



# impact SEAFORD

ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN





# The purpose of Impact Seaford

is to provide a framework for joint working to develop and implement projects that will deliver the Seaford Vision.

## The Seaford Vision

**The vision is that by 2030 Seaford will have:**

- ☀ Made greater use of its coastal location through a regenerated seafront that is easily accessed from the town centre and key transport hubs
- ☀ Utilised the seafront to provide a crucial amenity that supports and encourages healthy lifestyles
- ☀ The retail provision on offer in the town will have been improved and used more by local people
- ☀ Advantage will have been taken of the opportunities presented as a gateway to the National Park, including:
  - ☀ improved provision of tourist facilities and accommodation that have widened the town's economic base
  - ☀ sustainable development that maintains the relative tranquillity of the town
- ☀ Enhanced its heritage and marine assets which are valued by residents and visitors alike.



# Information and Evidence Base

## Coastal Community Team

Although Impact Seaford was formed in 2013, the Government awarded Coastal Community Team status in September 2015. A Coastal Community Team is a local partnership consisting of the local authority (Lewes District Council) and a range of people and business interests from the community that have an understanding of the issues facing that area and can develop an effective forward strategy for a place.

## Accountable Body

Lewes District Council is the Accountable Body for Impact Seaford and its status as a Government-approved Coastal Community Team.

Impact Seaford is administered by Lewes District Council's Regeneration & Investment team and can be contacted via email at: [impactseaford@lewes.gov.uk](mailto:impactseaford@lewes.gov.uk).

## The Delivery Board

Impact Seaford is governed by a Delivery Board comprised of local stakeholders and is chaired by an elected representative on behalf of Seaford Town Council.

## The Board (as at April 2016):

- ☀ Councillor Sam Adeniji  
*Seaford Town Council and  
Chair of Impact Seaford*
- ☀ Councillor Paul Franklin  
*Lewes District Council*
- ☀ Councillor Rupert Simmons  
*East Sussex County Council*
- ☀ James Corrigan  
*Town Clerk,  
Seaford Town Council*
- ☀ Ben King  
*Projects & Facilities Manager,  
Seaford Town Council*
- ☀ Max Woodford  
*Head of Regeneration &  
Investment,  
Lewes District Council*
- ☀ Vera Gajic  
*Economic Projects Manager, East  
Sussex County Council*
- ☀ Keith Blackburn  
*Seaford Community Partnership*
- ☀ Gerri Ori  
*Seaford Chamber of Commerce*
- ☀ Neal Richardson  
*Seaford Chamber of Commerce*
- ☀ Sylvia Dunn  
*Smarter Seaford / Seaford First*





## **Stakeholders**

Together, the Impact Seaford Board consults with local residents and businesses to make the Seaford Vision a reality. Board Members feed back progress on key project priorities to a wide range of stakeholders including:

*Seaford Town Council*

*Seaford Chamber of Commerce*

*Environment Agency*

*Lewes District Council*

*Seaford Community Partnership*

*Local Residents*

*East Sussex County Council*

*Seaford Youth Forum*

*Local Schools*

*SDNPA*

*Seaford Seniors Forum*

*Local Retailers and businesses*

## **Background**

There has been a settlement on the site of present day Seaford since ancient times, and the present town itself has a substantial and varied history. In medieval times, Seaford had a thriving harbour and became a limb of the prestigious Cinque Ports system during the thirteenth century. Towards the end of the sixteenth century, however, a major storm diverted the course of the River Ouse to Newhaven and dramatically altered Seaford's topography. This led to the silting up of the river and left the town without a viable harbour. It took until the mid-19th century, when the new London-Brighton-South Coast railway began bringing visitors to the town, for Seaford to enjoy a sustained period of prosperity.

Today, Seaford is a vibrant seaside town with a small but well-functioning and locally serving town centre, as well as a strong heritage with 39 listed buildings in the town centre alone.

