

# GRAVESHAM

# 2040

A Thameside borough, of historic towns, idyllic countryside and characterful Kentish towns, of proud identities and super-diverse community with a plan to steward community and place led regeneration for decades to come...

**Gravesham**  
Borough Council

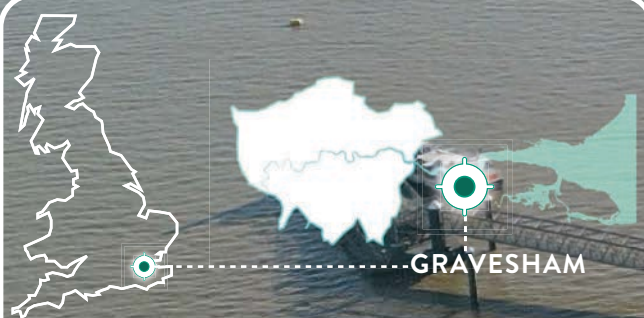


#PROUDTOBEGRAVESHAM



“The sleeping giant has not only woken up – it’s had a double espresso!”

- Regional property champion



Gravesham is a borough of around 106,900 people in The Thames Estuary, North Kent, with Priority 1 socio-economic, health inequalities (38% of Year 6 children are overweight, nearly 1-in-3 adults are physically inactive, 20% of our residents have no qualifications).



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# FOREWORD



**Cllr John Burden**

Leader of the Council

When I came into local government in 1987 it was to improve the lives of our residents and business community. I am proud of what we have achieved and excited about what is to come.

We have a clear plan, a wealth of high-impact projects and a chance to deliver catalytic regeneration, address local inequalities and bring forward holistic and tangible benefits for Gravesham and its community.

Gravesham is a proud place and has enormous potential. Others have described us as a sleeping giant.

Positioned on the Thames in north west Kent, we are ideally placed between London and the Channel Ports and we are well-connected, in every sense of the phrase.

London is a little over 20 minutes away by HS1, with the imminent prospect of rapid river transport offering more scenic links to the capital and supporting Gravesham's growing visitor economy.

Over recent years, we have started to see key investment landing in Gravesham to support key projects and initiatives. Others are now saying the sleeping giant not only has woken up but had a double espresso.

We have worked to put Gravesham on the map and the council is being recognised as punching well above its weight, with shortlisting for the MJ Local Authority of the Year and LGC Council of the Year in 2024.

Despite recent progress, there is much more to do and together with government agencies



and the private sector we are unlocking this regeneration potential now and, in the decades to come. This has to be holistic – not just homes, but jobs and skills, green spaces, revitalised Thameside towns, climate resilience, enhanced the quality of life, place and opportunity in the borough.

Through our Big Conversation initiative, which has engaged thousands of local residents so far, we will continue to listen and work with our community. Through the Big Conversation the community can help shape these future ambitions.

Great things are happening in Gravesham.

Others are now recognising the potential and we are driven to get the best and do the best for the borough, through excellence in service and a clear, compelling plan for the future.

Gravesham 2040 is our prospectus and roadmap, and we are driven to turn potential into a proud future for the borough.



»Image credit: 42 South Films

# INTRODUCTION



**“We desperately need regeneration in Gravesham, but it should be considered and balanced - need vs finance vs ambition.”**

Resident comment

**Gravesham Council is preparing a new Local Plan which will set the borough’s statutory spatial framework for growth and development across the borough.**

At the same time, Gravesham Council’s Corporate Plan sets the council’s overall strategic direction for the borough, with an aim to work together with residents, businesses, and government agencies to address challenging social inequalities and help Gravesham unlock its true potential: enabling our One Borough to become a protected, vibrant, and dynamic place of choice.

Gravesham 2040 bridges these two documents, activating both plans and setting a longer-term expression and roadmap to support the borough’s ambitions. Together these plans aim to optimise quality of life,

quality of place and quality of opportunity - stewarding community and place-led regeneration and leveraging holistic benefits for Gravesham’s residents and businesses.

This plan presents the compelling longer-term vision for the borough, from projects and initiatives happening now and in the pipeline, new homes and regeneration to jobs and skills pathways, inclusive growth for businesses and the visitor economy and a sustainable future in line with the council’s climate strategy commitments.

