Consider new way-finder at junction of Newland Street and Bowes Hill
⑧	Refurbish or replace damaged way-finder at junction of St John's Street and B4228
⑨	Refurbish or replace existing way-finder on Market Place
⑩	Consider new way-finder at on B4228 close to Tourist Information Centre and car park
⑪	Consider new way-finder at middle of High Street
⑫	Refurbish or replace existing way-finder on corner of High Street and Railway Drive car park

Other forms of signage

Mushet Walk Arch Signage




The wrought iron archway sign at the end of Mushet Walk needs repainting, especially its lettering so that there is more contrast. Vegetation could be tidied up.




Figure 4 – Coleford Town Centre





Source: Parish Maps Online, Coleford Town Council license

Location No.	Location Description	Image	Notes
1	Railway Drive – Upper Car Park		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No directional fingerpost from upper car park area Across the whole there is 21 no. pay and display signs which we would suggest is excessive
2	Railway Drive – Toilet Block area		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fingerpost needs replacing with new system and need to show time taken rather than distance Town map and information board needs to be alongside
3	Mushet Walk Square area		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fingerpost is offset from main pedestrian thoroughfare and is hard to read; A new fingerpost needs to be more central to Mushet Walk space

Location No.	Location Description	Image	Notes
4	Mushet Walk		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The wrought iron sign needs its lettering repainted and the base black paint repainted
5	Clocktower area		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fingerpost is hard to read Either paint lettering white or replace with new system Arms need to be moved and secured
5	Clocktower area		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Map case needs a repaint and information on the town centre side reprinted with a need for a larger so that it is accessible to all Need to consider new map artwork and a map furniture system

Location No.	Location Description	Image	Notes
6	Lower Clocktower area		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Opportunity to place a fingerpost within this lower intermediate space
7	Newland Street and junction of Bowen's Hill		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Junction up Bowes Hill to Angus Buchanan VC Recreation Grounds; signage to Whitecliff Ironworks
8	Top end of St John's Street		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sign damaged by vehicle ▪ Fingerpost is hard to read ▪ Either paint lettering white or replace with new system ▪ Arms need to be moved and secured

Location No.	Location Description	Image	Notes
8	Top end of St John's Street		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential location for a new town map and information case
9	High Street – eastern edge		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fingerpost is hard to read Either paint lettering white or replace with new system Arms need to be moved and secured
10	B4228 close to Tourist Information Centre		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential location for a new fingerpost

Location No.	Location Description	Image	Notes
11	Middle High Street		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential location for a new fingerpost within a key intermediate space
12	Upper High Street		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fingerpost is hard to see from High Street until you are close to it Fingerpost is hard to read Either paint lettering white or replace with new system Arms need to be moved and secured
12	Railway Drive car park		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay stations – general – opportunity to have a small town centre information sign that directs you to website and key information

4 Signage Strategy

Focus and Strategy

Visitor Attractions Signage

The audit has identified some gaps in the logic and flow of advanced and continuity signage to the respective attractions. These are identified for Gloucestershire County Council to consider. There are some maintenance issues to be considered. As part of the strategy development, the County Council has viewed the findings and will respond to the Town Council in due course.

New Town Map

The Town Council has identified the need for a new town map to provide enhanced information to town centre users and visitors. A town map provides the first interface with visitors when they arrive in a town centre, whether this be arriving by car, public transport, walking and cycling, and other modes.

Currently, there is only one town map/information case, which is in the Market Place close to the Clock Tower. In the short term it needs refurbishment, specifically painting and generally cleaning.

Ideally, a new town map would need to form part of a wider signage system so that it adopts a specific design style and appears co-ordinated to the user. Such a signage system can be phased with the town map element forming the first phase of work, followed by your way-finder/fingerpost system as described below.

We have identified through our audit, the need for an additional three town map/information boards at the Railway Drive toilet block, end of St John's Street and close to the current Tourist Information Centre. Examples of free standing and wall-fixed map/information systems are shown on page 25 of this report.

For the development of a new town map system, the following steps would need to be undertaken:

- Agree town map locations with FoDDC and GCC in relation to public realm;
- Research and agree on a town map system design that integrates with a future way-finding/fingerpost system;
- Obtain costs for manufacture of town map system (4 no. quantity);
- Secure funding for:
 - Artwork development;
 - Manufacture and supply of 4 no. town map/information systems;
 - Installation costs – groundworks,
- Review current town map and decide as to whether it needs to be refreshed;
- If map is to be refreshed to procure map designer and develop design in consultation with town stakeholder groups;
- Procure the supply of town map/information systems, deliver to site;
- Install town maps with artwork, and information material.

Way-finders/Fingerposts

We would recommend replacing the existing fingerposts when funding becomes available. These would need to co-ordinate with other forms of signage e.g. town maps, in terms of material, colour and typeface. We would also suggest that way-finding arms indicate duration in time not distance as people tend to understand time taken better than say 250 metres. This detail would need to be developed. A review of town centre facilities and attractions would need to be undertaken at the point in time. The current list would be:

- Public Toilets
- Tourist Information
- GWR Museum
- Town Centre Shops
- Community Centre
- AOG Pentecostal Church
- Cycle Route
- The Market Place
- Recreational Ground (Angus Buchanan)
- Whitecliff Ironworks
- Coleford Baptist Church
- Town Council Offices
- District Council Offices

Something to consider in the immediate term is the refurbishment and painting of the existing fingerposts, specifically their base colour and re-painting the words on the arms in a white paint, rather than the current faded gold.

Pay Station Town Centre Information

There is an additional opportunity to provide town centre information alongside the existing car parking pay stations. This could be a simple “Welcome To Coleford” panel that quickly informs people of top five things to do, tourist information opening times and a QR code/web link to <https://colefordtown.net/>.