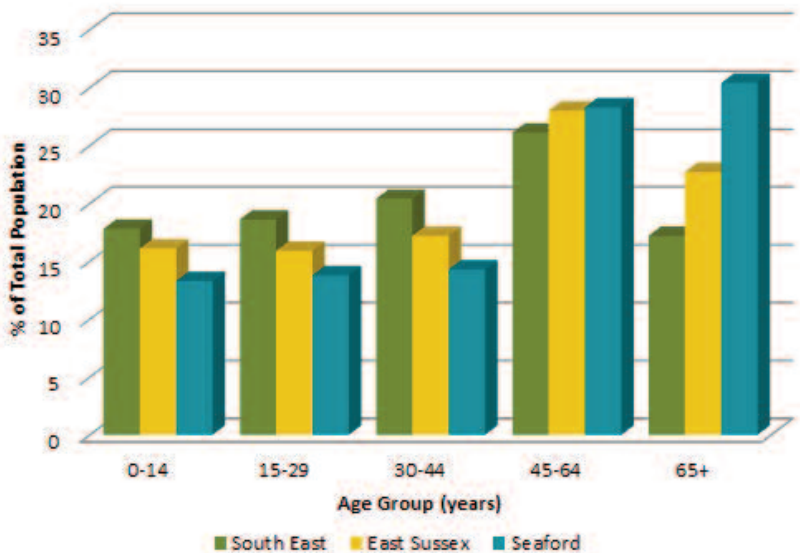


# Information and Evidence Base

## Community Context

Seaford has an estimated population of more than 24,000 and is the largest town by population across the Lewes District. Seaford is made up of five wards: North, South, East, West and Central. Despite a growing attraction for families, Seaford has an ageing population with almost one-third being of retirement age. This poses challenges (such as demands on healthcare and supporting infrastructure) as well as opportunities (the spending power of the 'grey pound'). This ageing demographic structure does mean that Seaford has proportionally fewer residents of working age.

Figure 1:  
Seaford  
Demographics  
Comparison



Alongside this ageing demographic profile, Seaford faces a considerable challenge due to a restricted catchment area. This severely limits development opportunities with, on one side, the English Channel and on the other, the South Downs National Park. This can manifest itself in community tensions, particularly where development proposals may not be ideally located.

## Economic Context

Whilst Seaford is the largest town in Lewes District, it has a comparatively small working age population. Just over half (52.8%) of the resident population is aged 16-64, which equates unfavourably with the wider District (57.9%), the South East region (62.1%) and England (63.3%). Despite this, Lewes District as a whole has a net outflow of commuters for work purposes, which highlights a lack of suitable employment prospects for the District – including its main towns, such as Seaford.

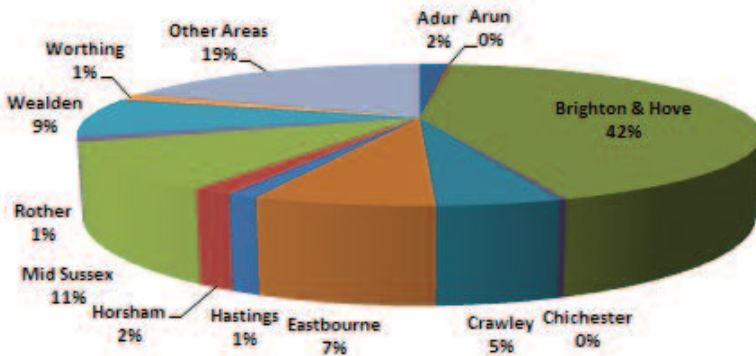


Figure 2:  
Commuting  
Outflows from  
Lewes District

Alongside the challenge of a relatively small working population base, household income in Seaford is below regional and national averages. Almost 30% of Seaford households are classed as being in poverty (ie. below 60% of national median household income), compared to 23% in the South East. This issue is highlighted further at ward level emphasising that Seaford, contrary to general perspectives, has pockets of considerable income deprivation. Indeed in Seaford Central Ward, household incomes are more than one-quarter lower than regionally. This is a challenge that all partners must seek to address over the next fifteen years.