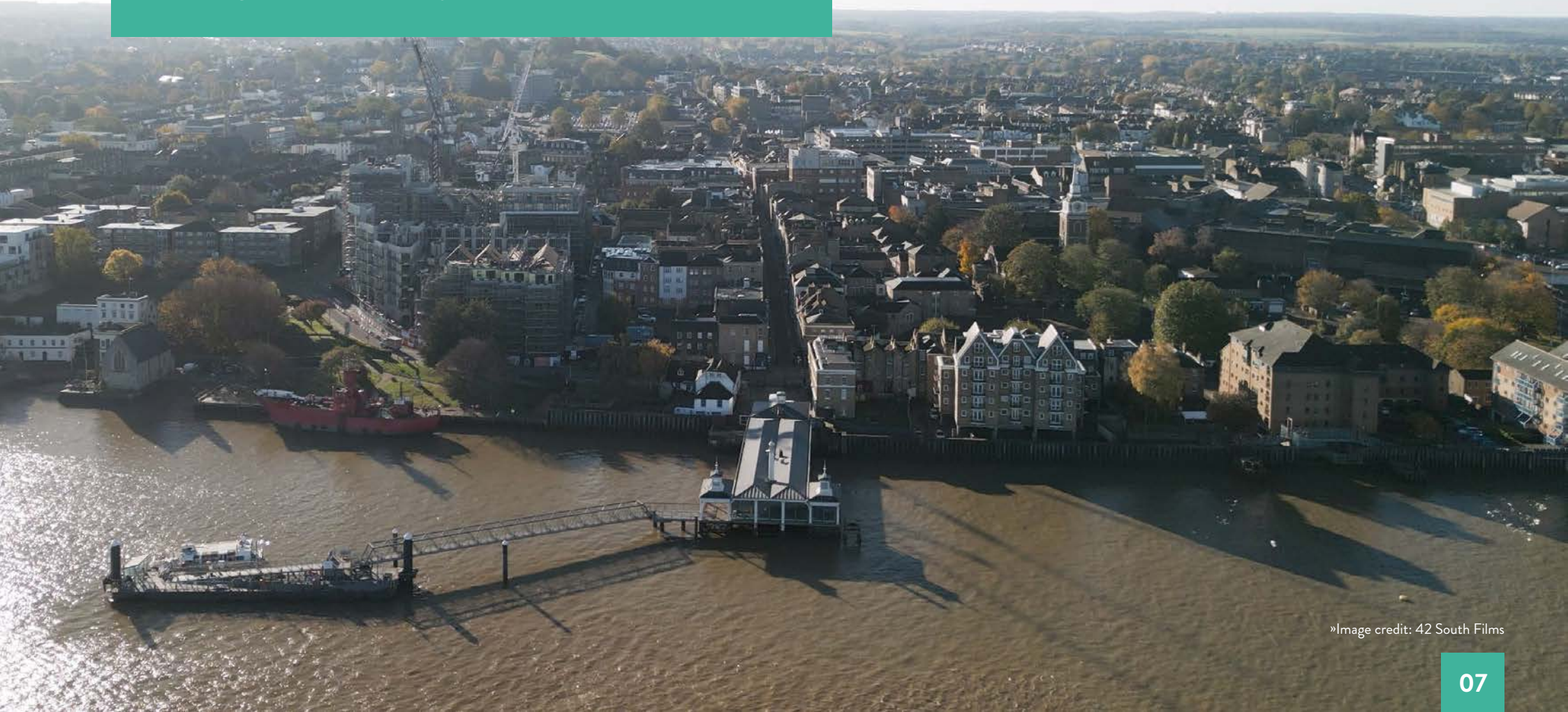
At the heart of this vision is the recognition that Gravesham is special. It is home to an

incredible community of 106,900 people, its history is centuries old, on the banks of the Thames and at the end of the Kentish grove.

Gravesham 2040 starts by outlining what makes us proud to be Gravesham, makes the case for investment in the borough, highlighting the broader realities and opportunities and presents the vision and objectives that will, together, unlock the borough’s potential. Gravesham 2040 concludes with a roadmap to show how through high-impact projects and initiatives, together, we can unlock the Borough’s potential.



**GRAVESHAM 2040** is about being clear and confident in our case for investment, but also in how investment and regeneration will tackle the key issues that matter to our communities and economy. This begins with building a clear vision founded in good evidence and will be achieved by shaping and delivering a strategy for our key projects that realise our vision.



»Image credit: 42 South Films

# MAKING THE CASE GRAVESHAM



“Gravesend has always been proud of its heritage but is now looking shabby in places. Regeneration would bring the town back to life but must be done in a way that preserves views and access to the River Thames and creates a welcoming, accessible environment.”

Resident comment

**By many measures Gravesham is a welcoming, safe and attractive place to work, visit or make a life, but we know that the borough’s benefits and advantages are not enjoyed equally by all, and that it has not secured the levels of investment that it could attract. In terms of public funding, there have been several local growth funding opportunities available to local authorities in England in recent years, yet Gravesham is yet to secure a fair share.**

In recent times, this is starting to shift with significant funding secured and strategic relationships with key government agencies and stakeholders being secured and galvanised.

Making the Case for Gravesham is about being clear and confident in our case for investment, but also in how investment and regeneration will tackle the key issues that matter to our communities and economy. This begins with building a clear vision founded in good evidence and will be achieved by shaping and delivering a strategy for our key projects that realise our vision.

## **Building our evidence base**

A comprehensive evidence base was first developed, which considered Gravesham through a comprehensive range of different ‘lenses’, to establish a fuller picture of the borough, its people and economy. A summary of the key observations from the evidence base is included in this report and a full version is available as a separate document.



## Priority 1 socio-economic and health inequalities...



**17%**

of working-age residents are Universal Credit claimants



**38%**

of year 6 children are overweight and nearly 1 in 3 adults are physically inactive



**2,500**

homes are over-occupied and 900 households are on the housing waiting list



**2,446**

households wake up in relative poverty



**245**

households go to bed every night in temporary accommodation



**9 YEARS**

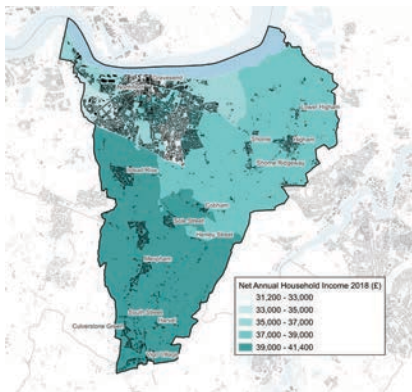
Where you live in the borough can make a 9 year difference in life expectancy

# GRAVESHAM REALITIES...

## Gravesham's Economy

Gravesham's economy has experienced strong growth over the past decade. Average resident and workplace earnings are above regional and national averages, with strong business and employment growth.

However, the local economy faces challenges of low productivity, a high proportion of low pay jobs, low qualifications levels and high unemployment levels. Combined, these factors suggest a lack of suitable employment opportunities locally.



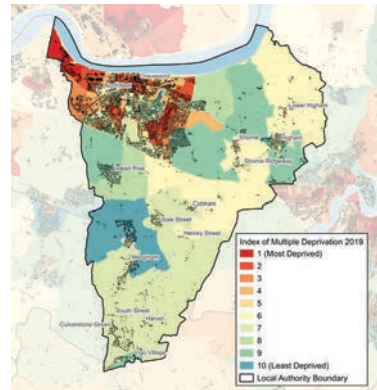
A high proportion of residents are living in relative poverty, with household incomes lowest in Gravesend and Northfleet.

