



Public Document Pack  
**Boston Borough Council**

**Chief Executive**  
**Rob Barlow**

Municipal Buildings  
Boston  
Lincolnshire PE21 8QR  
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Wednesday 5 November 2025

**Notice of Special meeting of the Cabinet**

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a Special meeting of the Cabinet  
on **Thursday 13th November 2025 at 6.00 pm**  
in the Committee Room - Municipal Buildings, West Street, Boston, PE21 8QR

**Rob Barlow**  
**Chief Executive**

**Membership:**

Leader of the Council:	Councillor Dale Broughton
Deputy Leader:	Councillor Mike Gilbert
Councillors:	John Baxter, Callum Butler, Sandeep Ghosh, Chris Mountain, Claire Rylott, Sarah Sharpe and Helen Staples

Quorum 4

**Members of the public are welcome to attend the committee meeting as observers except during the consideration of exempt or confidential items.**

**This meeting may be subject to being recorded.**

**Agenda**

**Part I - Preliminaries**

**A Apologies for Absence**

To receive apologies for absence.

**B Declarations of Interest**

To receive declarations of interests in respect of any item on the agenda.

**Part II - Agenda Items**

**1 Pride in Place Programme (Boston)**

(Pages 1 - 164)

(A report by Pranali Parikh, Director of Economic Development)

- \* In accordance with the Constitution, recommendations of Overview and Scrutiny Committees referred to Cabinet (if any) shall be included at this point in the agenda (unless they have been considered in the context of the Cabinet deliberations on a substantive item on the agenda) within six weeks of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee completing its report / recommendations.

**Call-In** – any decision taken by the Cabinet concerning an item on this agenda can be ‘called in’ in accordance with the Constitution, within 5 working days of the decision notice being published. It is expected that any decision notices will be published on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2025. Subject to this publication, the deadline for calling in a decision is **5 p.m. on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2025**.

#### **Notes:**

Please contact Democratic Services ([demservices@boston.gov.uk](mailto:demservices@boston.gov.uk)) if you have any queries about the agenda and documents for this meeting.

Council Members who are not able to attend the meeting should notify Democratic Services as soon as possible.

#### **Alternative Versions**

Should you wish to have the agenda or report in an alternative format such as larger text, Braille or a specific language, please telephone 01205 314591.



<b>Report To:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date:</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> November 2025
<b>Subject:</b>	Pride in Place Programme (Boston)
<b>Purpose:</b>	To approve the submission of a new ten-year Regeneration Plan and four-year investment profile for Boston under the UK Government's Pride in Place Programme (formerly Plan for Neighbourhoods).
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Mike Gilbert, Deputy Leader of the Council
<b>Report Of:</b>	Pranali Parikh, Director of Economic Development
<b>Report Author:</b>	Jon Burgess, Programme Manager (Economic Growth)
<b>Ward(s) Affected:</b>	Fenside, Witham, Town Centre, Trinity, Skirbeck, Staniland and St Thomas
<b>Exempt Report:</b>	No

## Summary

This report seeks Cabinet Member approval to proceed the submission of a new ten year Regeneration Plan for Boston under the UK Government's Pride in Place Programme (PiPP). The programme requirements to date have been designed and developed under the previous Government guidance within the Long Term Plan for Towns and Plan for Neighbourhoods prospectuses, prior to a new overarching Pride in Place Strategy being launched on the 25th September 2025.

The Boston Town Board is responsible for delivery of the programme and the allocation of funding to be awarded under to individual projects and organisations. The local authority is required to work in partnership with the Town Board as the lead accountable body to support the programme development and delivery and to ensure compliant use, procurement and expenditure of public funds. The key investment principles underpinning the submission documents have already been approved by the Boston Town Board on the 30<sup>th</sup> October 2025.

The Pride in Place programme will deliver new grant supported activities from April 2026, providing up to £20million of new investment over the next ten financial years. The allocation in the first financial year is the lowest across the ten year programme at

c£600K (rising to c£2m per annum from April 2028). 75% of the funding received under the programme must be spent on eligible capital works. In addition to the submission documents the Council's delivery support team is also working with the Town Board to establish a robust assessment framework that will be used to consider any future funding allocations towards individual projects. This will ensure that the funding awarded is aligned to the programme objectives and community aspirations. It will also consider the level of additional match funding that can be secured and released alongside the Pride in Place funding and the extent to which the impact and activity supported will be sustainable beyond any initial grant funded period.

## **Recommendations**

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the submission of the ten-year Regeneration Plan and Vision for Boston attached at Appendix 2;
2. Approves the proposed four year investment plan profile for Boston as set out at section 3 in the report;
3. Delegates authority to the Director of Economic Development to agree any amendments to the final draft Regeneration Plan and Investment Profile during the submission and assessment phase with UK Government, in consultation with the Chair of the Boston Town Board, Section 151 Officer and Deputy Leader of the Council; and
4. Delegates authority to the Council's Section 151 Officer to approve the submission of the Pride in Place Programme information for Boston to UK Government by the 28<sup>th</sup> November.

## **Reasons for Recommendations**

- To enable the Council to proceed with the Pride in Place Programme submission requirements of the UK Government's by the deadline of midday on the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2025
- To provide an efficient mechanism for the Council to respond to any additional queries or required amendments arising during the UK Government's assessment process of the submitted information for Boston.
- The additional resources available under the Pride in Place Programme provide an opportunity to support delivery of a number of established corporate priorities and objectives, including those identified within the current Town Centre Strategy for Boston and the Boston Borough Plan for 2040, Growth and Prosperity Plan and the SELCP Cultural Framework.



## Other Options Considered

To not participate in the Pride in Place Programme for Boston

To seek an alternative accountable body structure to deliver the funding programme

### 1. Background

- 1.1 The award of up to £20million of new grant funding over a ten year period has been allocated to Boston as one of 75 towns included under Phase One of the Pride in Place Programme (formerly Plan for Neighbourhoods). The programme now forms part of the UK Government's wider Pride in Place Strategy published on the 25<sup>th</sup> September 2025 which is intended to represent a new way for government to work in partnership with communities and neighbourhoods, empowering them with the tools and levers to drive meaningful change that reflects their priorities.
- 1.2 The Pride in Place Programme has three key objectives:
  - **Creating Thriving Places:** Town centres and neighbourhoods must evolve and regenerate to better reflect the needs and habits of their community, with busy high streets, a good range of local amenities, high-quality physical infrastructure and public services that are accessible, responsive, and tailored to local need.
  - **Building Stronger communities** - empowering Towns Boards to tackle the root causes of disengagement and division, rebuilding relationships, and restoring a collective sense of belonging to their community, bringing people together so they can feel proud of their area and safe in their neighbourhood.
  - **Helping communities to take back control of their own lives and areas** - putting more power, tools and resources in the hands of communities, giving them a greater stake in their area and economy and a stronger voice in the decisions that matter to them.
- 1.3 Decision-making on how and where this new funding is spent sits with Boston Town Board, working in partnership with Boston Borough Council. The Town Board must develop a plan for their local area and distribute funding to the projects to deliver on this vision. This may include the regeneration of a town square, local community centre or social club, the development of a new community garden, the rollout of a new programme to tackle homelessness or services to tackle child poverty and provide essential support to families and young people. Similarly, the Board may choose to use the funding to develop an action plan to address local cohesion issues, or local arts, cultural, heritage and sport initiatives. All activities supported by the programme must be shaped and informed by undertaking meaningful, iterative engagement with the local community, ensuring that any future investment reflects local need and evidencing that that people's priorities have been acted upon.
- 1.4 The Cabinet has previously approved a report on the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2025 to agree the allocation of the capacity fund element of Programme. That report provided a further summary of the programme objectives and work being undertaken to support the submission requirements.

## 2. Report

- 2.1 In order to meet the requirements to the Pride in Place programme and release the allocated funding for Boston, the Council must submit the following information by the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2025:
- i) A **10-year vision**: setting out the strategic vision for the place and where, why and how funds will be targeted and managed, taking account of the local area's challenges and opportunities. The proposed ten year Vision Document for Boston is attached at Appendix 2.
  - ii) A **4-year investment plan**: a more detailed plan outlining how the funding will be used in the first investment period of the programme, including:
    - how the local community has been engaged and involved them in design of the investment plan
    - the outcomes that are intended to be targeted based on local context
    - the interventions the Neighbourhood Board wish to prioritise
    - when funding is intended to be spent
    - the proposed route to market and management arrangements for the funding
- 2.2 Whilst the ten-year vision for Boston is expected to remain static over the programme period, there are sufficient flexibilities within the future funding profile to adapt and respond to changes in local need, opportunities and challenges. As such, the initial submission is required to set out indicative allocations against funding priorities and proposed intervention themes, in line with community feedback. It is not required at this stage to identify specific projects that will be funded.
- 2.3 In line with the published guidance, the development of the ten-year vision document and four year investment profile for Boston is based on a coordinated programme of local consultation. This work has been undertaken within the local community over the last two summers to help identify local resident's priorities for new investment that will deliver a visible and tangible improvement to local assets and service delivery that they would like to see within their town. The detailed findings of the community engagement process are attached at Appendix 4.
- 2.4 Extensive consultation undertaken from June–August 2025 (building on previous 2024 efforts under the Long Term Plan for Towns process) has gathered over 1,100 local community responses via surveys, workshops, and stakeholder events. This process has identified nine key priorities aligned to the Pride in Place objectives:
1. Enhancing safety and security (Stronger Communities)
  2. Revitalising the town centre (Thriving Place)
  3. Celebrating heritage, arts, and culture (Thriving Place)
  4. Improving education and skills (Stronger Communities)
  5. Supporting enterprise and business growth (Thriving Place)
  6. Supporting health and wellbeing (Stronger Communities)
  7. Enhancing green spaces and connectivity (Thriving Place)
  8. Addressing housing affordability (Stronger Communities)
  9. Building community capacity and empowerment (Taking Back Control)

- 2.5 These priorities, cross-referenced with neighbourhood-level data for Fenside, Witham, Town Centre, Trinity, Skirbeck, Staniland and St Thomas wards will ensure targeted interventions are developed that address spatial variations in deprivation and opportunity.
- 2.6 The networks created will support ongoing communication, encourage new leaders, and strengthen community ties throughout the delivery period. This platform will not only support the Pride in Place programme but also foster broader, long-term community engagement. 169 of the people who have responded to the consultation to date would like to be kept informed. We intend to develop this group as a consultation panel to ensure we engage very deeply on an ongoing basis with local people.
- 2.7 The Council will be the accountable body and will have responsibility for overall delivery, engagement with the Board, ensuring that public funds are distributed fairly and effectively, and that funds have been managed in line with the Nolan Principles and Managing Public Money principles. The Council will also be responsible for compliance with legal responsibilities in relation to subsidy control, state aid and procurement.
- 2.8 The Council in consultation with the Town Board is required to ensure that:
- the appropriate capacity and capability are in place throughout the programme period to ensure that funds are distributed effectively in the local area
  - residents, businesses, and grassroots organisations are actively involved in programme design and decision-making to ensure delivery reflects the priorities of local people and helps build capacity within the community
  - monitoring and evaluation are undertaken according to the Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy (yet to be published).

### **3. Investment Plan**

- 3.1 The first four years (2026–2030) of the Pride in Place programme will focus on delivering tangible outcomes in the lead-up to Boston 2030, prioritising interventions that address immediate community needs, build social trust, and lay foundations for long-term regeneration.
- 3.2 The Investment Plan is structured around the three Pride in Place objectives, with priority interventions targeting the seven neighbourhoods to address specific challenges (e.g. high deprivation in Fenside, retail decline in Town Centre). Interventions are designed to be agile, community-led, and aligned with existing investments (e.g., Towns Fund, Levelling Up, UKSPF). The plan includes a mix of early quick wins to build confidence, such as town centre enhancements and community safety hubs, while investing in longer-term goals like skills development and heritage activation. The table in Appendix 3 identifies the priorities, expected outcomes and delivery options to achieve them.
- 3.3 Funding will be allocated to projects using a transparent scoring and assessment framework, agreed by the Town Board allowing the Board to assess deliverability, value for money, strategic fit and benefits and impact of the proposed projects.

- 3.4 The Investment Plan is a live document that will be kept under review by the Town Board and is likely to be updated on annual basis in light of changing priorities, challenges and emerging opportunities. Annual updates on progress will be reported to the Cabinet on regular basis.
- 3.4 The table below outlines the phased expenditure for the listed projects from 2026/27 to 2029/30. Each project's annual allocation is split into revenue and capital, with an additional aspiration of leveraging 50% more from other public and private sector funding. This is a key aspirational principle to inform the future identification of projects and not a formal commitment from any party at this stage. Each project heading reflects the sum of revenue, capital, and leveraged funding for that year (there is some very modest rounding in the table). Housing interventions have been combined with wider town centre revitalisation. Similarly, education and skills and health and well-being have been combined with community capacity building and youth engagement to ensure that there is enough budget scale to address key issues which span these themes. Year One costs include £150,000 of further revenue capacity funding.

Table 1 – Four year investment plan profile

<b>Project</b>	<b>2026/27</b>	<b>2027/28</b>	<b>2028/29</b>	<b>2029/30</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>
Town Centre Revitalisation	£180,125	£723,550	£702,000	£702,000	£2,307,675
Revenue	£55,380	£72,816	£130,830	£130,830	£389,856
Capital	£124,745	£650,734	£571,170	£571,170	£1,917,819
Anticipated Leverage (50%)	£90,063	£361,775	£351,000	£351,000	£1,153,838
Heritage and Culture Activation	£64,625	£262,300	£271,000	£271,000	£868,925
Revenue	£34,125	£43,050	£73,500	£73,500	£224,175
Capital	£30,500	£219,250	£197,500	£197,500	£644,750
Anticipated Leverage (50%)	£32,313	£131,150	£135,500	£135,500	£434,463
Green Spaces and Connectivity	£0	£219,250	£158,000	£158,000	£535,250
Revenue	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Capital	£0	£219,250	£158,000	£158,000	£535,250
Anticipated Leverage (50%)	£0	£109,625	£79,000	£79,000	£267,625
Safety and Security	£243,000	£518,450	£614,000	£614,000	£1,989,450
Revenue	£82,875	£79,950	£128,940	£128,940	£420,705
Capital	£160,125	£438,500	£485,060	£485,060	£1,568,745
Anticipated Leverage (50%)	£121,500	£259,225	£307,000	£307,000	£994,725
Community Capacity Building	£52,125	£162,300	£181,500	£181,500	£577,425
Revenue	£29,250	£30,750	£63,000	£63,000	£186,000
Capital	£22,875	£131,550	£118,500	£118,500	£391,425
Anticipated Leverage (50%)	£26,063	£81,150	£90,750	£90,750	£288,713

Youth Engagement	£52,125	£106,150	£110,500	£110,500	£379,275
Revenue	£29,250	£18,450	£31,500	£31,500	£110,700
Capital	£22,875	£87,700	£79,000	£79,000	£268,575
Anticipated Leverage (50%)	£26,063	£53,075	£55,250	£55,250	£189,638
<b>Project</b>	<b>2026/27</b>	<b>2027/28</b>	<b>2028/29</b>	<b>2029/30</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>
Total Core Programme Funding	£592,000	£1,992,000	£2,037,000	£2,037,000	£6,658,000
Total Revenue Delivery Grant	£230,880	£245,016	£427,770	£427,770	£1,664,500
Total Capital Delivery Grant	£361,120	£1,746,984	£1,609,230	£1,609,230	£4,993,500
Total Anticipated Leveraged Funding (not secured)	£296,000	£996,000	£1,018,500	£1,018,500	£3,329,000
Total Programme Fund (targeted)	£888,000	£2,988,000	£3,055,500	£3,055,500	£9,987,000

#### 4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The profile of the funding to be awarded across the 10 year Programme is attached at Appendix 3. The grant funding will be paid to the Council on an annual basis to deliver the agreed Regeneration Plan for Boston. The Town Board will be able to agree changes to the initial investment plan profile during the delivery phase, as new project opportunities emerge and more detailed project design work and continued community engagement is undertaken. Any unspent funding in one financial year can be rolled forward into future years for delivery, but the Council cannot draw down future years grant funding in advance of the allocated financial year.
- 4.2 Both the financial year allocations and percentage split of capital and revenue funding are fixed. No adjustments will be made to future years funding allocations to account for inflation over the delivery period. The Town Board and Council will seek to maximise the overall level of investment into Boston through the programme by supporting viable and sustainable projects which are also able to unlock and leverage in additional match funding where possible.
- 4.3 HM Treasury define capital spending as expenditure on creating or enhancing assets that provide a long-term benefit, such as infrastructure, buildings, and IT systems, distinguishing it from day-to-day revenue spending like salaries. Capital spending results in the acquisition of a tangible or intangible capital asset. Examples include building new roads or hospitals and acquiring new equipment or software licenses. Incidental costs directly related to acquiring or disposing of an asset, such as legal fees, are also considered capital expenditure.
- 4.4 The delivery of the regeneration plan projects will be overseen by the Town Board and provision will be made within the investment profile to allocate dedicated programme management funding to support the delivery of the Regeneration Plan and provide continued support to the Town Board. For day to day management and co-ordination of the programme including reporting to MHCLG and the Town Board,

the Council will need to draw on a number of different service areas to provide appropriate support including finance, communications, legal and economic development. The Council is not asked to allocate additional funding to support the programme management or delivery functions.

- 4.5 Some of the projects identified in the regeneration plan may need to be delivered by the Council but the funding cannot be used to replace or substitute existing expenditure on core or statutory functions of the Council. MHCLG encourage consideration of appropriate local voluntary and charity organisations to lead on delivery, facilitated through the Town Board.
- 4.6 Any additional impact on Council's finances and officer capacity as a result of the decisions taken by the Town Board for implementation of the regeneration plan will be brought back to the Cabinet for consideration at relevant stages.

## **5 Conclusion**

- 5.1 The Pride in Place programme has at its core a partnership between the Boston Town Board and Boston Borough Council, supported by the UK Government. This partnership will drive growth by improving the physical and social infrastructure of their community and deliver tangible improvements to the everyday lives of Boston.
- 5.2 The submission of a locally agreed and approved Regeneration Plan and four year investment profile for Boston is a requirement of the Pride in Place Programme, in order to release the allocated funding to the local authority to enable the future years delivery. The information must be submitted via an online ('Delta') portal by midday on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2025.
- 5.3 This represents the next step in the process towards agreeing a formal Memorandum of Understanding. Once the funding offer is confirmed, officers will bring a future report back to Cabinet to consider the terms of the MoU, accept the funding into the updated Council's budget and request any delegated authority arrangements to deliver the funding profile in accordance with the approved submission.
- 5.4 If any further queries are generated during the Government's assessment process before March 2026, it is proposed that the Director of Economic Development is authorised to approve any responses in consultation with the Chair of the Town Board, Leader of the Council and the Council's appointed Section 151 Officer.
- 5.5 Where there are opportunities to align priorities and resources under the Pride in Place Programme with existing Council service and strategy delivery, the Council will work with relevant service leads and Portfolio Holders to develop proposals which are able to provide additional benefit to local communities.

## **Implications**

### **South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership**

Cumulatively, SELCP is due to receive up to £80m of new investment for the local area over the next ten financial years under the Pride in Place Programme. This represents a significant opportunity to provide enhanced places and better outcomes for the residents,

businesses and visitors of South and East Lincolnshire and to achieve economies of scale in the delivery of coordinated approach to linked interventions across four towns in the Partnership area. Boston, Skegness and Spalding are included in Phase One of the current Programme. Mablethorpe is allocated under Phase Two of the programme, due to commence delivery from April 2027.

### **Corporate Priorities**

The Plan for Neighbourhoods programme provides the opportunity for existing Council and public services to deliver additional benefit in the approved towns under the agreed themes and proposed interventions. Service Managers will be consulted as part of the development and delivery phase.

### **Staffing**

Additional project management resource is secured to support the team in delivering this significantly increased level of work.

### **Workforce Capacity Implications**

The delivery of the Plan may require additional capacity within the teams. Capacity implications of any actions included in the regeneration plan will need to be considered and monitored on ongoing basis.

### **Constitutional and Legal Implications**

The Council will act as the accountable body for the funds with responsibility for ensuring that public funds are distributed fairly and effectively, and that funds have been managed in line with the Nolan Principles and Managing Public Money principles. The Council will also be responsible for compliance with legal responsibilities in relation to subsidy control, state aid and procurement.

As an accountable body, the Council must comply with the Subsidy Control Act 2022 when administering public money under the programme. Accountable bodies should familiarise themselves with the Subsidy Control Act, and the statutory guidance which is updated periodically.

The Council may need to recover funding from project deliverers where subsidy control has not been complied with.

The Council will be responsible for ensuring that all funding is managed in accordance with relevant public contract regulations.

### **Data Protection**

Any exchange of data and information with Town Board and other partners will be subject to data protection regulations.

### **Financial**

As set out within Section 4 of the main report

## **Risk Management**

The key risks to be managed in the process of the submission of the Regeneration Plan are:

1. Capacity – to prepare the Regeneration Plan in compliance with the guidance and in timescales prescribed by the Government.
2. Inclusive engagement – Boston communities from all quarters have an opportunity to influence the Regeneration Plan.
3. Partnership – relationship between the Council, the Town Board and partners is constructive and collaborative to maximise the benefits of the community.
4. Deliverability – the Regeneration Plan is aspirational and deliverable to ensure the desired outcomes are achieved.
5. Accountability – the Council as accountable body is responsible for compliance to a range of issues as identified in the legal implications above.

## **Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales**

The Town Board membership was reviewed in March 2025 in alignment with the priority themes of the Plan for neighbourhood. The Deputy Leader of the Council, Cllr Mike Gilbert, sits on the Town Board for Boston. Engagement with stakeholders and communities is part of the programme of activities that the Town Board is leading in preparation of the Plan. The main body of the report provides detailed discussion of stakeholder engagement undertaken to date and of further scheduled activities. The guidance for PfN makes clear that Board are expected to undertake stakeholder engagement and consultation across the full 10-year funding period to ensure Plans are aligned to emerging priorities. Boston Scrutiny Committee also received a presentation on the process in October 2025.

## **Reputation**

The Pride in Place Programme presents a positive and good news story for increasing Pride in Place in Boston. It places the Council in a positive position at the heart of a partnership with the Town Board and MHCLG to drive and deliver meaningful change for the community. The investment builds on a successful track record with Government in delivering major regeneration programmes in Boston via the Towns Fund and Levelling Up funds.

## **Contracts**

The local authority in each place will act as the accountable body for the funds with responsibility for ensuring that public funds are distributed fairly and effectively, and that funds have been managed in line with the [Nolan Principles](#) and [Managing Public Money](#) principles. They will also be responsible for compliance with legal responsibilities in relation to subsidy control and procurement.

## **Crime and Disorder**

Safety and security is one of the key themes as part of the Plan for Boston.



## **Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding**

Equality, inclusivity and accessibility are key principles for the preparation of the Plan for Boston.

## **Health and Wellbeing**

Health and Wellbeing is one of the key priority themes for the Plan for Boston.

## **Climate Change and Environment Impact Assessment**

None arising from this report

## **Acronyms**

None

## **Appendices**

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report:

Appendix 1	Boston Intervention Area
Appendix 2	Boston Regeneration Plan and Ten Year Vision Document
Appendix 3	Indicative Ten Year Spend Profile
Appendix 4	Summary of Engagement Report

## **Background Papers**

Links to the guidance published to date on the new prospectus are provided below:

- [Plan for Neighbourhoods: prospectus - GOV.UK](#)
- [Plan for Neighbourhoods: pre-approved interventions - GOV.UK](#)
- [Plan for Neighbourhoods: list of powers - GOV.UK](#)
- [Plan for Neighbourhoods: governance and boundary guidance - GOV.UK](#)
- [Plan for Neighbourhoods: Regeneration Plan guidance - GOV.UK](#)

## **Chronological History of this Report**

8<sup>th</sup> July 2025 - Cabinet – Plan for Neighbourhoods Capacity Fund

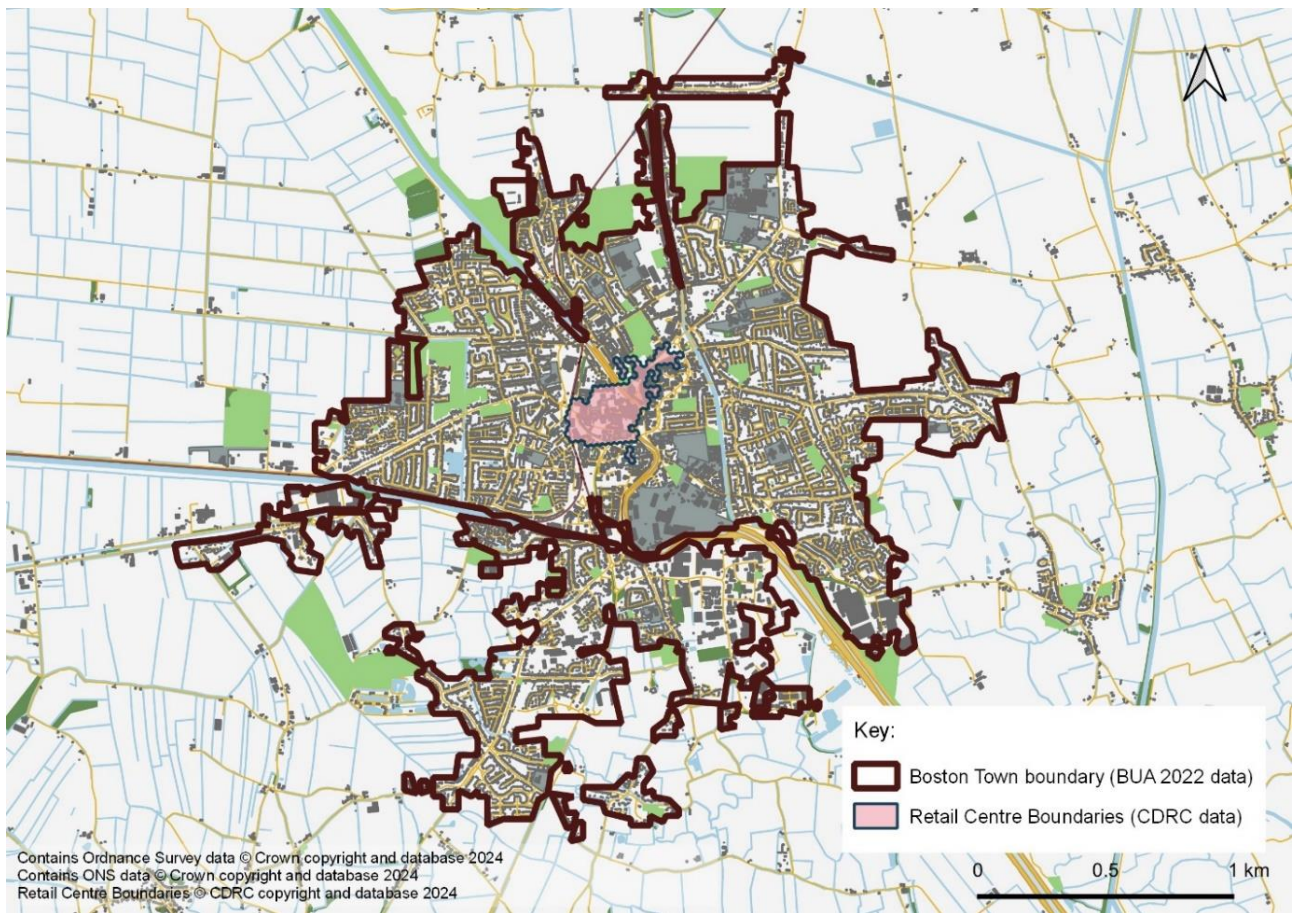
## **Report Approval**

Report author:	Jon Burgess, Programme Manager (Economic Development) <a href="mailto:jon.burgess@e-lindsey.gov.uk">jon.burgess@e-lindsey.gov.uk</a>
Signed off by:	Pranali Parikh, Director of Economic Development <a href="mailto:pranali.parikh@boston.gov.uk">pranali.parikh@boston.gov.uk</a>
Approved for publication:	Councillor Mike Gilbert, Deputy Leader of the Council <a href="mailto:mike.gilbert@boston.gov.uk">mike.gilbert@boston.gov.uk</a>

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## Boston Pride in Place Submission

### Appendix 1: Boston Intervention Area





# Boston Pride in Place

## Appendix 2

### Boston 10-Year Vision Document

#### Section 1: Local Context

##### Pride in Place

The Pride in Place programme will make £20 million available to Boston over the next 10 years as part of a transformative opportunity for the Town. It builds on a highly successful programme of regeneration which through Towns Fund and Levelling Up resources has seen approaching £40 million already deployed in the town. This vision document explains how we plan to use these new resources for the benefit of Boston. We begin with our vision statement which summarises the ambition underlying the text which follows setting out our plans further. A more detailed investment strategy for the first four years of the programme is also attached to this vision document.

##### Vision Statement

***Boston—a place where history and progress walk hand in hand. From the Market Place to the riverbanks, there's energy in the air and kindness on the streets. The town is a hub of ideas and action, shaped by the people who live here and believe in its future.***

***The centre is vibrant, with cafés spilling into squares, shops run by locals, and art that tells our story. The Stump rises proudly above spaces that work—distinct zones where retail, community, and enterprise each have room to breathe. Empty buildings become beating hearts: enterprise hubs, community spaces, places that give people reasons to linger. Visitors come to meet founding fathers and write new stories.***

***Young people are staying. Not because they have to, but because they want to; they can grow their futures right here. Conversations sound different now: "here's what's waiting for you" rather than "good luck out there." Investment in skills, creativity, and genuine pathways has invigorated ambition. Our youth are confident in their worlds.***

***Green space surrounds us and runs through us. The River Witham flows clear, flanked by wildflowers and walking paths. Transport is joined-up and getting around is simple.***

***Homes are affordable, warm, safe, and tidy. People feel rooted, not stuck. Communities respect and shape their surroundings.***

***Boston welcomes the world. We've celebrated the birth of our American offspring and we're a source of pride for their children. Our strength lies in our diversity—long-settled families and new arrivals who've found hope here. We speak many languages but share the same dreams. We've learned that working together creates the foundation for laughing together.***

***People have power here. Decisions aren't handed down—they're built up together, from doorstep to town level. We solve problems side-by-side.***

***We are famous again—not just for our past, but for what we're becoming. A place of action and imagination. A town that believes in itself. A town that's moved forward without leaving anyone behind.***

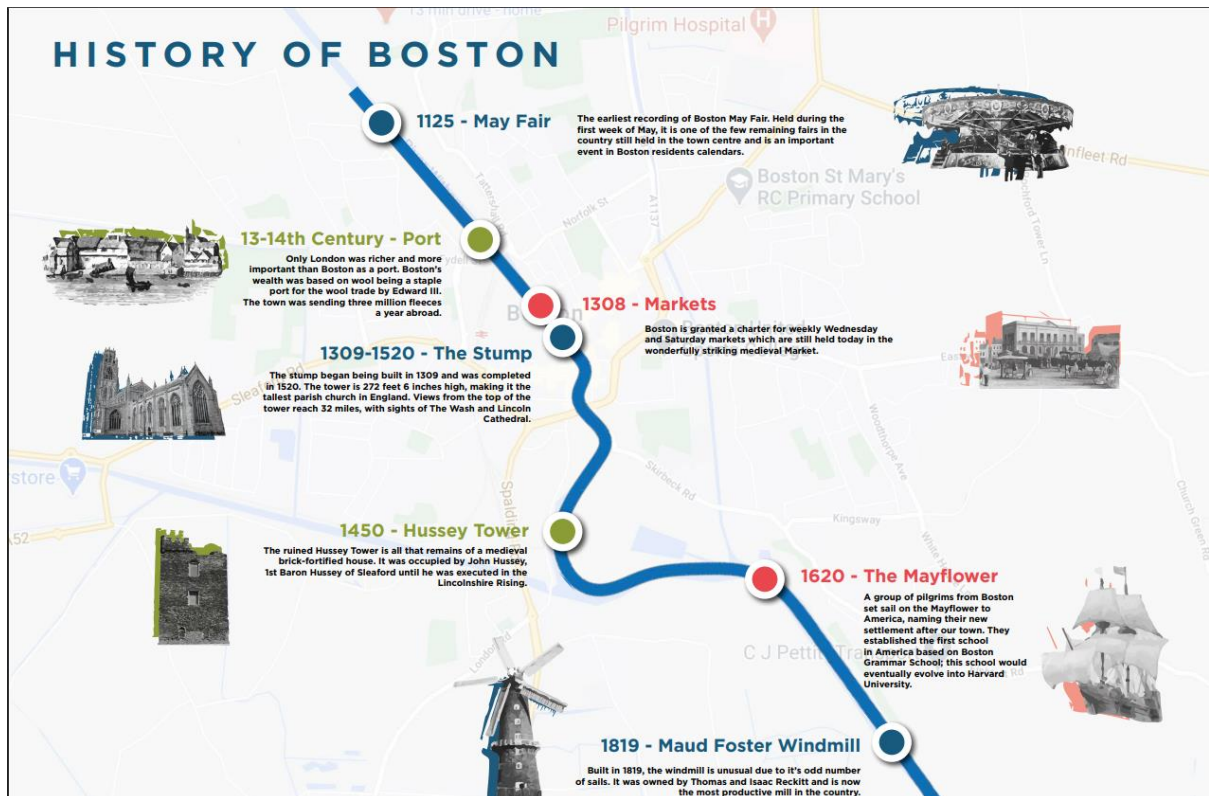
## **Boston, Lincolnshire: An Introduction**

Nestled between the Wash and the Humber, Boston stands as a town of remarkable contrasts—where its medieval church tower pierces the Fenland sky and dozens of languages echo through market streets. Lincoln as the county's 'principal city' has developed exponentially over the last thirty years and many Bostonians admit to a resentment from feeling 'left behind'. This is a community shaped by a thousand years of global connections, from its medieval heyday as England's second busiest port to today's reality as home to people from over thirty nations. Despite those who recognise its beauty and potential, many people in Boston and the surrounding area appear to have "fallen out of love" with the town.