Ward	Median Income £	Lewes District Median Income £	South East Region Median Income £
Seaford South	30,110		
Seaford West	30,045		
Seaford East	27,333	£30,482	£34,186
Seaford North	25,391		
Seaford Central	25,221		

Source: CACI

Aside from the town centre, the Seaford economy is focused on the Cradle Hill Industrial Estate. Cradle Hill covers 3.9ha and is the largest employment site in the town, located on the north-eastern edge of its urban area. Cradle Hill offers a range of relatively low-cost small and medium-sized light industrial units, with reasonably good strategic road access and regular bus services. Discussions with some firms located in Seaford have suggested that there is a shortage of good quality industrial space, particularly for slightly larger units that would allow local firms to expand or upgrade their premises as well as inadequate provision for start-ups. There was also a view that Seaford needs more and better industrial provision (aside from Cradle Hill and the small Blatchington Road Estate) for a town of its size, while some small office premises would be desirable.

*Figure 4:  
Highest  
proportion  
of jobs in  
Seaford*

The Seaford economy has a reasonable degree of diversification, with the highest proportions of jobs in areas such as Health and Social Work, which has a significantly higher proportion of employment locally than across the South East.

Sector of employment	Proportion of all employment %		
	Seaford	East Sussex	South East Region
Wholesale & Retail Trade; Repair of Motors	15.4	16.0	15.6
Health & Social Work	15.2	15.6	15.6
Education	11.9	10.3	10.1
Construction	9.1	9.4	8.0
Manufacturing	6.7	6.1	7.2

Source: Census 2011

Seaford has a small visitor economy, focused primarily on day-trippers. There remain challenges, however, in encouraging higher visitor spend in the town centre in particular. Nonetheless Seaford does have significant growth potential, which this Economic Action Plan seeks to unlock to deliver the Seaford Vision.





# Analysis



## ☀️ STRENGTHS

Attractive physical environment  
Range of recreational facilities  
Good rail and bus services  
Range of independent retailers



## ☀️ WEAKNESSES

Lack of visitor accommodation  
Ageing demographics  
Restricted catchment area  
Lack of development sites  
Pockets of low earnings and deprivation  
Few major employers / chain retailers  
Weak linkages between gateways,  
the town centre and seafront  
Poorly maintained seafront with lack  
of facilities

## ☀️ OPPORTUNITIES

Seafront masterplanning  
New employment-generating  
development  
Enhanced directional signage  
for visitors  
Major art and street enhancing  
scheme(s) for town  
Development of visitor economy  
including better links with the South  
Downs National Park, as well as USP  
of Coastguard Cottages/Seven  
Sisters as a world famous view

## ☀️ THREATS

Resistance to change  
Environmental risks  
(eg. flooding and coastal erosion)  
Continued tensions between  
residential and employment-generating  
development, as well as age-restricted  
residential development



# Delivering the Vision



## Making it Happen

This Economic Action Plan seeks to pull together and translate joint working into action so as to place a focus on delivery at a local level. This will ensure delivery closely matches local needs and aspirations and involves local residents and businesses, building on Impact Seaford's achievements since 2013.

## Achievements to Date

Much of the initial work on Impact Seaford has been in establishing the partnership and agreeing the way forward. Nonetheless, specific smaller-scale projects have already come to fruition.

This includes the launch of the '*I Love Seaford*' mobile phone app developed by Seaford Chamber of Commerce and supported by funding from Seaford Town Council as well as the Portas Pilot scheme secured by Lewes District Council in 2013.

Impact Seaford has been recognised for its innovative practice with designation as a Coastal Community Team, as well as a commendation for '*Partnership and Strategic Working – South Zone*' in 2013 from the Towns Alive National Awards.

## Building a Brighter Future

Consideration has also been given to a number of strategic external factors, including globalisation, changing industrial structures, technological advances, climate change and

demographic trends. To connect these strategic drivers of change with delivery at a local level, Lewes District Council's Regeneration Strategy has identified five priorities to drive the regeneration process and, as a result, improve quality of life for all through encouraging and supporting independent living:

- ☀ Attracting Investment
- ☀ Supporting Business
- ☀ Inspiring Learning
- ☀ Welcoming Visitors
- ☀ Strengthening Partnerships

Alongside these local priorities, there is an East Sussex Vision that "by 2021, East Sussex will have a stronger, more resilient, inclusive and balanced economy, built on an expanded private sector base in a county recognised for its distinctive character and excellent connectivity." This Vision will be delivered through a number of additional priorities:

- ☀ A More Diverse Economy
- ☀ Raise Aspirations and Skills Base
- ☀ Improve Connectivity
- ☀ Upgrade the Provision of Commercial Premises
- ☀ Improving Housing Choice and Availability
- ☀ Moving Towards a Low Carbon Economy
- ☀ Build the East Sussex Visitor Profile

# The Projects

With these wider strategic priorities in mind as well as the Seaford Vision, Impact Seaford is working towards three key aims:

- Creation of new employment opportunities.
- Encouraging residents and visitors to patronise local businesses.
- Enhancement of the seafront as a key Seaford asset.

These core priorities form the basis for developing and delivering projects within this Economic Action Plan across the short, medium and longer term.

All projects included in this Economic Action Plan have been assessed using **SMART** criteria to ensure that they are **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-limited**.

## The Short Term

The projects included for the short-term are those that the Impact Seaford board feel can realistically be delivered by April 2017, and do not detract from longer-term ambitions or the Seaford Vision.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Lead Partner</b>	<b>Project Details</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
<b>1 Signage Initiative</b>	<i>Seaford Town Council</i>	New brown visitor signage on key access routes	<i>Dec 2016</i>
<b>2 Martello Tower</b>	<i>Seaford Town Council</i>	Improved facilities and new entertainments area	<i>Dec 2016</i>
<b>3 Splash Point</b>	<i>Seaford Community Partnership</i>	Creation of new visitor access and seating area	<i>April 2017</i>
<b>4 Pavement Signage</b>	<i>Seaford Chamber of Commerce</i>	Directional signage on pavements to link town centre and seafront	<i>April 2017</i>
<b>5 Tourism Development</b>	<i>Seaford Town Council</i>	Marketing awareness to specific visitor segments and linking to Area Promotions	<i>Ongoing</i>
<b>6 Area Promotions</b>	<i>Lewes District Council</i>	Work ongoing with Locate East Sussex	<i>Ongoing</i>



# Short-Term Projects *(to April 2017):*

**1 Signage Initiative** – the introduction of new brown visitor signage will build upon Seaford's existing appeal and bring a greater number of visitors into the town to boost the local economy. A total of £12,000 has been earmarked for this project, representing funds committed by both Seaford Town Council and Lewes District Council.



Total Funding Required (£)	Source of Funding	Amount of Funding Secured £	% of Funding Secured
<b>12,000</b>	Seaford Town Council	<b>6,000</b>	<b>100%</b>
	Lewes District Council	<b>6,000</b>	

**2 Martello Tower** – the development of a new entertainments space / public performance area will be progressed in tandem with enhanced public facilities for visitors to the Martello Tower and surrounding seafront. A total of £15,000 has been earmarked for this project, funded through sponsorship packages for new memorial benches.



Total Funding Required (£)	Source of Funding	Amount of Funding Secured £	% of Funding Secured
<b>15,000</b>	Seaford Town Council	Not specified	<b>To be determined</b>

**3 Splash Point** – developing the 'Pier' as an amenity as well as a sea defence, including new seating, visitor access and interpretation points. This project is led by the Seaford Community Partnership on behalf of Impact Seaford.



Total Funding Required (£)	Source of Funding	Amount of Funding Secured £	% of Funding Secured
<b>£90,000</b>	Seaford Community Partnership	<b>£7,000</b>	<b>8%</b>



# Short-Term Projects *(to April 2017):*

**4 Pavement Signage** – the introduction of cost-efficient directional signage to guide visitors between the seafront and town centre, being led by the Seaford Chamber of Commerce with support from the Seaford Community Partnership.

Total Funding Required (£)	Source of Funding	Amount of Funding Secured £	% of Funding Secured
<b>To be determined</b>	To be determined	<b>Not specified</b>	<b>To be determined</b>



**5 Tourism Development** – deliver enhanced marketing and promotion of Seaford as a visitor destination, including among specific market segments. The initial focus is on promotional materials and a new website at an estimated cost of £6,000.

