

Lowestoft Place Board  
 Friday 8 August 2025, 10:00- 12:00  
 Associated British Ports, Port Office

**THINK  
 LOWESTOFT**

| Attendees  | Apologies  |
|--|--|
| Stephen Javes – Chair<br>Emma Ratzer – Access Community Trust (Deputy Chair)<br>Cllr Caroline Topping – East Suffolk Council<br>Cllr George King – representing Jess Asato MP<br>Cllr Richard Smith – Suffolk County Council<br>Cllr Tess Gandy – East Suffolk Council (representing Cllr Peter Byatt)<br>Danny Steel – Lowestoft Vision<br>Genevieve Christie – First Light Festival<br>Kelly Baker – CEFAS (representing Clare Varela)<br>Matthew Waters - Lowestoft & Waveney Chamber of Commerce<br>Paul Ager – Associated British Ports | Clare Varela – CEFAS<br>Cllr Peter Byatt – East Suffolk Council<br>Jess Asato – MP for Lowestoft<br>Rachel Hunt - Norfolk and Waveney Integrated Care Board<br>Paul Padda – East Coast College<br>Cllr Nasima Begum - Lowestoft Town Council |
| Attendees (Officers)   | Apologies (Officers)   |
| Kate Ellis – East Suffolk Council<br>Michelle Burdett - East Suffolk Council<br>Paul Wood – East Suffolk Council<br>Sarah Foote – Lowestoft Town Council   | Mike Todman - Cities and Local Growth Unit, HM Government<br>Andrew Cook – Suffolk County Council<br>Naomi Smith - Cities & Local Growth Unit  |

|   | Description  |
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| 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome &amp; Introductions - Chair</li> <li>The Chair thanked our hosts ABP</li> <li>Declarations of interest               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emma Ratzer declared her conflict of interest with the Marina Theatre.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Approval of notes from previous meeting - approved</li> <li>Actions from last meeting:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draft KPI's to be set out for the Delivery Plan for Place Board discussion – to be completed once Board decide which projects/actions to take forward</li> <li>Paul Padda to assist data regarding skills and skills still required locally.</li> <li>Kate to draft Ambassador programme KPI's – in progress</li> <li>Lowestoft based stats and sources on inequalities to be shared with Board - completed</li> <li>Gemma to take the proposal of launching the East Suffolk Marmot Place initiative in Lowestoft to Nicole Rickard</li> <li>Cllr Richard Smith to ask Director of Public Health to attend next Place Board meeting – <b>request withdrawn as we will not be looking at Health at the next Board.</b></li> <li>Kate will issue the Place Board compliance paperwork with the minutes of the meeting, to be returned as soon as possible for posting on the website – completed</li> <li>Place Board members to return their profiles to Kate to ensure we meet MHCLG's funding and audit terms – still awaiting some returns. To be carried on to next meeting.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| 2 | Lowestoft Regeneration Programme update  |

East Suffolk Council led projects – Paul Wood

Lowestoft Town Council projects – Sarah Foote

### **Cultural Quarter (Battery Green)**

Progress:

- High level (RIBA stage 2) redesign taken place to account for no buildings to be positioned over the sewer pipe.
- Re-engaged the market to inform the redesign.
- Marina Theatre started closure period to allow for internal works to take place.

Next Steps:

- Review market feedback and progress designs to detailed design stage (RIBA Stage 3).
- Continue to liaise closely with Anglian Water.
- Determine planning route for the project.
- Issue public statement on the project delay.