Heritage Trail

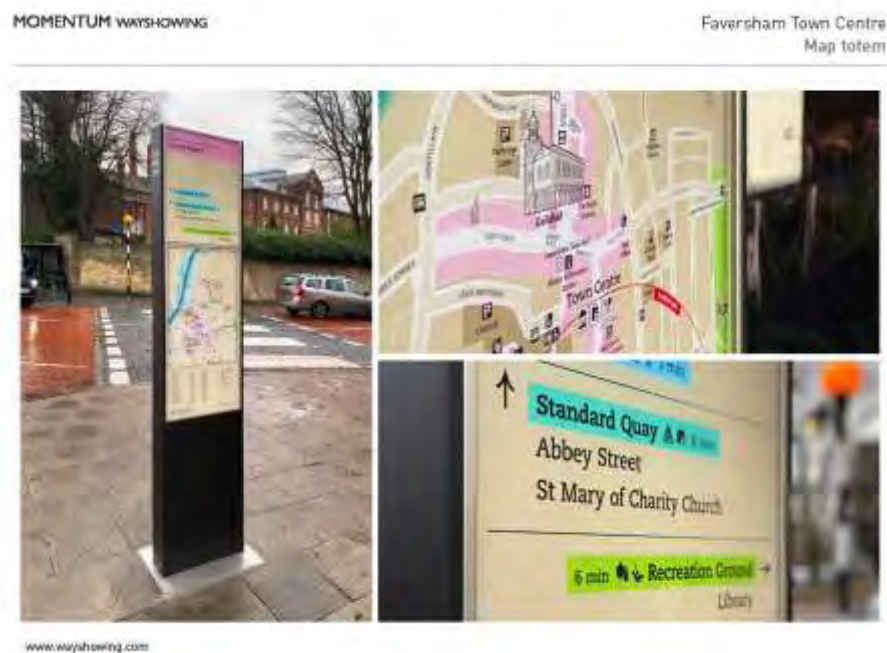
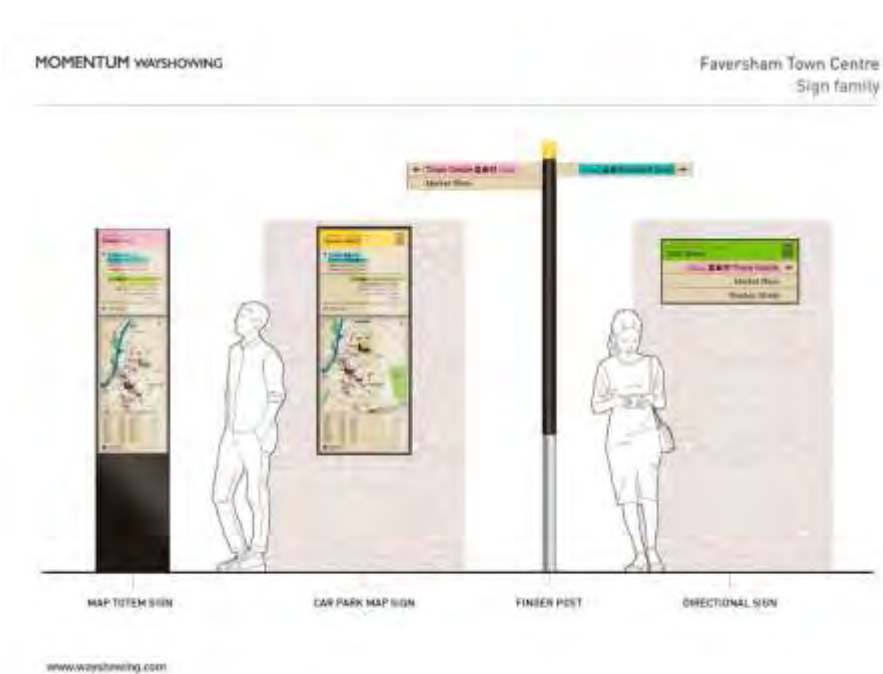
Another layer of town centre trails that would complement the town map and way-finding system is a town heritage trail. The town already has the App, Explore Coleford, which takes people on a 7 mile route of the town, provides Then and Now images at 31 points of interest. The map shows selected places of interest, and your location is tracked by GPS (no phone signal required on route). When near a place of interest, the GPS triggers a "You have discovered..." message showing you where you are. This could be promoted more whether this be on-street using pavement trail tiles, as shown overleaf from a scheme in Chepstow. Specific places or buildings which are of historic and cultural interest could have more detailed plaques.

Image 5 – Examples from Chepstow's Heritage Trail



Source: Ned Heywood

Appendix - Case Studies – Signage Strategies and Schemes



MOMENTUM WAYSHOWING

Faversham Town Centre
Colour palette development



www.wayshowing.com

MOMENTUM waySHOWING

Faversham Town Centre
Wall graphics design



www.wayshowing.com

MOMENTUM waySHOWING

North Walsham Town Centre
Loke sign | Bespoke typeface

**NORTH
WALSHAM**
TYPEFACE



www.wayshowing.com

MOMENTUM WAYSHOWING

North Walsham Town Centre
Terraced lettering



We also tackled an additional objective to add interpretation information at Church Approach, a recently landscaped and planted area in the front of St Nicholas Church.

This new layout of the area reflects the footprints of the former homes and workshops of traders in what was previously known as 'The Stambles'.

To explain this for visitors and residents, we are providing an interpretation lecture. We have also engraved the stone benches with the names and occupations of the people who lived and worked there, with details taken from the Census of 1901.



www.wayshowing.com

MOMENTUM WAYSHOWING

North Walsham Town Centre
Interpretation sign



www.wayshowing.com

Appendix – Tourism Signs - Eligibility Criteria

This appendix lists the eligibility criteria and necessary supporting information required.