These areas also have the highest rates of residents claiming unemployment-related financial support.

## Gravesham's Communities

Gravesham is an unequal borough in terms of health, with a clear north-south divide in child health, adult health, life expectancy and personal well-being.

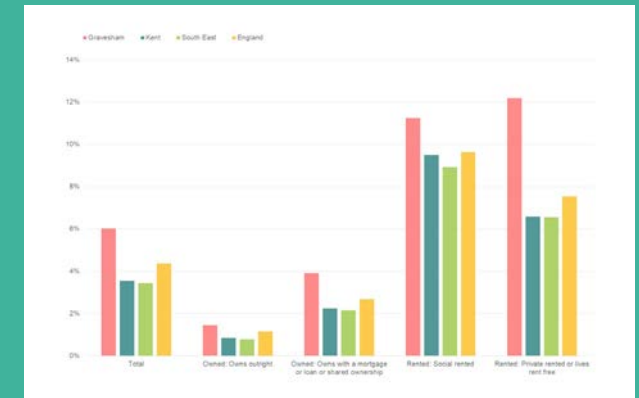
Deprivation is concentrated in the northern parts of Gravesham in Gravesend and



Northfleet, with some pockets of deprivation across southern and more rural communities.

Gravesham is home to an attractive natural environment, including the Kent Downs AONB and has strong transport connectivity to central London and beyond.

Gravesham has experienced an inflow of new residents from Outer London and Dartford, whilst some existing residents have moved out eastwards. This may be due to pricing increases that push some residents out of the borough.



## Gravesham's Places

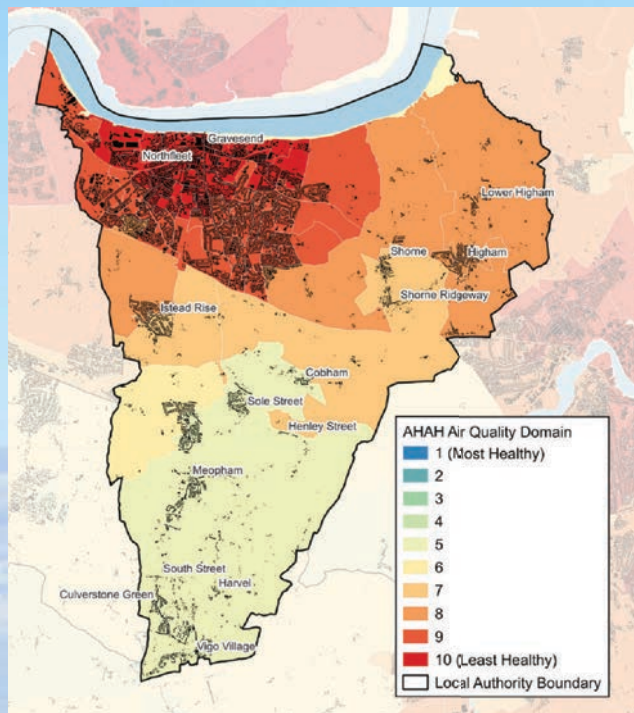
Town centre vitality in Gravesend could be strengthened, with low rents, the loss of anchor retailers and declining footfall in recent years.

There are also issues in the town centre related to perceptions of safety, with high incidences of crime in central locations. Survey results suggest that residents prefer to stay local or travel outside of the borough for leisure – particularly to Bluewater.

Communities in the north of the borough are more exposed to poor air quality due to Northfleet industrial area and the A2 trunk road.

There are lots of heritage and cultural assets across the borough, with the council strategies seeking to strengthen this offer.





## Gravesham's Housing

Housing affordability is a challenge in terms of both purchase and rental. This has worsened in recent years relative to both resident and workplace earnings. The number of households on Gravesham's housing wait-list has increased in recent years.

Housing over-occupancy is a challenge across the borough, with it being particularly acute in social rented and private rented accommodation in Gravesham.

Historical housing delivery indicates that the borough is not keeping up with demand. This is partly due to reliance on a few key sites to deliver large numbers of homes on brownfield land in Gravesend and Northfleet, combined with increased development costs due to wider economic factors.

## Cost of Living

Gravesham has a high proportion of low-income households in relative poverty. All household types are likely to be facing additional financial stress due to the impacts of the cost of living crisis on childcare, housing costs and energy costs; however these pressures will hit communities with the least economic resilience the hardest and will reinforce existing inequalities.



**"Regeneration is vital, Gravesend undersells itself and can be so so much more and I hope your programme really is a success for the community."**

Resident comment



# GRAVESHAM OPPORTUNITIES...

**The council is developing a holistic, place-led approach to inclusive growth, that responds to a range of short, mid and long-term opportunities...**

## **Gravesham business:**

Invest in Gravesham: From growing and supporting local businesses to attracting inward investment and opportunity, the council is developing an economic development vision - Gravesham shall be a Borough in which business and industry including traditional, current and emerging trades and industries are welcomed, supported and encouraged. Our residents shall have the opportunities to train and upskill to gain the careers they need and together we can unlock Gravesham's potential.

## **Gravesham creativity and culture:**

Being the Cultural Hub of North Kent! Gravesham has excellent rail, road and river transport links. There are decades of catalytic regeneration planned along Gravesham Riverside, with brownfield projects in delivery, development and the pipeline. These projects can deliver, thousands of homes, hundreds of jobs and millions in GVA uplift.

## **Supporting health and well-being advancements:**

The borough is currently the most in-active in Kent. The council is working with the community, stakeholders and government agencies to change that with a clear commitment to advance healthy living: by advancing local health outcomes through modern, affordable, and accessible leisure provision, underpinned by a targeted programme of activities and a strong local sporting infrastructure.

## **Gravesham hub and spoke network:**

A hub and spoke network of high impact, genuinely shovel ready projects that can deliver wider health and well-being benefits for local people and address Gravesham's Priority 1 socio-economic and health inequalities. The key project is Cascades health, well-being and skills hub; delivering enhanced energy and sustainability performance, regional standard wet and dry leisure facilities, well-being facilities and community spaces. The hub and spoke model links to projects across Gravesend and Northfleet, targeting areas most in need and projects supporting skills and employment pathways.