Discussion:

- Sarah Foote raised concern that the dates on the hoardings are now out of date. As a result, LTC are receiving emails about the Cultural Quarter and why development has stalled.  
**Action: ESC are already actively seeking to change the hoardings and will report back on the changes to be made at the November board meeting**
- Danny Steel raised disappointment that local agents weren't offered the opportunity to bid to be agents for Battery Green, and support exposure to the market.  
**Action: Paul W advised he would investigate the procurement route for this work and report back to the Place Board**

### **Marina Theatre**

Progress:

- The main work completed is the construction of the Link building and all the associated ground works
- Significant project milestone reached by works starting on the auditorium and café
- This required the staff relocation for the closure period however, they are working hard on future programming and taking the opt to visit lots of other venues for future joint working as well as undertaking some work with the Town Council in the community

### **Lowestoft Town Hall**

Progress:

- Additional £707k secured from Historic England towards restoration elements, particularly the stained glass.
- Inward investment to the town through the project now therefore £7.03m.
- Stained glass and weathervane being conserved.
- Barnes has issued an Extension of Time notice, due to the extensive works required on the roof timbers, now they've been revealed.
- Interpretation scripting is complete and RIBA5 design work underway.
- Appointed a Heritage Apprentice who'll be studying towards a Cultural Learning and Participation qualification.

### **Post Office**

Progress:

- Reconfiguration of the building including demolition and strip out.
- Unexpected works have been approved, and mobilisation of those works has started.
- Project Board meetings going well, firming up plans for programming and community engagement.

#### Next Steps:

- Undertake asbestos removal and repair internal fabric of listed building.
- Strip and retile the gault building roof.
- Undertake a hard hat day at the Post Office in September
- Approval of an access audit which has refined some of the design layouts.

#### Discussion:

- Caroline noted that there are weeds behind the hoardings, and that these need to be addressed, especially as we have invested so much in the frontage.

**Action:** ESC to ask for the contractor to address the weeds at the Post Office

### Jubilee Parade – Phase 3

#### Progress:

- Groundworks to main structure complete.
- Steel frame now complete.
- Speed deck\* roof installed to Ground floor with concrete cover poured.
- Speed deck to first floor roof installed to receive Green roof structure.

\* metal frame floor to the second floor which the restaurants and outdoor seating area will be built on. Concrete will be poured onto of this

#### Next Steps:

- Complete rising main installation and install precast staircase.
- Install new water main and continue Sika tanking works.
- Steel frame and zinc cladding of lift shaft.
- Weather proofing of roof.

### Seafront Vision (Royal Plain, Royal Green, South Quay Wharf)

- Half sunken plant room and paving works currently under construction.
- Installation of EV charging points currently underway, expected completion by 26/09/2025.
- Planting to Royal Green (including replacement of perished plants) to be completed Autumn 2025.
- UKPN completed reconnection of 3-phase electric supply to Royal Plain.
- Awaiting and chasing meter installation to Plant Room by ImServe which is delaying 1<sup>st</sup> fix electric installation.

#### Next Steps:

- Re-position existing feeder pillar to Royal Green car park to permit new access to Marine Parade.
- Specialist Fountain equipment to be installed to plant room by Ocmis.
- Install new lights to South Quay Wharf.
- ABP to complete works to fencing gravel board to enable the pocket park to be opened.
- Commissioning of Fountains upon completion of installation.
- Training of officers for handover to use Fountains equipment.

#### Risks

## Cultural Quarter

- Funding Deadline Risk: Time delays from redesign could jeopardise meeting Town Deal funding requirements (must be contractually committed by March 2026 and fully spent by March 2027).
- Mitigation: Ongoing discussions with MCHLG (supportive); outline timeline indicates delivery still achievable by March 2027.

## Post Office

- Asbestos Discovery: Asbestos found on second floor beneath floor covering not detected in R&D survey.
- Risk of programme delays.
- Mitigation: Works paused for safety; asbestos removal approved.

## Seafront Vision

- Operational Delay: Fountains will not be operational before August 2025.
- Mitigation: All site works progressing to new timeline.

## Jubilee Parade

- Cost Escalation Risk: Project delays may increase costs.
- Mitigation: Monthly cost reporting with all increases tracked.

## Social Value Achievements

The below are a selection of social value achievements since the last meeting.