1. All Applicants

Category	Eligibility Criteria	Additional Supporting Evidence Required	Tick if meet the criteria and can provide supporting information
<p>ALL APPLICANTS</p> <p>Note: there is a presumption in favour of pedestrian signing unless there is overriding evidence of a need for highway signs.</p>	<p>Adequate on-site parking must normally be available. Where off-site parking is provided this must be within a reasonable distance of the facility.</p> <p>Must not erect any advertising signs at/near the location of the proposed Brown and White Signs, and must remove any existing off- site signing (the applicant will be responsible for the cost of removing any advertising signs).</p> <p>Facilities must be adequately advertised, including location, opening times, facilities, etc.</p> <p>Location of facilities with clear directions, and where appropriate public transport access, must be adequately advertised.</p> <p>Must have necessary Planning Permission.</p>	<p>If the car park is not owned by the applicant, written confirmation from the owner of the car park that this is acceptable is required.</p> <p>Details of target markets, evidence of publicity and details of distribution, e.g. copies of leaflets, adverts, website promotion, etc.</p> <p>Evidence on above promotional materials.</p> <p>Proof of Planning permission (only required if facilities have been established for less than 10 years).</p> <p>Evidence of certificates and risk assessments relating to legal requirements such as fire, health & safety and</p>	

	<p>You must hold all the necessary fire, health & safety and environmental health certificates and show that you have carried out the appropriate risk assessments relating to these.</p> <p>Front of house staff must have undertaken adequate and continue to take adequate Customer Care training (either through a recognised training</p>	<p>environmental health.</p> <p>Evidence that Customer Care training has been undertaken, e.g. training certificates, details and dates of courses undertaken, programme of in-house training, etc.</p> <p>Provide current Cotswolds Tourism/Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Tourism Association Membership number.</p>	
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	<p>provider,</p> <p>Or adequate in-house training programme).</p> <p>Must be members of Cotswolds Tourism or the Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Tourism Association.</p>		
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2. Visitor Attractions:

Category	Eligibility Criteria	Additional Supporting Evidence Required	Tick if meet the criteria and can provide supporting information
	<p>As for ALL applicants.</p> <p>In addition:</p>	<p>As for ALL applicant. In addition</p>	

<p>Including historic houses, museums, gardens and arboreta, craft and wildlife centres, etc.</p> <p>Note: English Heritage and National Trust properties are already eligible for signs and are therefore exempt from the need for recognition as a bona fide tourist attraction</p>	<p>Must attract a minimum of 5,000 visitors per year, unless the need can be clearly demonstrated on road safety and traffic management grounds.</p> <p>Must be able to demonstrate that a substantial proportion of visitors are attracted from outside the local area.</p> <p>Must be open for a minimum of 6 consecutive months between March and October every year, including 24 weekend days within that period.</p> <p>Must be signed up to the National Code of Practice for visitor attractions via Visit England.</p> <p>Being signed up to VAQAS (Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme) is desirable</p>	<p>Evidence of annual visitor numbers.</p> <p>Evidence of the source of visitors.</p> <p>Details of annual opening times</p> <p>Evidence that the attraction is signed up to the National Code of Practice for visitor attractions</p> <p>If the attraction is VAQAS accredited then please provide evidence</p>	
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3. Serviced Accommodation

Category	Eligibility Criteria	Additional Supporting Evidence Required	Tick if meet the criteria and can provide supporting information
	As for ALL applicants. In addition:	As for ALL applicant. In addition	
Note: Serviced accommodation catering for long term residents which are therefore in effect Hostel type houses in multiple occupations are NOT eligible.	Must participate in and remain in a nationally recognised Quality Assurance Scheme i.e. Visit Britain or the AA Must be able to demonstrate that signs are required for traffic management purposes due to the volume of guests/visitors the facility receives during the course of a year Must comply with the most up to date Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations and Food Safety Act.	Written evidence of an up-to-date Quality Assurance Scheme grading. Provide yearly occupancy figures, provide evidence of events that take place such as weddings, conferences etc. Up-to-date evidence that meets Food Safety Regulations	

4. Rural Recreational Facilities

Category	Eligibility Criteria	Additional Supporting Evidence Required	Tick if meet the criteria and can provide supporting information

<p>Note: Exhibition Centres are NOT eligible for tourism signing.</p>	<p>Should be open for at least 100 days per year, and for at least 400 hours during that period.</p> <p>Should be open to non-members within normal opening hours and where necessary equipment should be available for hire.</p> <p>Should have adequate toilet facilities and be able to offer refreshments</p>	<p>Details of opening times.</p> <p>Provide evidence of what is available to non members and those visitors just visiting for one day and what equipment is provided for them.</p> <p>Provide evidence of what toilet facilities and refreshments you provide</p>	
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5. Urban Facilities:

For the purpose of this policy 'Urban' relates to the settlements of Gloucester, Cheltenham, Stroud, Tewkesbury and Cirencester. The criteria for facilities in urban areas are the same as for those in rural areas detailed in points 1 to 4 above.

The vast number of establishments that are eligible for brown signs leads to a danger of over- proliferation, clutter and confusion. In order to prevent potential problems individual highway signs will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Generic or shared signing may be preferred, subject to environmental and traffic management considerations. These generic signs will incorporate any reasonable term requested by the applicants, for example 'High Street Hotels'.

In urban areas generic pedestrian signs may be considered in order to direct visitors from car parks and public transport facilities to accommodation (and return). Generic signs can incorporate any reasonable collective term requested by the applicants. To complement existing pedestrian signs in urban areas, this type of tourism sign should be consistent with existing design. Positioning and design should be developed in consultation with the relevant District Council.