## **A Legacy of Global Reach**

Boston's heritage is international. In the 13th century, Hanseatic merchants made this Fenland port their English headquarters, creating wealth that built the magnificent St Botolph's Church—"The Stump"—whose tower still dominates the landscape. The sea has long been integral to Boston's identity, producing explorers such as Mathew Flinders and George Bass, as well as Sir John Franklin of nearby Spilsby. The town's history also includes Sir Joseph Banks and his involvement in the draining of the Fens creating fertile land to feed a flourishing country. In 1842, local man Herbert Ingram founded The Illustrated London News, further enhancing Boston's cultural legacy. The opening of a new dock in 1882 once again expanded trade and the fishing industry from the port.

Although it was built on trade that funded its elegant architecture, the town's most famous export wasn't wool or grain, but ideals. Some of the Pilgrim Fathers who sailed on the Mayflower in 1620 had links with Boston and a decade later another influential group, including Isaac Johnson carried Boston's spirit across to the New World on the Arbella as part of the Winthrop Fleet. The Pilgrims' arrival and influence laid the groundwork for the society and freedoms that shaped America and in 1630 Isaac Johnson was instrumental in naming their settlement on the coast of Massachusetts after this town. As 2030 approaches—marking 400 years since that founding—both Bostons prepare to celebrate their enduring connection.



## Today's Boston: A Community in Transition

With over 30% of residents born outside the UK, this is one of England's most internationally diverse smaller towns. Polish bakeries sit alongside traditional fish and chip shops, while Romanian families and long-established Lincolnshire families send their children to the same schools. This cultural richness brings both vibrancy and complexity to a community still finding its rhythm.

Boston's unique built environment is not just a reminder of the past: it can be an engine of renewal that, alongside wider change creates a stronger economy and increased civic pride. Heritage is critical to Boston's identity and future but the somewhat 'sprawling' town centre and its 'offer' has no clear theme or identity differentiating itself from others and easing a path to regeneration.

Economically, Boston faces the challenges common to many post-industrial towns. The local economy relies heavily on sectors that provide strong levels of employment but often at lower wages; while employment rates are relatively high, the Gross Value Added per capita is significantly below the national average. While the value of housing stock is low and housing should be affordable, low wages skew the average house price to earnings ratio in the opposite direction. The town centre, punctuated by vacant shops at numbers significantly above the national average, reflects the broader struggle of high streets across England.

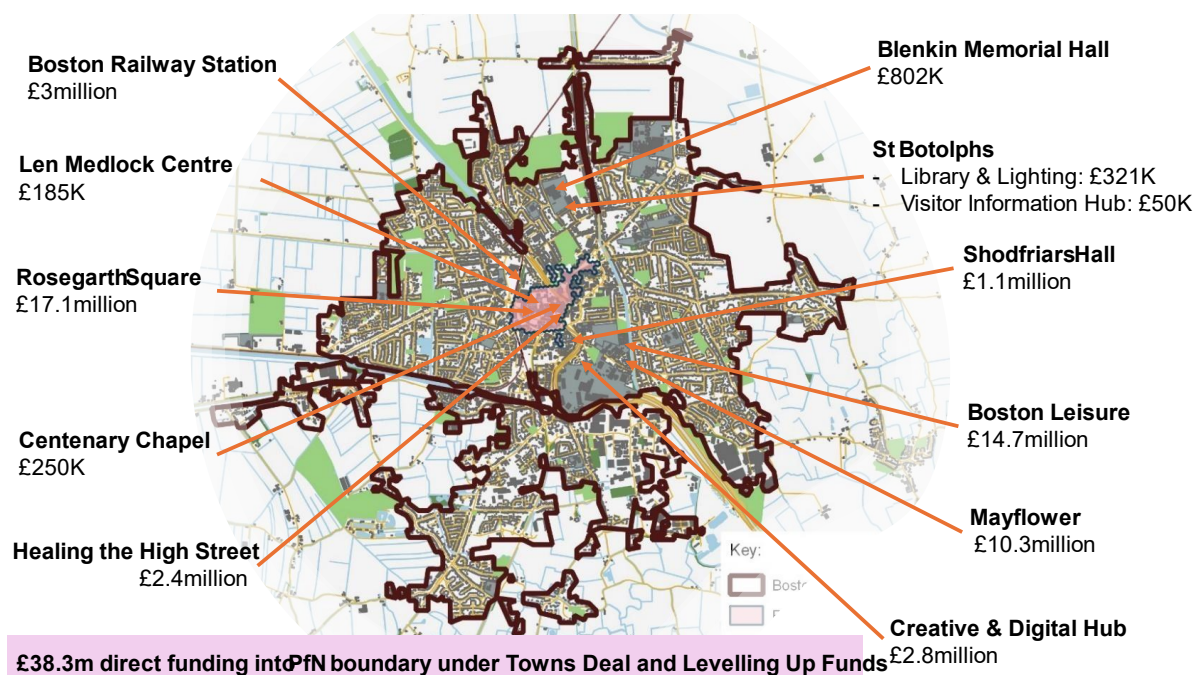
Boston today is a community at a crossroads, where medieval heritage meets modern migration, where agricultural tradition encounters technological change. The town's greatest asset may be its people—both those whose families have worked these Fens for generations and those who've recently made Boston their home, all contributing to a story that's far from finished.



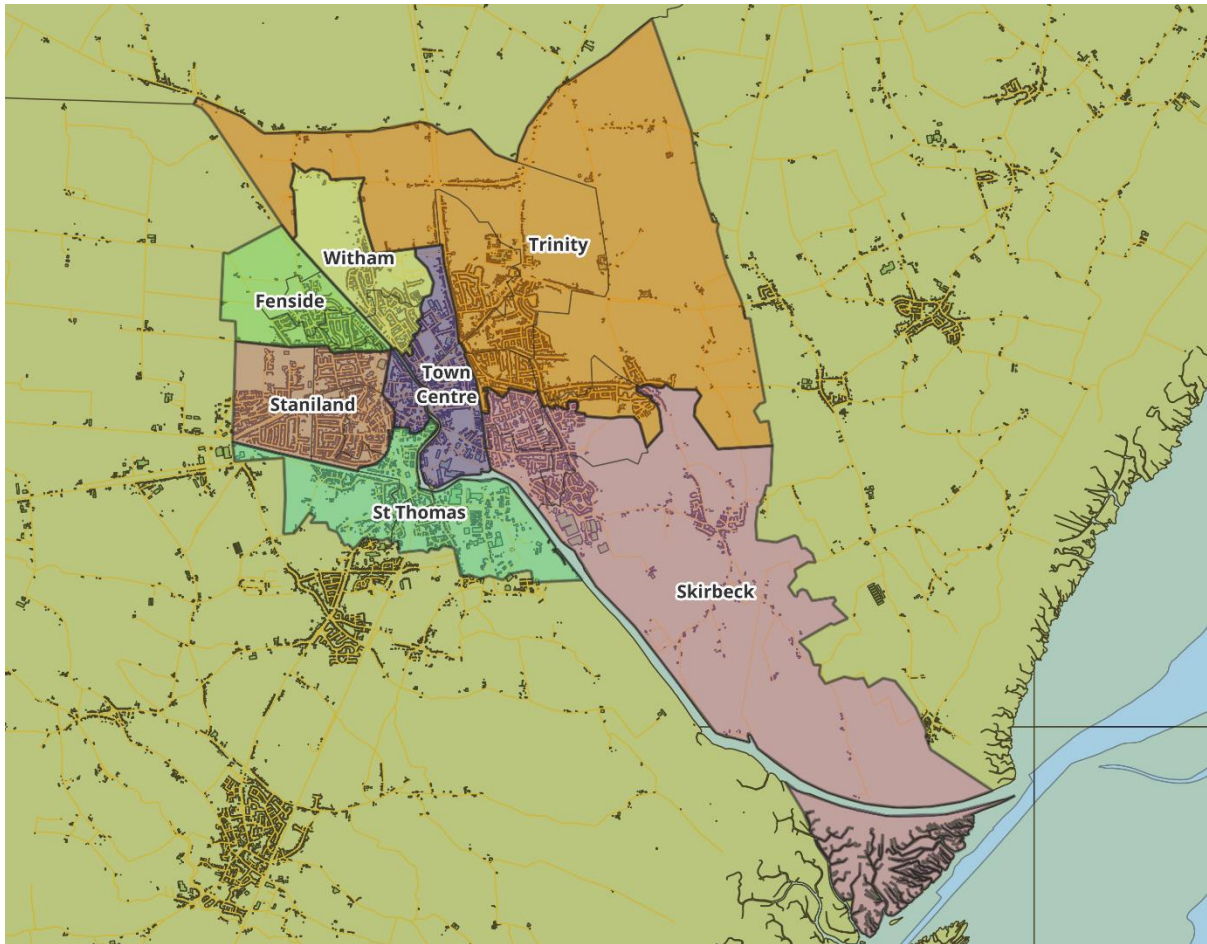
## Section 2: Spatial Targeting – How Boston Fits Together as a Place

The Boston Built-up Area (BUA), eligible for investment through the programme, is split into seven sub-areas: Fenside, Witham, Town Centre, Trinity, Skirbeck, Staniland, and St Thomas. The Boston Town Board has used the most suitable data from various sources to create a detailed and up-to-date profile of the town. Detailed analyses for each sub-area are available, revealing significant differences in some cases, which helps the Town Board and its partners target interventions for maximum impact.

The following maps show (1) the locations of existing government-funded projects and (2) the seven main neighbourhoods within the Boston BUA showing areas of focus for the Neighbourhood Plan programme.







## Section 3: Vision for the Future

### Boston's Vision - Introduction

This vision for the next 10 years will be part of a longer journey. We know that we can deliver significant change within the social, economic, and physical fabric of the town within ten years, but this work will not be completed. We will pre-empt and lay foundations for future change and by 2035 we will have a sustainable community-led model in place to continue, develop, and build on this programme.

The people of Boston understand that the clock cannot be turned back but overwhelmingly and understandably want to retain a focus on the town's history and heritage—celebrating it, bringing it to life, and positioning it alongside progress. A pioneering town, not a pastiche of its former self—attracting new business and enterprise, particularly within a theme of heritage and culture, crafts, art, and digital creativity, supporting a small but differentiated town centre that thrives and delights.

### Detailed Vision Highlighting Key Areas of Change

#### Brilliant Boston

Boston is a town where the glow of its history lights the way to a bold future. Landmark buildings and historic streets are restored and reimagined, alive with performance, creativity, and colour. Festivals, markets, and celebrations spill into the squares and along the riverbanks, telling Boston's story in ways that captivate residents and visitors alike. The town is a stage, a place to share our talents, honour our heritage, and make new memories.

### **A Thriving Place**

Together we are working to establish a clear "identity" for Boston that not only encapsulates our vision but helps drive sustainable change. An identity that differentiates Boston from neighbouring towns, sets expectations, and gives people a reason to join us here—to visit, work, play, and reside. An identity that helps us attract entrepreneurs, new business, and investment and create new employment, retail, and leisure opportunities. A place where young people are supported, talent is nurtured, and enterprise is embraced.

Rather than a reinvention, Boston needs to untangle the muddle. The town centre's confusion isn't terminal; it's a navigation problem waiting for thoughtful solutions. Instead of forcing everything to compete in the same struggling space, we can create distinct but connected zones where retail, business, leisure, and community have room to breathe and thrive.

We picture walking through a centre where a tourist knows where they are going—where clear pathways guide them from the revived medieval marketplace to independent shops tucked into previously forgotten corners, where local artists and makers offer experiences that no online store can replicate. Empty buildings that now stand as monuments to decline could become the beating heart of renewal: enterprise hubs where new businesses incubate, community spaces where different generations finally meet on common ground, leisure facilities that give people reasons to linger.

Boston's architectural heritage—from The Stump's ancient grandeur to Georgian merchants' houses—needs more than preservation; it needs activation and animation. Modern technology and creative interpretation can make these stones speak to visitors and residents alike, telling stories that connect past innovation to present possibility. This isn't about turning Boston into a museum but about making its remarkable history work for its future.

The town already knows how to party—recent innovative events have proven that people will come together when given something worth celebrating. As we build toward "Boston 400" in 2030, these are not just isolated festivals but stepping stones toward a new identity. Winter illuminations could transform the dark Fenland months from an endurance test to anticipation, while summer festivals remind everyone—locals and visitors—why this place matters to so many.

This is regeneration rooted in reality: not grand promises that fail to materialise. We are planning practical changes that translate into transformation. Boston has the bones of greatness; it simply needs the confidence and a body map to assemble them into a revitalised whole.

### **A Stronger Community: From Division to Unity**

Boston faces the same fractures troubling communities across Britain—fewer than half of us see ourselves as truly part of a community. But division isn't destiny, and Boston has something many places lack: a track record of reinvention and the institutional backbone to make change happen.

The challenge isn't abstract. It's visible in the generational tensions around diversity, the economic divides between opportunity and struggle, the geographic separation between those thriving and those left behind. By 2035, these divisions won't have magically disappeared, but they will have transformed from barriers into bridges. The town's productivity challenges, skills gaps, and educational needs will still require attention—but by then, we'll be building on success rather than scrambling to address crisis.

Picture Boston's young people in 2035 having genuine choices: staying for careers that matter, leaving knowing they're always welcome home, or creating entirely new paths that didn't previously exist. Picture employers who don't just complain about skills shortages but actively collaborate to solve them through apprenticeships, upskilling programmes, and community partnerships. Picture learning spaces where a grandmother teaches traditional cooking while gaining digital literacy, where recent arrivals share professional expertise while improving their English.

This isn't about erasing differences or forcing artificial harmony. Boston's strength lies in being multiple identities learning to become one community—integrated but not homogenised, connected but not conformist. Cultural diversity becomes an asset when Polish construction expertise meets Lincolnshire agricultural knowledge, when Iranian business acumen combines with established local networks, when teenage tech skills help elders' wisdom reach new audiences.

The path forward mirrors successful examples where people are empowered. Research suggests that reaching Nordic levels of social trust could generate £100 billion annually across the UK—Boston's version of this transformation could be equally valuable at local scale.

Our vision is communities that care for each other not through obligation but through genuine connection—where respect is earned through shared experience, where working together creates the foundation for laughing together, where Boston's remarkable diversity becomes its greatest competitive advantage. This is what a stronger community looks like: not the absence of difference, but the presence of belonging.

### **Taking Back Control: From the Ground Up**

The uncomfortable truth is that talent exists everywhere, but opportunity doesn't. A child born in Boston shouldn't face drastically different life chances than one born in London, yet that's exactly what happens when communities lack the power to shape their own futures. Taking back control means creating the infrastructure for local people to solve local problems while building something bigger.

Boston's challenge is familiar: too many people living payslip to payslip, too many brilliant ideas never getting the chance to flourish. But the solution isn't waiting for someone else to fix things. Look at what's working elsewhere, tackling employment challenges by investing in

training and reinvesting profits into local skills development by bringing together communities, businesses, and public services to tackle deprivation at its roots.

Boston needs its own version: community groups, business networks, and local institutions working together because they're genuinely invested in the town's future. This means bottom-up solutions created by the people who'll live with the consequence—residents organising improvements, businesses creating apprenticeships, community groups bridging barriers, entrepreneurs getting support to turn ideas into jobs for them and a new workforce.

The vision is a network operating at every scale: doorstep initiatives solving immediate problems, street-level organising building social capital, town-wide collaboration attracting investment. When people have ownership, they take responsibility. When they take responsibility, pride follows. When pride returns, everything else becomes possible.

Boston will be famous again—not just for what we were, but for what we're becoming. A place where action meets imagination, where communities believe in themselves because they've proven what they can achieve together. A town that moves forward without leaving anyone behind, because moving forward together is the only way that lasts. This is taking back control in its truest sense: communities empowering themselves to create the change they need to see.

## **What Success Looks Like**

While the challenges and opportunities, derived from evidence-based data and community feedback, reflect the areas for change over the ten-year period, we recognise that we cannot address everything at once; we understand the need to prioritise and sequence change to optimise the benefit of the investment and that the process of change will continue after the programme ends.

We are delivering change within a constantly changing world—there is a need to remain agile, scanning the horizon, pre-empting or responding to external influences and reflecting the changing needs and priorities of our communities—this is their plan.

Each intervention or project will have clear objectives and milestones allowing us to monitor and drive benefit realisation and these will be set within the context of the overarching measures we will set for the programme. We are in the process of designing our “dashboard”, setting baselines, milestones, and targets. At high level, examples of measures include:

### **A Thriving Place**

- Boston established and recognised as a regional centre for culture, arts, crafts, and creativity
- Acclaimed delivery of Boston (2030) 400 with a significant and successful legacy events programme
- Visitor numbers increased with related economic impact increased by 25% per annum
- GVA per capita increased by at least 30% in real terms
- Commercial vacancies reduced from well above national average to national average or below

## **A Stronger Community**

- Reduction in crime and anti-social behaviour from well above national average to national average or below—including in the town centre (significant hot spot)
- Greater equality of opportunity and access across the 7 neighbourhoods
- Significant reduction in deprivation for education and skills (reducing from 50% of LSOAs in the top 20% for deprivation—target to be established)
- Affordable homes—rebalance of median house price to earnings to national average
- Improvements to wellbeing (targets to be set) sustainable through prevention and personal responsibility rather than intervention programmes and agendas

## **Taking Back Control**

- A collaborative empowered community network
- Moving from 72% feeling they are not listened to in the making of local decisions (ZenCity May 2025) to upper quartile response

This analysis of what success will look like has informed the vision set out at the start of the document.

# **Section 4: Strategic Case for Change**

## **Evidence Base**

Based on the layout of settlements shaped by main roads and rivers, as well as the roles of areas like the town centre and industrial estates, Boston has been divided into seven neighbourhoods: Fenside, Witham, Town Centre, Trinity, Skirbeck, Staniland, and St Thomas. Each neighbourhood's boundaries are defined by major transport routes, such as the A16 and A52, and natural features like the River Witham, which affect their layout and purpose. For example, the Town Centre is the commercial hub, while Fenside and Skirbeck are mainly residential.

We selected the most suitable data for each neighbourhood from various datasets, as they differ by area, to create an up-to-date profile of the town. Full details are in the Town Board's main report and summarised in this section. The neighbourhood analysis, showing some clear differences, helps target interventions more effectively.

A detailed socio-economic report for the Boston Built-up Area and its seven neighbourhoods has been shared with the Town Board. Key findings are summarised below.

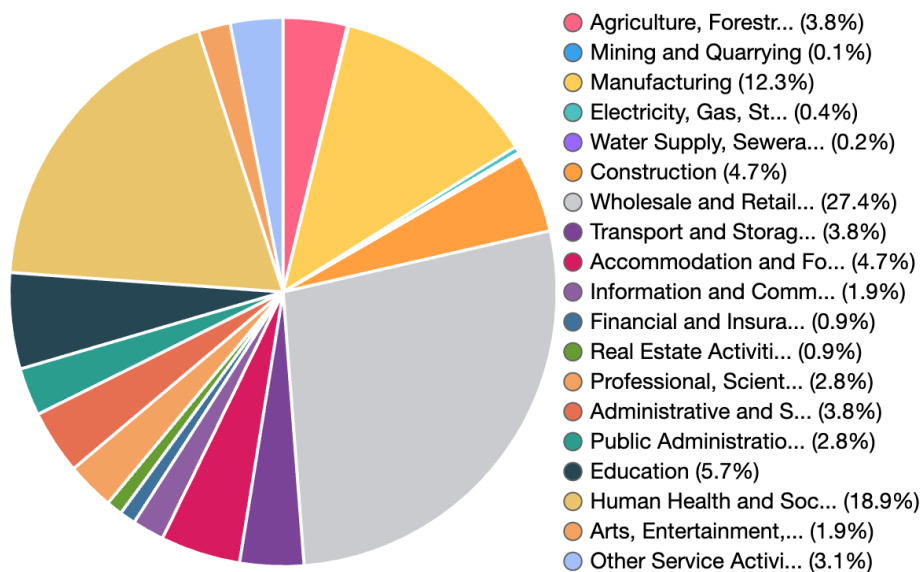
## **Objective – A Thriving Place**

Commuting patterns (based on 2021 Census data from the ONS Origin-Destination Data Explorer) show estimates for Boston's neighbourhoods, each with about 5,000 people, as precise Built-up Area (BUA) data is unavailable. Using Boston's working-age population and transport links, estimates suggest 5,000 to 7,000 people commute into Boston, while 3,000 to 5,000 commute out.

Cars are the main way people travel to work, like in many towns. Travel times for work, education (except secondary schools), and hospital visits are generally good.

Boston's economy has mixed results. Unemployment is slightly lower than average (Boston 4.6%, East Midlands 4.8%, England 4.9%), and fewer people are economically inactive (Boston 35.6%, East Midlands 44.1%, England 39.1%). However, Boston has a low-wage, low-skill economy. The Gross Value Added per job in 2022 was £39,959, much lower than the East Midlands (£52,889) and England (£62,751), with Boston's GVA at just 64% of England's. This is a challenge, especially with the risk of automation affecting low-skilled jobs.

The 2023 Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) data for Boston's Built-up Area and its neighbourhoods, as of July 2025, gives a clear picture of employment, key sectors, and areas for growth.



Boston's economy relies heavily on certain sectors. Wholesale and Retail Trade is the largest, employing 5,800 people (29.0% of the workforce, compared to 15% nationally), showing Boston's role as a regional shopping hub, supported by 5,000–7,000 commuters from places like Spalding and Skegness. Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing employs 800 people (4.0%, much higher than the national 1%), reflecting Boston's rural roots. Human Health and Social Work, with 4,000 employees (20.0%, above the national average), is growing, especially in Trinity, which added 595 jobs.

However, sectors like Finance and Insurance are underdeveloped, limiting growth in high-value industries. This reliance on traditional and public-sector jobs makes Boston less resilient to changes like automation or climate impacts on farming.

Boston's economy, characterised by low-wage sectors, faces significant disruption from artificial intelligence (AI). Automation risks exacerbating existing vulnerabilities, with studies indicating that up to 30% of jobs in routine-based industries like farming and logistics could be displaced by AI-driven technologies by 2030. In a town where Gross Value Added per job is only 64% of the national average, this could widen skills gaps and increase economic inactivity, particularly in neighbourhoods like Fenside, where over 50% of LSOAs rank in the top 20% for education deprivation.

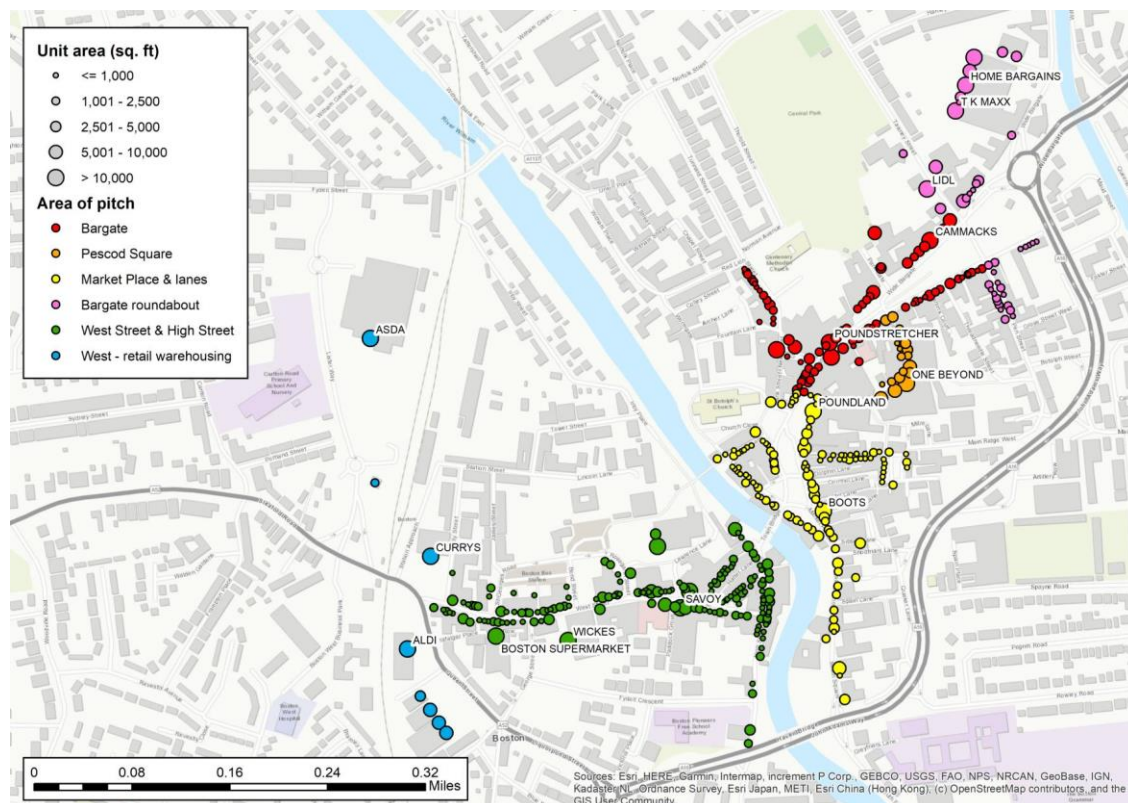


However, AI presents opportunities for renewal. Precision agriculture could enhance productivity in the Fens, while AI-enabled digital creativity—such as virtual heritage tours of St Botolph's Church—aligns with Boston's vision as a hub for arts, crafts, and innovation. Preparing for Boston (2030) 400in 2030, AI could animate cultural assets, boosting visitor numbers and GVA by fostering new enterprises.

This underscores the strategic imperative for change: targeted investments in skills programmes and community capacity must equip residents to harness AI, mitigating risks and unlocking growth. Without action, divisions deepen; with it, Boston transforms into a resilient, forward-looking community.

Each neighbourhood has a distinct economic role. The Town Centre, with 40.0% of its 2,300 jobs in retail, is the commercial heart but lost 400 jobs from 2015 to 2023, likely due to retail struggles. Trinity, with 25.0% of its 3,700 jobs in healthcare, is a sub-regional hub, supported by commuting patterns. Fenside and Skirbeck have more food-related jobs (5.0% and 6.0%), reflecting rural strengths, but Fenside faces high deprivation, limiting economic progress. Staniland (15.0% in Manufacturing) and St Thomas (29.0% in Retail) show some diversity but face issues—Staniland has low social trust (-7.0%), and St Thomas lost 465 jobs. Witham, with 30.0% in retail, lost 155 jobs, suggesting vulnerability. These differences highlight the need for targeted actions, like skills training in areas like Fenside.

Boston's town centre has been hit by national trends, with out-of-town retail and online shopping reducing its market share. Despite having 22% more retail and leisure outlets per person than similar towns, commercial vacancies are above average, and high street footfall is about 50% below average. The town's retail stretches 1km between two retail parks, where 7 of the top 10 retailers by sales are based in warehouse-style properties. Between 2019 and 2025, Boston lost nearly 150,000 square feet of retail space, leading to high vacancy rates on the high street.



Alongside a few great independents, the retail offer is mainly geared to value retail and convenience—this adequately meets the needs of the demographic profile of the town centre residents but does little to attract affluent or aspirational shoppers in the catchment area or increase visitor retail spend. A recent independent survey, commissioned by the Town Board and BBC, highlights the opportunity to work with local entrepreneurs, landlords, and stakeholders to develop the independent shopping offer in the market place and shopping lanes of Boston and the opportunity for pleasant environments of the market place to attract more food and beverage outlets to help develop the leisure offer with a particular opportunity for outdoor dining/seating.

This plan provides a great opportunity to consider how best to respond to the changing nature of the High Street. To adapt, the town must embrace non-standard retail approaches that leverage its rich heritage and community aspirations. Revitalising the historic Market Place with enhanced paving, seating, and lighting can create a lively hub for pop-up markets featuring local artisans and micro-businesses, building on the success of the Boston Brilliance festival to draw entrepreneurs and boost footfall.

Encouraging 'living over the shop' schemes can transform vacant upper floors of Boston's 266 listed buildings into residential spaces, fostering a 24/7 economy that enhances evening activity and community vibrancy. Creative retail models, such as street art markets, artisanal food stalls, and community-led repair cafes, can set Boston apart, offering unique experiences that online platforms cannot replicate. Supporting local makers with affordable spaces in underused alleys like Emery Lane further strengthens this distinct offer.

Digital innovations, like AI-powered interactive heritage trails linking sites such as St Botolph's Church, can elevate visitor engagement, while digital signage improves wayfinding and event promotion. By creating distinct zones for retail, leisure, and community activities, Boston's high street can evolve into a thriving cultural and social destination, resilient against modern retail challenges.

Boston town centre has a remarkable streetscape with many heritage assets, including nearly 500 Listed Buildings; with 266 of these within the town centre Conservation Area; a medieval street pattern still present and recognisable within Boston town centre, including the historic Market Place; one park listed on Historic England's register of Historic Parks and Gardens and other parks of value; and 16 Scheduled Ancient Monuments, protected by law due to their national significance.

Boston is one of only a few historic towns identified by Historic England as meriting particular attention, to encourage people to appreciate and cherish their extraordinary heritage.

Despite its remarkable heritage, history, and cultural assets (including a theatre and historic library in the town centre, and 33 museums and galleries within the borough), cultural participation lags behind regional and national benchmarks. From April 2022 to March 2024, 86.8% of adults in Boston's local authority engaged physically with arts, compared to 89.5% in the East Midlands and 90.4% in England (MHCLG, Boston local data).

Engagement with theatre, drama, musicals, was low at 23.2%, against 36.0% regionally and 39.5% nationally. Museum or gallery visits were reported by 28.4% of adults, compared to 37.4% and 43.1%. Heritage site visits stood at 53.4%, compared to 65.0% and 66.2%.

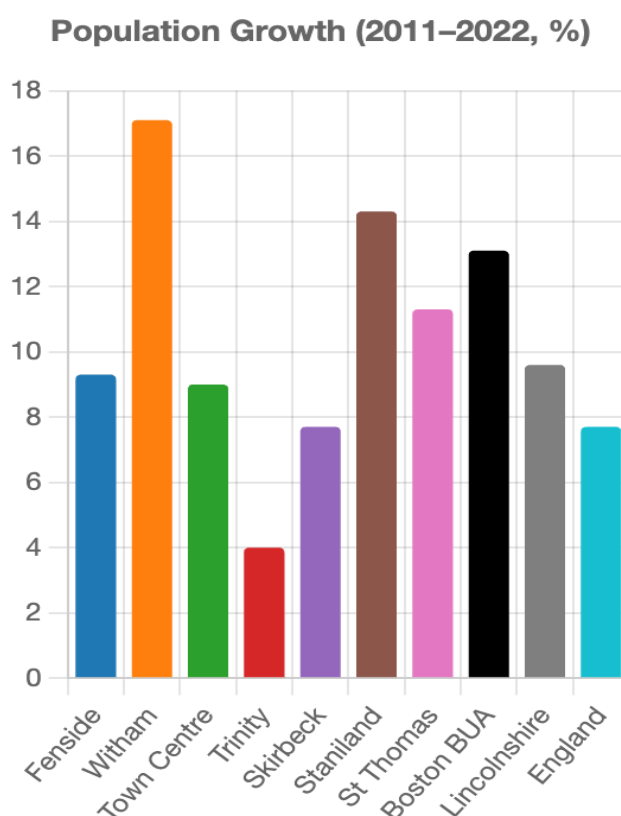


Of note, two of the borough art groups and a guitar maker have recently established a town centre presence including retail, indicating an appetite for participatory arts and craft and for local art and craft retail within the town.

As well as the heritage assets, Boston holds various popular family and cultural events during the year. In February 2025, “Boston Brilliance” was a collaboration between Boston College, South-East Lincolnshire Council Partnership (of which Boston Borough Council is part), and the internationally acclaimed architectural projection mapping experts, The Projection Studio, to take forward the UK’s first two-day architectural mapping festival. At the centre of the festival, eight iconic landmarks were lit up in a dazzling display of colour, celebrating Boston’s rich heritage and artistic talent. This was a pilot not only for future festivals of this nature but also to demonstrate how heritage can be brought to life in a very relevant and creative way—and its success highlights future social, cultural, and economic opportunity.

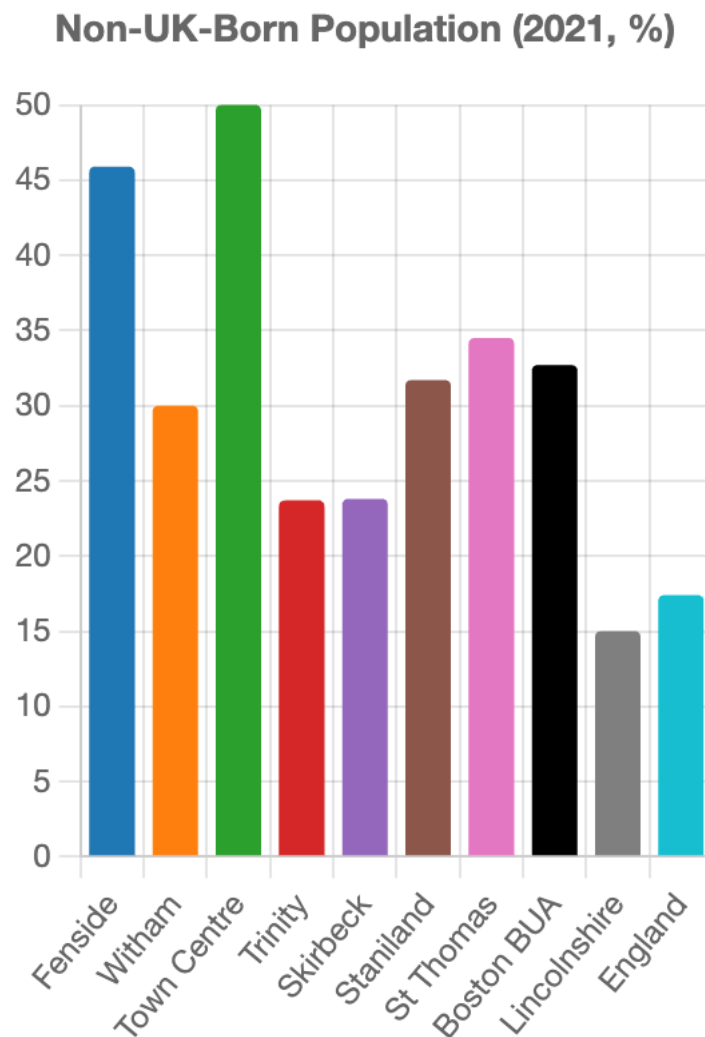
### Objective – A Stronger Community

Boston, had a population of 45,238 in 2022, reflecting a 13.1% increase from 40,010 in 2011. This growth is higher than the whole of the council area including its rural areas (9.6%), East Midlands (8.3%), and England (7.7%) averages (ONS, Population estimates for England and Wales, mid-2022).