- £3,500 donated to local food bank and 4 local pantries from Battery Green demolition.
- Salvaged furniture from Battery Green and Marina Centre demolition provided to Battery of Ideas.
- 48.8% of material from Marina Centre demolition recycled for use elsewhere.
- £313.90 donated to Fen Park School Environmental Project, in partnership with Friends of Fen Park and Suffolk Wildlife Trust.
- Fundraising campaign completed to raise money for Lowestoft & District food bank – sponsorship amount of £600.
- Promotion of active travel across all projects – cycling, carpooling and ride sharing programs encouraged among onsite workers to reduce emissions.
- 160 tonnes of crushed concrete material from Battery Green demolition re-used at Jubilee Parade Phase-3.
- Loan of crowd barriers to Lowestoft Riding for the Disabled Association for fundraising events – raised £750 on 2 occasions in Beccles, December 2024.
- 75 metres of Heras fencing and 12 sheets of plywood donated to First Light Festival.
- Implementation of cycle-to-work schemes by contractors, encouraging sustainable commuting practices.

## Discussion:

- Emma Ratzer keen to understand how many people have been employed so far. Can we also ensure that the presentation shows cumulative figures in addition to accumulative.  
**Action: Paul W to include these requests in future presentations to the Place Board**
- Stephen Javes asked if maintenance plans are in place for each of these projects. Paul W assured the board that there are.
- George King noted concerns that Jess Asato is receiving around the cleanliness and maintenance of the high street and London Road North – an topic that was a priority of the board when it was first established. There is a noticeable increase in bird faeces and antisocial behaviour. It was the Boards

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|   | <p>understanding that some of the cleaning vehicles have been out of order for sometime, and why there hasn't been a replacement.</p> <p><b>Action: Paul W to speak to Kerry regarding the maintenance and vehicle issues and prioritise street cleaning.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stephen Javes noted that he is meeting with Chris Bally w/c 12<sup>th</sup> August to discuss pride of place.</li> </ul>   |
| 3 | <p><b>Workshop - Paul Wood / All</b></p> <p>Review of last 3 workshops, and refining into 3 actionable projects</p> <p>The Board were asked to vote on what they felt should be the projects to take forward from those identified in the previous workshops as it is not possible to take all forward. Each member was provided with 3 votes per topic (Inequality, Investment, Skills and Jobs), and also asked to nominate themselves to support on projects that they felt they could support to take forward.</p> <p>The topics voted to take forward were:</p> <p>Inequality:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Accessibility – increase mobility and social equity (12 votes)</li> <li>2. Early Years - Give every child the best start in life (10 votes – the board asked for this to be added as an additional project due to the closeness of the vote). Genevieve Christie provided offer of support</li> <li>3. Income &amp; Living Standards - Ensure a healthy standard of living for all (11 votes)</li> <li>4. Place &amp; Environment - Create healthy and sustainable communities (11 votes)</li> </ol> <p>Investment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Night-time economy - Improve vitality &amp; safety (6 votes)</li> <li>2. Station Quarter - Improve arrival experience (6 votes)</li> <li>3. Flood protection collaboration - Unlock growth areas and protect from flood risk (11 votes)</li> </ol> <p>Skills &amp; Jobs:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Skills Development (Current and Future) - Ensure local residents are equipped with the current and emerging skills demanded by key sectors and future labour market needs. (16 votes)</li> <li>2. Employer Support and Supply Chain Responsibility - Encourage and support employers, particularly SMEs, to take greater responsibility in developing their workforce and offering placements or apprenticeships (8 votes)</li> <li>3. Further &amp; Higher education and research - Create a world-class Marine Science campus offer (4 votes)</li> </ol> <p><b>Action: Kate and Paul W to develop a draft action plan based on the workshop results and identify who will lead on the actions. This will also include existing activity that is ongoing against the agreed priorities.</b></p> |
| 5 | <p><b>Ambassador Programme – Kate Ellis</b></p> <p>Following on from the last Place Board meeting, members revisited the circulated paper proposing a refreshed and inclusive Ambassador Programme, to be delivered as part of the Lowestoft Place Marketing Programme.</p> <p>The refreshed programme will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build on the strong foundations of the original scheme (initiated 2018 via <i>Making Waves Together</i>).</li> <li>Address key lessons learned from the previous iteration.</li> <li>Align closely with Place Board and Place Marketing ambitions.</li> <li>Take a more inclusive, strategic, and impactful approach to community engagement and advocacy.</li> </ul> <p><b>Background</b></p>  |