6. Camping & Caravan Sites:

These signs are provided for the benefit of touring caravan users and campers from outside the local area, who wish to make casual overnight or short stays.

Eligibility Criteria	Additional Supporting Evidence Required	Tick if meet the criteria and can provide supporting information
As for All applicants in addition:	As for ALL applicants in addition:	

<p>Must:</p> <p>Either participate in a nationally approved Quality Assurance Scheme (QIT or AA)</p> <p>Or be under the membership of the Caravan Club or the Camping and Caravanning Club</p> <p>Should have at least 20 pitches for casual overnight use by touring caravans.</p> <p>Must be open to non-members without the need to pre-book.</p> <p>Must be licensed under the most up to date Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act and/or the Public Health Act.</p>	<p>Evidence of up-to-date Quality Assurance Scheme grading or membership of the Caravan Club/ Camping and Caravanning Club.</p> <p>Details of facilities offered on- site, including number of pitches.</p> <p>Evidence of up to date licensing</p>	
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7. Youth Hostels:

Eligibility Criteria	Additional Supporting Evidence Required	Tick if meet the criteria and can provide supporting information
As for All applicants in addition:	As for ALL applicants in addition:	
<p>Must be open without the need for prior booking during normal opening hours.</p> <p>Must be managed by the Youth Hostel Association</p>	Evidence that it is managed by the YHA	

8. Tourist Information Centres & Tourist Information Points:

Eligibility Criteria	Additional Supporting Evidence Required	Tick if meet the criteria and can provide supporting information

As for All applicants in addition:	As for ALL applicants in addition:	
Must be an official partner of the Enjoy England scheme to be signed with the recognised 'i' symbol. Note: Tourism signs for recognised strategic Tourist Information Points and Centres will normally be provided by the local authorities.	Up to date evidence that you are a member of the Enjoy England official partner scheme	

9. Bypassed Communities–Local Services:

These signs are provided for the benefit of drivers on All Purpose roads to highlight the availability of services, during working hours, in a bypassed community.

Eligibility Criteria	Additional Supporting Evidence Required	Tick if meet the criteria and can provide supporting information
As for All applicants in addition:	As for ALL applicants in addition:	
The community must usually be a small town or village with a population of less than 10,000. The community must offer a variety of services to visitors from outside of the local area. These might include adequate parking and public toilets (both must be clearly signed within the community), public	Up to date evidence of the population of the community. Details of the services offered within the community. Map detailing location of the community in relation to the road from which the services are to be signed. Details of existing or proposed confirmatory and return signing.	

<p>telephones, shops and/or refreshments.</p> <p>The community must be within 3 miles of the road from which the services are to be signed, and be the first community reached after leaving that road.</p> <p>Adequate confirmatory and return signing must be provided.</p> <p>Note: Bypassed Community Signs will NOT be eligible if the destination is already signed as a primary destination using standard directional signing.</p>		
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Additional Guidance for tourism signs for Bypassed Communities:

- There must be no detriment to road safety, good traffic management or the environment as a result of traffic looking for services.
- Encouragement of this traffic must be acceptable to the local community as a whole and should be determined by the appropriate District Council.
- If a community has tourist facilities which qualify for brown and white traffic management signs these may be included on the local services sign in the form of a small standard symbol. Individual qualifying attractions may also be eligible for other brown signs within the bypassed community.
- A descriptive phrase which refers to the history of the community, the attractions present or important environmental features may be included, for example 'Historic Market Town'. The phrase will not exceed three words.

10. Rural Community Signing Schemes:

These signs are provided where there may be several tourist facilities in one rural community. All rural settlements in the county are eligible for this type of sign and will be developed in consultation with Parish/Town/District Councils who may also wish to consult business interests. Examples of successful community signing schemes include Painswick and Stow-on-the-Wold.

The local town or parish council will be responsible for deciding the detail and content of individual rural community signing schemes.

Such schemes might incorporate:

- A local information board, with the words 'Local Information' in addition to the standard 'I' sign (if appropriate).
- Supplementary plates attached to the village name plates which could be erected at the village entry points.
- Signing within the settlement. This should look to direct traffic to adequate car parking facilities where possible. Individual attractions should be signed with pedestrian signs from these. It may also be possible for the local information points to be provided at car parks to highlight the location of the major facilities.
- The entry sign for rural communities should incorporate a standard symbol for a village shop.
- If a highway sign already exists in a rural settlement, GCC retains the right to remove these signs in conjunction with the introduction of a rural community signs scheme under this policy.
- The urban settlements detailed in Section 5 of this Appendix are not eligible for this type of sign.

11. Signs and Facilities Located On a Motorway and/Or Trunk Road:

There are additional rules to those detailed above for each category for tourism signs on motorways and trunk roads, and it is necessary to involve the Highways Agency in this type of application.

The additional rules are listed below:

Criteria for All Purpose Single Carriageways and Dual Carriageways with Speed Limits of 50mph or Less:

- There must also be brown signs on the adjacent local road network, approved by GCC.
- The route that traffic is being directed along must be the most suitable link between the destination and the trunk road.
- If there are siting difficulties or where the number of destinations signed at a single junction would be excessive, we reserve the right to refuse any signing proposals.
- Tourist attractions with direct access to an all-purpose trunk road may not need signs if the entrance is visible and identifiable from a safe distance.

Criteria for All Purpose Dual Carriageways with Speed Limits of 50mph or More: As for speed limits of 50mph and less, and in addition:

- The attraction should normally be within 20 miles of the junction from which it is being signed.

Taking account of the high speeds of traffic the number of tourist attractions signed should not exceed four, so that signs will be legible and of a manageable size.