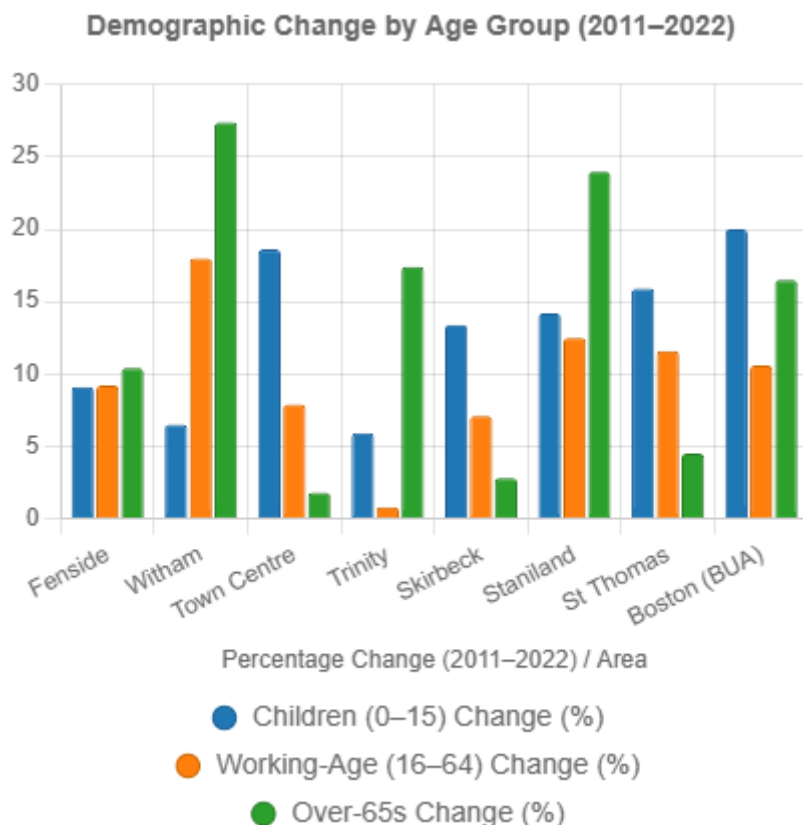
Ethnically, 93.02% of the population identify as White, 2.98% as Asian, 0.8% as Black, 1.6% as Mixed, and 1.61% as other ethnic groups, indicating a predominantly White population with modest diversity (ONS, Census 2021, TS021 dataset).

A high proportion of residents were born outside of the UK, well above regional and national averages, and most notable within the areas of Town Centre and Fenside. The high level of migration presents a number of challenges (real and perceived), but also opportunity.



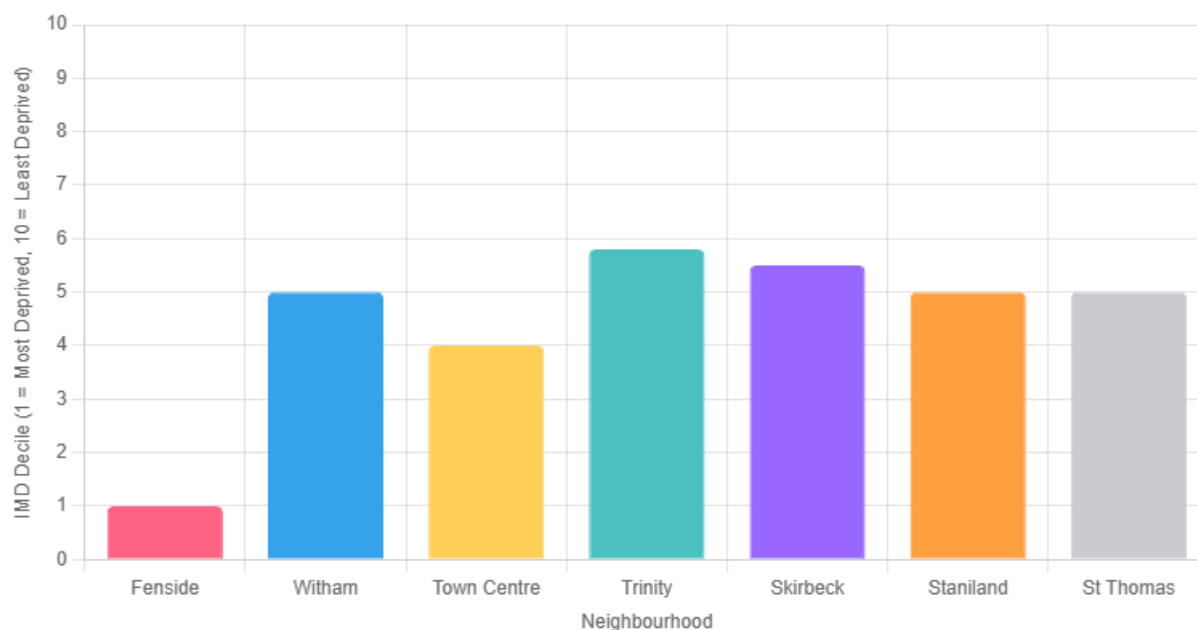
Boston has slightly more women than men (50.4% in 2022), and their population is growing faster (14.9%). The child population has grown significantly by 20.0%, compared to England's 18.5% child population share and 7.7% overall population growth from 2011 to 2021. This creates both challenges and opportunities for Boston.

The working-age population has decreased slightly (down 1.4% to 67.8%), but it's still higher than Lincolnshire (59.7%) and England (62.9%), indicating a strong workforce. However, there are notable differences across Boston's seven neighbourhoods.



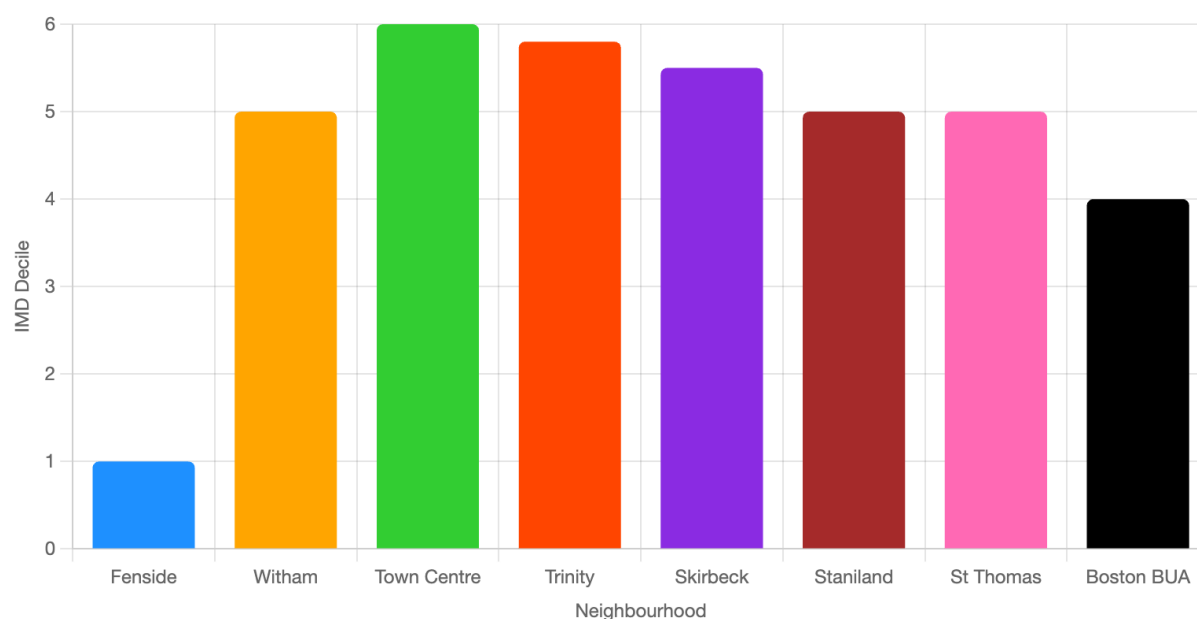
Deprivation is a major issue in Boston. Over half of the town's smaller areas (LSOAs) are among England's 20% most deprived for education, skills, and training, with 40% in the top 10% (MHCLG, English Indices of Deprivation 2019). Access to housing and services is also a problem, with 4% of these areas in the top 10% most deprived (MHCLG, English Indices of Deprivation 2019). Additionally, 34.6% of children under 16 live in low-income households, which is 13.3 percentage points higher than England's average (DWP, Stat-Xplore, Children in low-income households). There are strong correlations between those areas with a high proportion of migrant workers and high levels of poverty/deprivation, particularly in the Town Centre and Fenside areas.

**Deprivation by Neighbourhood in Boston (IMD Decile, 2019)**



Boston has strong education facilities and has seen recent investments in this sector. However, the overall data highlights problems with qualifications and skills. The share of people aged 16 to 64 with Level 3 qualifications or higher is low, especially considering the high deprivation in education, skills, and training (MHCLG, English Indices of Deprivation 2019). At the local level, educational achievement is particularly poor in the Fenside area. Low skills hold back economic opportunities.

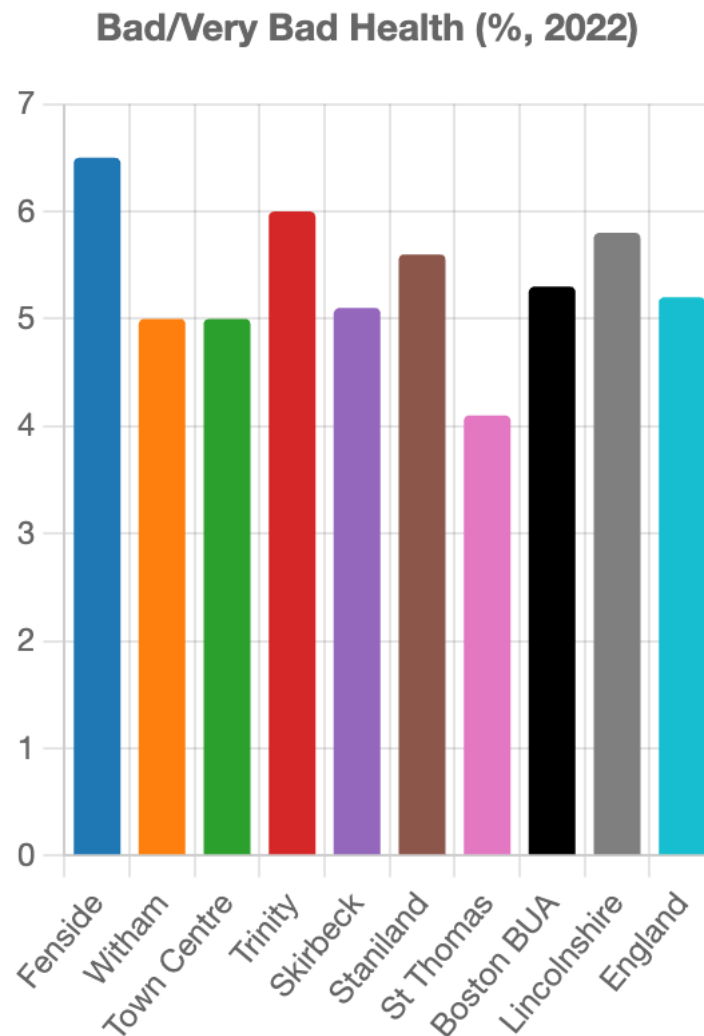
**IMD Decile (2019) by Boston Neighbourhood**



The overall value of the housing stock is low with over 50% of properties in council tax bands A and B, but low wages mean that housing affordability is a pressing issue, with a high ratio

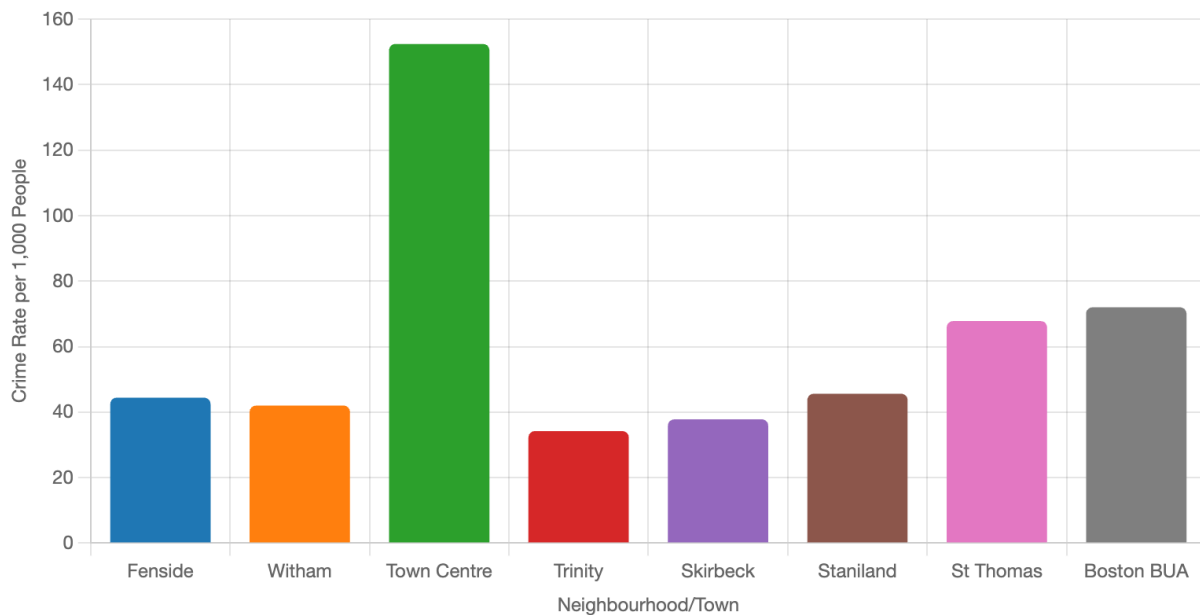
of median house prices to earnings (ONS, 2024). Non-decent dwellings indicate quality concerns (MHCLG, Boston local data).

Health indicators include healthy life expectancy (2021–2023) and GP appointment access (MHCLG, data pack). High deprivation and low-income households correlate with poorer health across the town (DWP, Stat-Xplore, Children in low-income households).

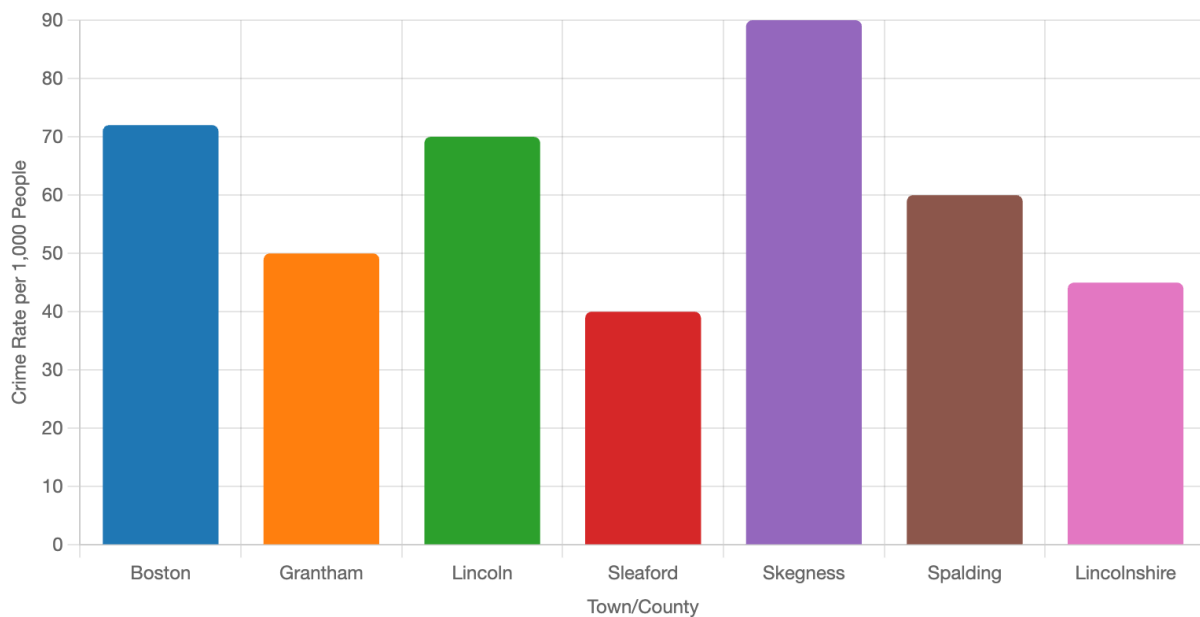


Crime data shows high levels of anti-social behaviour, violence, and sexual offences as prevalent factors. Boston's crime rate varies, with some neighbourhoods exceeding Lincolnshire's 0.0073 per head (Police UK compare your area).

**Crime Rates per 1,000 People in Boston Neighbourhoods (2024 Estimate)**



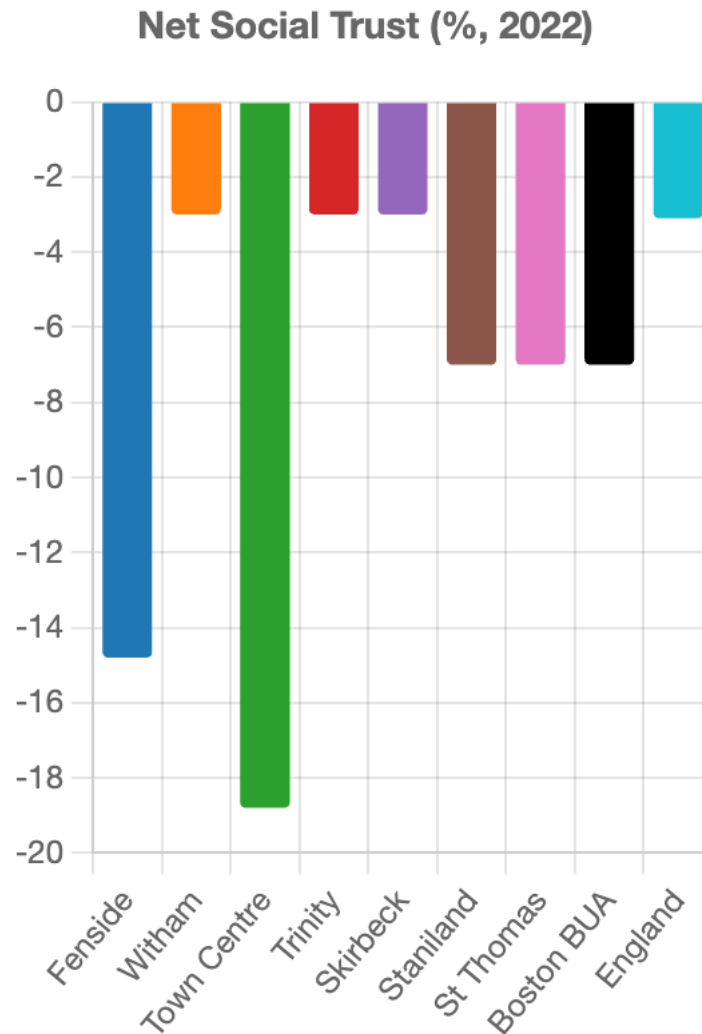
**Crime Rates per 1,000 People in Boston and Comparator Towns (2024 Estimate)**



### **Objective – Taking Back Control**

The Boston-wide average for social trust is low at -7% compared to the national average of -3%. There is significant variation across the seven neighbourhoods with Witham, Trinity, and Skirbeck close to the national average, while Fenside falls to -14.8% and Town Centre - 18.8%.

Factors such as high deprivation, significant migrant populations, and economic challenges, including a declining working-age share, contribute to lower trust, particularly in Fenside and the Town Centre, where negative perceptions are more pronounced.



The impact of low social trust cannot be underestimated, including for engagement and capacity building within communities. In this area, it is some of our young people who seem most willing to step forward.

Like many towns, Boston has a large number of community and interest groups. A significant project runs in parallel with our planning and the first year of the programme, creating a “community masterplan” for Boston. This is seen as one of the building blocks to help enable future engagement and empowerment within and across our communities. We start from a low base of social trust.

### **Community Priorities**

In June to August 2025, Boston Town Board ran a multi-layered programme of consultation and engagement which aimed to gain robust, meaningful, and deep insight and understanding of local people’s views, hopes, and ideas for their town. This programme built on the foundation of previous consultative activity, including the 2024 consultation for the (then) Long Term Plan for Towns.

The Boston Town Board wanted to build on past consultations, focusing on the three main goals of Pride in Place and the idea of “taking back control”. They collected over 1,100 responses, including a detailed online survey that provided in-depth feedback.

A full engagement report was shared with the Town Board, summarising all responses to identify key themes and detailed insights, including suggested solutions. This feedback is vital for the theme-based workshops, where partners and the community work together to plan and prioritise actions for the town’s development.

The Board compared the data with community feedback and found strong alignment—the challenges and opportunities for Boston are clearly reflected in both. This helps pinpoint where actions are needed to address issues or perceptions. By matching postcode data from feedback with neighbourhood-level evidence, the Board can target actions to have the greatest impact.

The engagement report highlighted nine key priorities:

1. Enhancing safety and security (Stronger Communities)
2. Revitalising the town centre (Thriving Place)
3. Celebrating heritage, arts, and culture (Thriving Place)
4. Improving education and skills (Stronger Communities)
5. Supporting health and wellbeing (Stronger Communities)
6. Enhancing green spaces and connectivity (Thriving Place)
7. Addressing housing affordability (Stronger Communities)
8. Building community capacity and empowerment (Taking Back Control)
9. Youth Engagement (Taking Back Control)

A copy of the full engagement report is attached as an annex to this Vision.

## Interventions to be Pursued

The following intervention themes are proposed for Boston. Each aligns with community priorities, leverages existing investments, and targets specific neighbourhoods to maximise impact. The scheduling of resources against these interventions for the first four years of their duration is set out in more detail in the 4 Year Investment Strategy which accompanies this Vision Document.

### Thriving Place

#### 1. Town Centre Revitalisation

- **Project:** Along with Safety and Security the primary theme for the first four years of the programme. A comprehensive programme of significant public realm, shop front and other physical enhancements to ensure the town realises its full potential as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century retail and amenity hub. This could include Market Place and Public Realm Enhancement. improved paving, outdoor seating, and lighting to support food and beverage outlets and independent retail. Pilot pop-up markets to attract local entrepreneurs, building on the success of Boston Brilliance festival re-design and development to support the circulation of people and traffic and the establishment of a major new town centre agenda. ***There is also scope to develop the town centre as a remote working hub, enabling residents to***



***have the facilities either in the town or in their own homes to access employment in wider settings outside of Boston.***

- **Rationale:** Addresses high commercial vacancies (above national average) and low footfall (50% below average). Enhances the town centre's appeal as a commercial and leisure hub, aligning with community feedback for a vibrant centre.
  - **Neighbourhood Focus:** Town Centre
  - **Outcome:** Increase footfall and reduce commercial vacancies
  - **Delivery:** Partner with Boston Borough Council and local business forum to implement improvements and manage pop-up markets
2. **Heritage and Culture Activation**
- **Project:** ***Pull together a series of key early actions to position Boston as a really strong competitor in the Town of Culture Agenda for 2028, leveraging its major relationship and connections with Boston Massachusetts all in connection with the Boston (2030) 400 Preparatory Programme.*** Develop a heritage trail highlighting listed buildings. Fund a Boston (2030) 400 Lead to coordinate events, secure sponsorship, and develop a legacy events programme.
  - **Rationale:** Leverages Boston's 266 listed buildings and low cultural participation (e.g., 28.4% museum visits vs. 43.1% nationally). Prepares for Boston (2030) 400 as a regional and international milestone and ***opens up real potential for Boston to become the first UK Town of Culture in 2028.***
  - **Neighbourhood Focus:** ***Town Centre, Trinity, Skirbeck***
  - **Outcome:** Increase heritage site visits and establish Boston (2030) 400 as a regional event with a sustainable legacy
  - **Delivery:** Collaborate with Historic England, local arts groups, and the Boston (2030) 400 stakeholders
3. **Green Spaces and Connectivity**
- **Project:** Enhance cycling and walking paths, wildflower planting, and signage along the River Witham, connecting neighbourhoods and improving access to green spaces across the town more widely.
  - **Rationale:** Addresses community demand for accessible green spaces and better connectivity. Supports tourism and wellbeing, particularly in Witham and Skirbeck.
  - **Neighbourhood Focus:** Witham, Skirbeck, St Thomas
  - **Outcome:** Increase green space usage and improve connectivity across neighbourhoods
  - **Delivery:** Partner with Environment Agency and community groups to implement and maintain improvements

## Stronger Communities

4. **Safety and Security**
- **Project:** Along with Town Centre Revitalisation the primary theme for the first four years of the programme Community Safety Hubs. Establish hubs in Town Centre and Fenside, offering community policing including wardens/rangers, youth engagement programmes, and anti-social behaviour workshops.
  - **Rationale:** Addresses high crime rates and low social trust (-18.8% in Town Centre, -14.8% in Fenside). Responds to community priority for safer streets.
  - **Neighbourhood Focus:** Town Centre, Fenside
  - **Outcome:** Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour to the national average by 2030

- **Delivery:** Work with Lincolnshire Police and community organisations to establish and operate hubs
- 5. **Education and Skills**
  - **Project:** Very modest interventions in first 4 years to take account of significant levels of partner funding to address these agenda. In year 3 and 4 scope for spot interventions to support bespoke one-off interventions to address very specific funding gaps/opportunities.
  - **Rationale:** Over 50% of LSOAs rank in the top 20% for education deprivation. Low Level 3 qualifications limit economic mobility, particularly in Fenside.
  - **Neighbourhood Focus:** Fenside, Skirbeck, Trinity
  - **Outcome:** Increase qualifications
  - **Delivery:** Collaborate with learning organisations and local employers to design and deliver training programmes diagnosing and acting on a lack of appetite for higher level skills
- 6. **Health and Wellbeing**
  - **Project:** Focus just on capital investment in Community Wellbeing Centres and associated activities. There is significant programmed spend, particularly in relation to revenue activities in the area and therefore scarce revenue funding will be allocated to other themes where public sentiment and detailed statistical evidence suggest stronger early priorities – particularly safety and security, town centre and heritage and culture themes. Develop multi-generational learning spaces in Trinity and Staniland, offering health workshops, digital literacy, and cultural exchange programmes. There is also scope to build substantive links with the work of Active Lincolnshire in Boston building synergies with their programme of public participation in exercise.
  - **Rationale:** High deprivation correlates with poorer health outcomes. 34.6% of under-16s live in low-income households, necessitating community-based wellbeing initiatives.
  - **Neighbourhood Focus:** Trinity, Staniland
  - **Outcome:** Improve wellbeing metrics
  - **Delivery:** Partner with NHS, community groups, and faith groups to deliver inclusive programmes
- 7. **Housing**
  - **Project:** There are strong links and interdependencies between this theme and the revitalisation of the Town Centre. Partner with housing associations to improve non-decent dwellings in St Thomas and Fenside, explore incentives and arrangements with premises owners to incentivise the transition from **retail to residential** and other evolution of town centre buildings into residential. In view of limited revenue resources proposed to be a capital only programme.
  - **Rationale:** High house price-to-earnings ratio despite low housing stock value. Non-decent dwellings exacerbate deprivation.
  - **Neighbourhood Focus:** St Thomas, Fenside
  - **Outcome:** Reduce non-decent dwellings in target areas and bring more residential into the town centre
  - **Delivery:** Work with housing associations and local authority to implement

## Taking Back Control

- 8. **Community Capacity Building**
  - **Project:** Community Masterplan Implementation. Fund community-led projects through a grant scheme, supporting initiatives like neighbourhood clean-ups, cultural events, and business forums.

- **Rationale:** 72% of residents feel unheard in decision-making. Low social trust (-7% vs. national -3%) requires capacity-building to empower communities.
- **Neighbourhood Focus:** All seven neighbourhoods
- **Outcome:** Move from 72% feeling unheard to upper quartile response by 2030
- **Delivery:** Administer grants, with community groups leading projects
- 

#### 9. Youth Engagement

- **Project:** Boston Youth Council. Establish a formal youth council to engage young people in decision-making, supported by Boston College and community leaders. By integrating this theme with Community Capacity building these if real potential to create synergies and in view of the limited revenue funding available to the programme overall significant attention will be given to building synergies with other initiatives outside of pride in place linked to education, prevention and skills in the area. There are strong opportunities to link to revenue funding streams in relation to this project which connect with safety and security, town centre revitalisation and heritage and culture.
- **Rationale:** High child population growth (20%) and strong youth engagement in 2025 consultations indicate potential for youth-led change. Significant anecdotal reporting of mental health challenges facing young people
- **Neighbourhood Focus:** All seven neighbourhoods
- **Outcome:** Increase youth participation in local decisions
- **Delivery:** Partner with Boston College, Boston Youth Hub, and community leaders to establish and support the council

## Pre-approved Intervention Links

The table below shows how each idea links to the pre-approved list of interventions within the Pride in Place Guidance:

Project Title	Linked Pre-Approved Intervention(s)	Rationale for Link
Town Centre Revitalisation	1. Funding for improvements to town centres, neighbourhoods, and high streets, including capital spend and running costs	Supports public realm improvements like paving, seating, and lighting in the town centre to enhance commercial appeal and footfall.
Heritage and Culture Activation	5. Enhanced support for arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities, projects and facilities and historic institutions that make up the local cultural heritage offer 6. Funding for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative initiatives	Funds development of heritage trails, event coordination, and legacy programmes for cultural and heritage assets, leveraging listed buildings for events like Boston 400.
Green Spaces and Connectivity	2. Creating and improving green spaces, community gardens, watercourses and embankments in the local	Enhances walking paths, wildflower planting, and signage along the river for better connectivity and

	area, along with incorporating natural features into wider public spaces 25. Support for active travel enhancements in the local area	green space access, including improvements to footways.
Safety and Security	4. Funding for new community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects, or for improvements to existing ones, including facilities that house public services or enhance community resilience to natural hazards, such as flooding. This could cover both capital spend and operational costs 19. Investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society, youth and community groups	Establishes hubs for community policing and youth engagement as new public service facilities with operational costs to address crime and anti-social behaviour.
Education and Skills	16. Skills provision tailored to local opportunities and skills gaps, such as those identified in an area's Local Skills Improvement Plan (England only) 13. Support to improve awareness of, and access to, local provision that moves people closer to and into sustained employment, in line with an area's Get Britain Working Plan (England and Wales only)	Partners with learning organisations for training programmes targeting deprived areas to enhance access to and increase qualifications and support employment in line with local skills needs.
Health and Wellbeing	20. Supporting community-level health provision 21. Integration and co-location of health and wellbeing services	Develops multi-generational spaces for health workshops, digital literacy, and cultural exchanges as community health hubs integrating wellbeing services.
Housing	8. Modernisation of social housing 10. Provide healthy and climate-resilient homes support locally	Improves non-decent dwellings through energy efficiency retrofits, including insulation and low-carbon heating, to enhance housing quality and resilience.

Community Capacity Building	19. Investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society, youth and community groups 9. Support wider neighbourhood renewal by improving the attractiveness and liveability of homes and their surroundings	Funds community-led projects via grants for clean-ups, events, and forums to build capacity, develop structures, and support neighbourhood renewal engagement.
Youth Engagement	17. Measures to improve community cohesion 18. Funding for impactful volunteering and social action projects to develop social and human capital in local place	Establishes a youth council for decision-making engagement, fostering cohesion through youth participation, dialogue, and social action projects.

### Theme Dependencies

The nine themes in Boston's Pride in Place programme are interdependent, forming a cohesive strategy for regeneration, wellbeing, and empowerment.

Town Centre Revitalisation and Safety and Security are foundational, driving early momentum. Revitalising public spaces and shop fronts boosts footfall and business viability, while safety hubs foster trust and reduce crime—both essential for attracting visitors and investment. These improvements directly support Housing, where incentives for living above shops and retrofitting non-decent dwellings rely on a vibrant, secure town centre.

Heritage and Culture Activation builds on this revitalisation, using Boston's rich history and links to Boston, Massachusetts to position the town for national recognition. It connects with Youth Engagement and Community Capacity Building by involving residents in cultural programming and legacy events, fostering pride and participation.

Green Spaces and Connectivity enhance wellbeing and mobility, linking neighbourhoods and supporting tourism. These improvements complement Health and Wellbeing initiatives, which focus on capital investment. Together, they address deprivation and promote healthier lifestyles.