- In 2018, ThinkingPlace was commissioned to develop the *Lowestoft Story* and a distinctive place brand.
- *Think Lowestoft* was formally adopted in 2021 as the strategic identity for promoting the town, uniting organisations, industries, and community groups under one brand.
- The brand's objectives include boosting collaboration, visibility, investment, tourism, talent attraction, and sustainable growth.

#### **Achievements of the Original Ambassador Programme**

- Early momentum and national recognition (case studies by LGA and High Streets Task Force).
- Strong digital engagement during lockdown.

#### **Challenges Identified**

- No events held in the past 12 months.
- Unclear purpose and objectives for Ambassadors.
- Events becoming repetitive and lacking diversity of audiences.
- Weak engagement, limited representation of younger residents and minority groups.

#### **Supporting Place-Based Initiatives**

- *Think Lowestoft* Brand – shared identity across sectors.
- *The Lowestoft Story* – distinctive narrative for the town.
- *Think Lowestoft* Website – unified digital platform.
- Ambassador Programme – community connection to the brand via advocacy and action.

It was noted that the *Love Lowestoft* campaign is creative and active on social media but lacks funding and strategic direction. Potential future collaboration may be explored if mutually beneficial.

#### **Proposed Objectives for the Refreshed Programme**

##### **1. Foster Dynamic and Purposeful Engagement**

- Enable Ambassadors to co-design creative engagement activities (e.g., themed forums, storytelling workshops).
- Move beyond standard project updates towards idea generation, networking, and change-making.
- *Aligned Place Board Objectives:* Pride in Lowestoft | Culture | Inequality

##### **2. Expand Inclusive Outreach and Participation**

- Develop a flexible, tiered involvement model.
- Introduce Youth Champions and Diversity Champions to reflect the town's demographics.
- *Aligned Place Board Objectives:* Pride in Lowestoft | Culture | Inequality

##### **3. Strengthen Strategic Partnerships for Greater Impact**

- Foster partnerships across public, private, and community sectors.
- Deliver joint initiatives (tourism trails, local campaigns, collaborative events).
- *Aligned Place Board Objectives:* Pride in Lowestoft | Culture | Inequality

##### **4. Ensure Sustainability, Leadership, and Accountability**

- Embed programme within Place Board governance.
- Create an Ambassador leadership subgroup.
- Track outcomes, provide training, and explore sustainable funding models.
- *Aligned Place Board Objectives:* Pride in Lowestoft

## 5. Champion the Lowestoft Story and Place Brand

- Equip Ambassadors to actively promote Lowestoft as a place to live, work, visit, study, and invest.
- Support brand promotion via storytelling, events, advocacy, and social media.
- *Aligned Place Board Objectives:* Pride in Lowestoft | Culture

### Proposed Delivery Approach

- Strengthen local leadership through a new Ambassador leadership subgroup (up to four Board-nominated members).
- Expand and diversify the Ambassador network.
- Provide Ambassadors with toolkits, training, and ongoing coordination.
- Connect and amplify community, cultural, and economic initiatives.
- Position *Think Lowestoft* as the official brand, endorsed by all Ambassadors.

### Role of East Suffolk Council

- Continue delivery support.
- Ensure strategic direction is locally led via the Place Board and Ambassador leadership subgroup.