Criteria for Motorway and Fully Graded Separated All Purpose Dual Carriageways:

As above for Single and Dual Carriageways with speed limits of 50mph or more, and in addition:

- The attraction should have at least 150,000 visitors per year.
- Some new sign layouts highlighted in the Traffic Signs Regulations may not be erected on motorways. The Divisional Manager will advise you on this.
- On All Purpose Trunk Roads nearby groups of attractions and facilities can be signed collectively, if collectively they meet the visitor number criteria. It will probably not be possible to show the name of each individual attraction in full, and in such cases symbols rather than legends may be used to indicate the type of attraction.

APPENDIX 2 –

ROAD SAFETY AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Road Safety and Traffic Management Considerations

The routes visitors use to reach your attraction or facility will be assessed on the presumption that more vehicles (and these might include touring coaches and Lorries servicing the premises), pedestrians and cyclists will be generated through the presence of Brown & White Traffic Management Signs. The County Council maintains records of all injury accidents reported to the police and these records will be used during the evaluation, together with the following considerations:

- The ability of the junctions along the approaches to accommodate further signs;
- The adequacy of a route to carry the expected traffic;
- The suitability of the direct access to the premises from the public road;
- The parking arrangements and the safety of pedestrian routes to the premises.

It will not be possible to support an application where on street parking already causes, or is expected to cause, inconvenience to residents or to general traffic.



People Make Places

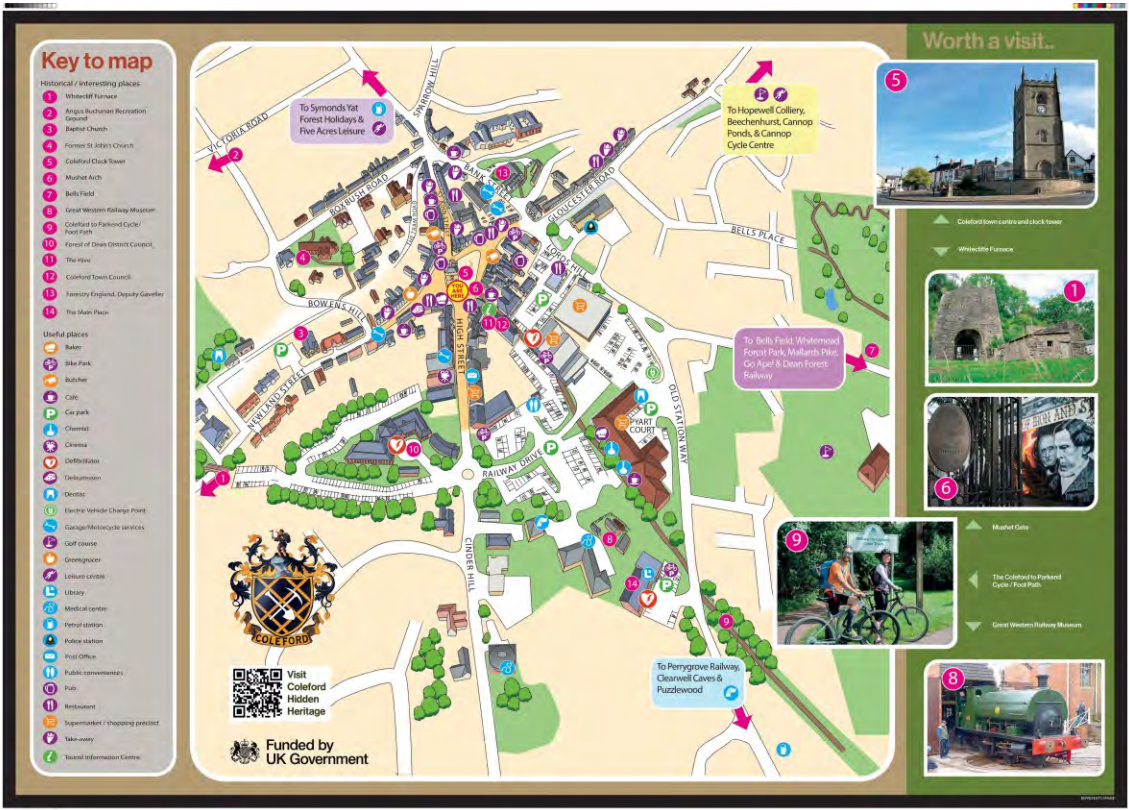
15 Nevill Street
Abergavenny
Monmouthshire
NP7 5AA

+44 (0) 1873 880666
+44 (0) 7968 943084
chris@chrisjones.studio
@chrisjonesplace
chrisjones.studio

2024-25

- 1. Project: Signage Strategy**
 - **Town Map and Case**
 - **Puzzlewood Sign**
 - **Brown and white
tourism signs enhance**

Town Map and Case



Puzzlewood Case



2024-25

2. Heritage Trail

- Tiles**
- QR plaque**
- Review of heritage in walking festival**
- A5 flyer**
- New Regard**

Tiles and QR plaque

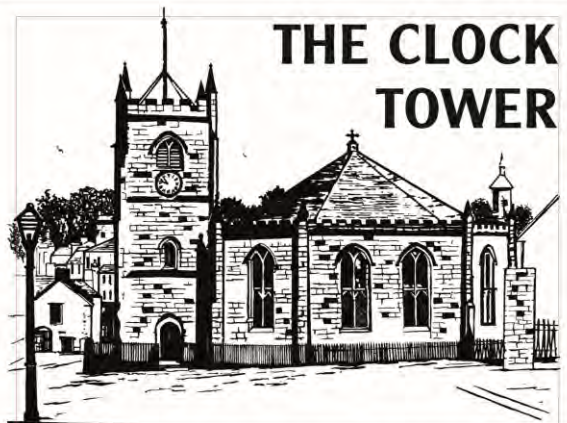


THE MARKET HALL

The magnificent clock tower at the centre of our town is all that remains of the octagonal church that once graced the town centre. This was demolished in 1882 having proven itself too small for the growing congregation. The Market Hall was much modernised and extended in 1866 from the original hall which had been built in about 1679. It was built of locally quarried stone but was sadly demolished in 1967 in an attempt to alleviate the greatly increased motor traffic travelling through the town.