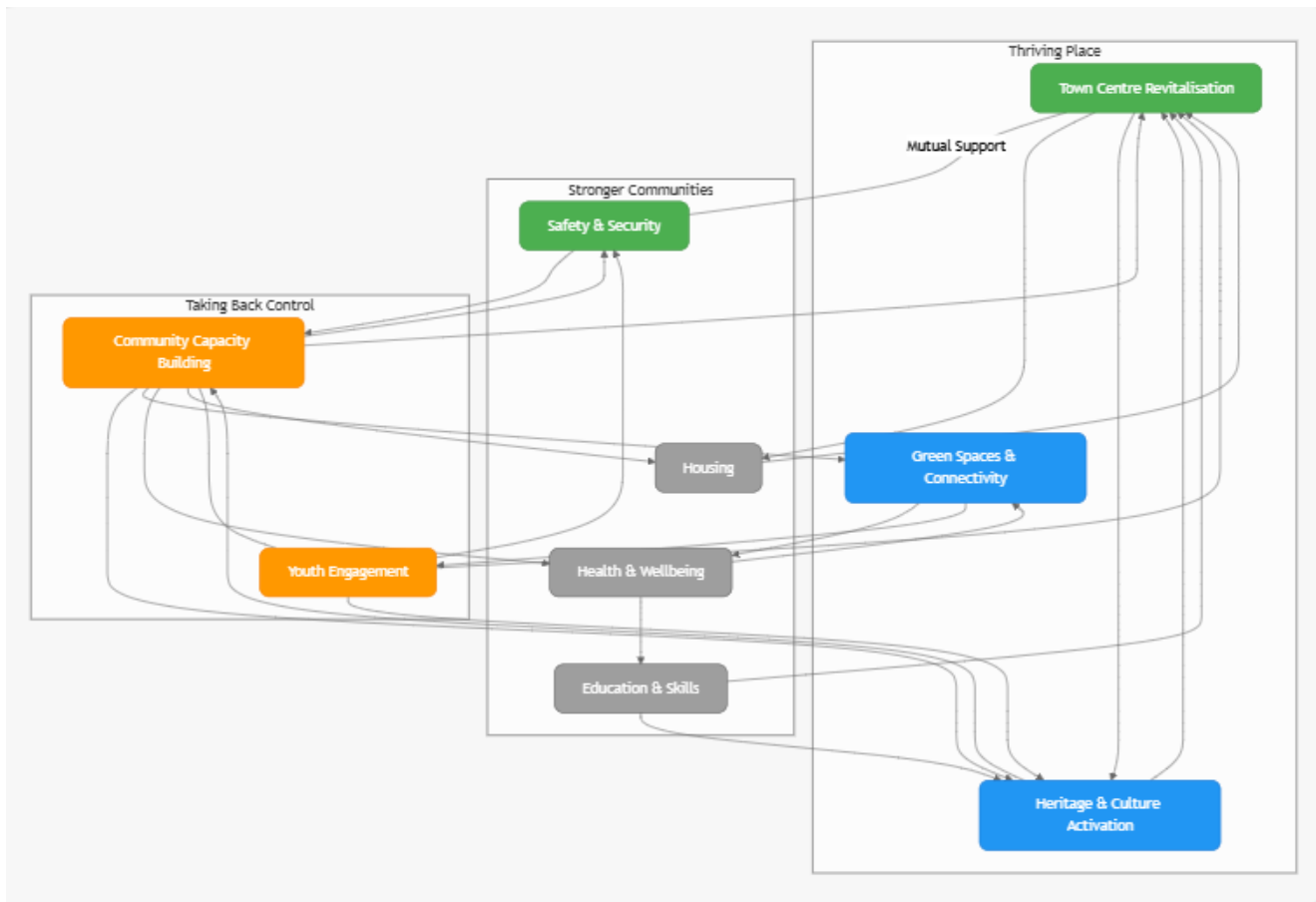
Education and Skills, though modestly funded early on, are critical for long-term economic mobility. They align with Youth Engagement, which empowers young people through the Boston Youth Council and connects to safety, heritage, and town centre themes via shared outreach and funding streams.

Community Capacity Building underpins all themes, enabling residents to lead local projects and shape their environment. It is mutually reinforcing with Youth Engagement, amplifying voices and building trust across all seven neighbourhoods.

The diagram sets out the dependencies between the themes in more detail based on:

- Green = Primary early themes – Town Centre and Safety and Security work as mutual foundations.
- Blue = Additional Thriving Place themes.
- Orange = Taking Back Control (foundational to all).

- Grey = Sub-themes (integrated into main budgets).



## Long-Term Outcomes

The long-term outcomes we hope to achieve include:

- A thriving town centre with reduced commercial vacancies and increased footfall, recognised as a regional hub for culture, arts, and creativity.
- Stronger communities with reduced crime and anti-social behaviour, improved educational attainment, better health and wellbeing, and more affordable, high-quality housing.
- Empowered communities with increased social trust and participation, particularly among youth, ensuring residents feel heard and have genuine control over local decision-making.
- A successful Boston (2030) 400 celebration in 2030, establishing a lasting legacy of heritage and cultural engagement.

## Summary

This programme outlines nine priorities to transform the town by fostering personal initiative, empowering residents as agents of change, amplifying community voices, and building a culture of mutuality for a more integrated, resilient future.

Revitalising the town centre through Market Place enhancements and pop-up markets encourages entrepreneurial initiative, reducing vacancies and boosting footfall. Promoting heritage and culture via the Boston (2030) 400 Programme leverages 266 listed buildings, engaging diverse communities in shared storytelling, fostering unity.

Enhancing green spaces along the River Witham improves connectivity, encouraging resident-led environmental stewardship. Safety hubs in Town Centre and Fenside, addressing high crime, empower locals through community policing and youth programmes, building trust.

Skills and wellbeing initiatives in Fenside, Skirbeck, and Trinity tackle deprivation, equipping individuals with tools for change. Housing retrofits in St Thomas and Fenside promote stability, while community grants and a Youth Council across all neighbourhoods ensure 72% of residents feeling unheard shift to active participation. These interventions, rooted in community feedback, cultivate mutual support, integrating Boston's diverse population into a resilient, empowered community by 2030.

## Section 5: Alignment with Other Programmes and Investments

Boston's Plan for Neighbourhoods sits within a wider landscape of investment and commitment from our partners. The role of the Neighbourhood Board is not to replace these initiatives, but to maximise their impact—using Pride in Place funding to complement them, to help partners draw in additional support, and to enable communities to make their own applications to funders. In this way, Pride in Place acts as a catalyst, ensuring that existing and future investment is rooted in local needs and delivers long-term benefit.

Over 85 strategies were identified that had the potential to relate to the priorities. These were filtered to ensure that there was not a duplication of effort (and expenditure) but equally that reliance was not placed on a strategy that was not delivering the required outcome. Partners with “ownership” of the most relevant strategies were invited to attend our co-design workshops to ensure these were taken into account and supported/enhanced by Pride in Place where appropriate. Awareness of funding streams relating to these strategies will help us tap into and help shape or focus external investment where possible.

Boston's 10-Year Vision presents a golden opportunity to deepen ties with Boston, Massachusetts, leveraging the shared heritage of the 1630 naming by Pilgrim settlers and the impending 400th anniversary in 2030. The document's “Boston (2030) 400 Preparatory Programme” (Thriving Place intervention) is pivotal, funding a heritage trail, event coordination, and a dedicated lead to secure sponsorships. This can evolve into a transatlantic celebration, inviting US delegates, joint festivals, and virtual exchanges via AI-enhanced tours of St Botolph's Church and the Massachusetts settlement site, boosting visitor numbers and cultural participation.

Community capacity building (Taking Back Control) through grants and the Youth Council enables resident-led initiatives, such as bilateral youth exchanges or business forums to build links with Boston Massachusetts innovation hubs.

***Aligning with existing investments like the Towns Fund's cultural framework, these approaches could form the basis of a “partnership agreement” setting out a bold agenda for bi-lateral cooperation.***

A summary of the alignment of strategies with key themes is set out in the table below:

<b>PiP Project Theme</b>	<b>Most Relevant Partner Partner Strategies and Investments</b>
Town Centre Revitalisation	Boston Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan 2023–27, SELCP Local Plan, SELCP Partnership Alignment and Delivery Plan 2025/26, Boston Borough Plan 2040, Boston Town Deal (Towns Fund) 2021–2026, Levelling Up Fund Round 2: Boston Rosegarth Square Masterplan (PE21) 2022–2025, Boston Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan 2023–2027, Lincolnshire Chamber of Commerce SEL to the World International Trade Strategy 2023–2025, Grants4Growth Programme 2023–2025
Heritage and Culture Activation	Destination Management Plan for SELCP Associated action plan for Boston 2024/25, Boston Cultural Framework for Renewal 2023–2027, Transported Arts Strategic Plan (2020–2025), Blackfriars Arts Centre Programming Strategy (2020–2025), St. Botolph’s Church Library Refurbishment Plan 2021–2025, St. Botolph’s Heritage and Visitor Strategy 2021–2025, Historic England Future Strategy (2021–2025), Heritage at Risk Register (2020–2025), Heritage Lincolnshire Strategic Plan 2020–2025, Lincolnshire Heritage Explorer Programme (2021–2025), Discover Boston Tourism Strategy (2020–2025), Greater Lincolnshire and Rutland Tourism Action Plan 2021–2025, Centre of Culture and Creativity Action Plan (2020–2025)
Green Spaces and Connectivity	Greater Lincolnshire Food Strategy 2021–2025 (wildflower planting), SELCP Climate Change Strategy 2022, National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (2020), River Basin Management Plan for the Anglian River Basin District (2022 Update), Natural England’s National Nature Recovery Strategy (2023), Lincolnshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) (2023–2025), Lincolnshire Highways Infrastructure Asset Management Strategy 2020–2025 (cycling/walking paths), Boston Transport Strategy 2020–2025
Safety and Security	South & East Lincolnshire Community Safety Strategy April 2025 to March 2028, Safer Lincolnshire Partnership strategy 2025 to 2028, Operation Subpole, Boston Schools Partnership Initiative 2020–2025, Police and Crime Plan 2021–2025, Serious Violence Prevention Strategy for Lincolnshire 2022–2025, Victims’ Strategy 2021–2025, Victims and Survivor Services Impact Report 2022–23, SELCP Community Safety Plan 2023–2025
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Boston College Strategic Plan 2025-28</li> <li>- Boston Brilliance Event and Schools Engagement Plan 2024–2025</li> <li>- Boston High School Behaviour and Inclusion Policy 2020–2025</li> <li>- Haven High Academy Behaviour for Learning Policy 2020–2025</li> <li>- Boston United Community Foundation Programmes 2020–2025</li> <li>- Healthy Minds Lincolnshire Emotional Wellbeing Strategy 2020–2025</li> </ul>



Health and Wellbeing	SELCP Health and Wellbeing Plan (Boston) 2023, Lincolnshire Integrated Care Partnership Strategy 2023, Lincolnshire Joint Local Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Lincolnshire ICB Joint Forward Plan 2023–2028, Lincolnshire Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise (VCSE) Collaborative Framework, Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Strategy 2024–2029, Lincolnshire Community Health Services NHS Trust Community Health Strategy 2021–2026, United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust Strategic Plan 2021–2026, Pilgrim Hospital Quality Improvement Plan 2021–2025, Pilgrim Hospital Sustainability and Net-Zero Strategy 2023–2025, Active Lincolnshire Strategic Plan 2020–2025, Let's Move Lincolnshire Campaign (2020–2025)
Housing	SELCP Private Sector Housing Strategy Lincolnshire Housing Partnership Strategic Plan 2021–2025, Boston Borough Council Housing Strategy 2022–2025, Household Support Fund Round 6 and 7 Strategy 2021–2026
Community Capacity Building	St. Botolph's Church Community and Outreach Plan 2020–2025, Centenary Methodist Church Community Engagement Plan 2020–2025, Lincolnshire Community Foundation GRASSroots Scheme 2021–2025, Lincolnshire Community Foundation Levelling Up Community Grants Programme 2022–2025, Lincolnshire Migrant Worker Integration Strategy 2020–2025, Boston College ESOL and Community Learning Programme 2020–2025, Boston & Sutterton Foodbank Operational Plan 2020–2025, Lincolnshire Food Partnership Food Access Strategy 2022–2025, Long-Term Plan for Towns: Boston Town Board Guidance 2023–2033
Youth Engagement	Boston College Strategic Plan 2025–28, Boston Brilliance Event and Schools Engagement Plan 2024–2025, Boston High School Behaviour and Inclusion Policy 2020–2025, Haven High Academy Behaviour for Learning Policy 2020–2025, Boston United Community Foundation Programmes 2020–2025, Healthy Minds Lincolnshire Emotional Wellbeing Strategy 2020–2025

## Government Investment

Boston has benefitted from significant capital investment programmes over recent years. Boston Town Board recognises that a number of the projects will deliver benefits that support delivery of the priorities and importance of optimising this investment insofar as possible. Where appropriate, we will invest further in these projects to maximise benefit. The opportunities include:

- **Towns Fund:** Supports projects like Mayflower, St Botolphs Blenkin Memorial Hall, Healing the High Street public space enhancements. Pride in Place adds community-led elements, such as pop-up markets and cultural events, to maximise benefits.

- **Levelling Up Round 2:** Rosegarth Square and Crown House refurbishment, investment in public space and cycle and walking opportunities will maximise the impact of this investment
- **Levelling Up Partnership Funding:** Funds a digital campus at Boston College (Gliderdome), aligning with the Skills for the Future Programme to enhance training in digital and creative industries.
- **UKSPF:** Supports town centre regeneration, supplemented by Pride in Place funding for independent retail and leisure enhancements.
- **Community Masterplan:** Runs in parallel, sharing data and workshops to build trust and capacity. Pride in Place interventions, like community grants, support masterplan goals.

## Section 6: Match Funding and Leveraged Investment

With our priorities and key interventions agreed, we are considering options to ensure and enable a clear focus on current and future investment, ensuring that the Neighbourhood 10-Year programme is the start of a longer journey. Boston Town Board has a track record for attracting matched funding for previous investment programmes.

We will take a similar approach, where appropriate, within the Neighbourhood Plan but also consider:

- Enabling progression (seed funding) to self-sustaining, self-funding projects and initiatives
- Leveraging grant/sponsor mix funding for community projects
- Attracting partner investment
- Bidding for other funding streams (including initial focus on Boston (2030) 400)
- Attracting sponsor funding for events (including initial focus on lead up to Boston (2030) 400)
- Grants to enable new local business and inward investment
- Investment in town centre property and related long-term return
- Matched resources—leveraging the community
- Cost avoidance (interventions that result in lower public spending elsewhere)
- Building social capital

We are keen to prioritise the work for Boston 2030 and will fund (initially using capacity funding) a additional capacity to work with our community, business, and partners to scope a programme of activity and events to lead into, celebrate Boston 2030, marking the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Boston Massachusetts, and create a lasting heritage and cultural legacy aligned with our vision for Boston. A key element of this role will be fundraising and sponsorship, leveraging Arts Council, Visit England and Heritage England interest.

It is important to note that, with the specific issues Boston faces, not all projects will attract or leverage additional matched funding or provide a direct financial return—many interventions will improve lives and livelihoods of the people of Boston and through that an indirect return to the community and economy (or cost reduction/avoidance for public services).

## Section 7: Community and Stakeholder Engagement

The Boston Town Board has worked hard to involve the community, building on feedback from previous consultations by the Town Board, Council, and partners over recent years. Community messages, along with the vision and plans based on them, have been shared back with the community for validation as much as possible at this stage. This will continue to be part of the co-design process and our commitment to the community.

Engagement has used various methods suited to different groups, with help from partners where possible. The networks created will support ongoing communication, encourage new leaders, and strengthen community ties. This platform will not only support the Pride in Place programme but also foster broader, long-term community engagement. 169 of the people who responded to the consultation would like to be kept informed. We intend to develop this group as a consultation panel to ensure we engage very deeply on an ongoing basis with local people. There are also significant opportunities to draw on the town's wider assets and connections for example in relation to the reintegration activities of HMP North Sea Camp.

## **The Board's Role in Engagement**

Boston had an existing Town Board with ongoing responsibility for the completion of the Town Deal funded projects. We undertook a stakeholder mapping exercise, and some changes to membership were implemented in June 2025 to form an "Interim" Town Board to bridge responsibilities and provide continuity while welcoming some new members. We also reduced the size of the Board, recognising that we could be more focused (with greater continuity of participation in meetings) while retaining a strong network and connectivity to key stakeholders.

Most Board members are connected to a key stakeholder or community group and have been active in the process of engagement within their community group and wider. We have been delighted by the passion of our young people and their willingness to engage (feedback has been disproportionate in their favour); alongside the Board, we hope to establish a Youth Council as a key touch point and channel to help shape and deliver change.

## **The Board's Ways of Working and Distinction from the Local Authority**

The relationship between the Board and Local Authority reflects the roles and responsibilities set out within the guidance. As well as being the Accountable Body for the funding, Boston Borough Council (BBC) is a Partner.

The Town Board provides a long-term non-political vehicle to shape change, but we know that we must work together, irrespective of politics, for the benefit of Boston. BBC is a source of significant data and information and a key delivery partner for a range of projects and interventions that must complement and enhance any of their own plans.

Pride in Place is the latest funding strand in a continuum of Government support routed through the local authority. Strong programme management and wider civic engagement has been built with the community over this period, constituting a good functioning three-way partnership between the local authority, the Board, and the local community.

At a higher level, administrative and project management support is provided by the SELCP (a partnership of three councils) on a shared basis. SELCP programme development support for the three Pride in Place programmes has mainly been through a shared contractor resource paid for through Capacity Funding. The dedicated (external to the Local Authority) supporting resource model will continue.

## **Buy-In from Local Business, Civil Society, and Communities**

Through our process of engagement, we have used small amounts of Pride in Place capacity funding to enable community groups to undertake and lead engagement. This model has been well received and has established the principle of community-led delivery and generated, at a formative level, buy-in from a range of community groups. Continued engagement, co-design, and feedback—not as an event but as the norm—will help cement buy-in and form the basis for funded community-led interventions.

Young people have been actively engaged within the programme—an enthusiasm and a resource we need to harness. Town Board members (Principal of Boston College, Managing Director of the Boston Youth Hub, and the Imam from Boston Mosque) are investigating the set-up of a Youth Council, supported in the first instance through Pride in Place capacity funding, to mirror and link into the Town Board and Community Masterplan process. This seemed a better and more equitable and accountable model than a single youth representative on the Board given the wide demographic.

Boston does not have a Business Investment District, but efforts have been made to re-establish a Business Forum over recent years. Significant effort has been made over the last 12 months to generate more active participation and formalise the arrangements. Boston Town Board sees a formalised and active business forum as a key partner going forward, helping to shape, invest in, and deliver critical change within the town centre as well as retaining and growing/diversifying the current offer. On this basis, Pride in Place capacity funding has been allocated to help shape and formalise a trading forum for Boston.

Boston's plans have and will continue to have a strong relationship with the Community Masterplan, which is being developed in parallel with the early stages of Boston's Pride in Place. The Community Masterplan will:

- Enable us to work with local people to better understand the relationship between people and places.
- Identify future development needs with the potential to create local plans at neighbourhood level and boost levels of trust.
- Create a blueprint for delivering the vision for Boston and informing future policy and resources decisions and partnership working, including across sectors.
- Provide a mechanism for accountability and 'checking the compass'.

Those leading on the, separately funded, Community Masterplan have been engaged throughout the process so far, including the sharing of data and information between the programmes and their involvement in workshops. Building trust and capacity within the Boston community to support ongoing engagement to the level we aspire to will not be achieved overnight, but by working alongside the development of the Community Masterplan for Boston, we will ensure that the benefit of this work is optimised.

## **How We Will Deliver Interventions**

The delivery partner, delivery vehicle, and route to market are highly dependent on the intervention. Our presumption will be towards:

- Agility within the requirements of appropriate governance and controls
- Utilising community groups to deliver (pass-ported funding) or support delivery where possible
- Working with partners—community, business, or others—where possible
- Utilising and supporting local traders and businesses where possible
- Minimising the use of consultants

## Section 8: Governance

Governance, roles, and responsibilities for the Board and Local Authority are set out clearly within the MHCLG Guidance and embedded within our Terms of Reference. This includes the requirement to operate in line with the Nolan Principles and the requirement for the Accountable Body to ensure that all expenditure meets the standards of Managing Public Money.

The Board and Local Authority have experience (from other funding programmes) of putting appropriate mechanisms, agreements, and processes in place to specify, manage, and oversee delivery through third parties—including partners. Grant funding agreements have had and will continue to have appropriate terms and conditions to protect investment and ensure the delivery of benefit.

The route to market will be determined by the type of intervention but will be compliant with the requirements of public expenditure and procurement where appropriate.

In terms of appraisal and approval of investment, an Evaluation Model is being designed to optimise benefit while recognising that “one size does not fit all” across the broad spectrum of social and economic change. The Board will approve all investment OR the delegated mechanism through which smaller investments and grants are approved. The Accountable Body will ensure compliance as set out in the section below.

There will be a Board Review post submission of the plan to enable an assessment of the skills and experience required to deliver the plan alongside the current skills and background of Board members.

## Section 9: Assurance

This plan establishes a robust framework to ensure the effective delivery of the programme. Our approach emphasises accountability, risk management, and performance oversight, tailored to the programme's focus on creating a thriving place, stronger communities, and empowered residents. By integrating compliance with the accountable body's procedures, including those governing performance monitoring, procurement, and adherence to key themes such as subsidy control, the plan safeguards public funds and promotes transparent decision-making

### Principles

The plan adheres to core standards:

- **Regularity:** Compliance with relevant legislation, procurement law, and subsidy control requirements, ensuring all expenditures support the vision's objectives, such as town centre revitalisation and heritage activation. This involves rigorous verification that grants and contracts adhere to statutory guidelines, with the accountable body overseeing approvals to prevent non-compliant spending.
- **Propriety:** High standards of public conduct, including transparent governance and community engagement, reflecting the Nolan Principles adopted by the Boston Town Board. This extends to ethical procurement practices and inclusive stakeholder involvement, ensuring decisions are free from conflicts of interest.
- **Value for Money:** Efficient, effective, and prudent use of resources to achieve outcomes like reduced commercial vacancies, improved social trust, and increased GVA per capita, with a focus on leveraging match funding and community-led initiatives. Assessments will incorporate cost-benefit analyses, aligned with the accountable body's financial procedures, to optimise returns on investments in areas like skills programmes and green space enhancements.

These principles are embedded throughout the programme's lifecycle, with the accountable body responsible for enforcing compliance through documented protocols, including annual reviews of subsidy control adherence in enterprise support activities.

### Accountability and Assurance Structure

A three-lines-of-defence model underpins the plan, with Boston Borough Council as the accountable body overseeing grant agreements and financial arrangements. This structure ensures layered scrutiny, with clear escalation paths for issues related to performance or compliance.

- **First Line of Defence:** The Chief Finance Officer (S151 Officer) provides primary assurance through internal controls. This includes signing off on project adjustments, compliance checks for interventions like the Skills for the Future Programme, and quarterly reporting on spend profiles, milestones, and risks. For community grants and youth council initiatives, the officer will verify alignment with the vision's performance metrics and milestones, such as reducing deprivation in education and skills across the seven neighbourhoods (Fenside, Witham, etc.). Additionally, the officer will be aware of subsidy control assessments for all funding allocations, ensuring they meet the accountable body's procedures for transparency and legal compliance. This line also involves day-to-day monitoring of project delivery, with reporting templates that capture progress against key performance indicators, flagging any deviations early for corrective action.
- **Second Line of Defence:** Oversight by the funding authority involves a risk-based approach to monitor delivery. Triggers for intervention include delays in key projects and budget variances exceeding 10%. Annual deep dives will sample 20% of projects, selected by risk scoring based on factors including and complexity. These reviews will test procurement for fairness, governance for inclusivity, counter-fraud measures via transaction sampling, and subsidy control compliance for enterprise support. To enhance robustness, deep dives will incorporate thematic audits on adherence to the accountable body's performance procedures, such as verifying that interventions align with the three core themes of thriving places, stronger

communities, and taking back control. Outcomes may lead to remedial actions, with escalation to a decision group comprising board members and external experts. Local meetings with partners will inform findings, fostering collaborative improvements and ensuring compliance with subsidy control through detailed subsidy assessments.

- **Third Line of Defence:** Independent audits by an external agency will provide objective assurance, reviewing a sample of projects, to confirm strategic alignment and benefit realisation. These audits will evaluate overall programme effectiveness, including how well the accountable body's procedures on performance and subsidy control have been applied, recommending enhancements where gaps are identified.

## Performance Management

Engagement with the funding authority will focus on a comprehensive monitoring framework with baselines for metrics like crime reduction and visitor numbers. This framework will track progress against predefined milestones. Payments will be milestone-based. Grant determinations will tie to the four-year investment plan (2026–2030).

The performance management system will incorporate a multi-tiered approach aligned with the accountable body's procedures. This includes establishing key performance indicators (KPIs) at the outset, derived from the vision's high-level measures. Quarterly reviews will assess delivery against these KPIs, using standardised reporting forms submitted by project leads. These reports will detail outputs (e.g., number of community events held), outcomes (e.g., improved social trust scores), and risks, with variance analysis to identify underperformance early.

In cases of deviation, a structured escalation process will apply: initial remedial plans developed by the Town Board, reviewed by the accountable body for compliance with financial and subsidy control procedures, and approved by the funding authority if necessary. Annual performance summaries will be published for transparency, incorporating community feedback to refine metrics and ensure alignment with resident priorities.

The system will also integrate compliance audits specifically on key themes, such as verifying subsidy control in business grants through pre-approval assessments and post-expenditure reviews. This ensures all activities adhere to the accountable body's governance protocols, promoting accountability and value for money. Benchmarking against similar programmes will inform continuous improvement, with training for board members on performance monitoring to build capacity.

This approach will be reviewed annually, incorporating lessons from community feedback and board evaluations, to sustain Boston's transformation into a vibrant, inclusive town.

# Boston 4-Year Investment Plan 2026–2030

## Pride in Place Programme: Building a Thriving, Stronger, and Empowered Boston

Prepared by Boston Town Board for the Plan for Neighbourhoods Programme  
October 2025

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### Introduction

This 4-Year Investment Plan (2026–2030) outlines Boston, Lincolnshire’s strategy to deliver transformative change as part of the Pride in Place programme. Building on the Boston 10-Year Vision Document, this plan prioritises interventions that align with the programme’s three objectives: creating a Thriving Place, fostering Stronger Communities, and enabling communities to Take Back Control. It responds to Boston’s unique socio-economic challenges and opportunities, as identified through extensive community engagement and data analysis, with a focus on preparing for the Boston (2030) 400 celebrations in 2030, marking 400 years since the founding of Boston, Massachusetts.

Boston is a town of contrasts: a medieval heritage juxtaposed with modern diversity, a history of global trade meeting present-day economic challenges. With over 30% of residents born outside the UK, a low-wage economy, and high deprivation in education and skills, Boston faces significant hurdles. Yet, its rich heritage, vibrant community, and strategic location offer immense potential. This plan sets out a practical, community-led approach to regeneration, leveraging Pride in Place funding alongside existing investments to deliver measurable outcomes by 2030.



The plan is structured to deliver quick wins in the early years, build momentum, and establish a sustainable framework for long-term change. It prioritises interventions in the town centre, heritage activation, safety, education, and community empowerment, ensuring alignment with community priorities and the Boston (2030) 400milestone. By 2030, Boston aims to be a place where history and progress walk hand in hand, where communities are stronger, and where residents have genuine control over their future.

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## Strategic Context

Boston's socio-economic profile, as detailed in the 10-Year Vision Document, highlights key challenges and opportunities that shape this plan:

- **Economic Challenges:** Boston's Gross Value Added (GVA) per job filled is £39,959, significantly below the national average of £62,751 (64% of England's GVA). More widely however the economic multiplier effects of particularly the freight and logistics elements of the economy are very important at a regional level. They support a very important wider nationally significant supply chain at a Greater Lincolnshire level. The economy is nonetheless still heavily reliant on low-wage sectors, with Wholesale and Retail Trade employing 29% of the workforce (vs. 15% nationally) and Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing at 4% (vs. 1% nationally). High commercial vacancies and low high street footfall (50% below average) reflect town centre decline.
- **Social Challenges:** Over 50% of Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) rank in the top 20% for deprivation in Education, Skills, and Training, with 40% in the top 10%. Social trust is low at -7% (vs. national -3%), with 72% of residents feeling unheard in local decision-making (ZenCity, May 2025). Crime rates, particularly in the Town Centre, exceed Lincolnshire's average (0.0073 per head).
- **Diversity and Demographics:** Boston's population grew 13.1% from 2011 to 2022 (45,238), with 30% born outside the UK, making it one of England's most diverse smaller towns. Child population growth (20%) outpaces national trends, presenting both challenges and opportunities.
- **Heritage Potential:** With 266 listed buildings in the town centre, 16 Scheduled Ancient Monuments, and a historic Market Place, Boston's heritage is a key asset. However, cultural participation lags, with only 23.2% engaging in theatre (vs. 39.5% nationally) and 28.4% visiting museums (vs. 43.1% nationally).
- **Housing and Health:** High house price-to-earnings ratios and non-decent dwellings indicate housing affordability issues. Health outcomes are poorer due to deprivation, with 34.6% of under-16s in low-income households.

Community engagement conducted from June to August 2025, building on 2024 consultations, gathered over 1,100 responses through surveys, workshops, and stakeholder events. This process identified nine key priorities aligned with Pride in Place objectives:

1. Enhancing safety and security (Stronger Communities)
2. Revitalising the town centre (Thriving Place)
3. Celebrating heritage, arts, and culture (Thriving Place)
4. Improving education and skills (Stronger Communities)
5. Supporting enterprise and business growth (Thriving Place)
6. Supporting health and wellbeing (Stronger Communities)
7. Enhancing green spaces and connectivity (Thriving Place)
8. Addressing housing affordability (Stronger Communities)

## 9. Building community capacity and empowerment (Taking Back Control)

These priorities, cross-referenced with neighbourhood-level data (Fenside, Witham, Town Centre, Trinity, Skirbeck, Staniland, St Thomas), ensure targeted interventions that address spatial variations in deprivation and opportunity.

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## Investment Plan Overview

This plan covers the first four years (2026–2030) of the Pride in Place programme, with an indicative funding allocation of £6.6 million from Pride in Place. This is expected to leverage a further £3.3 million in match funding (local authority, businesses, grants, private and public sector investment and sponsorships). It focuses on delivering tangible outcomes in the lead-up to Boston 2030, prioritising interventions that address immediate community needs, build social trust, and lay foundations for long-term regeneration.

The plan is structured around the three Pride in Place objectives, with projects targeting the seven neighbourhoods to address specific challenges (e.g., high deprivation in Fenside, retail decline in Town Centre). Interventions are designed to be agile, community-led, and aligned with existing investments (e.g., Towns Fund, Levelling Up, UKSPF). The plan includes quick wins to build confidence, such as town centre enhancements and community safety hubs, while investing in longer-term goals like skills development and heritage activation.

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## Interventions and Funding Allocation

The following interventions are proposed for 2026–2030, with indicative costs (see budget table which follows), timelines, and outcomes. Each aligns with community priorities, leverages existing investments, and targets specific neighbourhoods to maximise impact.

### Thriving Place

#### Town Centre Revitalisation

- **Project:** Along with Safety and Security the primary theme for the first four years of the programme. A comprehensive programme of significant public realm, shop front and other physical enhancements to ensure the town realises its full potential as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century retail and amenity hub. This could include Market Place and Public Realm Enhancement. improved paving, outdoor seating, and lighting to support food and beverage outlets and independent retail. Pilot pop-up markets to attract local entrepreneurs, building on the success of Boston Brilliance festival re-design and development to support the circulation of people and traffic and the establishment of a major new town centre agenda. ***There is also scope to develop the town centre as a remote working hub, enabling residents to have the facilities either in the town or in their own homes to access employment in wider settings outside of Boston.***

- **Rationale:** Addresses high commercial vacancies (above national average) and low footfall (50% below average). Enhances the town centre's appeal as a commercial and leisure hub, aligning with community feedback for a vibrant centre.
- **Neighbourhood Focus:** Town Centre
- **Timeline:** 2026–2028
- **Outcome:** Increase footfall and reduce commercial vacancies
- **Delivery:** Partner with Boston Borough Council and local business forum to implement improvements and manage pop-up markets

**Heritage and Culture Activation (Scope in addition to set budget to absorb up to £100,000 of capacity funding to support the development of a programme of activity linked to the newly published Town of Culture opportunity).**

- **Project:** ***Pull together a series of key early actions to position Boston as a really strong competitor in the Town of Culture Agenda for 2028, leveraging its major relationship and connections with Boston Massachusetts all in connection with the Boston (2030) 400 Preparatory Programme.*** Develop a heritage trail highlighting listed buildings. Fund a Boston (2030) 400 Lead to coordinate events, secure sponsorship, and develop a legacy events programme.
- **Rationale:** Leverages Boston's 266 listed buildings and low cultural participation (e.g., 28.4% museum visits vs. 43.1% nationally). Prepares for Boston (2030) 400 as a regional and international milestone and ***opens up real potential for Boston to become the first UK Town of Culture in 2028.***
- **Neighbourhood Focus:** ***Town Centre, Trinity, Skirbeck***
- **Timeline:** 2027–2030
- **Outcome:** Increase heritage site visits and establish Boston (2030) 400 as an international event with a sustainable legacy
- **Delivery:** Collaborate with Historic England, local arts groups, and the Boston (2030) 400 stakeholders

### **Green Spaces and Connectivity**

- **Project:** Enhance cycling and walking paths, wildflower planting, and signage along the River Witham, connecting neighbourhoods and improving access to green spaces more widely across the town.
- **Rationale:** Addresses community demand for accessible green spaces and better connectivity. Supports tourism and wellbeing, particularly in Witham and Skirbeck.
- **Neighbourhood Focus:** Witham, Skirbeck, St Thomas
- **Timeline:** 2026–2029
- **Outcome:** Increase green space usage and improve connectivity across neighbourhoods
- **Delivery:** Partner with Environment Agency and community groups to implement and maintain improvements

## **Stronger Communities**

### **Safety and Security**

- **Project:** Along with Town Centre Revitalisation the primary theme for the first four years of the programme Community Safety Hubs. Establish hubs in Town Centre and Fenside, offering community policing including

wardens/rangers, youth engagement programmes, and anti-social behaviour workshops.