## **Gravesham growing visitor economy:**

Gravesham's growing visitor economy has grown 50% since 2020 and with its excellent attractions and connectivity and the prospect of rapid river transport on the horizon via Uber Boats by Thames Clippers, Gravesham is one of Kent's fastest growing destinations.

From the historic town of Gravesend on the river Thames to quintessentially Kentish villages, set in some of the county's most beautiful countryside - this is a borough to experience with plenty to offer. Gravesend with its famous piers and cobbled High Street full of independent shops, artisan makers and atmospheric tea and tap rooms is the perfect place to start. This is also a town of myth and legend with stories to tell at every corner - including the last resting place of Pocahontas and the home of famous author Charles Dickens. Gravesham is a prime location for investment with excellent river, road and rail connectivity.

The council is working with government agencies and the private sector to unlock decades of catalytic, place-led regeneration along Gravesham Riverside, with brownfield projects in delivery, development and the pipeline that can deliver thousands of new homes, hundreds of jobs and millions in GVA uplift to the borough.

**c.£25m**  
in GVA uplift linked to  
Gravesham Riverside  
schemes

**c.£22m**  
external funding  
secured in 2023 to  
support plans

**c.3,000**  
number of jobs  
to be created on  
Gravesham Riverside

**c.7,800**  
number of homes proposed on  
Gravesham Riverside

**c.232,000sqm**  
new commercial space  
linked to Gravesham  
Riverside schemes


**50%**  
Growth in visitor  
economy since 2020




# GRAVESHAM RIVERSIDE

Gravesham has excellent rail, road and river transport links. There are decades of catalytic regeneration planned along Gravesham Riverside, with brownfield projects in delivery, development and the pipeline. These projects can deliver, thousands of homes, hundreds of jobs and millions in GVA uplift.

CANAL BASIN  
WIDER REGENERATION  
POTENTIAL?




CASCADES HEALTH, WELL-  
BEING AND SKILLS HUB



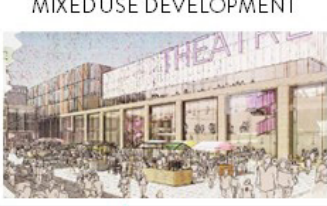
THE CHARTER  
ROSHVILLE & REEF GROUP

242 RIVERSIDE HOMES




ST GEORGE'S SQUARE  
GBC

PUBLIC SECTOR HUB  
MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT




CLIFTON SLIPWAYS  
QUINN ESTATES

227 RIVERSIDE HOMES  
2600SQM PUBLIC SPACE




NORTHFLEET HARBOURSIDE  
EBBSFLEET UNITED

3500 RIVERSIDE HOMES  
8,000 SEAT STADIUM  
3,000 NEW JOBS



ALBION WATERSIDE  
JOSEPH HOMES

1500 RIVERSIDE HOMES  
4500SQM COMMERCIAL



MILTON PLACE  
GCIP  
C. 80 HOMES

LORD STEET  
156 HOMES  
PARROCK STREET  
C. 180 HOMES  
CHURCHILL  
75 HOMES

CIVIC  
CENTRE  
C. 230  
HOMES

GRAVESEND STATION  
HS1 line to London and  
Kent Coast

Ebbsfleet Int. – 5 mins  
Stratford Int. – 15 mins  
St Pancras – 22 mins

M BLOCK  
115 HOMES



GRAVESEND FERRY  
TERMINAL

Tilbury – 5 mins  
Uber Boats by Thames Clippers  
(from 25/26)  
Barking – 20 mins  
Greenwich – 40 mins  
London Bridge – 59 mins

- < Proposed route of the Lower Thames Crossing
- < Potential location for second Thames Barrier

RIVER THAMES

Note: The map to the right include several projects that are subject to planning permission. These include Northfleet Harbourside, St George's Square, Milton Place. Albion Waterside has resolution to grant. There are also projects included as possible 'pipeline' projects – like the Civic Centre and Parrock Street





**ST GEORGE'S ARTS CENTRE;** The council has transformed a vacant unit in the shopping centre into a thriving art space, for exhibitions, workshops and artist residencies, alongside a vibrant community cafe.

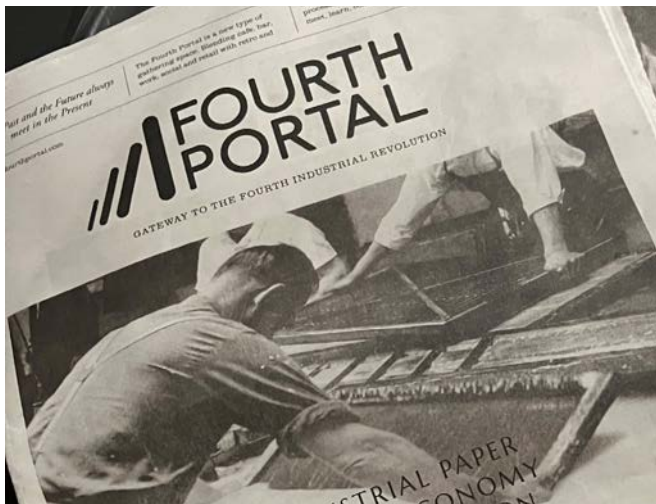


»Image credit: 42 South Films

**RAPID RIVER TRANSPORT;** Uber Boats by Thames Clippers have purchased Town Pier with big plans to create a bustling destination at this key arrival point into the town and a regular service starting in 2026.



**VISIT GRAVESEND;** The council is developing a compelling place brand to better tell the borough's story and attract visitors to the area.



**CULTURAL HUB OF NORTH KENT;** Gravesham has a thriving creative scene, with around 400 creative sector businesses, incredible community-led pop-ups like Fourth Portal and community infrastructure from the Woodville, Art Centres and cafés.