COLEFORD HIDDEN HERITAGE TRAIL



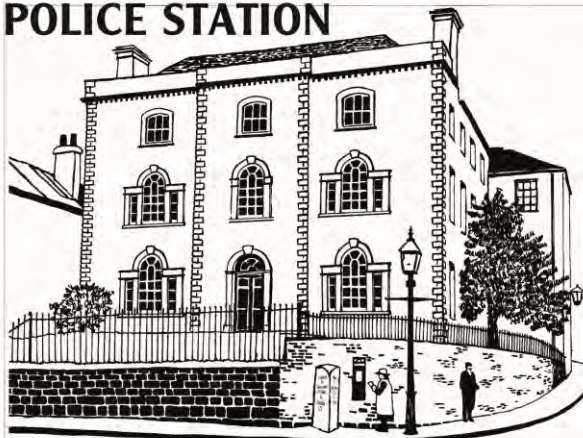
THE CLOCK TOWER

A chapel of rest was first recorded in the town centre in 1489. Badly damaged during the Civil War and then rebuilt, it was much further enlarged at various times over the coming years. By the 1870s however it was decided that a much bigger premises was needed for Coleford's increasing congregation. The huge 'new' St Johns Church overlooking the town was thus opened in 1880 and by 1883 the old church was demolished with the stone being used to build a school alongside the new church. Thankfully a decision was made to retain the church bell tower along with its clock (previously bought by public subscription 1863) and Coleford thus acquired its most distinctive landmark. The shape of the original octagonal church can be seen replicated in the stonework close to the tower.



COLEFORD HIDDEN HERITAGE TRAIL

THE OLD POLICE STATION



By the mid 18th Century Coleford had apparently engaged two constables to police the town and in the 1840s local Magistrates Courts had been established using the premises of the Angel Inn as their Courthouse. The town's first Police Station was in Gloucester Road however by 1860 a suitably large private dwelling had been purchased by the West Gloucestershire Constabulary and this was adapted as the towns grand 'new' Police Station complete with a Courthouse on the first floor, together with accommodation for the Inspector and Sergeant and their families. This fine old building sadly succumbed around 1963 with the 'modern 1960s style' (and far less attractive) 'new' Police Station and Magistrates Courthouse opening for business around the same time.



COLEFORD HIDDEN HERITAGE TRAIL

THE ANGEL HOTEL



The large and imposing Angel Hotel was built around 1650 following the Civil War. The impressive bowed front windows facing into Market Place are reputed to have been salvaged from the much earlier Highmeadow Farmhouse which had been a Royalist strongpoint during the war. Much enlarged and improved around 1800, the hotel has served the town in many ways over the years. It was the town's principal coaching inn, serving the route between Monmouth, Gloucester and Bristol, and an important meeting place, and even at one time it has housed the 'Excise Office,' for the collection of local taxes, the Post Office and acted as a courthouse. In the Enclosure Riots of 1831, it was used as a temporary prison for captured rioters.



COLEFORD HIDDEN HERITAGE TRAIL

THE OLD POLICE STATION



By the mid 18th Century Coleford had apparently engaged two constables to police the town and in the 1840s local Magistrates Courts had been established using the premises of the Angel Inn as their Courthouse. The town's first Police Station was in Gloucester Road however by 1860 a suitably large private dwelling had been purchased by the West Gloucestershire Constabulary and this was adapted as the towns grand 'new' Police Station complete with a Courthouse on the first floor, together with accommodation for the Inspector and Sergeant and their families. This fine old building sadly succumbed around 1963 with the 'modern 1960s style' (and far less attractive) 'new' Police Station and Magistrates Courthouse opening for business around the same time.



COLEFORD HIDDEN HERITAGE TRAIL

Leaflet and A5 flyer

St Johns Church

St Johns Church opened in May 1860. The burial path from the town up through the Angus Buchanan Memorial Recreation Ground can still be followed along its route to the nearby Newland Church, commonly known as 'the Cathedral of the Forest'.

Boxbush Road

The name of the road the shop is situated in 'Boxbush', which possibly comes from the Boxbush Iron Mine that was once situated in the garden to the rear of the shop. This short lived mine never amounted to any great profitable production and the shaft was safely filled in long ago.

Angel Hotel

The large imposing Angel Hotel was built around 1850 following the Civil War. Much enlarged and improved around 1890, the hotel has served the town in many ways over the years. It was the town's principal coaching inn and meeting place and even at one time housed the 'Excise Office' for the collection of local taxes.

Old Police Station

The town's first Police Station was in Gloucester Road however by 1860 a suitably large private dwelling had been purchased by the West Gloucestershire Constabulary. This fine old building sadly succumbed around 1963 with the modern 1960s style 'new' Police Station.

The Market Hall

The Market Hall was much modernised and extended in 1866 from the original hall which had been built in about 1679. It was built of locally quarried stone but was sadly demolished in 1967 in an attempt to alleviate the greatly increased motor traffic travelling through the town.

Horse Trough

The horse trough which now stands below the Clock Tower was originally intended to have been built to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria but it was not declared 'open' until 1898.

Newland Street

It may seem hard to believe but in the mid 1800s Coleford still had no mains water nor sewerage system of any description. Most properties in the town still had no mains water until the early 1930s and the towns sewerage was still disposed of by the simple expedient of allowing it to flow into the brook!