- **Rationale:** Addresses high crime rates and low social trust (-18.8% in Town Centre, -14.8% in Fenside). Responds to community priority for safer streets.
- **Neighbourhood Focus:** Town Centre, Fenside
- **Timeline:** 2026–2029
- **Outcome:** Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour to the national average
- **Delivery:** Work with Lincolnshire Police and community organisations to establish and operate hubs

## Education and Skills

- **Project:** Very modest interventions in first 4 years to take account of significant levels of partner funding to address these agenda. In year 3 and 4 scope for spot interventions to support bespoke one off interventions to address very specific funding gaps/opportunities.
- **Rationale:** Over 50% of LSOAs rank in the top 20% for education deprivation. Low Level 3 qualifications limit economic mobility, particularly in Fenside.
- **Neighbourhood Focus:** Fenside, Skirbeck, Trinity
- **Timeline:** 2027–2030
- **Outcome:** Increase qualifications
- **Delivery:** Collaborate with learning organisations and local employers to design and deliver training programmes diagnosing and acting on a lack of appetite for higher level skills

## Health and Wellbeing

- **Project:** Focus just on capital investment in Community Wellbeing Centres and associated activities. There is significant programmed spend, particularly in relation to revenue activities in the area and therefore scarce revenue funding will be allocated to other themes where public sentiment and detailed statistical evidence suggest stronger early priorities – particularly safety and security, town centre and heritage and culture themes. Develop multi-generational learning spaces in Trinity and Staniland, offering health workshops, digital literacy, and cultural exchange programmes. There is also scope to build substantive links with the work of Active Lincolnshire in Boston building synergies with their programme of public participation in exercise.
- **Rationale:** High deprivation correlates with poorer health outcomes. 34.6% of under-16s live in low-income households, necessitating community-based wellbeing initiatives.
- **Neighbourhood Focus:** Trinity, Staniland
- **Timeline:** 2026–2028
- **Outcome:** Improve wellbeing metrics by 2030
- **Delivery:** Partner with NHS, community groups, and faith groups to deliver inclusive programmes

## Housing

- **Project:** There are strong links and interdependencies between this theme and the revitalisation of the Town Centre. Partner with housing associations to improve non-decent dwellings in St Thomas and Fenside, explore incentives and arrangements with premises owners to incentivise the transition from **retail to residential** and other evolution of town centre

buildings into residential. In view of limited revenue resources proposed to be a capital only programme.

- **Rationale:** High house price-to-earnings ratio despite low housing stock value. Non-decent dwellings exacerbate deprivation.
- **Neighbourhood Focus:** St Thomas, Fenside
- **Timeline:** 2027–2030
- **Outcome:** Reduce non-decent dwellings in target areas, bring forward new town centre residential schemes
- **Delivery:** Work with housing associations and local authority to implement retrofits and the introduction of more residential to the town centre

## Taking Back Control

**Community Capacity Building (Scope to also absorb some of the outstanding capacity building funding £228,000 which remains to be allocated having accrued from 2023/4 to 2025/6)**

- **Project:** Community Masterplan Implementation. Fund community-led projects through a grant scheme, supporting initiatives like neighbourhood clean-ups, cultural events, and business forums. There is also scope to develop community cohesion programme profiled at the end of the Investment Plan.
- **Rationale:** 72% of residents feel unheard in decision-making. Low social trust (-7% vs. national -3%) requires capacity-building to empower communities.
- **Neighbourhood Focus:** All seven neighbourhoods
- **Timeline:** 2026–2030
- **Outcome:** Move from 72% feeling unheard to upper quartile response by 2030
- **Delivery:** Administer grants, with community groups leading projects

**Youth Engagement (Scope to also absorb some of the outstanding capacity building funding £228,000 which remains to be allocated having accrued from 2023/4 to 2025/6)**

- **Project:** Boston Youth Council. Establish a formal youth council to engage young people in decision-making, supported by Boston College and community leaders. By integrating this theme with Community Capacity building these if real potential to create synergies and in view of the limited revenue funding available to the programme overall significant attention will be given to building synergies with other initiatives outside of pride in place linked to education, prevention and skills in the area. There are strong opportunities to link to revenue funding streams in relation to this project which connect with safety and security, town centre revitalisation and heritage and culture.
- **Rationale:** High child population growth (20%) and strong youth engagement in 2025 consultations indicate potential for youth-led change. Significant anecdotal reporting of mental health challenges facing young people
- **Neighbourhood Focus:** All seven neighbourhoods
- **Timeline:** 2026–2028
- **Outcome:** Increase youth participation in local decisions by 20%
- **Delivery:** Partner with Boston College, Boston Youth Hub, and community leaders to establish and support the council

## Pre-approved Intervention Links

The table below shows how each idea link to the pre-approved list of interventions within the Pride in Place Guidance:

Project Title	Linked Pre-Approved Intervention(s)	Rationale for Link
Town Centre Revitalisation	1. Funding for improvements to town centres, neighbourhoods, and high streets, including capital spend and running costs	Supports public realm improvements like paving, seating, and lighting in the town centre to enhance commercial appeal and footfall.
Heritage and Culture Activation	Enhanced support for arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities, projects and facilities and historic institutions that make up the local cultural heritage offer	Funds development of heritage trails, event coordination, and legacy programmes for cultural and heritage assets, leveraging listed buildings for events like Boston 400.
Green Spaces and Connectivity	Green Spaces and Connectivity	Enhances walking paths, wildflower planting, and signage along the river for better connectivity and green space access, including improvements to footways.
Safety and Security	4. Funding for new community and neighbourhood infrastructure projects, or for improvements to existing ones, including facilities that house public services or enhance community resilience to natural hazards, such as flooding. This could cover both capital spend and operational costs 19. Investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society, youth and community groups	Establishes hubs for community policing and youth engagement as new public service facilities with operational costs to address crime and anti-social behaviour.
Education and Skills	16. Skills provision tailored to local opportunities and skills gaps, such as those identified in an area's Local Skills Improvement Plan (England only) 13. Support to improve awareness of, and access to, local provision that moves people closer to and into sustained employment, in line with an area's Get Britain Working Plan (England and Wales only)	Partners with learning organisations for training programmes targeting deprived areas to increase qualifications and support employment in line with local skills needs.

Health and Wellbeing	20. Supporting community-level health provision 21. Integration and co-location of health and wellbeing services	Develops multi-generational spaces for health workshops, digital literacy, and cultural exchanges as community health hubs integrating wellbeing services.
Housing	8. Modernisation of social housing 10. Provide healthy and climate-resilient homes support locally	Improves non-decent dwellings through energy efficiency retrofits, including insulation and low-carbon heating, to enhance housing quality and resilience.
Community Capacity Building	19. Investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society, youth and community groups 9. Support wider neighbourhood renewal by improving the attractiveness and liveability of homes and their surroundings	Funds community-led projects via grants for clean-ups, events, and forums to build capacity, develop structures, and support neighbourhood renewal engagement.
Youth Engagement	17. Measures to improve community cohesion 18. Funding for impactful volunteering and social action projects to develop social and human capital in local place	Establishes a youth council for decision-making engagement, fostering cohesion through youth participation, dialogue, and social action projects.

## Funding Profile

The indicative funding allocation for 2026–2030 is outlined below. The profile prioritises early investment in safety, town centre revitalisation, and heritage to build momentum for Boston 400.

### Phased Spend Table with Revenue, Capital, and Matched Funding Split (2026/27 to 2029/30)

The table below outlines the phased expenditure for the listed projects from 2026/27 to 2029/30

Each project's annual allocation is split into revenue and capital, with an additional 50% matched funding added to each project's annual core allocation – ***this is a key design principle to inform the future identification of projects not a formal commitment from any party at this stage.***

Each project heading reflects the sum of revenue, capital, and matched funding for that year (there is some very modest rounding in the table). Housing interventions have been combined with wider town centre revitalisation and education and skills and health and well-being have been combined with community capacity building and youth engagement to ensure that there is enough budget scale to address key issues which span these themes.

To date £450,000 has been provided for programme management and a further £150,000 is scheduled for 2026/27. The remaining funding will be used to support

- 'Town of culture' bid
- Boston 2030 preparation
- Project and programme management costs
- Project development/ feasibility/ business case work

**It is proposed to allocate up to £100,000 of this funding to the development of the Boston 2030 programme – particularly in relation to the development of a programme of activities which would position Boston very strongly to achieve Town of Culture Status in 2028.**

Project	Total Cost PiP	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30
Town Centre Revitalisation (incorporating housing interventions)	£2,307,675	£180,125	£723,550	£702,000	£702,000
Revenue	£389,856	£55,380	£72,816	£130,830	£130,830
Capital	£1,917,819	£124,745	£650,734	£571,170	£571,170
Anticipated Leverage Target (50%)	£1,153,838	£90,063	£361,775	£351,000	£351,000
Heritage and Culture Activation	£868,925	£64,625	£262,300	£271,000	£271,000
Revenue	£224,175	£34,125	£43,050	£73,500	£73,500
Capital	£644,750	£30,500	£219,250	£197,500	£197,500
Anticipated Leverage Target (50%)	£434,463	£32,313	£131,150	£135,500	£135,500
Safety and Security	£1,989,450	£243,000	£518,450	£614,000	£614,000
Revenue	£420,705	£82,875	£79,950	£128,940	£128,940
Capital	£1,568,745	£160,125	£438,500	£485,060	£485,060
Anticipated Leverage Target (50%)	£994,725	£121,500	£259,225	£307,000	£307,000
Community Capacity Building (incorporating Education and Skills and Health and Well-Being)	£577,425	£52,125	£162,300	£181,500	£181,500
Revenue	£186,000	£29,250	£30,750	£63,000	£63,000
Capital	£391,425	£22,875	£131,550	£118,500	£118,500
Anticipated Leverage Target (50%)	£288,713	£26,063	£81,150	£90,750	£90,750



Youth Engagement (incorporating Education and Skills and Health and Well-Being for young people)	£379,275	£52,125	£106,150	£110,500	£110,500
Revenue	£110,700	£29,250	£18,450	£31,500	£31,500
Capital	£268,575	£22,875	£87,700	£79,000	£79,000
Anticipated Leverage Target (50%)	£189,638	£26,063	£53,075	£55,250	£55,250
Green Spaces and Connectivity	£535,250	£0	£219,250	£158,000	£158,000
Revenue	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Capital	£535,250	£0	£219,250	£158,000	£158,000
Anticipated Leverage Target (50%)	£267,625	£0	£109,625	£79,000	£79,000
<b>Project</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>2026/27</b>	<b>2027/28</b>	<b>2028/29</b>	<b>2029/30</b>
Total Core Funding	£6,658,000	£592,000	£1,992,000	£2,037,000	£2,037,000
Total Revenue	£1,664,500	£230,880	£245,016	£427,770	£427,770
Total Capital	£4,993,500	£361,120	£1,746,984	£1,609,230	£1,609,230
Total Anticipated Leverage Funding Target	£3,329,000	£296,000	£996,000	£1,018,500	£1,018,500
Total Core + Leverage	£9,987,000	£888,000	£2,988,000	£3,055,500	£3,055,500
Year 1 also includes £150,000 revenue funding for capacity building					

## Alignment with Existing Investments

The plan complements and enhances existing investments to optimise impact:

- **Towns Fund:** Supports projects like Crown House and Rosegarth Square public space enhancements. Pride in Place adds community-led elements, such as pop-up markets and cultural events, to maximise benefits.
- **Levelling Up Round 2:** Funds a digital campus at Boston College, aligning with the Skills for the Future Programme to enhance training in digital and creative industries.
- **UKSPF:** Supports town centre regeneration, supplemented by Pride in Place funding for independent retail and leisure enhancements.
- **Community Masterplan:** Runs in parallel, sharing data and workshops to build trust and capacity. Pride in Place interventions, like community grants, support masterplan goals.

The plan also aligns with 85 national, regional, and local strategies (e.g., Historic England's heritage priorities, local authority economic development plans), ensuring no duplication and leveraging partner investments.

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## Governance and Assurance

The Boston Town Board, with Boston Borough Council as the Accountable Body, oversees the programme. The Board operates under the Nolan Principles and adheres to Managing Public Money standards, ensuring regularity, propriety, value for money, and feasibility. Key governance features include:

- **Structure:** The Board, supported by the South-East Lincolnshire Council Partnership (SELCP), manages programme delivery. SELCP provides shared contractor resources, funded by capacity allocations.
- **Investment Appraisal:** An Evaluation Model will assess interventions, with delegated mechanisms for smaller grants. The Accountable Body ensures compliance with public expenditure rules.
- **Transparency:** Regular reporting to stakeholders and community feedback sessions ensure accountability.

Grant funding agreements with delivery partners (e.g., community groups, Boston College) will include terms to protect investments and ensure benefit realisation.

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## Community and Stakeholder Engagement

Engagement is central to the plan's success, building on the 2025 consultation (1,100+ responses) and addressing low social trust (-7%) and perceptions of being unheard (72%). Strategies include:

- **Themed Workshops:** Ongoing workshops with community groups, businesses, and partners to co-design and review interventions. These will continue post-submission to refine plans.
- **Youth Council:** Supported by Boston College and community leaders, to harness youth enthusiasm and ensure young people shape decisions.
- **Business Forum:** Formalised with Pride in Place capacity funding to drive town centre investment and delivery.
- **Community Grants:** Small-scale funding to empower local groups, building on 2025 engagement success and fostering community-led delivery.
- **Feedback Loops:** Regular community updates via online platforms, town hall meetings, and partner networks to validate plans and maintain trust.

The plan integrates with the Community Masterplan, sharing data and workshops to build long-term engagement capacity.

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## Monitoring and Evaluation

A Pride in Place Dashboard will track progress against baselines, with specific targets for 2030:

- **Thriving Place:**
  - Increase visitor numbers annually, with related economic impact.
  - Reduce commercial vacancies to the national average.
  - Increase GVA per capita
- **Stronger Communities:**
  - Reduce crime and anti-social behaviour to the national average.
  - Increase Level 3+ qualifications in target neighbourhoods.
  - Improve wellbeing metrics
  - Reduce non-decent dwellings
- **Taking Back Control:**
  - Move from 72% feeling unheard to upper quartile response.
  - Increase youth participation in local decisions.

Milestones and outcomes will be reviewed annually, with adjustments based on community feedback and external factors (e.g., economic shifts, new funding opportunities).

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## Conclusion

This 4-Year Investment Plan sets Boston on a path to transformation by 2030, leveraging its rich heritage, diverse community, and strategic location. By prioritising quick wins like Market Place enhancements and community safety hubs, building capacity through youth councils and community grants, and preparing for Boston 400, the plan delivers tangible change while laying foundations for long-term success. Through co-design, strategic alignment with existing investments, and robust governance, Boston will become a thriving, stronger, and empowered community—a town that believes in itself and moves forward together.

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## Proposal for Community Cohesion and Development in Boston

### Introduction

Community cohesion is essential for the progress and development of towns. The diverse communities of Boston play a vital role in shaping its future. This proposal outlines strategies to foster mutual respect, understanding, and collaboration among all segments of society.

### Background

Boston is home to a wide range of ethnicities, faiths, and cultures, including British, Pakistani, Indian, Bangladeshi, Egyptian, Tunisian, Moroccan, Algerian, Somali, Yemeni, Latvian, Polish, Bulgarian, Romanian, Turkish, Iraqi, Kurdish, Tajik, Turkmen, and Christian communities.

Residents work in various sectors, from healthcare and engineering to farming and business. Faith groups include Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, and atheists.

Despite this diversity, there is currently no direct forum for inter- community engagement. Establishing such a forum is paramount to creating a positive impact across all segments of society.

## Objectives

1. Establish a Community (INTERFAITH) Forum: Create an inclusive infrastructure where all communities are represented.
2. Develop and Execute Programmes: Launch initiatives that promote understanding, respect, and collaboration.
3. Engage All Segments: Ensure participation from faith groups, deprived and affluent communities, youth, elderly, and businesses.

## Proposed Actions

1. Formation of an Interfaith Forum
  - Bring together representatives from all faiths and denominations.
  - Develop a constitution for the forum.
  - Rotate meetings between churches, mosques, and community spaces.
  - Organize events such as food festivals, cultural occasions, and campaigns on societal issues.
2. Community Engagement Programmes
  - Mentorship Initiatives: Recruit mentors (primarily volunteers) to support deprived communities and youth.
  - Educational Support: Involve schools and colleges to help raise educational standards of those who are from the weak backgrounds.
  - Resource Sharing: Encourage affluent community members and businesses to involve and support those in need through voluntary work and resource allocation.
3. Inclusive Participation
  - Ensure programmes address the needs of all segments: poor, elderly, youth, and various ethnicities.
  - Foster opportunities for interaction, collaboration, and mutual support.
  - Promote understanding of different theological, philosophical, and political perspectives.

## Expected Outcomes

- Enhanced trust and respect among communities.
- Improved well-being and opportunities for deprived groups.
- Stronger collaboration between faith groups, businesses, and educational institutions.
- A cohesive, caring, and resilient community.

## Conclusion

Community cohesion and development are vital strategies for Boston's future. By fostering understanding, respect, and collaboration, all segments of society can work together to achieve shared objectives and build a thriving town. This approach provides a foundation for discussion and the developments of impactful initiatives.

Boston Pride in Place Submission

Appendix 3: Pride in Place 10 Year Funding Profile (as per Government prospectus)

Grant type	Previous Years	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	2032/33	2033/34	2034/35	2035/36	Total
Revenue funding (capacity)	250	200	150	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	600
Revenue funding (grants)	0	0	232	256	432	432	432	432	437	450	450	450	3,999
Total revenue funding	250	200	382	256	432	432	432	432	437	450	450	450	4,599
Capital funding (grants)	0	0	360	1,736	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	1,605	14,936
Total	250	200	742	1,992	2,037	2,037	2,037	2,037	2,042	2,055	2,055	2,055	19,535

For noting: there are some minor anomalies in the funding totals published by Government due to rounding errors.

**Bold:** funding received  
**Green:** the Plan for Neighbourhoods submission for Boston must include an investment plan for the first four years of delivery

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**Let's Talk Boston:  
Plan for Neighbourhoods Funding  
Consultation and Engagement, Summer 2025**

**Final report  
September 2025**

Prepared by The Engaging People Company on behalf of Boston Town Board

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## Executive Summary

### Overview

Consultation and engagement has been carried out across a range of methods to gain meaningful insight from the public to shape the Plan for Neighbourhoods plans for Boston, under the banner of Let's Talk Boston. The aim has been to raise awareness, engender interest, share information, and drive involvement, and to build on findings from engagement and consultation work carried out in 2024.

At the heart of the approach was a concerted consultation period between 4<sup>th</sup> July – 11<sup>th</sup> August 2025. During this period, people had their say through the following online surveys, resulting in the following responses:

- General survey ('Let's Talk Boston') - 338 responses
  - *The total sample size for this survey provides findings with a margin of error of +/-5% (at a 95% confidence level) (based on a Boston town population of 45,347 - Source: ONS Census 2021).*
- Young people survey (for under 25s) - 61 responses
  - *The total sample size for this survey provides findings with a margin of error of +/-12.5% (at a 95% confidence level) (based on a Boston town population under the age of 25 of 16,226 - Source: ONS Census 2021).*

In addition to these surveys, Boston College led-engagement activities at Futurefest and Sparkfest generated 102 and 347 responses respectively.

In addition, feedback has also been shared via community group activities and freepost response leaflets. 96 leaflet responses were received by post.

Around 1,100 separate pieces of feedback have been captured from people through the process.

The feedback from consultation and engagement mechanisms is highlighted within this **report**.

### Let's Talk Boston: engagement overview

Boston Town Board is committed to engaging local people in the development and delivery of plans for Boston, ensuring that they are supported and empowered to have their say, in a range of accessible ways. The Board is taking a collaborative approach, involving the community in co-creating plans that are 'owned' by local people.

The approach to engagement is underpinned by some guiding principles:

- **Inclusive** – the Board seeks to ensure that its engagement and communications activities meet the diverse needs of the population, and that it connects with people who may be seldom heard;

- **Creative** – the Board looks for opportunities to ‘do different’ and encourage involvement through creative activities;
- **Empower** – the Board seeks to empower by delegating responsibility to community groups and local people;
- **Listen** – the Board actively listens to feedback, and demonstrates its understanding and actions in response to feedback through action;
- **Easy** – the Board makes it easy and convenient for people to access information and get involved.

## **Plan for Neighbourhoods consultation and engagement: phase 1**

### **June – August 2025**

In summer 2025, Boston Town Board ran a multi-layered programme of consultation and engagement which aimed to gain robust, meaningful, and deep insight and understanding of local people’s views, hopes, and ideas for their town. This programme built on the foundation of previous consultative activity, namely the consultation in 2024 around the then Long Term Plan for Towns scheme. This report can be found [here](#)

## **Programme of consultation and engagement**

### **1. Boston College consultation**

Boston College played a leading role in consultation and engagement with a dedicated survey which was rolled out at two key events – Futurefest, a careers festival dedicated to secondary schools and post-16 learners – and Sparkfest, Boston College’s 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. Engagement was incentivised with ice-cream at Futurefest, and the Sparkfest engagement was led by community Interviewers from Boston College who received training in interview and coaching skills as well as reimbursement for their role. 120 young people had their say at Futurefest and 449 people of all ages completed the survey at Sparkfest.

### **2. Let’s Talk Boston**

Together with Boston Borough Council, the Let’s Talk Boston brand and messaging was developed to ensure a consistent and coherent approach across all consultative activities in the town. Let’s Talk Boston also set out a call to action to the community and underpinned a number of different mechanisms for engagement, including:

- A **general survey**, incentivised, and available online, with the survey also made available in nine other languages. The survey questions sought to build on previous insight and gain depth of understanding. 338 people had their say in this survey;



- Two versions of incentivised **freepost leaflets** were also produced, which invited people to have their say on four questions (two per leaflet), and return their responses freepost. These leaflets were distributed at venues across Boston and offered an accessible and easy way for people to join the conversation. 96 people had their say via these leaflets. Responses have been incorporated, where applicable, in the general survey analysis.



- A dedicated and incentivised **young people survey** was developed and made available online. The survey was set up in partnership with Boston Youth Hub as a collaborative exercise, and the youth hub supported the survey by having iPads available at the centre for young people to engage with the survey. 61 young people had their say in the survey.

### 3. Events

Face to face engagement was an important part of the programme and representatives and interviewers had a presence at a number of different events during the summer, inviting feedback from the public via the online survey on an iPad and the freepost response leaflets.



Engagement took place at the following events:

- Boston Community Day at Jakeman's Stadium, 20<sup>th</sup> July;
- Boston craft market, 26<sup>th</sup> July;
- Boston Pride, 26<sup>th</sup> July,
- Boston market, 30<sup>th</sup> July;

- Boston teenage market, 2<sup>nd</sup> August.

These events offered the opportunity to engage other community groups, businesses, and traders as well as the public in the consultation.

#### 4. Community group collaboration

A crucial part of the approach was empowering and supporting community groups to take a lead in delivering consultation and engagement, recognising that they have existing trusted connections within Boston. This element of the programme was supported by a [toolkit](#) and funding from the capacity funding. The opportunity to get involved was promoted via a presentation to the Boston Community Leaders meeting, and through direct contact and conversations with numerous community groups, organisations, and champions in Boston. This resulted in additional engagement activities led and delivered by community groups, and supported by the Boston Town Board:

- **Boston Lithuanian Community** – a programme of engagement activities over the summer such as ‘Talk & Tea’ Drop-in sessions, a feedback wall, and an art club workshop. The survey was offered in different languages – provided by the Board – with the responses translated by members of the group. So far 26 Lithuanian surveys and 24 Russian-language surveys have been captured, with more to come.
- **Boston mosque** – engagement is ongoing and has included providing materials and an iPad at the mosque for people to complete the survey, which was promoted within the Friday service.
- **Boston Youth Hub** – in addition to the dedicated survey and iPad, the Board has also funded a graffiti wall to engage young people in an activity with the opportunity to also share their views.
- **Boston Centrepont** – the Board funded an art workshop where clients of the charity were able to complete the leaflets.

Conversations also took place with other partners and community groups - such as LCVS, the Boston Community Connector, and the Young Journalists scheme amongst others – with opportunities identified for collaborative engagement activities in the next phase of consultation and engagement, and beyond.

#### 5. Summary of engagement

Hundreds of conversations about the Plan for Neighbourhoods and the opportunity it represents have taken place over the last two months - at events, with community groups, within organisations, and online. Currently, there are over 1,000 separate pieces of feedback with more to come in the form of feedback leaflets.

#### Driving engagement

It was crucial to drive engagement in the consultation, ensuring that people were aware of it taking place, and knew how to get involved. Activities took the form of:



- Continuous **organic and paid-for social media content**. During the consultation period (4<sup>th</sup> July – 11<sup>th</sup> August) the Boston Town Board Facebook page had 77,509 views, 16,080 reach, 566 content interactions, and 742 link clicks. The paid for Facebook ad for the general Let's Talk Survey had 9,388 views, 4,382 reach, and 394 link clicks. Meanwhile, the paid for Facebook advertising for the under 25s survey generated 7,819 views, 3,555 reach, and 152 clicks. Content was also shared in the town's biggest Facebook group Boston the People.
- Paid for **web banners on Boston Vibe** promoting both surveys had the following results:

Period: 23rd July 2025 – 10<sup>th</sup> August 2025

- Views: 32,582
- Clicks: 12

Period: 23rd July 2025 – 10<sup>th</sup> August 2025

- Views: 122,584

Period: 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2025 – 10<sup>th</sup> August 2025

- Views: 25,770
- Clicks: 8

Period: 23rd July 2025 – 10<sup>th</sup> August 2025

- Views: 117,334

- A Boston-based graphic designer was commissioned to support the promotion of the consultation with **social media assets and vox pops** which served to capture views and also encourage others to get involved. The films can be viewed [here](#)
- The **freepost leaflets and associated posters** promoting the consultation were distributed across the town in a number of locations.
- A dedicated **Chair's Update** with details of the consultation and engagement was sent directly to 168 subscribers and shared online on the Boston Town Board website.
- A **press release** was prepared and issued to local [media](#).
- Content about the opportunity to get involved was created on the Boston Town Board **website**.
- In addition, **content** was shared by board members, partners, and members of the public to encourage people to get involved and share their views.

### **Inclusive engagement**

An absolute priority for the Board has been **inclusive engagement**, ensuring everyone is able to make their voice heard and access routes to have their say. This has been underlined by creating accessible feedback mechanisms – including offering translated surveys – and working with community groups who are trusted sources of information. As outlined previously, the Board has worked with Boston College and the Youth Hub to engage young people and engagement also took place at Boston Youth Market. As such, the youth voice is well represented in this consultation, and beyond that, young people have been supported and empowered to play a leading role as community interviewers.

In addition, activities have been supported by Boston Lithuanian Community, Boston mosque, and Centrepont, allowing the Board to connect with the views of people

diversely. The Board will continue to build on the foundations that have been created and extend its reach further in the months and years to come.

### **Next steps**

The next steps are to continue to engage people in Boston, and to seek further, deepening insight through focus groups. The Board will continue to deliver against its commitment to engage people meaningfully to co-create plans that belong to local people.

## Themes

There are some key themes coming through the feedback:

- **Identity and vision** – there is strong support for Boston embracing its heritage alongside progress and creativity. Respondents want it to be known for its history, market town charm, independent businesses and cultural life.
- **Cleanliness, safety and anti-social behaviour** - top concerns include crime, anti-social behaviour and public cleanliness. There are calls for more visible policing, improved street lighting and better maintenance of public areas.
- **Town centre and local economy** – there is a desire to revitalise the high street, support independent shops and improve the look and feel of the town. Suggestions include affordable parking, filling empty shops and enhancing green spaces.
- **Community, integration and inclusion** – there is emphasis on community spirit, multicultural integration, and cross-cultural events. However, there is a need to overcome division and low civic pride.
- **Support for young people** – with priority for job opportunities, career advice, youth spaces and mental health support to help young people stay and thrive in Boston.
- **Health, wellbeing and leisure** – there is interest in affordable fitness, walking/cycling routes and support for clubs and community activities (e.g. funding, spaces). Events and leisure activities are key to encouraging local engagement and visitor interest.
- **Skills and training** – there is a need for accessible learning, apprenticeships and support for people to gain skills or start businesses. Strong support for community learning hubs.
- **Arts, culture and events** – there is widespread enthusiasm for more music festivals, seasonal events, food markets. Culture and heritage seen as key to improving the visitor / tourist experience.
- **Volunteering and community involvement** – many are already involved, and others would engage more if opportunities were flexible and well-communicated. Most want to contribute through consultations and idea-sharing.
- **Communication and access to services** – there is preference for community hubs, online services, and mobile support. Clearer communication about opportunities and services is needed.

## **Key findings**

### **Part A: survey analysis – General Survey**

#### **i. Our vision for Boston**

##### **Thoughts about Boston's possible identity (prompted)**

1. The large majority of respondents like the idea that Boston's identity could be about its history side-by-side with progress and creativity – 80% quite like it OR like it a lot.
2. With 48% 'liking it a lot'.

##### **What should Boston be known for, so it stands out (open-ended)**

3. Key themes emerging include:
  - a. Its history and heritage
  - b. Independent shops and local businesses
  - c. Cultural activities, events, festivals
  - d. Public spaces and town aesthetics
  - e. Its market town identity

##### **Main changes would want to see in Boston by 2035 (open-ended)**

4. Key themes emerging include:
  - a. Cleanliness, safety and tackling anti-social behaviour
  - b. Revitalising the town centre and retail
  - c. Parking and traffic management (including a bypass)
  - d. Community, culture and integration
  - e. Family-friendly facilities and green spaces

##### **Best things about Boston that we should build on (open-ended)**

5. Key themes emerging include:
  - a. Heritage and history
  - b. Community spirit and friendliness
  - c. Green spaces and the natural environment
  - d. The market and town centre
  - e. Diversity and multiculturalism

##### **Description of the Boston that you would be proud to be part of in 2035 (open-ended)**

6. Key themes emerging include:
  - a. Clean and safe town
  - b. A thriving market town
  - c. Sense of community and togetherness
  - d. Celebrating its history and heritage
  - e. Diverse, multi-cultural and integrated

#### **ii. Boston moving forward**

##### **Small, quick changes that could make a big difference (open-ended)**

7. Key themes emerging include:
  - a. Cleanliness and maintenance of public spaces
  - b. Crime, safety and police presence
  - c. Bins, litter and dog waste facilities
  - d. Pavement and road condition (potholes, cracks, safety)
  - e. Town aesthetic and shopfront improvements



### **Biggest challenges in local community (open-ended)**

8. Key themes emerging include:
- a. Anti-social behaviour and crime
  - b. Immigration, integration and community division
  - c. Safety and town centre decline
  - d. Lack of services and infrastructure
  - e. Community apathy and low civic pride
  - f. Young people, activities and opportunities

### **How can these challenges be tackled (open-ended)**

9. Key themes emerging include:
- a. Visible policing and enforcement
  - b. Shared activities, understanding and celebration of diversity
  - c. Clean streets and maintained public spaces
  - d. Revive the high street, reduce empty shops, lower rents, support local businesses
  - e. Improvements to transport and connectivity

### **Community support, advice, services needed to live well in Boston (prompted)**

10. When prompted, 77% of respondents selected 'activities for young people'.  
11. Closely followed by 'social activities' (73%).  
12. With 'mental health support' chosen by around half (52%).

### **How and where easiest to access this community support, advice or services (open-ended)**

13. Key themes emerging include:
- a. Community hubs / centres
  - b. Town centre / central location
  - c. Online services
  - d. Mobile / pop-up services

### **Whether volunteer or get involved in community groups, projects or activities (prompted)**

14. 49% of those who responded to this question volunteer or get involved in community groups, projects or activities.

### **What would encourage volunteering or getting involved in community groups, projects or activities (prompted)**

15. When prompted, those who don't currently volunteer or get involved in community groups, projects or activities are most likely to consider doing so if there were 'more flexible ways to get involved' (41% of those who don't volunteer / get involved).  
16. Around a third (35%) would like 'more information about ways to get involved'.

### **iii. Supporting people in Boston**

### **What would help you and others stay healthy and active in Boston (open-ended)**

17. Key themes emerging include:
- a. Walking and cycling infrastructure
  - b. Affordable and accessible fitness options
  - c. Support for clubs and community activities
  - d. Better communication and promotion
  - e. Safety and cleanliness

**How can help young people to stay in Boston (prompted)**

18. Prompted, respondents are most likely to think 'better jobs and career opportunities' would help young people to stay in Boston (76%).
19. Followed by 'local job fairs' and 'career advice' - 53% of respondents respectively.

**How can support people of all ages to get the skills and training they need (open-ended)**

20. Key themes emerging include:
  - a. Access to information and advice
  - b. Apprenticeships and work-based learning
  - c. Free or affordable training courses
  - d. Employer partnerships and work experience
  - e. Community hubs and local learning centres

**Whether would like to see more support for local people to achieve ambitions (prompted)**

21. The large majority of respondents would like to see more support for local people to achieve their ambitions to start and build new businesses (89%).

**iv. Improving our town**

**What could do to make Boston town centre more attractive and welcoming (open-ended)**

22. Key themes emerging include:
  - a. Cleanliness and tidy appearance
  - b. Reduce anti-social behaviour / improve safety
  - c. Fill empty shops / encourage independent retailers
  - d. Free / affordable parking
  - e. More greenery, flowers, art

**What would encourage more frequent and longer visits to Boston town centre (open-ended)**

23. Key themes emerging include:
  - a. Better and more diverse shops
  - b. Free or cheaper parking
  - c. Addressing safety and anti-social behaviour concerns
  - d. More events and activities
  - e. Cleaner and more attractive environment

**What could be done to make people feel safe in Boston (open-ended)**

24. Key themes emerging include:
  - a. Improved street lighting
  - b. More CCTV and visible monitoring
  - c. Control / disperse large groups loitering
  - d. Reduce anti-social behaviour.
  - e. Cleaner, busier and more attractive town centre

**How could more be made of green spaces in Boston (open-ended)**

25. Key themes emerging include:
  - a. Maintenance, cleanliness and safety
  - b. Improved play and recreational facilities
  - c. Community events and social activities
  - d. Community gardens and allotments

## **v. Spending time in Boston**

### **How enjoy spending free / leisure time in Boston (open-ended)**

26. Key themes emerging include:

- a. Walking
- b. Going for a coffee
- c. Going to the cinema, theatre, attending cultural events
- d. Eating out
- e. *However, a notable number do not spend their free / leisure time in Boston, preferring to go elsewhere*

### **Types of events should be hosted in Boston (open-ended)**

27. Key themes emerging include:

- a. Music events
- b. Christmas events (markets, light shows, festivals)
- c. Boston Brilliance (light shows)
- d. Summer festivals / Party in the Park
- e. Food festivals and markets (including multicultural food)

### **Whether would like to see more support for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities (prompted)**

28. The large majority of respondents would like to see more support for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities for local people to get involved in (81%).

### **How can improve the visitor experience for tourists (prompted)**

29. Prompted, the large majority think the visitor experience for tourists would be improved by a 'better choice of shops and places to eat' – 80%.