Total Funding Required (£)	Source of Funding	Amount of Funding Secured £	% of Funding Secured
<b>6,000</b>	Seaford Town Council	<b>6,000</b>	<b>100%</b>



**6 Area Promotions** – all three tiers of local authority are committed to working with partners and external bodies, such as Locate East Sussex, to promote Seaford as a place to live, work and do business.

Total Funding Required (£)	Source of Funding	Amount of Funding Secured £	% of Funding Secured
<b>12,000</b>	Lewes District Council	<b>5,000</b>	<b>100%</b>
	East Sussex County Council	<b>10,000</b>	



# The Medium Term

The projects included for the medium-term are those that will primarily be delivered between 2017 and 2019, although this does not preclude commencement on larger projects in the short-term.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Lead Partner</b>	<b>Project Details</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
<b>1 Salts Development</b>	<i>Seaford Town Council</i>	Continue redevelopment of the Salts including exploring potential for cafe and leisure facilities	<i>Dec 2017</i>
<b>2 Seafront Development Masterplan</b>	<i>Seaford Town Council</i>	Strategy for sustainable development of seafront	<i>Dec 2017</i>
<b>3 Beach Huts</b>	<i>Seaford Town Council</i>	Link with Seafront Plan	<i>Dec 2017</i>
<b>4 Seaford Innovation &amp; Enterprise Hub</b>	<i>Lewes District Council</i>	Development of small business/incubator	<i>Dec 2018</i>
<b>5 Seaford Head Cabins</b>	<i>Seaford Town Council</i>	Development of new visitor accomodation	<i>Dec 2018</i>
<b>6 Seaford Enhancement</b>	<i>Seaford Community Partnership</i>	Ensuring the beach is recognised as an amenity as well as a sea defence	<i>Ongoing</i>

Each of these medium-term projects will have specific, achievable and measurable actions attributed to them. These are shown in more detail in an Appendix to this Action Plan.



# The Long Term

Longer-term projects are those which are aspirational and contribute to the development of the Seaford Vision to 2030. They are likely to come forward as and when funding is available and secured.

Project	Lead Partner	Project Details	Due Date
<b>1 Tourist Information Centre Enhancement</b>	<i>Lewes District Council &amp; Seaford Town Council</i>	Improve awareness / visibility of TIC	<i>April 2019</i>
<b>2 Crouch Redevelopment</b>	<i>Seaford Town Council</i>	Variety of works to enhance the existing recreation space	<i>June 2019</i>
<b>3 South Hill Barn</b>	<i>Seaford Town Council</i>	Bringing back into public use	<i>Dec 2019</i>
<b>4 Cradle Hill Industrial Estate</b>	<i>Lewes District Council</i>	Enhancement of key employment site	<i>TBC</i>
<b>5 Public Realm Enhancement</b>	<i>East Sussex County Council</i>	Improvements to accessibility and wider environment	<i>Ongoing</i>

Each of these longer-term ambitions is subject to resources and the timescales are included for guidance purposes only. Nonetheless, all of these will have specific, achievable and measurable actions attributed to them. These are shown in more detail in an Appendix to this Action Plan.





## Costs and Available Resources

Impact Seaford recognises that resources are limited and that partners must use best endeavours to manage available funding to deliver on our ambitious vision.

Seaford Town Council has already, with the assistance of Impact Seaford, utilised some S106 monies for the redevelopment of facilities at the Salts Recreation Ground. Another excellent example is Lewes District Council and Seaford Town Council pooling staff resources to put together the successful Coastal Community Team and Towns Alive bids.

## Funding

A fundamental principle of Impact Seaford is ensuring that the community is at the heart of the decision-making process, so that projects taken forward reflect the needs, demands and aspirations of local residents and businesses. This has been reflected in some of Impact Seaford's achievements to date.

To deliver on the Seaford Vision, Impact Seaford and its key partners will look to be innovative in accessing appropriate finance. The funding landscape is constantly evolving, with new initiatives and eligibility criteria on a daily basis.

Accordingly, at this stage, Impact Seaford will look to develop medium and longer-term concepts to create 'oven-ready' projects. This will facilitate submissions to central funds (for example, the Coastal Revival Fund and the Coastal Communities Fund).