Clock Tower

The church bell tower along with its clock (previously bought by public subscription 1863) and Coleford thus acquired its most distinctive landmark. The shape of the original octagonal church can be seen replicated in the stonework close to the tower.

Market Place

It is perhaps difficult today to imagine our modern town centre bustling with farm animals of all descriptions, penned in along the roadways awaiting sale, but this sight was once common for the residents of the town. The market was first recorded in 1642 being on Wednesdays and Fridays and rapidly became a very important part of the town's economy.

High Street

Built in 1906 as the local Drill Hall, it was converted around 1910 into an Electric Cinema which it remains to this day. Modernised over the years and with a much newer facade than as originally constructed, it is now called 'The Studio'.

GWR Goods Shed

Rivalry between the Great Western Railway and the Severn and Wye Railway was intense. The GWR closed their line down to Monmouth in 1916. The Severn and Wye line however managed to prosper until finally closing in 1987.

Forest House Hotel

This magnificent 18th Century Grade 2 Listed building has a very proud place in the history of Coleford being the place of residence for David Mueshet in approx. 1810.

Ever wondered what Coleford used to be like in days gone by?



Explore our town centre shops, eating places and other attractions as you learn about our hidden heritage.

The Coleford Hidden Heritage app follows a route around the historic market town of Coleford with this guide focussing on the points of interest in the town centre. Learn how Coleford was once at the forefront of the developing national iron and steel industry

visit www.colefordtown.net



Hidden Coleford

1. St John's Church
2. Boxbush Road
3. Angel Hotel
4. Old Police Station
5. Market Hall
6. Horse Trough
7. Newland Street
8. Clock Tower
9. Market Place
10. High Street
11. GWR Goods Shed
12. Forest House Hotel

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Google play app download
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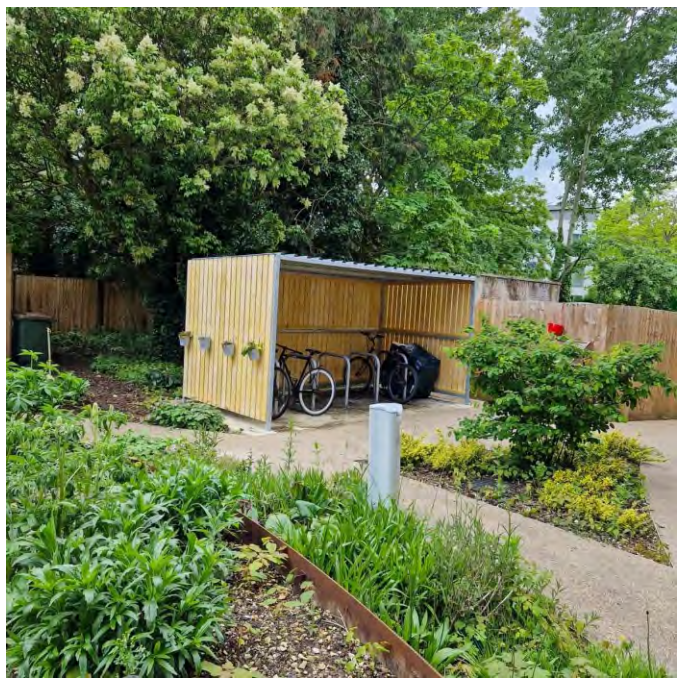


2024-25

3. Active travel

- **Bike shelter**
- **Landscaping, recycling bin relocation, improving environment**
- **Further route development**
- **Cycle stands**