30. Closely followed by 'bringing Boston's heritage to life' – 73%.

### **How can work better together and make multi-cultural Boston work for us (open-ended)**

31. Key themes emerging include:

- a. Better integration and mutual respect
- b. More inclusive, cross-cultural community events
- c. Improved communication, education and language support
- d. Celebrating and enhancing of a shared heritage

## **vi. Getting involved**

### **How would like to be involved in making a difference (prompted)**

32. Prompted, respondents would most like to be involved in 'making a difference' through having their say in consultations such as this (68%).

33. Around half (46%) would like to be able to suggest an idea for a project.

## **vii. About Respondents**

### **How would describe themselves (prompted)**

34. The sample has a strong female bias, with 63% describing themselves as female.

35. And 33% as male.

### **Respondent age (prompted)**

36. There is a good spread across age groups, although only a small number of those who responded are under the age of 25 (6%). However, noting that a separate survey was available for young people to complete.

37. 28% are aged 25-44; and 45% 25-54.

38. 45% of those who responded are aged 55+.

### **Respondent postcode (open-ended)**

39. As expected, respondents are most likely to have a PE21 postcode (Boston).  
40. With PE20 also a notable mention.

### **Whether would like to be kept informed of the findings of this consultation and future consultation and engagement by Boston Town Board (prompted)**

41. 72% of those who responded to this question (or 169 individuals) would like to be kept informed.

## **Part B: survey analysis – *Young People Survey***

### **a. Your ideas for Boston**

#### **What would make Boston a place where you want to live, work or study in 2035 (open-ended)**

1. Key themes emerging include:
- Job opportunities (especially for young people)
  - More youth activities and spaces
  - Improvements to shops and the town centre
  - Safety, cleanliness and (addressing of) anti-social behaviour

#### **Activities / spaces would make you want to spend more time in Boston town centre (open-ended)**

2. Key themes emerging include:
- Music events / live music / music venues
  - study spaces / youth clubs / safe social spaces
  - shops / shopping centres / cafés
  - Festivals / markets / cultural events
  - sports and active spaces (e.g. football, trampoline parks, arcades)

#### **Support needed to achieve goals in Boston (open-ended)**

3. Key themes emerging include:
- Career advice
  - Skills training
  - Mental health support

#### **How can we make Boston's green spaces and community events more appealing (open-ended)**

4. Key themes emerging include:
- Festivals and events – music, sport, youth-oriented
  - Sports facilities and activities
  - Cleanliness, maintenance, beautification
  - Mental health support
  - Security and safety (including police presence)

## **Part C: Sparkfest**

These statements emerged as the most important from the Sparkfest feedback:

- Everyone in Boston should have access to training that leads to a good local job
- Boston should feel safe for everyone, day and night
- The town centre should be a place where people live, work, shop and can spend time together
- Everyone should be able to access good quality local healthcare

- Young people in Boston should be actively involved in shaping the town's future
- Boston's unique history and diversity should be celebrated more.

## **Part D: Futurefest**

These statements emerged as the most important from the Futurefest feedback:

- Everyone should be able to learn skills that help them get a good job in Boston
- Boston should feel safe for everyone, during the day and at night
- The town centre should be a place where people can live, work, shop, and hang out
- Everyone should be able to get good, local healthcare
- Young people should have a say in decisions about Boston's future
- Boston's unique history and mix of cultures should be celebrated more.

## **Part D: Community group activities**

### **i. Boston Lithuanian Community**

- Cultural and Social Life
- Learning and Skills Development
- Safety and Security
- Cleanliness and Environment
- Infrastructure and Transport
- Community Integration and Support
- Health, Workload, and NHS Access
- Recreation, Health, and Wellbeing
- Support for Local Economy and Creativity.

### **ii. YMCA / Boston Youth Hub**

This workshop successfully combined informal education principles with creative expression, offering young people a space to explore identity, collaborate with peers, and engage in meaningful art-making.

### **iii. Boston Centrepoint**

The main ideas were:

- More accessible toilets in town.
- A homeless shelter.
- Buses on a Sunday.
- More free music events to bring people together.
- A cheap affordable café that acts a community hub.
- Help to give Centrepoint Outreach a refurbishment.
- More places to go on a Saturday and Sunday that are free or very low cost.
- A heritage centre or more events on the river.

## Part A: survey analysis – *General Survey*

### i. Our vision for Boston

#### 1. Thoughts about Boston's possible identity

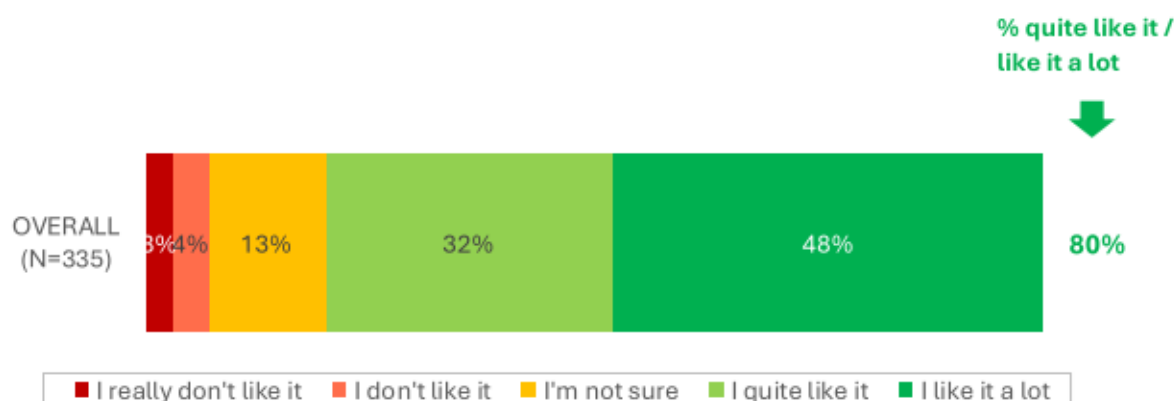
*Q: We need to think about what we want Boston to be in 10 years' time – this is our identity. Based on previous consultation, we know that people want Boston to prosper, to make more of its history, but also look to the future. So, our identity could be about Boston's history and heritage side-by-side with progress and creativity. What do you think about that? (prompted)*

*Response rate to this question: 335 people / 99% of respondents to this survey*

The large majority of respondents like the idea that Boston's identity could be about its history side-by-side with progress and creativity – with 80% quite liking it or liking it a lot.

Indeed, around a half (48%) 'like it a lot'.

A further 13% are unsure.



Option	%	Number
I like it a lot	48	160
I quite like it	32	108
I'm not sure	13	43
I don't like it	4	13
I really don't like it	3	11

## 2. What should Boston be known for, so it stands out

Q: What do you think Boston should be known for so that it stands out from other neighbouring towns? For example: this could be things like small independent shops, arts and crafts, or cultural activities like events and festivals. (open-ended)

Response rate to this question: 366 people (comprising 313 online responses and 53 leaflet postal responses).

Boston's **history and heritage** is frequently highlighted as a defining feature to celebrate and promote.

With specific mention of its Pilgrim connections, architecture and maritime past.

*"More focus on the history, the Pilgrim Fathers or how the port used to be one of the greatest."*

*"Keep making use of our history and architecture... that certainly stands out from other towns."*

*"Celebrating its Hanseatic history, making the most of the historic buildings."*

*"Boston has so much heritage. Signpost it, bring back links with USA and further Hanseatic links."*

There is a strong desire for Boston to be known for **independent shops and local businesses**.

Respondents dislike the dominance of shops such as barbers and vape shops.

*"Independent shops that aren't a repeat of the same thing! We don't need any more barbers or Eastern European grocery stores."*

*"It would be lovely to be known as a hub for independent shops, craft workshops, wellbeing offerings etc."*

*"Build up the small shops with nice olde world frontage, not these big glass windows/brash advertising."*

Being known for **cultural activities, events and festivals** also comes through strongly (e.g. arts, music, theatre, parades, heritage festivals, multi-cultural events).

*"Boston needs more cultural activities. Some of the events like the Festival of Light have been brilliant."*

*"Events and festivals would bring a sense of community to the town and a sense of well-being."*

*"Art / cultural events such as Boston Brilliance, Illuminate Parade, etc."*

For its **public spaces and town aesthetics**.

Respondents want a beautiful, well-maintained and inviting town centre with thoughtful design, flowers, clean streets and seating areas that evoke a sense of pride.

*"Boston should be known for its beautiful and creative public spaces that inspire stories, spark curiosity, and encourage interaction."*

*"Its attractive centre with welcoming flowers and plants and gardens and park."*

*"It definitely needs a big clean up with some lovely Independent shops to come in. A town to be proud of which it's not at the moment."*

And its **market town identity**.

There's nostalgia and advocacy for reviving the traditional market, better using the market square and promoting local produce and makers — reinforcing Boston's roots as a proud market town.

*"More shopping choices and bring back the proper markets like used to be - not a 5-stall wonder it is now."*

*"A thriving market would be a good start."*

*"Market town — build on this."*

*"The market should be developed further to include local produce etc so supporting local farmers."*

*"Boston was always known for its market. Let's make it happen again."*



Other notable mentions include:

- **Safety and cleanliness** – many want a town that feels safe, clean and welcoming.
- **Infrastructure and transport** – frequent mentions of the need for a bypass, better roads, parking.
- **Youth facilities** – a need for more activities for children and teens.
- **Community integration** – some call for better integration and cohesion amongst diverse communities.

### 3. Main changes would want to see in Boston by 2035

Q: What are the three main changes you would want to see in Boston by 2035 to make it a thriving place? (open-ended)

Response rate to this question: 376 people (comprising 321 online responses and 55 leaflet postal responses).

**Cleanliness, safety and tackling anti-social behaviour** is a key theme emerging when respondents were asked about changes they would want to see in Boston by 2035 (e.g. more policing, action on alcohol / drug use, littering and intimidating behaviour).

*"A strong community response to reduce drug and alcohol misuse, especially in public areas."*

*"Zero tolerance to drinking, anti-social behaviour"*

*"Improved lawfulness and cleanliness."*

*"More police presence — more visible security to stamp out shop lifting."*

*"Less litter and fly-tipping."*

*"No drinking in the streets."*

Another key theme coming through strongly is **revitalising the town centre and retail** (e.g. reviving the high street, filling empty shops, supporting independent businesses, bringing in popular or unique brands).

*"Bring alive the dead town centre by opening new shopping outlets and leisure centres."*

*"More shops, different varieties, not cheap Eastern European food markets."*

*"A small focused retail centre, independent shops not chain stores - a bit different from everywhere else."*

*"Create food pop-ups, exhibitions & galleries in empty buildings."*

*"Vibrant town centre - shops, cafés etc that locals and visitors want to visit."*

As does **parking and traffic management (including a bypass)**.

Free or cheaper parking and a bypass to reduce traffic congestion are frequent mentions.

*"1 hour free parking arrangements to drive footfall."*

*"Bypass to reduce congestion from freight and agricultural vehicles plus summer caravans going to Skegness."*

*"Better road system (not to be stuck in traffic all the town)."*

**Community, culture and integration** comes through notably too.

With calls for greater community cohesion, cultural understanding, inclusive events and promotion of Boston's heritage and identity.

*"A stronger, more united community - where local people are friendlier, more positive, supportive, educated, and integrated."*

*"Shout about its history and its wonderful church."*

*"More integration between cultures."*

*"A regular calendar of events - particularly in sports and music - to bring the community together and attract visitors."*

There is a desire for better **family-friendly facilities and green spaces** (e.g. parks, play areas, family events, safe public spaces).

*"Renovated buildings and Witham Park transformed into a lively hub for festivals, sports, water activities, cafés."*

*"More outdoor space for people to meet."*

*"More play areas for children."*

*"A big and beautiful park."*

#### 4. Best things about Boston that we should build on

Q: What are the three best things about Boston that we should build on as we head towards 2035? (open-ended)

Response rate to this question: 304 people / 90% of respondents to this survey

When asked about best things about Boston that should be built on, the most dominant theme emerging is its **heritage and history** (e.g. architecture, connections to Pilgrims and the USA).

*"Its rich history and heritage, which give the town a strong identity and unique character."*

*"Boston has a lot of history that a lot of people don't know about, more awareness and education on the history would be good."*

*"It's heritage, schools/college and port. Three extremely important environments that are working in isolation."*

The town's **community spirit and friendliness** is another notable theme highlighted as something to build on.

*"Our friendliness and sense of community and willingness to volunteer."*

*"The friendly attitude of Bostonians."*

There is some mention of **green spaces and the natural environment**.

Respondents seem to value parks, woods, rivers.

*"The riverside and green spaces, offering opportunities for leisure, events, and community gatherings."*

*"The river - could it be more of a feature with a water taxi."*

*"Natural green spaces to enjoy."*

And the **market and town centre**.

The market, market place and central area still hold cultural and nostalgic significance, despite concerns about decline (and there is a clear desire for things to go back to 'how they used to be').

*"Town centre looking nice e.g. no empty shops."*

*"The market (as it was)."*

*"There are spaces to develop within the town centre and improve the appearance of the town."*

*"The market Wednesday and Saturday - sadly depleted at the moment."*

*"Make more use of the large market place."*

**Boston's diversity and multiculturalism** is highlighted by many.

With frequent praising of the variety of cultures and languages in Boston.

But noting the divisive nature of this theme in some feedback.

*"It's multicultural residents. Highlight their cultures, music, singing, dance and food."*

*"The diverse and hardworking community, bringing different cultures, skills, and perspectives together."*

## 5. Description of the Boston that you would be proud to be part of in 2035

Q: In one sentence please describe the Boston that you would be proud to be part of in 2035? (open-ended)

Response rate to this question: 338 people (comprising 298 online responses and 40 leaflet postal responses).

The most commonly expressed aspiration for Boston is for a **clean and safe town**.

*"A clean, safe, thriving, market town with access to healthcare, education, and leisure activities."*

*"A clean tidy town where people can walk without intimidation."*

*"Cleaner and safer streets, also discouragement of the unruly and disrespectful element."*

There is a strong desire for Boston to be a **thriving market town**, and to bring back Boston's identity as a busy, prosperous market town.

*"Revive the town centre to the vibrant, popular destination it used to be."*

*"A thriving market town that looks well-kept and has lots of little quaint shops."*

*"A clean, tidy, thriving town with no empty shops, a better market (like it used to be) ..."*

With a good **sense of community and togetherness**.

*"A Boston that comes together as a community to celebrate and support each other."*

*"A community that works together, is resilient and proud of its town's past and passionate about its future."*

And **celebrating its history and heritage** with pride.

*"A town that celebrates its unique history that is open and accessible to residents and visitors from far and wide."*

*"Boston would be a place where the rebellious spirit of the Pilgrim Fathers lives on."*

*"One in which its rich heritage is clearly marked. An active tourist information centre ..."*

Many support a **diverse, multi-cultural and integrated** town, although there are some divisive views surrounding this theme.

*"A proudly multi-cultural town, with a vibrant market ..."*

*"A really integrated, multicultural accepting society."*

*"Back to a nice market town without gangs of foreigners hanging about."*

*"A vibrant interacting multicultural society with everyone embracing the town ..."*

## ii. Boston moving forward

### 6. Small, quick changes that could make a big difference

*Q: What small, quick changes could make a big difference in your neighbourhood right now? This can be anything you can think of, but could include things like providing small, amounts of funding or support to deal with issues like weeds or cracks in pavements, dog poo bins / bags, small amounts of funding for local community groups – and much more. (open-ended)*

*Response rate to this question: 302 people (comprising 265 online responses and 37 leaflet postal responses).*

**Cleanliness and maintenance of public spaces** is a key theme emerging in terms of small, quick changes that could make a big difference in respondents' neighbourhoods.

There are deep concerns voiced about the state of streets, pavements and green spaces. There is widespread demand for regular cleaning, weeding, bin placement, graffiti removal and general tidiness.

*"A mass clean up, street cleaning, litter removal and maintaining the grass verges, river banks and road edges."*

*"Definitely give the place a good scrub! Repair and clean damaged signs and street furniture."*

*"Cut the grass in the public areas. Clean the pavements, empty the drains."*

*"Just making the streets cleaner. Less weeds, cut grass, less dog poo, clean road signs etc."*

*"Less litter and the town much cleaner. Fewer empty shops."*

**Crime, safety and police presence** is a theme coming through strongly.

There is widespread call for more visible policing, particularly in the evenings, and a clampdown on anti-social behaviour, street drinking and crime. People feel unsafe and want action.

*"Bring back community policing in the town centre."*

*"More beat police, and I don't mean in cars!"*

*"Fund the return of the Town Rangers. People will feel safe if they see boots on the ground, not CCTV."*



*"Stronger enforcement to stop public drinking and drug use in outdoor spaces."*

*"Police the streets. I am an elderly person who daren't walk the streets or centre of Boston due to groups etc."*

**Bins, litter and dog waste facilities** is another noteworthy theme.

There are frequent requests for more litter bins, dog waste bins, especially near parks, schools and walking routes.

*"A bin located near my local park to stop people dropping litter."*

*"More bins in useful places like parks and outside schools."*

*"More litter bins and dog waste bins to be provided in the town to help keep the town tidy and clean."*

**Pavement and road condition (potholes, cracks, safety)** is highlighted by many.

Potholes and cracks are perceived as safety hazards, especially for the elderly, children and those with mobility needs.

*"Fix pavements. All pavements leading to our house are cracked, potholes everywhere. Hard to pass with a wheelchair or a buggy."*

*"Definitely improve road conditions. I see many potholes start small and expand over time."*

*"Pavement doing down near Tower Road Academy so my child doesn't fall off scooter at least 3xs a week."*

*"The quality of some roads around the town is shocking. Fixing these properly would make a massive difference."*

There is some mention of **town aesthetic and shopfront improvements**.

Respondents want a visually appealing and vibrant town centre — better shopfronts, flowers, greenery, art installations and generally more investment in making the town more attractive.

*“More flowers and greenery in public areas, cleaner streets, better lighting in the evenings, and more benches.”*

*“Support for shopfront and café window decorations to brighten the town.”*

*“Allowing art students to display their artwork to brighten dull, lacklustre areas.”*

## 7. Biggest challenges in local community

Q: What do you think are the biggest challenges in your local community? (open-ended)

Response rate to this question: 272 people / 80% of respondents to this survey

The most commonly emerging theme when asked about biggest challenges in the local community is **anti-social behaviour and crime**.

This encompasses drug use, street drinking, aggressive and intimidating behaviour (e.g. groups in public spaces), theft, vandalism and a lack of (visible) police presence.

*"Public drug and alcohol misuse, which makes some areas feel unsafe and unwelcoming."*

*"No policing in the town."*

*"Drug dealing, theft."*

Another key theme coming through is **immigration, integration and community division**.

With many responses reflecting a perceived divide between immigrant and local communities, often with strong or negative language used.

This includes issues around cultural differences, lack of integration and fear.

*"A big divide between nationalities."*

*"Integration and fear of the difference."*

*"Immigration – so many and they are bringing the town to be like a third world country."*

*"Getting people of all nationalities to work together to make Boston a place to be proud of."*

**Safety and town centre decline** is a commonly mentioned theme.

There is frequent talk of not feeling safe, especially in the evenings. The town centre is perceived to be run-down and uninviting (e.g. empty shops, derelict buildings, littering and fly-tipping, intimidating atmosphere).

*"People feeling safe in the town, particularly young girls."*

*"The town centre feels intimidating, especially in the evening."*

*"Too many empty units, buildings in disrepair."*

*"Lots of people feel intimidated by groups 'hanging around' in the town centre."*

There is a perceived **lack of services and infrastructure**.

With deep concern over insufficient services, especially in health, public transport and support for vulnerable populations.

*"Health services, especially GPs, unable to keep pace with the massive population rise."*

*"Public Transport - buses don't go far enough out (so it's a problem just getting to the closest bus stop), or bus schedules don't start early enough or finish late enough to be all that useful. And taxis are expensive, so it has to be buses."*

*"Sustainable support for community groups and centres, that work with vulnerable people and those with low language skills."*

**Community apathy and low civic pride** is also a notable mention.

Many respondents feel that people have given up on the town or no longer care. Some blame a lack of visible progress.

*"Apathy in people to support their local community."*

*"People have lost hope."*

*"Making people take more pride in where they live."*

And **young people, activities and opportunities** too.

There's evident concern for the future generation, with mentions of few safe or engaging spaces for young people and a lack of aspiration.

*"Nothing for youngsters to do."*

*"Opportunities for young people to have careers."*

## 8. How can these challenges be tackled

Q: And, how do you think these challenges can be tackled? (open-ended)

Response rate to this question: 261 people / 77% of respondents to this survey

There is strong call for **visible policing and enforcement** - against anti-social behaviour, crime, intimidation, and to make people feel safe.

*"A zero tolerance to policing and enforcement."*

*"More police. Orders to move on or not hang around for people discovered to be drunk/drugs."*

And for **shared activities, understanding and celebration of diversity** - to tackle any division within the community.

*"Community events, sharing of stories, humanising people in each group."*

*"Education! Dedicated events that bring people together... like the beach in the park."*

**Clean streets and maintained public spaces** are key suggestions to counteract respondents' frustrations about the 'poor' look and feel of the town, and to foster a sense of pride in the environment.

*"Make the town a safer and cleaner environment for us all to enjoy."*

*"More litter pickers, more maintenance programmes."*

There is a strong desire to **revive the high street, reduce empty shops, lower rents and support local businesses** – for a vibrant, thriving and attractive town centre.

*"Reduce shop rents/rates to attract new ones."*

*"Offer short-term, low-rent 'pop-up' shop schemes for local entrepreneurs."*

Some suggestions are provided for **improvements to transport and connectivity** – e.g. bypass, more buses ...

*"Fast trains from London/Birmingham to Skegness; frequent bus services to Peterborough."*

*"Build a bypass."*

## 9. Community support, advice, services needed to live well in Boston

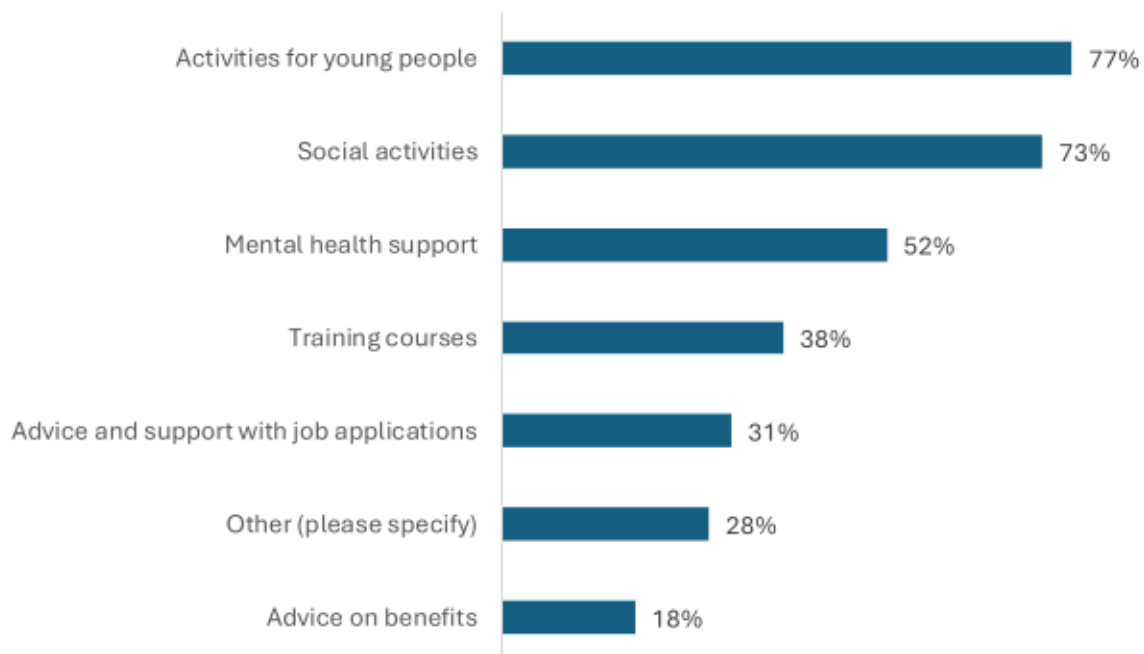
*Q: What community support, advice or services do you or others need to live well in Boston? (please pick all the things that you think are needed) (prompted)*

*Response rate to this question: 276 people / 82% of respondents to this survey*

When prompted about community support, advice or services needed to live well in Boston, respondents are most likely to select 'activities for young people' – around three quarters of those who responded to this question (77%).

Closely followed by 'social activities' (73%).

And 'mental health support' is chosen by around half (52%).



Option	%	Number
Activities for young people	77	212
Social activities	73	202
Mental health support	52	143
Training courses	38	105
Advice and support with job applications	31	86
Other (please specify)	28	76
Advice on benefits	18	49

## 10. How and where easiest to access this community support, advice or services

Q: And how and where would it be easiest to access this community support, advice or services? For example, this could be centres or hubs in the community, online services or mobile services. (open-ended)

Response rate to this question: 249 people / 74% of respondents to this survey

**Community hubs / centres** are, by far, most frequently mentioned.

Often paired with 'town centre', 'accessible', 'face-to-face', 'welcoming'.

*"Small community hubs within the town."*

*"Centres or hubs in the community where people can get face to face support."*

*"Through well-advertised, welcoming community hubs and centres in central and accessible locations ..."*

Indeed, **town centre / central location** support is commonly cited.

Visible, walkable services.

*"Use one of the empty shops as a pop-up centre within the town."*

*"Something central in town where people notice it and investigate what's on offer."*

As are **online services**, but typically as a supplement to in-person support.

It is seen as convenient, but not as a 'replacement', and particularly with the elderly in mind.

*"A universal Boston online portal should be created."*

*"Online is always good... but a hub would be marvellous."*

*"For so many older people something that isn't online."*

**Mobile / pop-up services** are often mentioned alongside hubs / online as a flexible outreach means of providing community support.

Useful for reaching villages and non-digital users.

*"A talking bus that comes to people."*

*"Pop-up hubs in the market square."*

*"Mobile services or pop-up support stalls in high footfall areas (like markets or parks) could also help reach more people, especially those who don't go online regularly."*

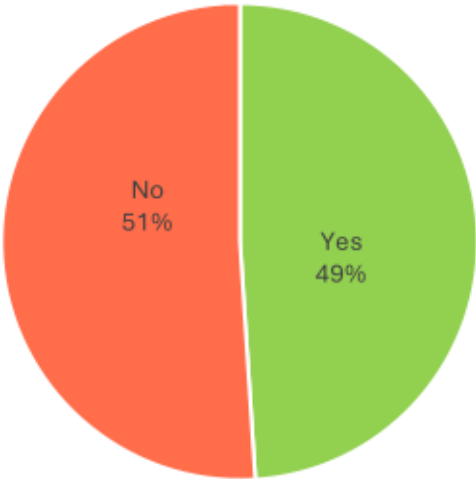


**11. Whether volunteer or get involved in community groups, projects or activities**

*Q: Do you volunteer or get involved in community groups, projects or activities?  
(prompted)*

*Response rate to this question: 280 people / 83% of respondents to this survey*

Around half of those who responded to this question (49%) volunteer or get involved in community groups, projects or activities.



Option	%	Number
No	51	144
Yes	49	136

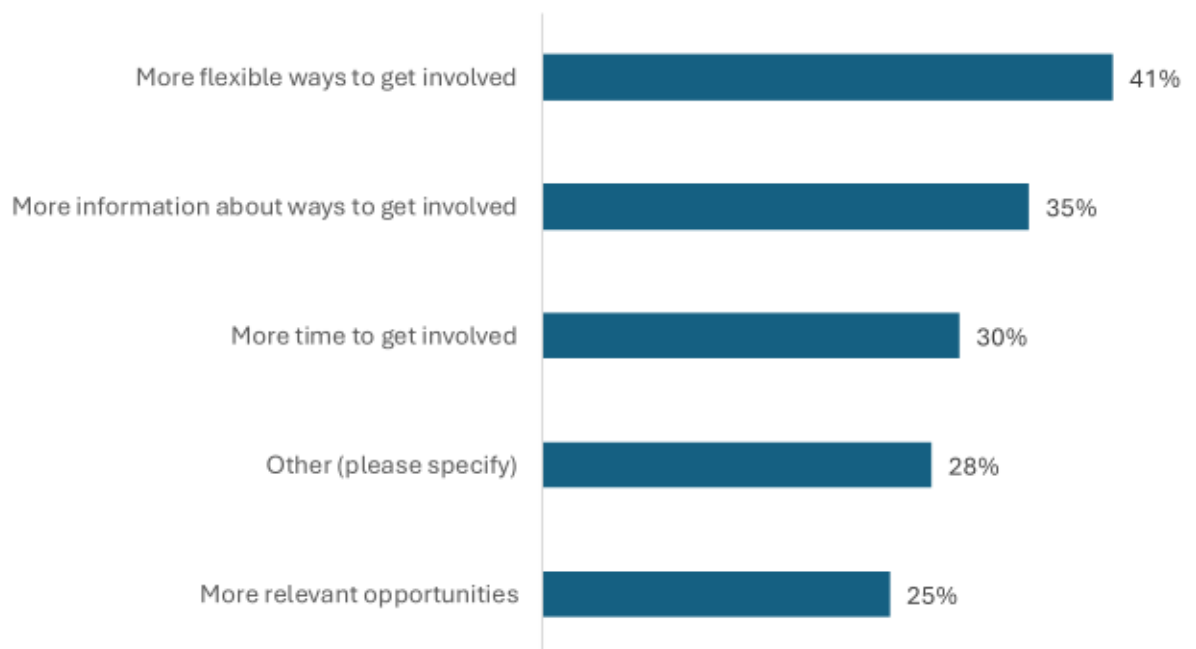
## 12. What would encourage volunteering or getting involved in community groups, projects or activities

Q: If 'no' to the previous question, what would encourage you to do so?  
(prompted)

Response rate to this question: 142 people / 99% of respondents who said 'no' to the previous question

Prompted, those who don't currently volunteer or get involved in community groups, projects or activities are most likely to consider doing so if there were 'more flexible ways to get involved' (41% of those who don't volunteer / get involved).

And around a third (35%) would like 'more information about ways to get involved'.



Option	%	Number
More flexible ways to get involved	41	58
More information about ways to get involved	35	49
More time to get involved	30	43
Other (please specify)	28	40
More relevant opportunities	25	36

### iii. Supporting people in Boston

#### 13. What would help you and others stay healthy and active in Boston

*Q: What would help you and others to stay healthy and active in Boston? For example, health programmes, advice and support (other than through NHS), sports clubs, outdoor gyms, walking trails or healthy eating initiatives. (open-ended)*

*Response rate to this question: 240 people / 71% of respondents to this survey*

**Walking and cycling infrastructure** is the most strongly emerging theme.

This includes terms such as walking routes, trails, safe cycle paths, bike roads and connectivity to villages.

*"Walking trails that are accessible."*

*"A cross-country walking and cycling route."*

*"Safe and inviting walking and cycling routes."*

*"There aren't enough pavements / cycle lanes connecting the villages to Boston."*

There is a strong call for **affordable and accessible fitness options**.

Frequent mentions of cost barriers for gyms, swimming and sports generally, Many requests for free or low-cost gyms, outdoor gyms.

*"Free gym membership."*

*"Outdoor gyms or cheaper gym access would help a lot."*

There is notable desire for **support for clubs and community activities**.

Calls for more sports clubs, walking groups, activity clubs.

And the space / funding to support them.

*"Financial support to local sport, fitness activities."*

*"Walking groups, Pilates, swimming ..."*

*"More active options for adults (and more of a range of active options) ... I think also giving various clubs proper spaces to work from would be helpful, too, as a lot of them in Boston are either out-of-town or squirreled away - which makes them inaccessible or makes them seem a little dodgy (even when they aren't)."*

**Better communication and promotion** also comes through notably from feedback.

With many simply not knowing what exists in Boston to stay healthy and active.

*"I don't know what's available."*

*"There is plenty of things to do, but aren't advertised well enough."*

And **safety and cleanliness** too.

There is clear concern about feeling unsafe when out walking or using parks.

With anti-social behaviour frequently highlighted.

*"Not feeling scared to walk around the town."*

*"Cleaner walking trails."*

*"I believe we have enough places to walk and be healthy it's just many don't feel safe walking in most areas."*

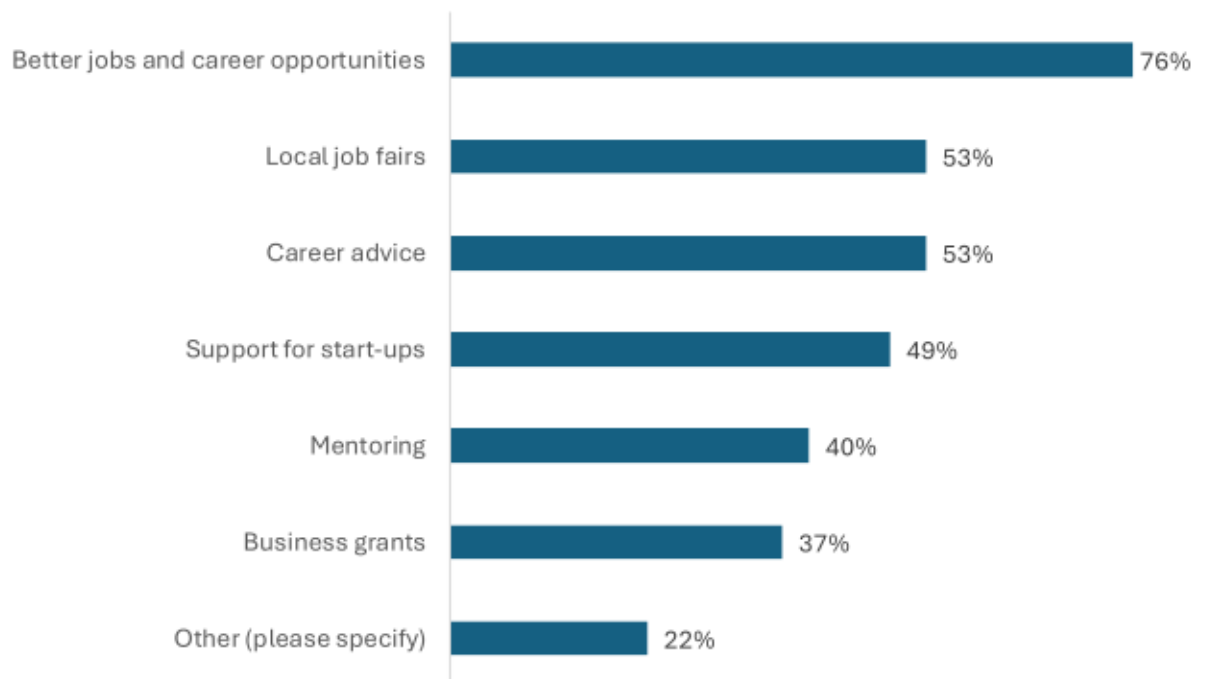
#### 14. How can help young people to stay in Boston

*Q: How can we help young people leaving school or college to find opportunities and stay in Boston? (prompted)*

*Response rate to this question: 270 people / 80% of respondents to this survey*

Prompted, respondents are, by far, most likely to think 'better jobs and career opportunities' would help young people to stay in Boston after leaving school or college (76% of those who responded to this question).

