



District Councils' Network Annual Conference 2020

Championing our towns, cities and communities

Thursday 6 – Friday 7 February 2020
Chesford Grange Hotel, Warwick

W3 Your High Streets: retail is detail

- **John Parmiter**, Director, Future High Streets
- **Daisy Daventry**, Town Centre and High Streets Policy Team Lead, MHCLG
- Chaired by **Cllr Jason Zadrozny**, DCN Vice Chair and Leader, Ashfield District Council

YOUR HIGH STREET

John Parmiter FRICS FRSA MRTPI
Director: **Future High Streets**

7 February 2020

www.futurehighstreets.com

Three questions

- Why?
- What
- How?



Why?

- **External influences:**

- Internet shopping
- Consumer behaviour
- Polarisation
- Portfolio rationalisation

- **Internal conditions**

- Experience
- Convenience
- Occupier line-up
- Access & parking

Town Centres are not adapting well to change

What?

- Retail is less and less significant

- Experience

or

- Convenience

(or both?)

- Town centres are more about:

- Living

- Leisure

- Learning

- Local services

How?

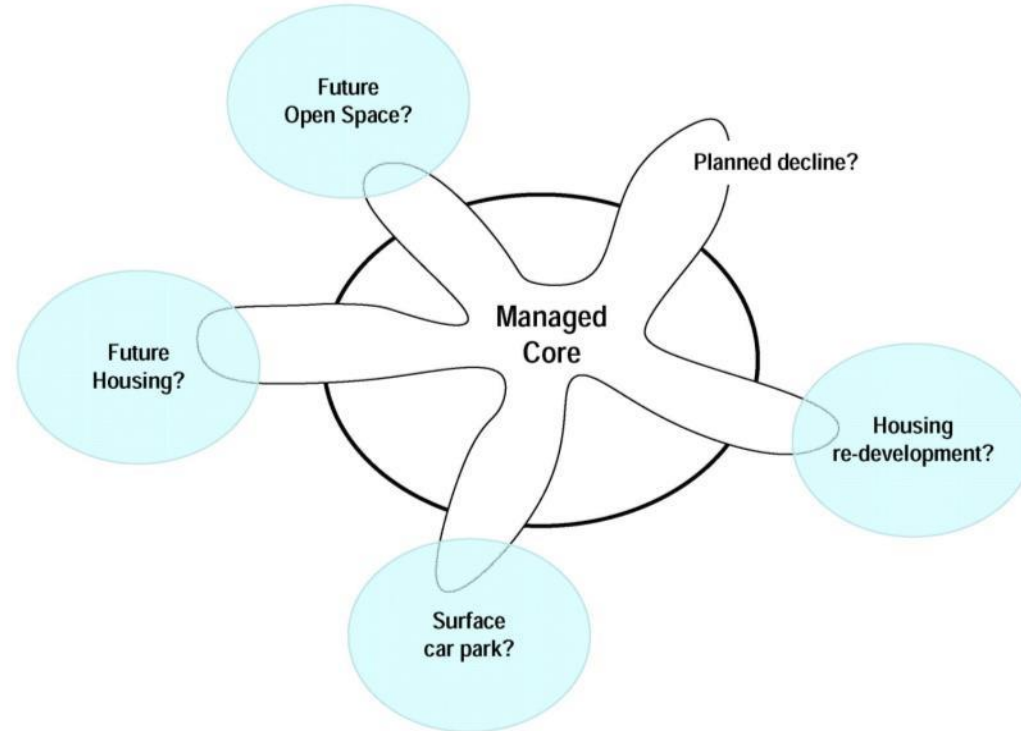
1. Get involved in asset management (+ FM):

- Control a critical mass (acquire freeholds)
- Curate the line up
- Adapt the stock
- Market the destination
- Respond to change

2. Get organised:

- One plan
- One board
- One team
- One set of investable propositions

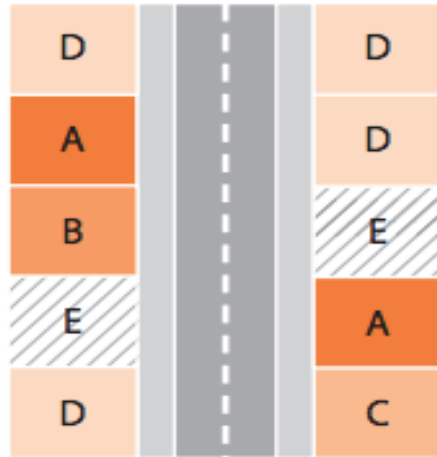
How 1: Restructuring the High Street



How 2: Adapting + curating the core

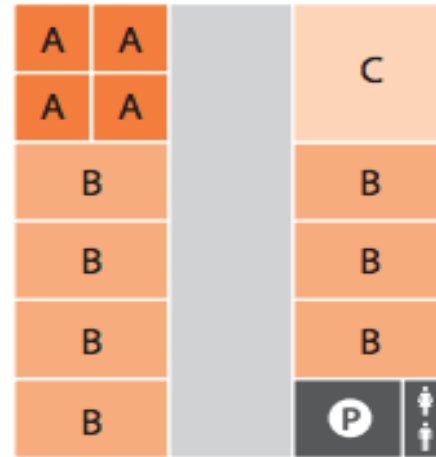
Figure 2: Struggling high street vs successful shopping centre or high street