»Image credit: Cyclopark

**A HAVEN FOR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING;** From Cyclopark to Shorne Country Park, Jeskyns, Camer, Cascades and Cygents leisure centres and the Promenade - Gravesham has so much to offer...



**RIVERSIDE DESTINATION;** Gravesham has 11km of Thames riverfront, which is an essential part of its heritage and story. Shifting the gravity back to the river, by creating vibrant destinations and attractions is a key opportunity...



# WHAT MAKES US PROUD TO BE GRAVESHAM?



“We feel proud when we see development in our town. You have the potential to make a long lasting legacy of change and development in Gravesend - please get it right and get it done.”

Resident comment

## **The Corporate Plan has a clear ambition: to create a positive sense of belonging in a community where we are Together – Proud to be Gravesham:**

- One Borough: a safe, clean, and attractive living environment, enhanced by a sustainable and increasingly energised local economy.
- One Community: an active, engaged and culturally enriched population, built on the foundations of an affordable and quality local housing offer.
- One Council: The council aims to deliver exceptional services and high-impact projects and initiatives that make a positive difference to people's lives.

For example, our Low Income Family Tracker project (LIFT) pro-actively identifies households at risk of slipping into poverty and helps us guide them in finding all the support they are entitled to.

With around 5,700 council homes maintained and managed in the borough, we are a council that listens to, works with and serves the community.

The council have a pioneering and award-winning net zero programme, with officers being invited to speak at national events to highlight the best practice approach we are taking to de-carbonising our council housing stock. The council has also facilitated a 71% increase in household recycling since 2014.

The council's strength comes from its component parts coming together to innovate and deliver.

Gravesham directly delivers community infrastructure from our community theatre, art galleries, centres, cafés, parks and open spaces.

Gravesham Borough Council has been short-listed for the LGC and MJ Awards for Council of the Year in 2024.

We are the largest local council by officer headcount in Kent.

Our diversity is  
our strength here  
in our borough.”

Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox

## GRAVESHAM IS A LISTENING COUNCIL.

The council has an effective community engagement strategy and pride ourselves on being a listening council. The Big Conversation initiative puts our strategy into action through a range of regular in-person events across the borough, outreach and digital engagement. The borough-wide Design Code, Design for Gravesham, attracted thousands of views across an extensive programme of community engagement and means residents and local businesses can play a key role in shaping the policy for the area.



“Making a fairer, equal and inclusive community everyone can be proud of.”

Resident comment

### BIG CONVERSATION;

Big Conversation events around the borough to hear the views of our residents on projects and documents that will shape the borough for generations to come.

### WORKING TOGETHER;

Finding ways to work with the community, stakeholders and partners to unlock holistic benefits to improve quality of life, place and opportunity.

### A PROGRAMME OF FREE EVENTS;

From the Winter light festival, the Riverside Festival and the Christmas lights switch on the council deliver a range of events that bring joy to the community.

### HIGH IMPACT INITIATIVES;

Listening to the community and finding ways to bring forward high impact initiatives and tangible outcomes for the community.



# UNIQUE PLACES AND NEIGHBOURHOODS

**Gravesham is a collection of unique places from the historic towns of Gravesend and Northfleet to characterful Kentish villages in some of Kent's most idyllic countryside.**

To the north of the borough, spread along the banks of the Thames, its towns of Gravesend and Northfleet are steeped in history and opportunity, but feature some of the most deprived wards in the country. They are home to a diverse community, boasting one of Europe's largest Sikh Gurdwara, an Afro-Caribbean community with direct descendants of the Windrush generation who landed just across the river at Tilbury, an active and engaged Muslim community, and a range of eastern European cultures.

To the south are rural villages and swathes of Green Belt and AONB countryside. Each rural community is unique and with its own identity.

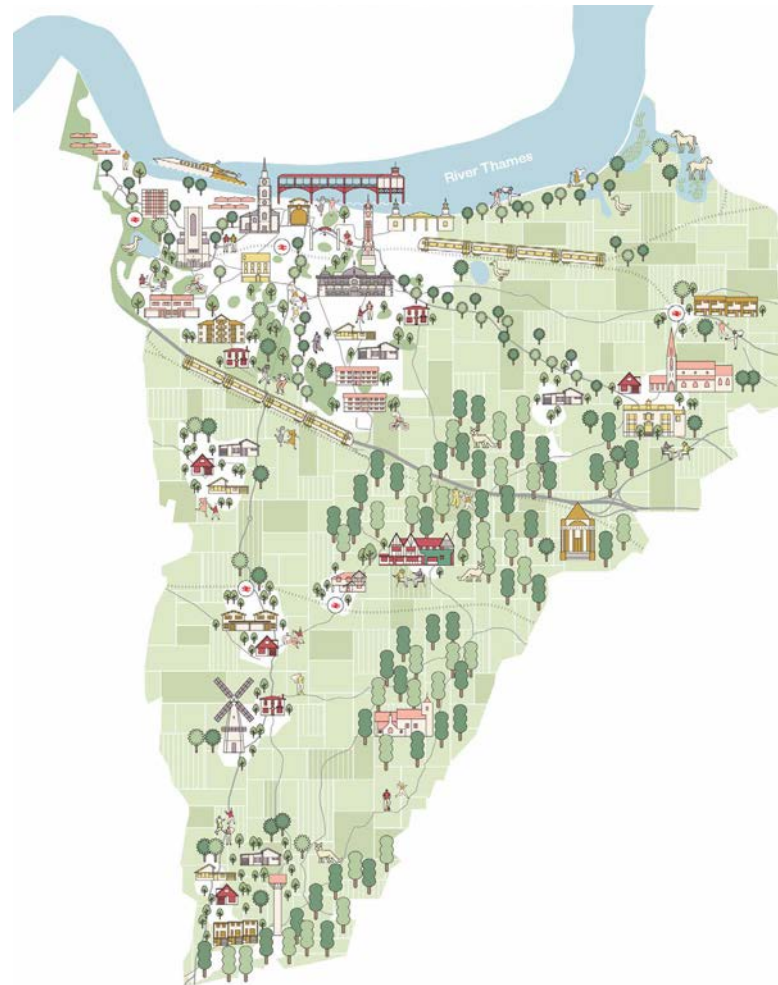
Much of Gravesend and Northfleet's history lies in their strategic location beside the River Thames and on the route between London and the Channel ports. Through history, this area has been a strategic port – linking to the new world, industrial area – from cement, to paper, to industries still using the river frontage today and as a holiday destination with day trippers on steamers frequenting pleasure gardens to the beach at the Prom!