'Local job fairs' and 'career advice' are other notable means of encouraging them to stay – selected by 53% of those who responded respectively.



Option	%	Number
Better jobs and career opportunities	76	205
Local job fairs	53	144
Career advice	53	143
Support for start-ups	49	132
Mentoring	40	108
Business grants	37	101
Other (please specify)	22	60

## 15. How can support people of all ages to get the skills and training they need

Q: How can we support people of all ages to get the skills and training they need for the jobs and careers they want? (open-ended)

Response rate to this question: 232 people / 69% of respondents to this survey

When asked about how best to support people to get skills and training they need, **access to information and advice** comes through strongly as a theme.

There were many mentions of a lack of awareness or clarity around what opportunities exist for training and skills.

Suggestions include better publicity, centralised advice hubs, school involvement, community outreach.

*"Boston College offers a lot but many people do not know about it."*

*"A centrally located careers centre."*

*"More support before they leave school. There is no encouragement once leaving school as benefits are given too readily and easily."*

*"... mentoring and giving people advice on how to find their career path would be a start on the right direction."*

**Apprenticeships and work-based learning** are a key mention too.

There are calls for more apprenticeships, especially ones that are easy to access, well-supported by employers and available across industries.

*"Apprenticeships. Mentoring. Talks in schools by people of all occupations."*

*"People need information about careers, work experience, maybe talks, incentives, apprenticeships scheme support for businesses too, career conventions."*

*"Work with local businesses to offer more apprenticeships. Encourage larger companies to relocate to Boston by giving them incentives or making it easier for them to relocate with planning permissions."*

**Free or affordable training courses** would be welcomed.

Cost is seen as a major barrier. There are frequent requests for more free, subsidised or lower-priced training options.

*“Not everyone can afford to go to college or university, have some free practical training in the community. For example the wood carving that took place in Witham Country park a few years ago.”*

*“Providing affordable or free training as well as training in multiple languages to make it accessible for all.”*

Another notable theme coming through is **employer partnerships and work experience**.

There is a call for employers to engage more actively, such as offering job shadowing, mentoring, internships and training. There is some mention of financial support for businesses to do so.

*“Create a plan with local businesses to fund internships.”*

*“Give employers more advice and financial assistance to provide either in-house or contracted out training.”*

**Community hubs and local learning centres** are cited by some.

There is support for more learning options in informal, local spaces – e.g. community centres, pop-up workshops, rural outreach.

*“Community Learning Hubs.”*

*“Pop-up workshops within rural areas.”*

*“Courses at college and community centres.”*

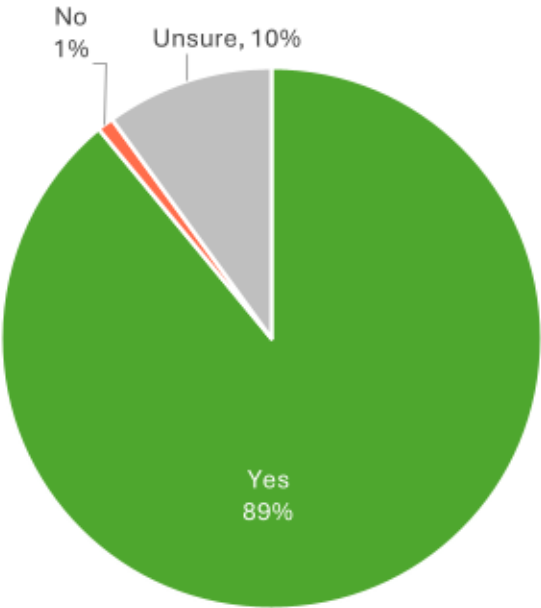
**16. Whether would like to see more support for local people to achieve ambitions**

*Q: Would you like to see Boston offer more support to local people of all ages to achieve their ambitions to start and build new businesses? (prompted)*

*Response rate to this question: 270 people / 80% of respondents to this survey*

The large majority of those who responded to this question would like to see more support in Boston for local people of all ages to achieve their ambitions to start and build new businesses (89%).

And a further 10% were unsure.



Option	%	Number
Yes	89	239
No	1	3
Unsure	10	28



#### iv. Improving our town

##### 17. What could do to make Boston town centre more attractive and welcoming

*Q: What do you think we could do to make Boston town centre more attractive and more welcoming? (open-ended)*

*Response rate to this question: 246 people / 73% of respondents to this survey*

**Cleanliness and tidy appearance** comes through very strongly when asked about what could be done to make the town centre more attractive and welcoming.

There are consistent comments about litter, weeds, dirty streets, unkempt shopfronts, general visual upkeep.

*"Clean it up!"*

*"Regular deep cleans of the pavements, alleys, bins and shop fronts."*

*"Just tidy it up and encourage more businesses to empty buildings."*

*"Just keep the place nice and tidy. Weed the streets, clear the litter, repaint the signs and lamp posts. Keeping a town tidy automatically creates a more welcoming place and gives people a more sense of pride."*

Another key suggestion is **reduce anti-social behaviour / improve safety**.

Respondents frequently mention loitering, drinking, drugs and large groups making them feel unsafe.

With visible policing a common demand.

*"Find a way to make the groups that congregate either move along or improve their behaviour."*

*"More police patrols to discourage antisocial behaviour and alcohol consumption."*

*"Tidy it up. Proper policing. Move on the groups that congregate around the market place, Ingram memorial, that are intimidating."*

There is notable call to **fill empty shops / encouraging independent retailers.**

Empty, boarded-up, neglected shops are widely noted as damaging the town's image.

There is some suggestion of incentives for small or independent businesses.

*"Fill the empty shops as boarded up and empty shops don't appeal."*

*"Fill the empty shops as boarded up and empty shops don't appeal."*

*"Tidy up shop fronts and put vacant buildings back to use (independent shops, arts and craft space or centre, community hubs, start-up opportunities, retail, accommodation)."*

Specifically, **free / affordable parking** would be widely welcomed.

*"Cheaper or no car parking charges especially on Sundays."*

*"Free parking or at least 2-3 hours free."*

As would **more greenery, flowers and art.**

Respondents want the town to be more visually appealing, with suggestions including flowers, planters, murals and seasonal art. Some mention of connecting this to local artists or heritage.

*"Add more flowers, lights and murals from local artists ..."*

*"Colour (flowers, art, seasonal decorations) - less grey."*

## 18. What would encourage more frequent and longer visits to Boston town centre

Q: What would bring you into the town centre more often or make you stay longer? (open-ended)

Response rate to this question: 251 people / 74% of respondents to this survey

**Better and more diverse shops** are, by far, most likely to encourage more frequent and longer visits to the town centre.

Notable call for more clothing shops.

Repeated frustration with the high number of charity, vape, phone and barber shops.

*"Shops that are nice! I desperately miss M&S, Oldrids, Clarks shoes, Wilko."*

*"More shops but not any more barber shops."*

*"Better shops, I feel I can't find hardly anything I want in town, there is a lack of clothing stores for men and kids ...."*

**Free or cheaper parking** would be a key incentive to visit and / or stay longer.

There was some call for 1–2 hours of free parking.

*"One hour free parking if you buy from certain shops!! Remember Wilkos did this!"*

*"Free parking on market days."*

As would **addressing safety and anti-social behaviour concerns**.

Mentions of feeling unsafe due to groups loitering, street drinking and lack of visible policing.

*"As someone who is LGBT+ I do not feel safe there for long periods."*

*"If I felt more safe, street drinking/anti-social behaviour makes me anxious to bring my family into town."*

*"... less groups of men hanging around. Do not feel safe."*

There is some call for **more events and activities**.

This includes festivals, craft fairs, family events, food nights, pop-up attractions.

*"Activities in the marketplace.  
The reggae festival was  
absolutely fantastic and drew a  
really big crowd of people."*

*"Pop-up events i.e. street food  
night, jazz night, Polish night, etc."*

*"Seasonal events / festivities."*

*"More Craft and Farmers type  
Markets and other weekend  
events. It is already improving."*

And a **cleaner and more attractive environment** would be a draw for many.

There is a desire for improved cleanliness, flowerbeds, benches, public toilets and revitalised shopfronts.

*"If it were cleaner and more  
welcoming. It's such a beautiful  
town and it's being neglected."*

*"Create vibrant public spaces with  
more flowers, greenery, and  
comfortable seating... improve  
shopfronts... seasonal decorations  
like Christmas lights, spring  
flowers."*

*"I come into town quite a lot but it  
always feels dingy. If the market  
place/shops were smartened up,  
it would feel nicer."*

## 19. What could be done to make people feel safe in Boston

Q: We know from previous feedback that some people do not always feel safe in the town. So, apart from more police, what do you think we could do to make people feel safe? (open-ended)

Response rate to this question: 245 people / 72% of respondents to this survey

Apart from more police, **improved street lighting** is a key suggestion to make people feel safe in the town.

Poor lighting makes areas feel unsafe, particularly at night. Respondents highlighted dark alleys, streets and parks as problem areas.

*"Improved lighting – Boston Brilliance was ace for this!"*

*"Keeping street lights on at night.  
Tackling grot spots where ASB  
takes place."*

*"Street lighting on all night."*

**More CCTV and visible monitoring** is also widely highlighted.

*"CCTV everywhere and  
actually do something when  
people are not behaving."*

*"Good lighting and signage to confirm  
CCTV is in place."*

Another notable mention is **control / disperse large groups loitering**.

With comments typically relating to groups of men, which can be intimidating.

*"Less men standing around,  
which makes young girls feel  
unsafe."*

*"Try and stop groups of people sitting  
outside the memorial in town / stump."*

*"Find ways to discourage gangs of men in central places."*

Another key measure to make people feel safe in Boston is **reduce anti-social behaviour**.

This includes public drinking, drug use, littering, urination – contributing to a sense of disorder and fear.

*“Crack down on small crimes, drinking, spitting, drugs.”*

*“Enforce the no drinking in the town centre and central park.”*

*“Stop people urinating and dedicating in the street. It didn't used to happen but I've seen it too many times.”*

There is some mention that a **cleaner, busier and more attractive town centre** would feel safer and entice more frequent and longer visits.

*“More businesses open = more people about = feel safer.”*

*“If the town was filled with more shops, it would feel more watched.”*

## 20. How could more be made of green spaces in Boston

Q: Boston has lots of areas of green space, how do we make more of these areas so they are more appealing and are used more? Green space could be spaces such as parks, communal gardens, verges. Examples could include renovating parks, play facilities, community gardens and essential facilities. (open-ended)  
Response rate to this question: 230 people / 68% of respondents to this survey

When asked how more could be made of Boston's green spaces, the key theme emerging is **maintenance, cleanliness and safety**.

So, respondents overwhelmingly want clean, well-kept and safe green spaces – including through regular litter picking and grass cutting, tackling anti-social behaviour, more bins, dog fouling control, CCTV, police presence.

*"Keep them clean and tidy. Cut grass regularly. Discourage teenage gangs hanging around."*

*"Bring back park wardens."*

*"Keep them free of drugs and other filth. Prosecute those who ruin the benches and wooden statues."*

*"Clean them up and add more flowers/plants but these need to be maintained by the community as well."*

There is notable call for **improved play and recreational facilities**.

Modern and safe 'play' areas for all ages, outdoor gyms, cycle paths, sports pitches.

*"Play facilities should be provided for ALL green spaces ... include additional play facilities for teenagers."*

*"More play facilities aimed at all ages 1-18."*

*"Update local parks. Put more for the kids to do. It's all very dated."*

*"The play equipment in parks is aimed at small children. Construct challenging things for teenagers to do."*

**Community events and social activities** would be warmly welcomed.

There is a desire for green spaces to be used for social engagement, bringing the community together.

Suggestions include outdoor cinemas, fairs, music events, picnics, gardening clubs, family activities, sports.

*"Bring back 'Party in the Park'."*

*"Outdoor sessions on things like yoga or Pilates, park runs for all ages."*

*"Host family-friendly events like outdoor cinema, markets, or sports days."*

There is repeated interest in **community gardens and allotments** - grow-your-own projects and shared green use.

And some low-level suggestion of educational growing and cooking spaces.

*"Start community gardens to grow fruit and veg. Give people support and confidence."*

*"Community gardens growing produce to eat. Teach people how to cook with produce."*

*"Community gardens and allotments need to return."*



## v. Spending time in Boston

### 21. How enjoy spending free / leisure time in Boston

Q: How do you enjoy spending your free / leisure time in Boston? (open-ended)

Response rate to this question: 242 people / 72% of respondents to this survey

**Walking** is a key way that respondents spend their free / leisure time in Boston.

There is some mention of enjoying local green spaces, such as parks and woods.

*"Walking in the volunteer-maintained woods ..."*

*"I love walking in the park and  
Witham country park."*

*"Going on walks with my friends  
and family."*

**Going for a coffee** is also a key pastime.

Often tied to socialising (meeting friends / family).

There is some mention of visiting Boston's (independent) coffee shops / cafés.

*"Meeting up with friends for  
coffee."*

*"I like the independent cafés that it  
offers."*

Going to the **cinema, theatre and attending cultural events** is enjoyed by some.

With specific mentions of local venues - Blackfriars, the Stump (events) and Gliderdrome.

*"I visit the theatre and am a  
member. I go to the cinema and  
Gliderdrome."*

*"I go to the cinema and to Blackfriars."*

As is **eating out**.

Although many express a desire for more and better-quality options.

*"Eating and drinking out with friends and family."*

*"There isn't much to encourage people to spend time in town. We need more restaurants and eating places."*

However, a notable number of respondents say **they don't spend their free / leisure time in Boston**, preferring to go elsewhere, due to concerns about safety, limited amenities or a lack of atmosphere,

*"Generally go out of town now."*

*"I don't spend it here anymore."*

*"... most of the time go out to Leicester and Peterborough."*

## 22. Types of events should be hosted in Boston

Q: What types of events should Boston host for local residents and to bring people into our town? For example, events in Boston have included Boston Brilliance, Beach in the Park and Boston's Christmas Festival 2024. (open-ended)  
Response rate to this question: 224 people / 66% of respondents to this survey

There is strong call for **music events** to be hosted in Boston (live music / festivals).

Catering for all ages and tastes.

*"Music festival in Central Park for local bands of all nationalities and high-quality tribute acts."*

*"Get some bands to play in the town."*

*"I think overall, you need more events with music (preferably live...)."*

With **Christmas events (markets, light shows, festivals)** also a popular mention.

*"A Christmas market would be amazing."*

*"Christmas/Halloween events would be great and would help encourage people out when it's cold."*

*"Christmas Market, another Christmas light show."*

As is **Boston Brilliance** (and light-based events).

*"Boston Brilliance was AMAZING – more of this please!"*

*"Go bigger – Boston Brilliance - needs to be longer than 2 days."*

And **summer festivals / Party in the Park**.

*"Bring back Party in the Park!"*

*"Festivals in the park especially in the summer – draw in 18+ people."*

*"I used to love the Party in the Park."*

Also, **food festivals and markets (including multicultural food).**

*"Really liked the international food market, especially Asian dishes."*

*"Something like a food festival so people can share a piece of their culture."*

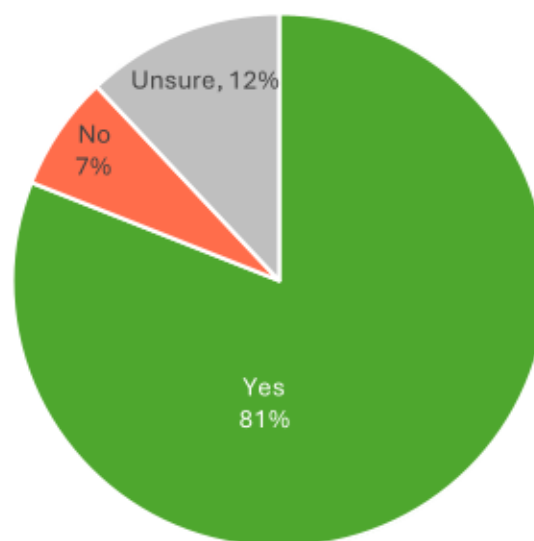
*"Perhaps an intercultural market by and for local people. Food tasting, cookery demonstrations of different ingredients and foods."*

### 23. Whether would like to see more support for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities

*Q: Would you like to see more support for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities that local people can get involved in? This could be things like heritage tours, art classes or performances. (prompted)*

*Response rate to this question: 250 people / 74% of respondents to this survey*

The large majority of those who responded to this question would like to see more support for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities for local people to get involved in (81%).



Option	%	Number
Yes	81	202
No	7	18
Unsure	12	30

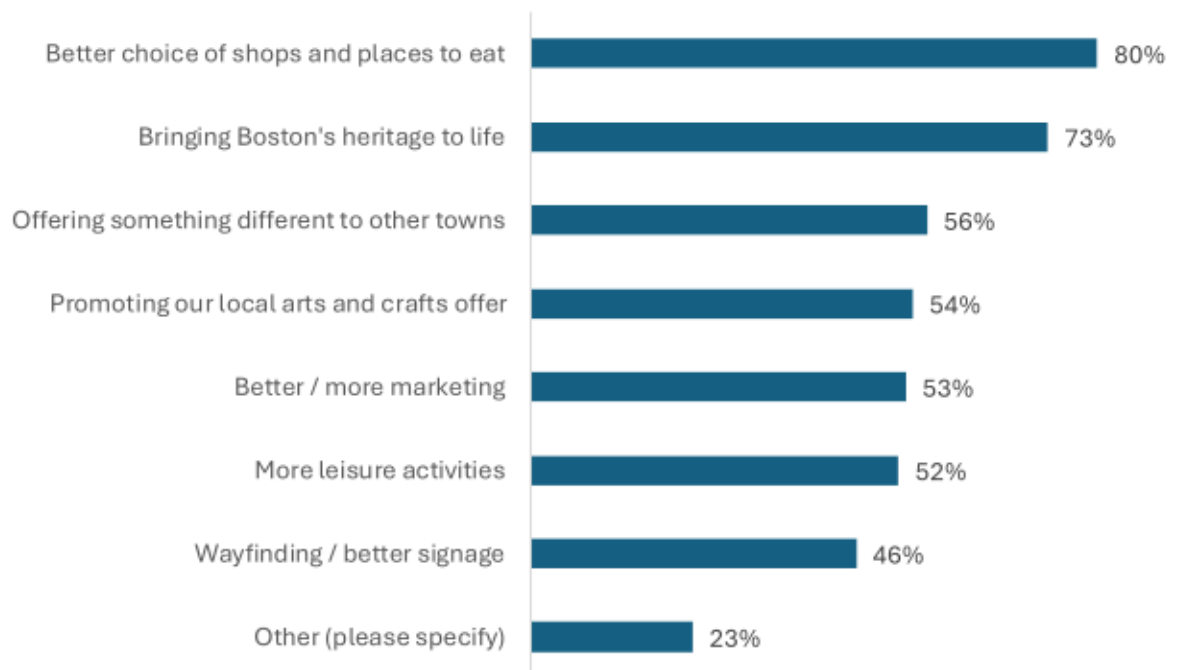
## 24. How can improve the visitor experience for tourists

Q: How can we improve the visitor experience for tourists and support Boston's attractions? (prompted) (please select all that apply)

Response rate to this question: 251 people / 74% of respondents to this survey

Prompted, the large majority of those who responded to this question think the visitor experience for tourists would be improved by a 'better choice of shops and places to eat' – 80%.

Closely followed by 'bringing Boston's heritage to life' – 73%.



Option	%	Number
Better choice of shops and places to eat	80	202
Bringing Boston's heritage to life	73	183
Offering something different to other towns	56	141
Promoting our local arts and crafts offer	54	135
Better / more marketing	53	133
More leisure activities	52	130
Wayfinding / better signage	46	115
Other (please specify)	23	57

## 25. How can work better together and make multi-cultural Boston work for us

*Q: Thinking about the group of people who went to America from Boston almost 400 years ago and, along with other immigrants, founded the vibrant multi-cultural city of Boston Massachusetts: how do you think we can work better together and make our multi-cultural town work for us, like those who did before us? (open-ended)*

*Response rate to this question: 210 people / 62% of respondents to this survey*

There is a strong call for **better integration and mutual respect** between communities.

With efforts from both sides – locals and newcomers.

*"By everyone, all nationalities, across the whole Boston borough, town and villages/Parishes, treated equally and all working together."*

*"Respect. That's all. Both ways. When you have respect you can combine so many cultural aspects to create vibrancy."*

*"Make people feel more welcome. What does it matter where you came from, everyone has a right to their space on the planet."*

And **more inclusive, cross-cultural community events**, such as cultural festivals, food markets, art / music-based gatherings, to bring people together to celebrate diversity.

*"Have events such as art/music where different cultures can come together and try each other's art, instruments etc."*

*"Multi-cultural events, encouraging people to try something (food, dance, song, language) from another culture."*

There is some mention of **improved communication, education and language support**, including English classes for immigrants, cultural awareness training for locals and education in schools.

*"Free provision of English lessons."*

*"I did training several years ago with PAB languages for work... helped me understand that what seems rude is often just a cultural difference."*

*"Start young! Teach children about Boston's heritage and links to the world and make them understand the importance of community."*

And the **celebrating and enhancing of a shared heritage**.

The town's shared history (especially the Pilgrim Fathers' story and connection to Boston, USA) to be celebrated and better utilised for community building and tourism.

*"We should have better links to Boston in America, the Pilgrim Fathers story could be reenacted live in the town every year."*

*"Create an annual Boston Festival to celebrate the heritage."*

*"Partnering with Boston, USA, and organising shared cultural, educational, and heritage events would strengthen connections and inspire unity."*



## vi. Getting involved

### 26. How would like to be involved in making a difference

*Q: There is funding available to help community groups take forward actions and projects that make a difference. How would you like to be involved in making a difference? Please pick as many choices as you like. (prompted)*

*Response rate to this question: 224 people / 66% of respondents to this survey*

When prompted, respondents would most like to be involved in ‘making a difference in Boston’ through having their say in consultations such as this (68% of those who responded to this question).

And around a half (46%) would like to be able to suggest an idea for a project.



Option	%	Number
Having my say in consultations like this	68	153
Being able to suggest an idea for a project	46	102
Talking with the Boston Research Project team	33	73
Supporting the more vulnerable in our community	30	68
Volunteering at a community event or activity	29	64
Working with others to set up ad deliver a project	28	63
Other (please specify)	15	34

## vii. About Respondents

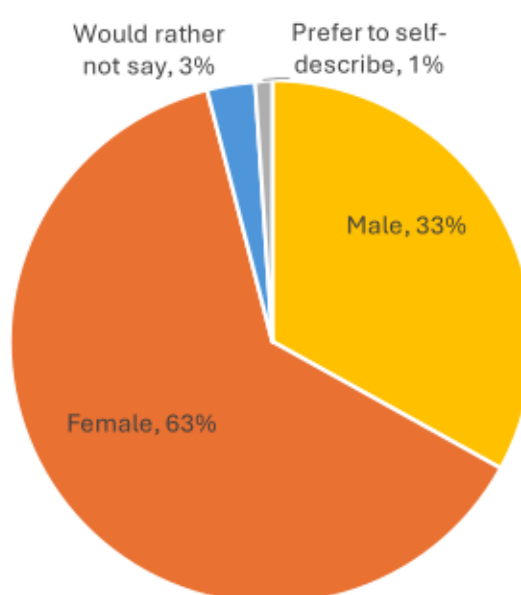
### 27. How would you describe yourself? (prompted)

*Response rate to this question: 249 people / 74% of respondents to this survey*

The sample has a strong female bias, with 63% describing themselves as female.

And 33% as male.

*N.B. Gender breakdown for Boston (town) is 48.9% male, 51.1% female (ONS Census 2021).*



Option	%	Number
Female	63	157
Male	33	82
Would rather not say	3	7
Prefer to self-describe	1	3

## 28. What is your age? (prompted)

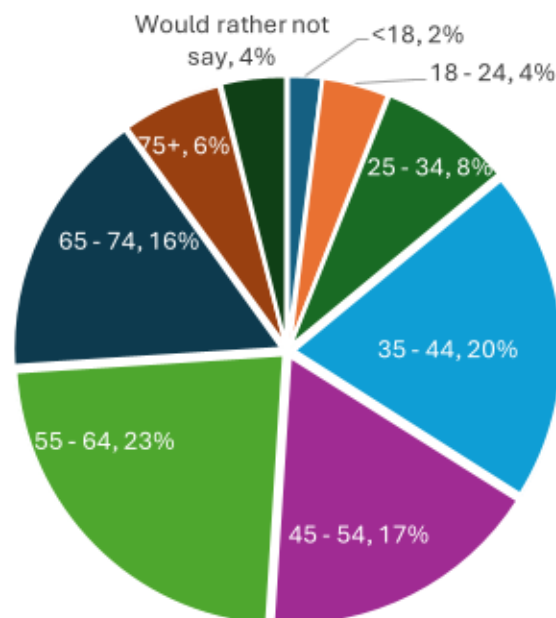
Response rate to this question: 249 people / 74% of respondents to this survey

There is a good spread across age groups, although only a small number of those who responded are under the age of 25 (6%). However, noting that a separate survey was available for young people to complete.

28% are aged 25-44; and 45% 25-54.

45% of those who responded are aged 55+.

*N.B. The median age in Boston (town) is 39 years (ONS Census 2021). The median age for England is 39 years.*



Option	%	Number
Under 18	2	4
18 – 24	4	9
25 – 34	8	21
35 – 44	20	49
45 – 54	17	43
55 – 64	23	58
65 – 74	16	39
75+	6	16
Would rather not say	4	10

## 29. Where do you live? (postcode) (open-ended)

*Response rate to this question: 240 people / 71% of respondents to this survey*

As expected, respondents are most likely to have a PE21 postcode (Boston).

With PE20 also a notable mention.

Postcode	No. of respondents
PE11	1
PE13	2
PE20	24
<b>PE21</b>	<b>116</b>
PE22	14
PE23	1
PE25	1
Other 'non-PE' postcodes (inc. DN, LN, NG)	6

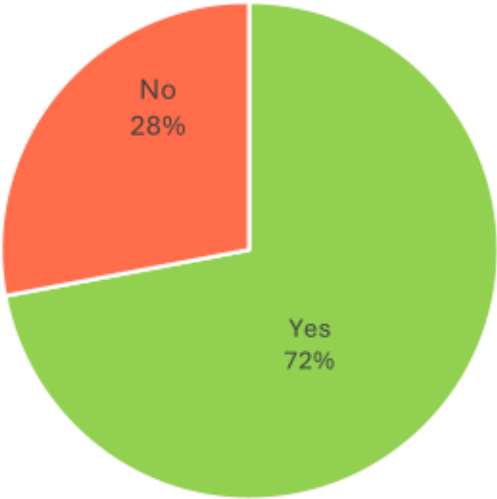
However, noting that many respondents did not give their postcode as requested, but the name of the town or village where they live instead.

An additional 35 respondents stated that they live in 'Boston'.

**30. Would you like to be kept informed of the findings of this consultation and future consultation and engagement by Boston Town Board? (prompted)**

*Response rate to this question: 235 people / 70% of respondents to this survey*

Just under three quarters of those who responded to this question would like to be kept informed of the consultation findings and future consultation and engagement by Boston Town Board (72% or 169 individuals).



Option	%	Number
Yes	72	169
No	28	66

## Part B: survey analysis – *Young People Survey*

- Respondents were screened into the survey if under the age of 25. Otherwise, they were directed to the General Survey
- All 61 respondents are under the age of 25

### i. Your ideas for Boston

#### 1. What would make Boston a place where you want to live, work or study in 2035

*Q: What would make Boston a place where you want to live, work or study in 2035? This could be things like more youth activities, job opportunities or creative spaces. (open-ended)*

*Response rate to this question: 61 people / 100% of respondents to this survey*

A key theme emerging when asked what would make Boston a place where they would want to live, work or study in 2035 is **job opportunities (especially for young people)**.

The lack of accessible, well-paying and entry-level jobs, especially for teenagers and young adults, is consistently highlighted.

*"More job opportunities would be amazing. I'm from Boston and have recently graduated university but currently not considering moving back to Boston due to lack of job opportunities and poor state of the town."*

*"More job opportunities for people aged 14-16 during the summer holiday."*

*"More job opportunities as many places want people to have experience and no one wants to give it."*

*"More job opportunities that provide a decent wage for young people to get started in life, as well as opportunities for learning and growth."*

Another key theme coming through is **more youth activities and spaces**.

There is a strong desire for more fun, engaging and meaningful things for young people to do, and particularly outside of school.

*"More clubs for young people so they are not always on social media, they can connect with others in real life."*

*"There's nothing for young people to do here."*

*"More youth activities, more entertainment for youth as it's boring, there's barely anything to do except the park."*

*"Definitely more youth activities... reading groups, art activities."*

Also notably, respondents want to see **improvements to shops and the town centre**.

They want to have better shopping options, especially high-street chains and a more vibrant and modern town centre.

*"More shops, like clothing shops or just restaurants like there are in cities, for example like Zara or some other good shops."*

*"Bring back Primark."*

*"We need more modern shops to attract footfall to town as many shops are catered to the elderly."*

*"More places such as better clothing shops, more smaller businesses such as alternative shops."*

**Safety, cleanliness and anti-social behaviour** is another theme coming through strongly.

There are concerns around feeling unsafe, anti-social groups and the general dirtiness of public areas.

*"A safer place, more policing to get bad people off the streets, and also, for the town to be cleaner."*

*"It's a horrible environment on the streets... Make the streets a nicer safe place."*

*"Sort out the intimidating groups of men that always group together... Main reason many of us won't go town."*

*"Clamping down on antisocial behaviour is essential as it has increased significantly."*



## 2. Activities / spaces would make you want to spend more time in Boston town centre

Q: What activities or spaces would make you want to spend more time in Boston's town centre? This could be things like youth clubs, music events or study spaces. (open-ended)

Response rate to this question: 61 people / 100% of respondents to this survey

**Music events / live music / music venues** are frequently mentioned by respondents.

Requests include concerts, music festivals and spaces for live bands or specific genres (e.g. rock, 80s).

*"It would also be nice to have some sort of a summer music festival, inviting local and national artists to our town."*

*"More clubs, personally I really like rock and 80's music. So a club playing this type of music would interest me."*

*"More music events and stuff like the festivals in the park ..."*

There is notable call for **study spaces / youth clubs / safe social spaces**.

Respondents emphasised the need for quiet, safe spaces for young people and students to study, hang out and engage in free or low-cost activities.

*"A student-only study space that isn't the library."*

*"Study spaces which are quiet, secure and clean. Free or low-cost social spaces."*

Another key theme emerging is **shops / shopping centres / cafés**.

There is a strong desire for more shopping options (especially in the town centre) and a better variety of shops – along with places like cafés for socialising.

*"More shops, like a mall."*

*"More shops would be great to attract people."*

*"More variety of shops or cafés,  
maybe with a discount for students  
/ young people."*

*"More shops, we lack any good  
shops in the town centre. It's  
honestly embarrassing at the lack  
of ANY good shops in the towns  
CENTRE. Any actually proper  
shops are either on the outskirts  
of Boston or can only be found in  
neighbouring towns."*

**Festivals / markets / cultural events** would be welcomed by many.

Local festivals, international markets, food and craft fairs, cultural weeks are suggested as a way of enriching the town's social life.

*"Town fetes, whole town  
celebrations for occasions."*

*"Cultural weeks, like food  
festivals."*

*"Bring back the international  
stalls."*

*"Dance workshops."*

There is some request for **sports and active spaces (e.g. football, trampoline parks, arcades)**.

Respondents would like fun physical activity spaces, such as arcades, indoor football, trampoline parks and parks with fitness equipment.

*"To me, most important is the pull  
up bars, dip bars in parks."*

*"More indoor activities like bowling  
in Boston, or some arcades."*

*"Like futsal or like five a side  
football."*

*"Paddle courts or squash courts."*

### 3. Support needed to achieve goals in Boston

Q: What support do you need to achieve your goals in Boston? This could be things like careers advice, skills training or mental health support. (open-ended)  
Response rate to this question: 58 people / 95% of respondents to this survey

The most frequently mentioned support needed to achieve goals in the survey feedback is **career advice ...**

*"I think a lot of people in the town could benefit from career advice and further training to help them get jobs."*

*"Workshops, where we can learn new skills. Personalised advice with a holistic approach...."*

*"Training available that actually help obtain a job and work experience for young people."*

*"Boston needs role models, it needs entrepreneurs who can be looked up to and advice can be taken from them ..."*

... and **skills training** too.

*"If more training programmes could be run to help support young adults."*

*"Workshops, where we can learn new skills ..."*

*"Skills training, not just for careers, but for everyday tasks, like finance and personal development ..."*

*"More skills training and job opportunities for chefs and cooks ..."*

Responses suggest that **young people are looking for practical, tailored support** that helps them:

- Identify career paths
- Build real-world skills
- Access personalised, experience-based advice
- Get job-ready with work experience

There is some mention of **mental health support**, albeit at a lower level.

*"Mental health support is massive!!  
So hard to access anything."*

*"Mental health support  
because it's so hard to get to a  
doctor here quickly and get  
mental health help which really  
keeps me back from achieving  
more."*

#### 4. How can we make Boston's green spaces and community events more appealing

Q: How can we make Boston's green spaces and community events more appealing, so that young people like you want to use them? This could be things like sports facilities, festivals or digital engagement. (open-ended)

Response rate to this question: 61 people / 100% of respondents to this survey

**Festivals and events, such as music, sports and youth-oriented**, are highlighted by many as a key way in which Boston's green spaces and / or community events could be made more appealing.