### Board Requests / Actions

- Approve the relaunch of the Lowestoft Ambassador Programme.
- Nominate up to four members (or organisational representatives) to join the Ambassador leadership subgroup.
- Support recruitment by promoting the programme and helping to attract a diverse pool of Ambassadors.
- Endorse *Think Lowestoft* as the official place brand.

### Discussion:

- There is still evidently some concern around brand confusion. Kate and Paul W advised this would be for the subgroup to discuss, but the Think Lowestoft brand was created to be used flexibly, and be utilised by others where they saw fit.
- Cllr Smith asked if we can change the name to Love Lowestoft. It was noted that Love Lowestoft already exists, and that there are commercial elements surrounding this. Think Lowestoft was the name and brand endorsed by the Board, and could create more brand confusion by changing the name at this time.
- The board noted that the brand does need to be more visible – Kate advised the subgroup can look at creating some ambassador merchandise to help with visual presence.
- Emma Ratzer asked if there is a budget for Ambassadors attending events.

**Action:** Paul W advised he would explore this, but made it clear that at the moment there is no budget for the programme as we want to create a defined programme first.

- Genevieve asked if the programme could be slimmed down to ensure that we don't over complicate. ESC are supportive of this, to ensure sustainability.

**Action:** Ambassador subgroup to lead on scale of programme

- The Board noted that the new ambassador programme will, need to have a programme strong enough to attract and retain – there are concerns that the programme could end up experiencing the same problems as the previous programme. Kate advised that this will be the purpose of the subgroup – to help shape and guide.
- The board would like to ensure we have strong KPIs – this will be picked up by the subgroup
- **Action:** Kate to move objective 5 to 1.

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|   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The board were asked if they would be happy to support a subgroup to help shape the programme. Stephen Javes, Genevieve Christie, Jess Asato, Angela Grey (Lowestoft Vision) and Clare Varela were nominated to sit on this group. Sarah Foote also offered support.</li> </ul> <p>Action: Kate to arrange a subgroup meeting</p>  |
| 6 | <p><b>Forward Plan - Paul Wood</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Culture – November</li> <li>Health – 2026</li> <li>Pride of Place - 2026</li> </ul>   |
| 7 | <p><b>AOB</b></p> <p><b>Associated British Ports – Paul Ager</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paul advised there are new businesses that are expected to join the port shortly</li> <li>ABP plans major upgrades to modernise the port, boosting efficiency, capacity, and sustainability to meet future trade demands.</li> <li>Also plans to improve the port side of Belvedere Road to support with improving Pride of Place.</li> </ul>   |
|   | <p><b>Summary of actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place Board members to return their profiles to Kate to ensure we meet MHCLG’s funding and audit terms</li> </ul> <p><b>Regeneration updates</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ESC are already actively seeking to change the hoardings and will report back on the changes to be made at the November board meeting</li> <li>Paul W advised he would investigate the procurement route for this work and report back to the Place Board – Darren has spoken to Danny post meeting</li> <li>ESC to ask for the contractor to address the weeds at the Post Office</li> <li>Paul W to speak to Kerry regarding the maintenance and vehicle issues and prioritise street cleaning.</li> </ul> <p><b>Social Value</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paul W to include social value requests in future presentations to the Place Board</li> <li>Paul W to speak to Kerry regarding the maintenance and vehicle issues and prioritise street cleaning.</li> </ul> <p><b>Workshop</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kate and Paul W to develop a draft action plan based on the workshop results and identify who will lead on the actions. This will also include existing activity that is ongoing against the agreed priorities.</li> </ul> <p><b>Ambassador Programme:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ambassador subgroup to lead on scale of programme</li> <li>Paul W advised he would explore budgets for Ambassadors attending events representing Think Lowestoft, but made it clear that at the moment there is no budget for the programme as we want to create a defined programme first.</li> <li>Kate to move objective 5 to 1.</li> <li>Kate to arrange a subgroup meeting</li> </ul> |
| 8 | <p><b>Future meeting dates</b></p> <p>4 November 2025 – Cefas – cancelled</p>   |