Past industry in Northfleet



Beach and Pier, Gravesend



St George's Church in Gravesend



Old Mill in Meopham



## TRAIN



22 MINUTES TO  
CENTRAL LONDON



15 MINUTES  
TO STRATFORD INT.



5 MINUTES  
TO EBBSFLEET INT.



## UBER BOAT



20 MINUTES  
TO BARKING



40 MINUTES  
TO GREENWICH



59 MINUTES TO  
CENTRAL LONDON



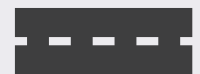
## ROAD LINKS



1 HOUR  
TO LONDON



1 HOUR  
TO DOVER



26 MINUTES  
TO MAIDSTONE



# GRAVESHAM 2040 VISION

**Gravesham in 2040 will be a Borough that respects the past and looks forward to the future. It will be a Borough that is proud of its identity and its diversity. Gravesham will be a fairer place that puts the needs of communities, businesses and people at the heart of plans to enhance our Borough and makes our built environment and infrastructure fit for purpose for a diverse economy to grasp and maximise the opportunities available and provide the circumstances that meets the modern challenges in housing, employment, transport, tourism and climate.**

» Photo by Gravesham Borough Council

# WHAT ARE OUR KEY OBJECTIVES?

We will achieve our vision for Gravesham in 2040 by meeting the following six objectives:

1



Our built environment and infrastructure will be enhanced and benefit all residents, visitors and businesses.

2



A holistic strategic approach to development that has the needs of communities, businesses and people at its heart.

3



Welcoming partnerships and investment that deliver on our local priorities.

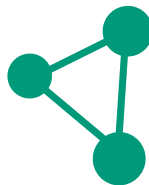


4



Ensuring that our built environment and public infrastructure are fit for purpose with a focus on brownfield development first and projects are delivered.

5



Ensuring that our infrastructure for transport and connectivity infrastructure for all forms of transport are improved allowing for full mobility within and out with the Borough and that it is accessible, value for money and timely.

6



Protect, maximise and enhance the variety of history, heritage and identities of our diverse Borough to make Gravesham the best place to live, to work and to visit.

# HOW WE WILL GET THERE

**We have taken a Theory of Change approach to regeneration in Gravesham. Working with elected members, senior council officers and the community through the Big Conversation we have designed our approach to regeneration so that everything we do tackles the big opportunities that matter to our future. Theory of Change means that our projects are deliberate and contribute to a much wider programme of regeneration.**

Working together with stakeholders like Reef Group, in partnership with Hill Group and with government agencies demonstrate that Gravesham is working actively to make this happen.





## **LEGEND**

### **1 NORTHFLEET HARBOURSIDE**

### **2 NORTHFLEET**

- Northfleet Harbourside
- Northfleet North Community Hub and Workspace
- The Hive
- Clubbs Yard

### **3 GRAVESEND TOWN CENTRE PROJECTS**

- St George's tech hub
- St George's Square
- Gravesend Arts Centre
- Gravesend Riverside
  - Fourth Portal (St Andrew's)
  - St Andrew's Gardens
  - LV21.
- Gravesend Borough Market
- The Charter
- M Block
- Clifton Slipways
- The former police station
- Albion Waterside
- Cascades health and well-being skills centre

### **4 CASCADES HEALTH AND WELLBEING CENTRE**

An aerial photograph of a coastal city, likely Liverpool, showing a large harbor with several ships, industrial areas with cranes, and residential areas in the foreground. The image is overlaid with a teal gradient.

1

Our built environment  
and infrastructure will  
be enhanced and benefit  
all residents, visitors and  
businesses.

“Your proactive, efficient,  
and fair actions have  
been nothing short of  
*remarkable.*”

- Local resident

Prosperity in the local economy will build on existing sector strengths and the diversity of businesses across the borough's urban and rural areas. We will work with partners in education and industry to make sure that skills provision supports the needs of businesses locally, and ensure that residents can make the most of training opportunities that will establish long careers.



# TECH HUB AT ST GEORGE'S

**c.400**  
Creative  
businesses in  
Gravesend

**c.8,000**  
Sq. ft of space  
to be created

**2024/5**  
Completion

This project will refurbish vacant retail space to offer modern, affordable and flexible workspace for small businesses and third sector organisations in the heart of Gravesend, as part of a wider vision for revitalising Gravesend town centre. Workspace is envisaged to be a combination of membership-style co-working options, meeting rooms and flexible small offices. The ambition is that there will be an anchor tenant, on-site business support, alongside skills and training opportunities.



“Economic development is the most important priority the council has. This has to be the focus of council efforts to support businesses through the recession and to create an economy that can actually provide a future for residents beyond retail / warehousing etc..”

Resident comment



# GREEN SKILLS HUB

**20%**  
of residents  
have no  
qualifications

**Network**  
Bringing education  
and industry  
partners together

The council has secured funding from National Highways to assess the feasibility of delivering a skills offer as part of the plans for Cascades Health and Well-being Centre. This project forms part of our emerging strategy for Business Gravesham. The emerging vision states, ‘Gravesham shall be a Borough in which business and industry including traditional, current and emerging trades and industries are welcomed, supported and encouraged. Our residents shall have the opportunities to train and upskill to gain the careers they need and together we can unlock Gravesham’s potential.’