Struggling high street



- A Fried chicken shop
- B Charity shop
- C Bookmaker
- D Other shop
- E Vacant

Successful shopping centre or high street



- A Restaurant quarter
- B Other shop
- C Department store
- Facilities



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

DCN Conference 2020
Transforming our towns, cities and
communities
Daisy Daventry, Cities & Local Growth Unit

Regeneration policy response

The challenge

- Changing consumer behaviour presents a significant challenge for retailers in our town centres, which are significant occupiers of commercial buildings.
- This is exacerbated by regional imbalances in our economy, leaving many towns in the Midlands and North of England with substantial blight.
- Town centres are a crucial part of local economies, providing spaces for retail and other businesses.



Change will only be possible if thriving high streets are underpinned by **strong leadership at the local level** – and given support from central government.

In order to respond to changing circumstances and build thriving high streets and town centres, places need:

- **Investment** – we have created the £1bn Future High Streets Fund, providing capacity funding to 101 places and the opportunity for up to £25m capital investment.
- **Information** – we have established High Streets Task Force, providing local leaders with access to training, on the ground experts and data.
- **Innovation** – we have created new approaches to bringing empty properties back into use through our Open Doors project and plans for a register of empty commercial properties.
- **Inspiration** – we highlight best practice across the country through the Great British High Streets Awards and the new Town of the Year Competition.

Investment: Town Deals and Future High Street Fund

In July 2019, the Prime Minister set out this Government's plan to unite and level up cities, towns, coastal and rural areas across our country, including a **£3.6 billion Towns Fund**, including **£1 billion Future High Street Fund**.

Town Deals:

- We have announced **100 places** with which we will work to develop **Town Deals** to invest **up to £25 million in each place**. 45 places announced are in the **Northern Powerhouse** and 30 in the **Midlands Engine**.
- A prospectus has been published, with a focus on connectivity (transport & digital); land acquisition and preparation and use of planning tools; and skills and enterprise infrastructure.

Future High Street Fund:

- The Future High Street Fund will support local areas in England to invest in **infrastructure**, increase **access** to high streets and support **redevelopment** and **densification** around high streets. The Fund aims to renew and reshape town centres and high streets in a way that **improves experience, drives growth and ensures future sustainability**.
- **100 places** were shortlisted in round 1 of the competition. These have received revenue funding to work up project proposals.
- There will be further competitions for the Future High Street Fund and Town Deals.



Information: High Streets Task Force

Local leadership capability and capacity were highlighted as an issue by Sir John Timpson's Expert Panel, Bill Grimsey's review, the Future High Streets Forum and in evidence to the HCLG Select Committee.

What will it do?

- The Task Force will strengthen local leadership and be a **'go to hub'** to enable local places to produce plans to adapt their high streets and town centres.
- It will do this by providing local places with:
 - Access to relevant experts from across the Task Force consortium.
 - Training online and face to face
 - Access to localised data and a repository of best practice and guidance.

What happens next?

- The Task Force is hosted by a consortium led by the **Institute of Place Management**. It is piloting **on the ground interventions, individual products and services** in 20 places in early 2020, before rolling out **expert training and data offer** across the country later in the year. The places benefitting from being part of this pilot will be a mixture of local authorities, Business Improvement Districts and community groups.
- Places can find out more and register to be kept up to date at <https://highstreetstaskforce.org.uk/>

Innovation: Use of empty properties

Open Doors pilot

- This pilot has matched landlords of five empty commercial properties across England with community groups looking for space to carry out their activities. It supports groups who may need premises for several hours a day, but are unable to take on a full lease and may struggle to pay rents on town centre premises.

Register of Empty Commercial Properties

- We are also considering a register of empty commercial properties to increase the transparency of ownership on high street and recently surveyed stakeholders' views.
- Government has also committed to explore options to review the **Landlord & Tenants Act 1954**.

Built Environment Sector Deal:

- Sector Deals are partnerships between the government and industry on sector-specific issues and can create significant opportunities to boost productivity, employment, innovation and skills. We've been working with BPF and HBF on a built environment Sector Deal because of the importance of the sector to the country's economy. Following a process of early engagement, we have now **entered into formal negotiations on a built environment sector deal**.



Inspiration: Great British High Street Awards

- In May 2019, MHCLG relaunched the Great British High Streets Awards, in partnership with Visa and other partners.
- The Awards celebrate the achievements of local areas in creating vibrant and dynamic high streets that are loved by their community.
- Two categories: Champion and Rising Star
- On the 23 January we celebrated the winners of the Great British High Street Awards 2019 at an awards ceremony in Edinburgh.
- The Minister of State for the Northern Powerhouse and Local Growth crowned **Treorchy** High Street of the Year and **The Square, Kelso** as 2019's Rising Star.



Thank you.

Questions and Discussion.

1. What's the balance of responsibility between central and local Government in supporting regeneration in town centres?
2. How can we build better partnerships between the public and private sectors?
3. How can we encourage sharing of lessons learned from ideas that didn't work out, as well as the sharing of best practice?

Refreshments, networking and exhibition



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