Bike Shelter

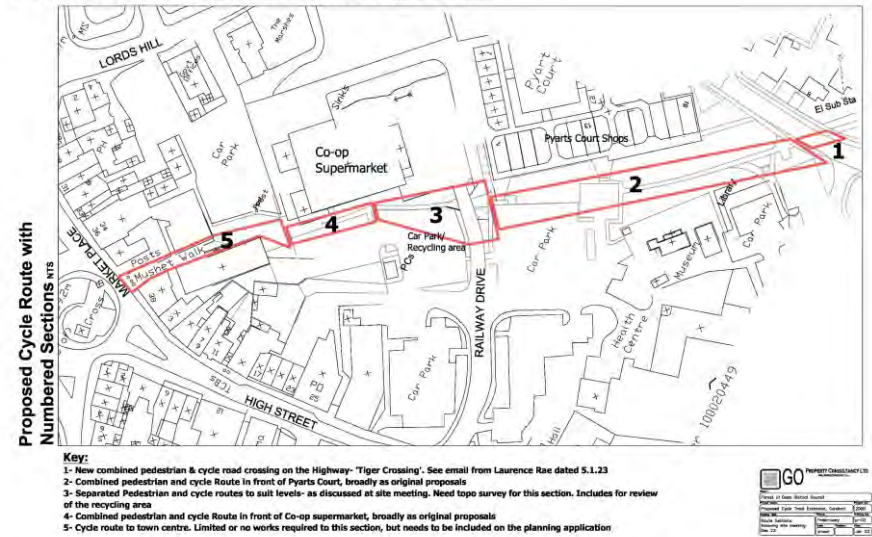


Landscaping bins, recycling area and toilet improvements

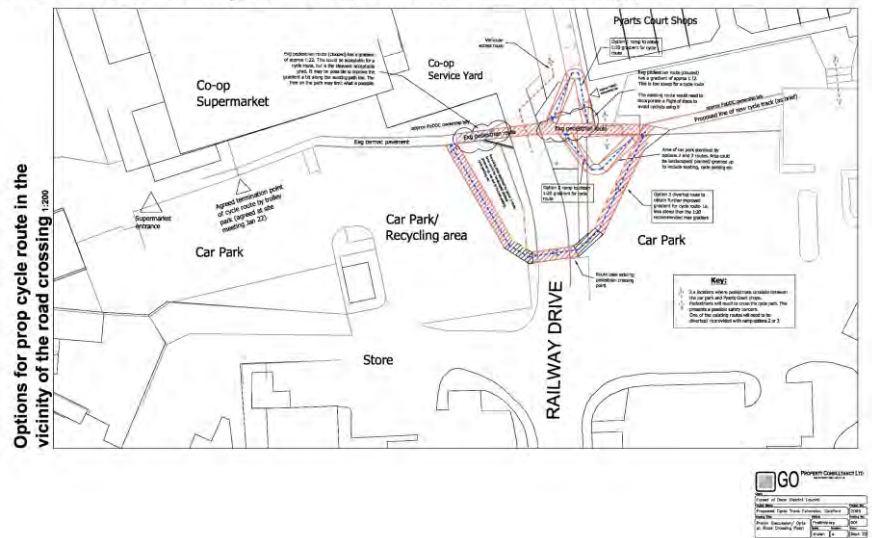


Further route development

Coleford Cycle Route Extension Route Sections following site meeting Dec 22



Coleford Cycle Route Extension Prelim Discussion/ Options for cycle route at road crossing point



Cycle stands

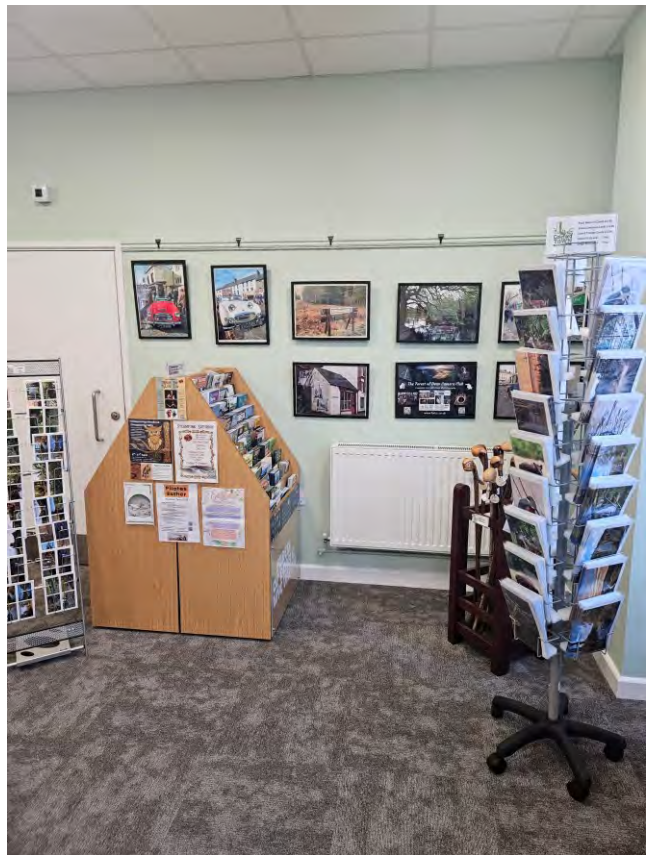
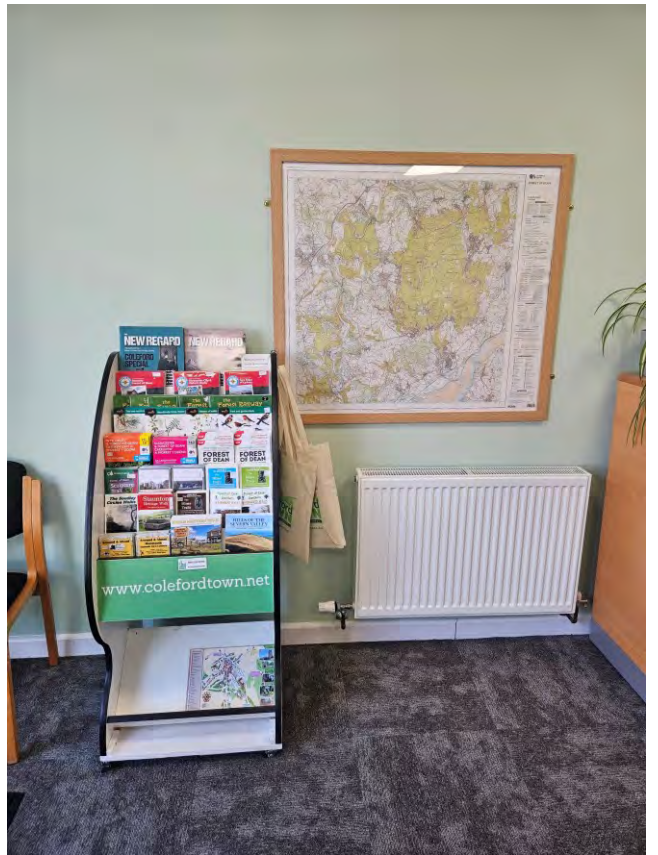


2024-25

4. TIC relocation

Photos of relocated TIC





2024-25

5. Markets



- The Fiddle Fair events that ran until 2023 were organised by the St John Street Traders Association in partnership (with financial support) of Coleford Town Council.
- Due to a lack of members, and some traders ceasing to occupy retail premises in the town these sadly stopped following the Christmas Market in December 2023.
- A new initiative is developing, led by traders in the Market Place, which will be branded as the Coleford Food and Arts Festival, and will launch in Summer 2025. This event will see partial road closures and trading on the 'tump'.
- The new event will initially be supported by Coleford Town Council by way of stall hire, and equipment purchase, as well as support and guidance from Nick Penny Event Services (in a voluntary capacity) re event planning, road closures and risk management.