Respondents would like to see more frequent, varied and better-advertised festivals / events, especially ones involving music and sports.

*"More festivals would bring and encourage more young people to engage with the community."*

*"A young people festival. something that teenagers could enjoy, like a club."*

*"Hosting music festivals would be amazing!!!"*

*"Have sports events."*

**Sports facilities and activities** also emerge as a significant mention.

There's high demand for public sports areas (e.g. tennis, football, skate parks).

And emphasis on affordable access and youth engagement.

*"More places for freedom such as sports facilities."*

*"Definitely sport facilities. But not the ones for old people ... decent calisthenics parks."*

*"Create more clubs for sports like tennis, football and outdoor sports."*

*"Spaces for different sports that are well used by local clubs, teams or just freely available to use ... Swimming pools that are cheaper for young people to use to stay active. Young people are clearly interested in staying healthy, as the new Pure Gym is busy, so investing in activities for young people is a great idea, as long as they are affordable."*

Also coming through as a key theme, albeit less strongly, is **cleanliness, maintenance and beautification**.

Respondents would like parks and green spaces to be clean, well-maintained and visually appealing, with flowers, trees, benches etc.

*"Cleaning up town park and adding more flowers."*

*"Trees, more benches, flowers, hidden nooks for picnics."*

*"By making green spaces stay nice and clean."*

**Security and safety (including police presence)** is reasonably frequently raised too.

There are concerns around crime, anti-social behaviour, vandalism and safety. There are calls for police presence and general safety measures.

*"Lighting and permanent police presence."*

*"Make sure police are present to deter people from vandalising."*

*"Boston needs to be a safer place before people will consider venturing out the house."*

## Part C: survey analysis – Sparkfest

### 1. Respondent age (N=347)

Age group	%	Number
0-18	27%	94
18-35	16%	57
<b>35-65</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>177</b>
65+	4%	15
Prefer not to say	1%	3
No reply	0.3%	1

*N.B. percentages may not total 100% due to rounding*

### 2. Rank the following statements in order of priority the first being the highest priority and the lowest the least priority: Topic - Deprivation, Skills & Economy (N=342)

% ranking as TOP PRIORITY	Statement
<b>42%</b>	<b><i>Everyone in Boston should have access to training that leads to a good local job</i></b>
18%	There should be more opportunities for professional training and development to keep young people in Boston
12%	We need more opportunities for adults to retrain and upskill throughout life
11%	There should be more and different job opportunities in Boston
10%	Businesses in Boston should work closely with schools and colleges
5%	We should support new businesses and entrepreneurs from all backgrounds
2%	Boston should lead the way in food innovation, agri-tech, or green industry

*N.B. percentages may not total 100% due to rounding*

**3. Rank the following statements in order of priority the first being the highest priority and the lowest the least priority: Topic – Safety, Trust & Social Cohesion (N=318)**

<b>% ranking as TOP PRIORITY</b>	<b>Statement</b>
<b>62%</b>	<b><i>Boston should feel safe for everyone, day and night</i></b>
13%	We need more activities and spaces for young people to have things to do
9%	Reducing anti-social behaviour should be a top priority for Boston
7%	Everyone in Boston should feel they belong, no matter where they come from
5%	Police, residents and communities should work together to prevent crime
3%	We need more safe spaces where people can come together as equals
2%	People from different backgrounds should have more chances to meet and mix

*N.B. percentages may not total 100% due to rounding*

**4. Rank the following statements in order of priority the first being the highest priority and the lowest the least priority: Topic - Housing, Public Space & Town Centre (N=297)**

<b>% ranking as TOP PRIORITY</b>	<b>Statement</b>
<b>45%</b>	<b><i>The town centre should be a place where people live, work, shop and can spend time together</i></b>
20%	Vacant shops and buildings should be put to other uses, such as community space
10%	Everyone deserves a warm, safe and affordable home in Boston
8%	More needs to be done to improve the quality of local housing
7%	Boston should have more places to sit, gather, and feel safe in the town centre
6%	We should offer more reasons for people to come into our town centre other than shopping
4%	We should invest in greener, more climate-friendly homes and buildings

*N.B. percentages may not total 100% due to rounding*



**5. Rank the following statements in order of priority the first being the highest priority and the lowest the least priority: Topic - Health, Wellbeing & Social Infrastructure (N=267)**

<b>% ranking as TOP PRIORITY</b>	<b>Statement</b>
<b>53%</b>	<b><i>Everyone should be able to access good quality local healthcare</i></b>
15%	Boston should offer more support for mental health within the local community
14%	Everyone should feel able to ask for help with their health or wellbeing
10%	There should be more public spaces where people can spend time taking part in active or healthy activities
9%	Loneliness and isolation should be treated as urgent health issues

*N.B. percentages may not total 100% due to rounding*

**6. Rank the following statements in order of priority the first being the highest priority and the lowest the least priority: Topic - Young People & Future Opportunities (N=267)**

<b>% ranking as TOP PRIORITY</b>	<b>Statement</b>
<b>33%</b>	<b><i>Young people in Boston should be actively involved in shaping the town's future</i></b>
21%	Boston should support every child to thrive, no matter their background
21%	Schools should help students feel proud of Boston and their potential in it
17%	We need more safe, welcoming spaces for young people to meet, learn and play
8%	Young voices should be heard and respected in local decisions

*N.B. percentages may not total 100% due to rounding*

**7. Rank the following statements in order of priority the first being the highest priority and the lowest the least priority: Topic - Culture, Identity & Community Assets (N=265)**

<b>% ranking as TOP PRIORITY</b>	<b>Statement</b>
<b>32%</b>	<b><i>Boston's unique history and diversity should be celebrated more</i></b>
25%	We need more free or low-cost creative activities for all ages
14%	Everyone should feel proud to say "I'm from Boston."
14%	Boston should host more events that bring people together
9%	Local artists and creatives should be supported to build careers in Boston
6%	Public spaces where people can do activities such as watching a film or listening to music should be for everyone who lives here

*N.B. percentages may not total 100% due to rounding*

**8. Right now, what one thing would most improve Boston for you? (open-ended)**

Key themes emerging in terms of improvements include:

**a. Safety and crime reduction:**

Many respondents are concerned about crime, anti-social behaviour and feeling unsafe in public areas.

- *"Being able to feel safe to walk around the town."*
- *"Boston needs making safe... it has a bad name because of all the anti-social behaviour."*
- *"Make it safe for people so they don't get scared going out at night."*
- *"Crackdown on crime."*
- *"More police presence."*

**b. Shops and town centre revitalisation**

There's call for more shops, fewer empty stores and a vibrant, clean, appealing town centre with a better retail mix.

- *"More shops lots of vacant shops."*
- *"A redecorated and gentrified town centre, something that makes Boston look like a nice and welcoming place."*
- *"Fill the empty shops with more independent businesses NOT BARBERS!!!"*
- *"Better shops."*
- *"Investment into the town centre."*

**c. Youth activities and community spaces**

Respondents highlight the lack of things for young people to do and the need for safe, inclusive, engaging spaces and events.

- *"More activities/clubs for young people to do."*
- *"Access to youth activities in the community."*

- *"More community centres, youth centres and festivals where people would feel safe and happy."*
- *"Social spaces for young people."*

#### **d. Transport and infrastructure**

Comments about better transport links, traffic flow (especially a bypass) and improved roads are commonplace.

- *"Better transport links."*
- *"Get a bypass built to relieve traffic congestion."*
- *"Investment in roads and infrastructure."*
- *"Not being stuck in roadworks!"*
- *"Better traffic management and more appealing town centre."*

#### **e. Cleanliness and environment**

Residents want a cleaner town with more green spaces, better litter management and environmental improvements.

- *"The litter"*
- *"Make it cleaner, less shops shutting down."*
- *"Weeding and upkeep of communal areas."*
- *"Greener"*

### **9. If you had millions of pounds to spend in Boston, what would be your priorities? (open-ended)**

Key themes emerging in terms of priorities include:

#### **a. Bypass / traffic reduction**

Repeated call for the construction of a bypass or ring road to reduce congestion, improve traffic flow, make the town more attractive to visitors and businesses.

- *"Build a bypass around to lessen bottlenecking through Boston."*
- *"Ring road to divert traffic. And fund more into the roads, police etc."*
- *"Bypass – help with traffic and more desirable shops and things to do."*

#### **b. Revitalisation of the town centre / empty shops**

A notable number of responses focus on bringing life back to the town centre through renovation, reducing empty shops, attracting businesses.

- *"Fill vacant shops."*
- *"Revitalising the town centre."*
- *"Renovating empty buildings."*
- *"Investment in the high street."*
- *"Redevelopment of town centre."*

#### **c. Youth engagement and activities**

Widespread desire for more facilities, activities, safe spaces for children and young people to keep them engaged and supported.

- *"More clubs for young people such as a gaming café."*
- *"Youth clubs places for young people to stay out of trouble."*
- *"Create more youth areas and activities and make a safer town."*
- *"More stuff for children."*

#### **d. Safety and anti-social behaviour**

Many respondents are concerned about safety and want increased policing, a reduction in anti-social behaviour and a cleaner, safer environment.

- *"Make it feel safer."*
- *"More policing and making it a safe environment for everyone."*
- *"Better Police presence."*
- *"Cleaning up crime and making it a better community."*

#### **e. Housing and homelessness**

Affordable housing, renovation of derelict buildings for residential use, and support for homeless people are key concerns.

- *"Improve housing and buildings to reduce dereliction..."*
- *"Create safe accommodation for homeless to transition..."*
- *"Housing, NHS, more things to do."*
- *"Make a house for homeless people."*

### **10. 10 years' from now, in 2035, what would you like to be different about Boston? (open-ended)**

Key themes emerging in terms of priorities include:

#### **a. Safety and crime reduction**

A strong desire for a safer, more secure town where residents and visitors feel comfortable to be.

- *"Everyone to feel safe, day and night when out in town"*
- *"Safer and less obvious drug peddling"*
- *"Crime and anti social behaviour handled"*
- *"To feel more safe within the town. More police to ensure safety"*

#### **b. Cleanliness and visual appeal**

Frequent mentions of the need for a cleaner town with better-maintained buildings and public spaces.

- *"Cleaner streets"*
- *"Cleaner and safer place"*
- *"Buildings need improvement as some look rundown"*
- *"Cleaner, less deserted buildings, more things to do"*

#### **c. Community cohesion and pride**

There is a strong desire for improved community spirit, inclusivity and a return to feeling proud of Boston.

- *"A united prosperous community"*
- *"Everyone got on whatever colour you are or whatever country you come from"*
- *"I would like the people that are from Boston to be proud that they are from Boston like it used to be"*
- *"A warm welcoming place that's thriving and full of kind people"*

**d. Thriving town centre and more shops**

Respondents want a vibrant town centre with more shops, activities and a flourishing economy.

- *"More shops and more kid friendly places"*
- *"A more thriving town centre. Less groups of people hanging around..."*
- *"All the shops filled so no empty shops"*
- *"Thriving town centre with educational opportunities"*
- *"More modernised shopping"*

**e. Youth opportunities and things to do**

There is frequent call for more facilities, jobs, and activities for young people to keep them engaged and give them a future in the town.

- *"More opportunities for young people"*
- *"Great youth resources inside and outside"*
- *"More clubs and activities to do for young people"*
- *"Jobs for young college leavers"*
- *"More sport and social spaces"*

## Part D: Futurefest

1. Rank the following statements in order of priority the first being the highest priority and the lowest the least priority: Topic – Skills, Jobs & Opportunities (N=101)

% ranking as TOP PRIORITY	Statement
34%	<b><i>Everyone should be able to learn skills that help them get a good job in Boston</i></b>
19%	We need more training and job opportunities to help young people stay in Boston
13%	We should support people from all backgrounds to start their own businesses
12%	There should be more types of jobs in Boston
10%	Adults should be able to learn new skills and change careers if they want to
10%	Local businesses should work closely with schools and colleges
4%	Boston should be known for leading the way in areas like food, green jobs, and farming technology

N.B. percentages may not total 100% due to rounding

2. Rank the following statements in order of priority the first being the highest priority and the lowest the least priority: Topic – Feeling safe & part of the community (N=96)

% ranking as TOP PRIORITY	Statement
48%	<b><i>Boston should feel safe for everyone, during the day and at night</i></b>
19%	There should be more things for young people to do and places to go
10%	Stopping anti-social behaviour (like vandalism or public trouble) should be a big focus
8%	Everyone should feel like they belong in Boston, no matter where they come from
5%	Police and communities should work together to prevent crime
5%	There should be safe places where everyone feels welcome and treated equally
4%	People from different backgrounds should have more chances to meet and get to know each other

N.B. percentages may not total 100% due to rounding

**3. Rank the following statements in order of priority the first being the highest priority and the lowest the least priority: Topic – Homes, Public Spaces & the Town Centre (N=95)**

<b>% ranking as TOP PRIORITY</b>	<b>Statement</b>
<b>33%</b>	<b><i>The town centre should be a place where people can live, work, shop, and hang out</i></b>
21%	Everyone should have a warm, safe, and affordable place to live
19%	Empty shops or buildings should be used for things like community spaces
12%	The quality of housing in Boston needs to be better
8%	There should be more places to sit, relax, and feel safe in the town centre
4%	We should give people more reasons to visit the town centre besides just shopping
3%	Homes and buildings should be better for the environment (climate-friendly)

*N.B. percentages may not total 100% due to rounding*

**4. Rank the following statements in order of priority the first being the highest priority and the lowest the least priority: Topic – Health, Wellbeing & Support (N=82)**

<b>% ranking as TOP PRIORITY</b>	<b>Statement</b>
<b>44%</b>	<b><i>Everyone should be able to get good, local healthcare</i></b>
22%	People should feel comfortable asking for help with health or mental wellbeing
12%	There should be more public spaces where people can be active or do healthy activities
12%	Feeling lonely or left out should be treated as a serious health issue
10%	Boston should offer more mental health support for young people and the community

*N.B. percentages may not total 100% due to rounding*

**5. Rank the following statements in order of priority the first being the highest priority and the lowest the least priority: Topic – Young People & the Future (N=86)**

<b>% ranking as TOP PRIORITY</b>	<b>Statement</b>
<b>26%</b>	<b><i>Young people should have a say in decisions about Boston's future</i></b>
24%	We need more safe, friendly places for young people to meet, learn and have fun
23%	Schools should help students feel proud of Boston and believe in their future here
19%	Boston should help every child do well, no matter their background
8%	Young people's opinions should be heard and respected by local leaders

*N.B. percentages may not total 100% due to rounding*

**6. Rank the following statements in order of priority the first being the highest priority and the lowest the least priority: Topic – Culture, Community & Pride (N=81)**

<b>% ranking as TOP PRIORITY</b>	<b>Statement</b>
<b>42%</b>	<b><i>Boston's unique history and mix of cultures should be celebrated more</i></b>
20%	There should be more free or cheap creative activities for people of all ages
12%	Everyone should feel proud to say "I'm from Boston."
11%	Boston should hold more events that bring people together
10%	Artists and creative people should be supported to build careers here in Boston
5%	Public places for watching films, listening to music or other creative things should be open to everyone

*N.B. percentages may not total 100% due to rounding*



## **7. What's one thing that would make Boston better for you right now? (open-ended)**

Key themes emerging in terms of improvements include:

### **a. Safety and cleanliness**

Many concerns about crime, anti-social behaviour, litter and a general lack of safety in the town centre.

- *"Clamping down on anti-social behaviour, starting with educating young people and providing more alternative spaces"*
- *"Less rubbish"*
- *"Stop crime and more stuff for kids"*
- *"Be more safe / cleaner"*

### **b. More for young people (activities, jobs, education, support)**

There is a demand for youth-focused infrastructure, activities and support, especially around jobs, education and safe recreation.

- *"Awareness of opportunities for young people"*
- *"More education for younger people"*
- *"More jobs for young people"*
- *"To spend more money on the young people"*
- *"New places for kids to have fun and not too expensive"*
- *"Stop crime and more stuff for kids"*

### **c. More shops / better shopping experience**

Some respondents want better or more diverse shopping options to make the town centre more appealing.

- *"More shops"*
- *"Encourage more shopping in the centre"*
- *"Cooler shops, places for children"*
- *"Improved shopping"*
- *"New shops"*
- *"Making the town centre itself 'buzz' - more of an outdoor café culture"*

### **d. More things to do, parks, community spaces**

A notable number of respondents call for more community spaces, green areas, and recreational activities to improve quality of life.

- *"More activities"*
- *"Mountain bike park"*
- *"More parks"*
- *"More things to do"*
- *"More access to the arts"*
- *"A public track field"*
- *"Add to the Boston centre skatepark"*

## **8. If you had millions of pounds to spend in Boston, what would you spend it on? (open-ended)**

Key themes emerging in terms of what respondents would like money spent on in Boston include:

### **a. Young people-focused resources and support**

Needs highlighted include things for young people to do, education improvements, mental health support, job readiness, youth centres.

- *"More for kids to do to keep them entertained"*
- *"Massive youth and mental health facilities"*
- *"Education"*
- *"Help me be better at my job in future and resources I can use"*

### **b. Housing**

There was call for affordable housing, safer housing, help for the homeless.

- *"A house"*
- *"Affordable housing, doctors, dentists, schools"*
- *"To help the homeless people"*
- *"More public space and homes/shops"*

### **c. Infrastructure, environment, cleanliness**

Some cited a need for roadworks and transport improvements, cleanliness (bins, litter), better town infrastructure.

- *"Build the bypass"*
- *"Improving existing infrastructure"*
- *"Less litter"*
- *"More bins"*

### **d. Health and care services**

There were requests for more hospitals and health centres, elderly care, child health and mental health services.

- *"Child and health care"*
- *"Places for care homes and the elderly"*
- *"More hospitals"*

### **e. Community spaces and inclusion**

Respondents want places that bring people together; inclusive, multicultural spaces; general community cohesion.

- *"Community projects to bring people together"*
- *"More things for people from all backgrounds to join to feel included"*
- *"Community venue"*

## **9. In 10 years (in 2035), what do you hope will be different about Boston? (open-ended)**

Key themes emerging in terms of hopes for Boston in 2035 include:

### **a. Cleanliness and environment**

A recurring desire is for cleaner streets and less litter.

- *"Less litter"*
- *"Cleaner streets"*
- *"Less rubbish on the streets"*
- *"Environment - more ecofriendly"*

### **b. Safety and crime reduction**

Some responses emphasise wanting a safer town, with less crime, vandalism and anti-social behaviour.

- *"Crime free"*
- *"Less crime"*
- *"Less robbery and theft"*
- *"More people will feel safer to visit Boston"*
- *"Safer environment"*

### **c. Community and inclusivity**

Respondents want a stronger sense of community, with more acceptance, friendliness and integration between different groups.

- *"Better community"*
- *"A thriving community"*
- *"More accepting of each other"*
- *"People will get along"*
- *"No more crime and people from different countries will be treated the same as Brits"*
- *"A better, safer, friendlier culture, with more locals playing a part"*

### **d. More things to do / leisure / town centre revitalisation**

Respondents desire a more vibrant town centre with more shops, leisure activities and entertainment.

- *"More theatre"*
- *"More things to do"*
- *"More nature in town"*
- *"That more leisure things will be around"*
- *"A more upbeat vibe, bustling town centre"*

### **e. Opportunities and infrastructure**

There's demand for more jobs, better housing, transport, schools and future opportunities - especially for young people.

- *"Better housing"*
- *"More jobs"*
- *"Schools and colleges"*
- *"Safe place to live with opportunities for different jobs"*
- *"Better mental health for young people"*

## Part E: community group activities

### i. Boston Lithuanian Community

#### Survey Collection and Translation

- Collected 26 Lithuanian-language surveys (translated into English at the end of July).
- Collected 24 Russian-language surveys, mainly from Ukrainian nationals but also from Latvian, Bulgarian, and Belarusian participants.
- Currently translating Russian surveys into English, with completion expected by 20 August. Translation is essential to ensure all responses are accessible and consistent for the consultation team.

#### Engagement Activities Delivered

- Organised 2 targeted ESOL engagement sessions with Lithuanian- and Russian-speaking students, offering language support and simplifying survey completion.
- Delivered 8 “Talk & Tea” drop-in sessions at the Hub for one-to-one and small group support.
- Collected additional surveys from clients attending regular sessions and consultations.
- Planned children’s art workshop for late August, where participants will create artwork depicting their vision of the town. This will contribute to a Hub feedback wall showcasing the community’s ideas in a visual and engaging format.

#### Key Outcomes

**Inclusive engagement:** Reached residents who might otherwise be excluded from the consultation due to language barriers, building confidence to take part.

**Diverse perspectives:** Gathered a rich mix of views from Lithuanian, Ukrainian, Latvian, Bulgarian, and Belarusian residents, representing a broad cross-section of the local migrant community.

#### Themes emerging:

1. **Cultural and Social Life:** Interest in more cultural and family events, food and music festivals, art and creative exhibitions, themed days, fairs, and celebrations of different cultures and nations.
2. **Learning and Skills Development:** Strong interest in free or low-cost English language courses (with more hours per week), education on UK laws and rights, development of digital and vocational skills, and training opportunities for older people to learn new professions.
3. **Safety and Security:** A strong desire for improved safety across the town, including more street lighting in dark areas, CCTV in public spaces, faster police response, volunteer evening patrols, and measures to address anti-social behaviour.
4. **Cleanliness and Environment:** Calls for cleaner streets, better waste management, provision of free rubbish containers in fly-tipping hotspots, deratisation (rat control), more greenery, and well-maintained public spaces.

5. **Infrastructure and Transport:** Requests for road and street repairs, improved modern infrastructure, pedestrianising parts of the town centre, and better public amenities such as benches and recreational areas.
6. **Community Integration and Support:** Ukrainians and other migrants highlighted the importance of help in their native language and tailored integration support, including:
  - Access to information through local hubs in their own language.
  - Housing rental support.
  - Assistance in understanding and exercising their rights.
7. **Health, Workload, and NHS Access:** Many respondents, particularly Ukrainians, raised concerns about:
  - Difficulties accessing NHS services, dissatisfaction with the quality of care, and long waits for treatment.
  - The impact of language barriers on healthcare experiences and outcomes.
  - The need to identify health problems early and link them to their causes.
  - Calls to limit physically demanding workloads at work to protect health and wellbeing.
8. **Recreation, Health, and Wellbeing:** Desire for safe parks, walking routes, children's play areas, sports clubs, creative hobby groups, outdoor workshops, wellness programmes, and spaces to interact with animals and nature.
9. **Support for Local Economy and Creativity:** Encouragement of small shops, family-run businesses, local craft enterprises, and support for street artists and musicians.

**Community connection:** Engagement activities strengthened relationships within the community, creating spaces for discussion, cultural exchange, and shared problem-solving.

**Creative contribution:** Upcoming art workshop will add a visual, youth-led perspective to the consultation, making the feedback more accessible and engaging for the wider public.

**Trust and accessibility:** By providing translated materials and direct language support, participants felt their voices were valued and that their input would be accurately represented.

## **ii. YMCA / Boston Youth Hub**

### **Overview**

On Tuesday, 5th August, we delivered a graffiti workshop for young people attending Boston Youth Hub, in partnership with Tonic Health. We departed our base at 09:20 and arrived in Boston approximately one hour later. Upon arrival, we familiarised ourselves with the Youth Hub setting—an open-access provision offering a range of recreational activities including table tennis, snooker/pool, darts, air hockey, and gaming consoles (Xboxes). Workshop Structure

The session followed a structured plan designed to engage participants creatively, safely, and meaningfully:

1. Icebreaker Activity – Played a group game of Corks to build rapport and ease young people into the session.
2. Discussion: Graffiti – Art or Vandalism? – Explored the differences between legal and illegal graffiti, encouraging open dialogue and critical thinking.
3. Skill Building: Lettering Techniques – Introduced various lettering styles and techniques to make words visually stand out. – Young people were given time to experiment and practise these on paper.
4. Outdoor Spray-Paint Practice – Transitioned outside to practise using spray paint on large plywood boards. – All spray-painting activities were conducted outdoors for health and safety compliance.
5. Creative Concept Development – Participants reflected on the identity and purpose of the Youth Hub. – They brainstormed six words that came to mind when thinking of “Tonic Health Youth Hub.” – Tonic Health Staff also contributed ideas.
6. Design Drafting – Using their brainstormed words, young people sketched their final board designs on practice paper.
7. Board Painting – The group collaboratively painted their designs onto the wooden boards outdoors.
8. Drying and Break Time – While the paint dried, young people were offered 15 minutes of free time.
9. Detailing and Finishing Touches – Once dry, the boards were enhanced with highlights and finer details using Sharpie paint pens.

### **Participant Feedback & Evaluation**

The session was well received by the young people. While there was initial hesitance, participants quickly became engaged and demonstrated enthusiasm and creativity. We gathered feedback using post-it notes. Young people were asked to share their thoughts about the session.

### **Responses included:**

- “10/10 – Staff were really friendly.”
- “Sigma 100/10.”
- “Very nice – 10/10. Aura can’t lie.”
- “Very entertaining and fun.”
- “I like the people, the spray paint, and doing the board.”

**Conclusion**

This workshop successfully combined informal education principles with creative expression, offering young people a space to explore identity, collaborate with peers, and engage in meaningful art-making. The partnership with Tonic Health and the supportive environment at Boston Youth Hub contributed positively to the overall impact of the session.

### iii. Boston Centrepont

The general ideas were:

- More toilets in town. Accessible ones without steps.
- A homeless shelter.
- Buses on a Sunday
- More free music events to bring people together.
- A cheap affordable café that acts a community hub – different projects going on.
- Help to give Centrepont Outreach a refurbishment.
- More places to go on a Saturday and Sunday that are free or very low cost – Safe spaces.
- A heritage centre or more events on the river – as Boston used to be a major port town historically.





## Appendix A: survey questions – *General Survey*



### ***Let's Talk Boston***

#### ***Let's talk about Boston***

Have your say on Boston, help to shape the future of our town, and you could win £100 in shopping vouchers.

Our town is set to benefit from multi-million-pound government funding (around £2M a year for 10 years) – and together we can all play a part in deciding how this money should be spent.

We need everyone who lives, visits, works, and cares about Boston to **make your voice heard**.

Share your thoughts, your ideas, your hopes for our town – please answer as many questions as you can - and just by having your say, **not only will you help to shape our town's future, you could also win £100 in shopping vouchers**.



## ***Our vision for Boston***

We need to think about what we want Boston to be in 10 years' time – this is our identity.

Based on previous consultation, we know that people want Boston to prosper, to make more of its history, but also look to the future.

1. So, our identity could be about Boston's history and heritage side by side with progress and creativity. What do you think about that?

- ☐ I like it a lot
- ☐ I quite like it
- ☐ I'm not sure
- ☐ I don't like it
- ☐ I really don't like it

2. What do you think Boston should be known for so that it stands out from other neighbouring towns? *For example: this could be things like small independent shops, arts and crafts, or cultural activities like events and festivals.*

3. What are the three main changes you would want to see in Boston by 2035 to make it a thriving place?

1st change	<div></div>
2nd change	<div></div>
3rd change	<div></div>

4. What are the three best things about Boston that we should build on as we head towards 2035?

1st best thing	<div></div>
2nd best thing	<div></div>
3rd best thing	<div></div>

5. In one sentence please describe the Boston that you would be proud to be part of in 2035?

## ***Boston Moving Forward***

6. What small, quick changes could make a big difference in your neighbourhood right now? *This can be anything you can think of but could include things like providing small amounts of funding or support to deal with issues like weeds or cracks in pavements, dog poo bins/bags, small amounts of funding for local community groups - and much more.*

7. What do you think are the biggest challenges in your local community?

8. And, how do you think these challenges can be tackled?

9. What community support, advice, or services do you or others need to live well in Boston? (please pick all the things that you think are needed)

- ☐ Mental health support
- ☐ Social activities
- ☐ Advice on benefits
- ☐ Advice and support with job applications
- ☐ Training courses
- ☐ Activities for young people
- ☐ Other (please tell us what you think)

10. And how and where would it be easiest to access this community support, advice, or services? For example, this could be centres or hubs in the community, online services, or mobile services

11. Do you volunteer or get involved in community groups, projects, or activities?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

12. If no to the previous question, what would encourage you to do so?

- ☐ More information about ways to get involved
- ☐ More relevant opportunities
- ☐ More time to get involved

☐ More flexible ways to get involved

☐ Other (please tell us what you think)

### **Supporting people in Boston**

13. What would help you and others to stay healthy and active in Boston?

*For example, health programmes, advice and support (other than through NHS), sports clubs, outdoor gyms, walking trails, or healthy eating initiatives.)*

14. How can we help young people leaving school or college to find opportunities and stay in Boston?

☐ Career advice

☐ Mentoring

☐ Local job fairs

☐ Business grants

☐ Support for start-ups

☐ Better jobs and career opportunities

☐ Other (please tell us what you think)

15. How can we support people of all ages to get the skills and training they need for the jobs and careers they want?

16. Would you like to see Boston offer more support to local people of all ages to achieve their ambitions to start and build new businesses?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Unsure

### **Improving our town**

17. What do you think we could do to make Boston town centre more attractive and more welcoming?

18. What would bring you in to the town centre more often or make you stay longer?

19. We know from previous feedback that some people do not always feel safe in the town. So, apart from more police, what do you think we can do to make people feel safe?

20. Boston has lots of areas of green space, how do we make more of these areas so they are more appealing and are used more? *Green space could be spaces such as parks, communal gardens, verges. Examples could include renovating parks, play facilities, community gardens, and essential facilities.*

### **Spending time in Boston**

21. How do you enjoy spending your free/leisure time in Boston?

22. What types of events should Boston host for local residents and to bring people into our town? *For example, events in Boston have included Boston Brilliance, Beach in the Park, and Boston's Christmas Festival 2024.*

23. Would you like to see more support for local arts, cultural, heritage and creative activities that local people can get involved in? *This could be things like heritage tours, or art classes, or performances.*

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

24. How can we improve the visitor experience for tourists and support Boston's attractions? *Please pick all that apply.*

- ☐ Wayfinding / better signage
- ☐ Better / more marketing
- ☐ Offering something different to other towns
- ☐ Bringing Boston's heritage to life
- ☐ Promoting our local arts and crafts offer
- ☐ More leisure activities

☐ Better choice of shops and places to eat

☐ Other (please tell us your ideas)

25. Thinking about the group of people to America from Boston almost 400 years ago and along with other immigrants founded the vibrant multi-cultural city of Boston Massachusetts: how do you think we can work better together and make our multi-cultural town work for us, like those who did before us?

### **Getting involved**

26. There is funding available to help community groups take forward actions and projects that make a difference. How would you like to be involved in making a difference? *Please pick as many choices as you like.*

☐ Having my say in consultations like this

☐ Being able to suggest an idea for a project

☐ Working with others to set up and deliver a project

☐ Volunteering at a community event or activity

☐ Supporting the more vulnerable in our community

☐ Talking with the Boston Research Project team

☐ Other (please tell us your thoughts)

### **About you**

27. How would you describe yourself?

☐ Male

☐ Female

☐ Prefer to self-describe

☐ Prefer to not say

28. What is your age?

☐ Under 18

☐ 18-24

☐ 25-34

☐ 35-44

☐ 45-54

☐ 55-64

☐ 65-74

☐ 75+

☐ Prefer not to say

29. Where do you live? Your postcode

### ***Keeping connected***

30. Would you like to be kept informed of the findings of this consultation and future consultation and engagement by Boston Town Board? The consultation privacy policy can be found [here](#)

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

31. Would you like to enter our prize draw to win £100 in shopping vouchers? to win £100 in shopping vouchers? Competition terms can be found [here](#)

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

32. If you answered yes to question 30 or question 31 please add your contact details here:

Name

Email Address

Phone Number

Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with us.

What you tell us will help to decide how funding is invested in Boston.

[www.bostontownboard.co.uk](http://www.bostontownboard.co.uk)



**Funded by  
UK Government**

## Appendix B: survey questions – *Young People Survey*



### Let's Talk Boston - young people's survey

#### Let's talk Boston - and you could win £100 in shopping vouchers.

Millions of pounds of money from the government is going to be coming into Boston over the next ten years. It works out at about £2m each year from next year. **And together we can all play a part in deciding how this money should be spent.**

We really want to hear what you want in Boston. Can you tell us what you think in this short survey please?

And just by having your say, you can also enter our prize draw to win £100 in Love 2 Shop vouchers.

1. Are you aged under 25?

☐ Yes

☐ No - if no, please head over to our main survey which can be filled in here <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/letstalkboston>

2. What would make Boston a place where you want to live, work, or study in 2035? *This could be things like more youth activities, job opportunities, or creative spaces.*

3. What activities or spaces would make you want to spend more time in Boston's town centre? *This could be things like youth clubs, music events, or study spaces.*

4. What support do you need to achieve your goals in Boston? *This could be things like careers advice, skills training, or mental health support.*



5. How can we make Boston's green spaces and community events more appealing so that young people like you want to use them? *This could be things like sports facilities, festivals, or digital engagement.*

6. Would you like to enter our prize draw to win £100 in shopping vouchers?

☐ Yes

☐ No

7. **If you are 13 and over:** please provide your email address to enter the prize draw. By submitting this form, you confirm that you are aged 13 or over and consent to the use of your email address solely for administering the prize draw, in accordance with our [Consultation Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms and Conditions](#). You may withdraw your consent at any time by contacting [michelle@engaging-people.co.uk](mailto:michelle@engaging-people.co.uk)

Name

Email Address

Thanks so much! If you want to find out more about what's happening and the money coming in to our town have a look [here](#)

8. **For respondents aged under 13**, this part **must** be completed by a parent or guardian.

Parent or guardian - please provide your name and email address for your child to be entered into the prize draw in accordance with our [Consultation Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms and Conditions](#).

Before doing so, we need to know that you are giving your consent to allow your child/children to enter the prize draw so by adding your name and address below you are confirming that. The [Terms and Conditions](#) can be found here:

By providing your name and email address, you confirm that:

You are the parent or legal guardian of the child.

You give consent for their entry into the prize draw.

You understand that your child's/children's personal data will be processed in accordance with our Privacy Notice and Terms and Conditions of this survey.

Name

Email Address

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