“High quality training opportunities with chance to learn decent skills for unemployed and low skilled people in the area so they can get better jobs than just minimum wage ones.”

Resident comment



»Image credit: Space and Place architects





2

A holistic strategic approach  
to development that has  
the needs of communities,  
businesses and people at its  
heart.

“This development... punches way above its weight. The judges were impressed by the variety of the architecture, and by its good sustainability credentials”

Housing Awards 2023, judges' comments

Regeneration brings opportunities to build community power and improve life chances for everyone, but we must recognise the challenge in making sure this happens for everyone.



# THE CHARTER

## Gravesham Riverside (Central)

The Charter is a build to rent development of 242 homes in Gravesend town centre being delivered by Rosherville (GBC's wholly owned company) and developers Reef Group.

**242**  
homes

**2026**  
completion

**Best build to rent scheme at  
2023 Inside Housing awards.**



»Image credit: Reef Group



# ALBION WATERSIDE

## Gravesham Riverside (east)

Developers, Joseph Homes, are bringing forward the mixed use regeneration of Albion Waterside. On Wednesday 21 July 2021, Gravesham Borough Council's Planning Committee voted unanimously to resolve to grant planning consent for the development. The plans give extensive access to the waterside, with a Riverside Walk, a greener environment with energy efficient buildings, including up to 1500 new homes, circa 4,500m<sup>2</sup> of commercial space and a new mobility hub, promoting sustainable modes of transport to and from the site.

**1,500**  
new  
Riverside  
homes

**65%**  
of site is  
open space\*

**4,500sqm**  
of Riverside  
commercial space

**271%**  
net  
biodiversity  
gain\*

**172**  
jobs in the final  
development

**385**  
jobs in  
construction

up to  
**£6.5M**  
of GVA per annum  
generated by net  
employment jobs



»Image credit: Joseph Homes



# NORTHFLEET HARBOURSIDE

Gravesham Riverside (west)

**3,500**

new Riverside homes

**8,000**

seat stadium

**225,000sqft**

new shops,  
restaurants and cafés

**c.3,000** new jobs

**FLAGSHIP  
EMPLOYERS**

A new neighbourhood with Ebbsfleet United football club at its heart.

The emerging plans are for a c.50-acre brownfield site located in Ebbsfleet, close to Northfleet's historic harbour and the river. The proposals include: Around 3,000 new jobs for the local area, Parklands, green spaces, public pedestrian / cycle paths and children's play space, new multi-purpose 8,000 capacity stadium – securing the long-term future of Ebbsfleet Football Club, new pedestrian and cycle links, 22,500m<sup>2</sup> retail and 9,500m<sup>2</sup> food and beverage, 18,000m<sup>2</sup> commercial office, a new community retail centre, a new 300-bed hotel, 3,500 new homes and Incubator spaces for start ups.



Image credit: HLM architects



# St. GEORGE'S SQUARE

Gravesham Riverside (Central)

St. George's Square enhances the setting of St. George's Church, transforming surface car parks and sub-optimal public realm into a destination - a great place to live, work and visit. The project is part of our place-led vision for Gravesham Riverside and a vibrant, resilient and proud town centre. The mixed-use development comprises a flagship public sector and Cultural hub, 146 homes, community space and cafés, hotel and high quality and safer public realm. The project will stimulate the local day/night economy, wider regeneration and developer confidence to unlock stalled sites along Gravesham Riverside.