# Communications

## Joint Working

Impact Seaford is a vehicle for joint working, and is shaped and informed through the work of local and strategic stakeholders and policymakers. The Board seeks to progress realistic and achievable projects in accordance with relevant strategic guidance and through consultations with local residents and businesses. Examples of this 'bottom up' approach include:

- ☀ Seaford Neighbourhood Plan
- ☀ STC Salts Development Plan
- ☀ LDC / SDNPA Joint Core Strategy
- ☀ LDC Regeneration Strategy
- ☀ ESCC Economic Development Strategy
- ☀ ESCC Local Transport Plan
- ☀ ESCC Cultural Strategy
- ☀ South Downs National Park Management Plan



## Consultations

Consultations have been – and will remain – a vital part of the Impact Seaford process. In addition to proposed partners, public consultations will focus on raising awareness and enhancing existing engagement with the local community to ensure that the public is at the heart of the process.

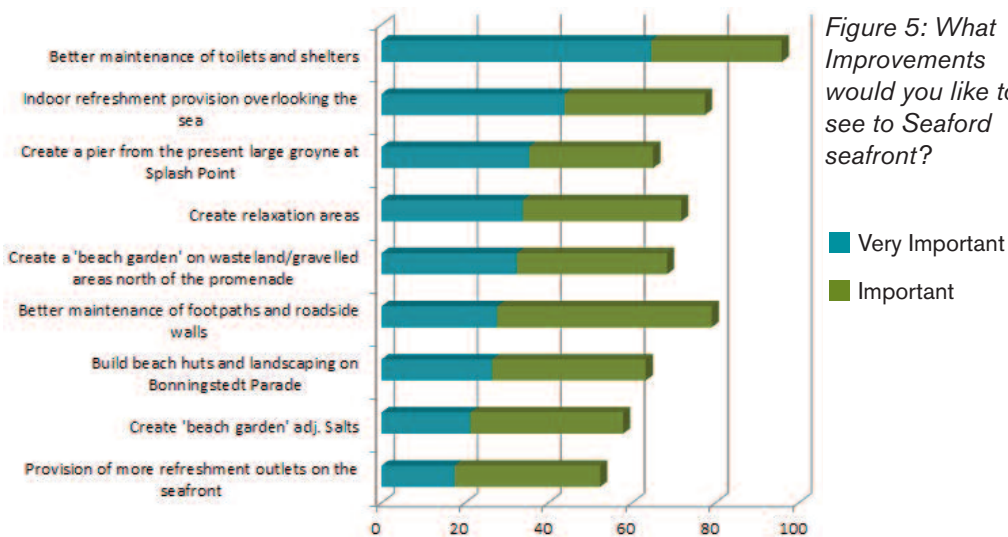
Recent consultations have included those around the re-development of the Salts Recreation Ground, as well as the Neighbourhood Plan – both of which were run by Seaford Town Council. Seaford Community Partnership has also consulted on views on the future enrichment of Seaford's fabulous seafront to enhance the destination and feeling of place.



## Seafront Consultations

The Seaford Community Partnership has undertaken extensive consultations with residents and visitors to identify the public perspective on Seaford's seafront, with more than 300 responses. These consultations identifies a number of opportunities and challenges, but largely confirmed the Community Partnership's own Vision for the seafront. This seeks a smarter and greener seafront and beach with well-designed and maintained facilities which enhance the natural beauty of the Bay and Seaford Head. Indeed, many respondents were keen to retain the seafront's unspoilt nature.

Nonetheless, visitors did rate a number of areas where it was felt that the seafront could be enhanced. As shown, almost all respondents wanted to see better maintenance of toilets and shelters, whilst more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  wanted to see new provision for indoor refreshments.



Source: Seaford Community Partnership

Further consultations will come forward as priority projects progress. The local community will be kept informed through the work of key partners to ensure that Impact Seaford continues to be recognised as an important part of delivering the Seaford Vision.



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Lewes District Council



Seaford Town Council



Impact Seaford can be contacted by email at [impactseaford@lewes.gov.uk](mailto:impactseaford@lewes.gov.uk).

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