**PUBLIC  
SECTOR HUB**

**NEW THEATRE**

**NEW HOMES**

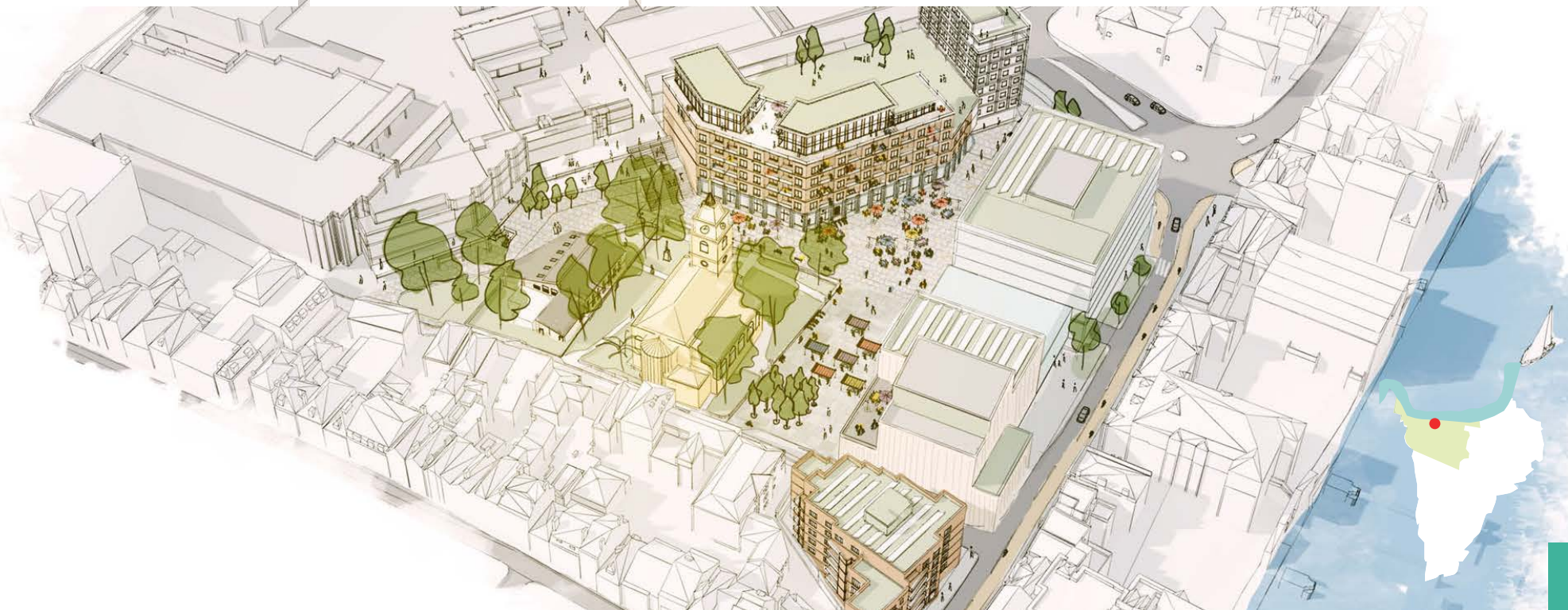
**NEW OPEN SPACES**

**REJUVENATE  
ST GEORGE'S**

**NEW COMMUNITY  
SPACE**

**NEW FOOD AND  
BEVERAGE**

**ST GEORGE'S REGENERATION AND A TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN**



An aerial photograph of a coastal town and harbor, overlaid with a teal gradient. The harbor is filled with numerous boats and ships. The town features a mix of residential and commercial buildings, including a large curved building on the right. The text is overlaid on this image.

3

# Welcoming partnerships and investment that deliver on our local priorities.

*“The sleeping giant has  
not only woken up – it’s  
had a double espresso!”*

- Regional property champion

We will be proactive in seeking investment and in supporting growth, but only where this contributes directly and clearly towards tackling the key issues that matter in Gravesham, including health, well-being, community safety and climate change.



# CASCADES, HEALTH, WELL-BEING AND SKILLS CENTRE

Gravesham is an unequal borough in terms of health, with a clear north-south divide in child health, adult health, life expectancy and personal well-being. Some of the least healthy neighbourhoods are located on the doorstep of Cascades. There is a life expectancy difference of 9 years between some parts of the borough.

Opportunity to improve the fitness the 4,300 additional adults across Gravesham that do not get the national average level of physical activity. If we get 50% of the way, this would be equivalent to £5.4m in well-being benefit using HM Treasury measures.

Co-locating healthcare facilities to allow the 18,400 residents aged 65+ to access health, well-being and benefit from social prescribing.

Providing leisure and sports facilities that will benefit 32,700 young people (aged up to 24 years) across the borough to embrace healthy habits for life.

## REGENERATION

- Gravesham becomes regional sports anchor
- New facilities on a brownfield site

## CLIMATE

- Enhanced energy performance
- Reduced carbon emissions

## HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

- Increases resident physical activity levels
- Tackles local health inequalities and boosts well-being
- Reduces health and social care costs

## LEVEL-UP?

Due to current rates of borrowing and build cost inflation and without catalytic investment we cannot bring this shovel-ready, high-impact project forward.



»Image credit: Space and Place architects

# CULTURAL QUAYSIDE

This project regenerates the town centre to improve perceptions of safety and complement the benefits of riverside developments along the north of the borough. Uber Boats by Thames Clippers are running trial sails to the capital from the neighbouring Town Pier, with a regular service expected from 2025. This

not only enhances Gravesend's already excellent transport links but creates the opportunity to grow the local visitor economy. The Cultural Quayside project transforms Gravesend's front garden, St Andrew's, into a vibrant destination, providing much needed quality green space and transforming

underutilised historic and cultural assets for community and creative uses. The phased project draws on grants from regional bodies and section 106 contributions but cannot be completed in its entirety without catalytic investment.

## DIVERSE CULTURAL OFFER AND ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

- Retention and enhancement of local creative businesses
- Local job opportunities created

## PRIDE IN PLACE

- Attractive and welcome visitor environment
- Boosts day and evening visitors
- Enhanced resident well-being through access to green space and gardens

## KEY OUTCOMES

1. Help Gravesend to keep pace with other towns in terms of its creative and cultural economic offer – such as Chatham and Ashford, and aspirational locations such as Margate
2. Improve physical and mental wellbeing, including relationships to the town centre through increased riverside access and connectivity
3. Reduce antisocial behaviour close to many of Gravesend's game-changer projects (the pier, market, Charter housing)





# COACH HOUSE PROJECT

Northfleet has some of the most deprived Wards in the country. This initiative transforms vacant and underutilised spaces in Northfleet North to tackle national and local Levelling-Up priorities, addressing significant socioeconomic and health inequalities, regenerating underutilised spaces and re-purposing vacant buildings – creating community-led projects that support a fairer, happier, healthier Northfleet.

## COMMUNITY COHESION

- Enhances local community space provision
- Boosts pride in place

## TOWN CENTRE VITALITY

- Boosts visitor numbers and spend in Northfleet
- Diversifies local offer
- Enables businesses to locate and grow locally

## REGENERATION

- Repurposes a prominent building in Northfleet
- Improves attractiveness of the station approach



»Image credit: Turner Works

An aerial photograph of a river estuary, likely the Thames Estuary, showing several large ships docked at a quay on the left. The water is a light blue-grey, and the surrounding land features a mix of green spaces, roads, and buildings. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent teal filter.

4

Ensuring that our built environment and public infrastructure are fit for purpose with a focus on brownfield development first and projects are delivered.

“Gravesham Borough Council. What can I say? They are a complete joy to work with and they proper get stuff done!”

- Kate Willard OBE

Thames Estuary Envoy and Chair

We will provide the framework for quality place-led development that delivers holistic benefits for Gravesham, including contributions to critical infrastructure and social value, whilst also making the most of the spaces and assets we already have – including our river frontage and public spaces.



# DESIGN FOR GRAVESHAM

Responding to the Regeneration and Levelling-Up Act, a design code is being developed by award winning place-makers, Levitt Bernstein, to steward community and place-led regeneration in the borough for the decades to come. This has been developed through three stages of extensive community engagement engaging thousands of local people. The Design Code will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), subject to approval of Cabinet. The document will then be used by planning officers in the assessment of planning applications.

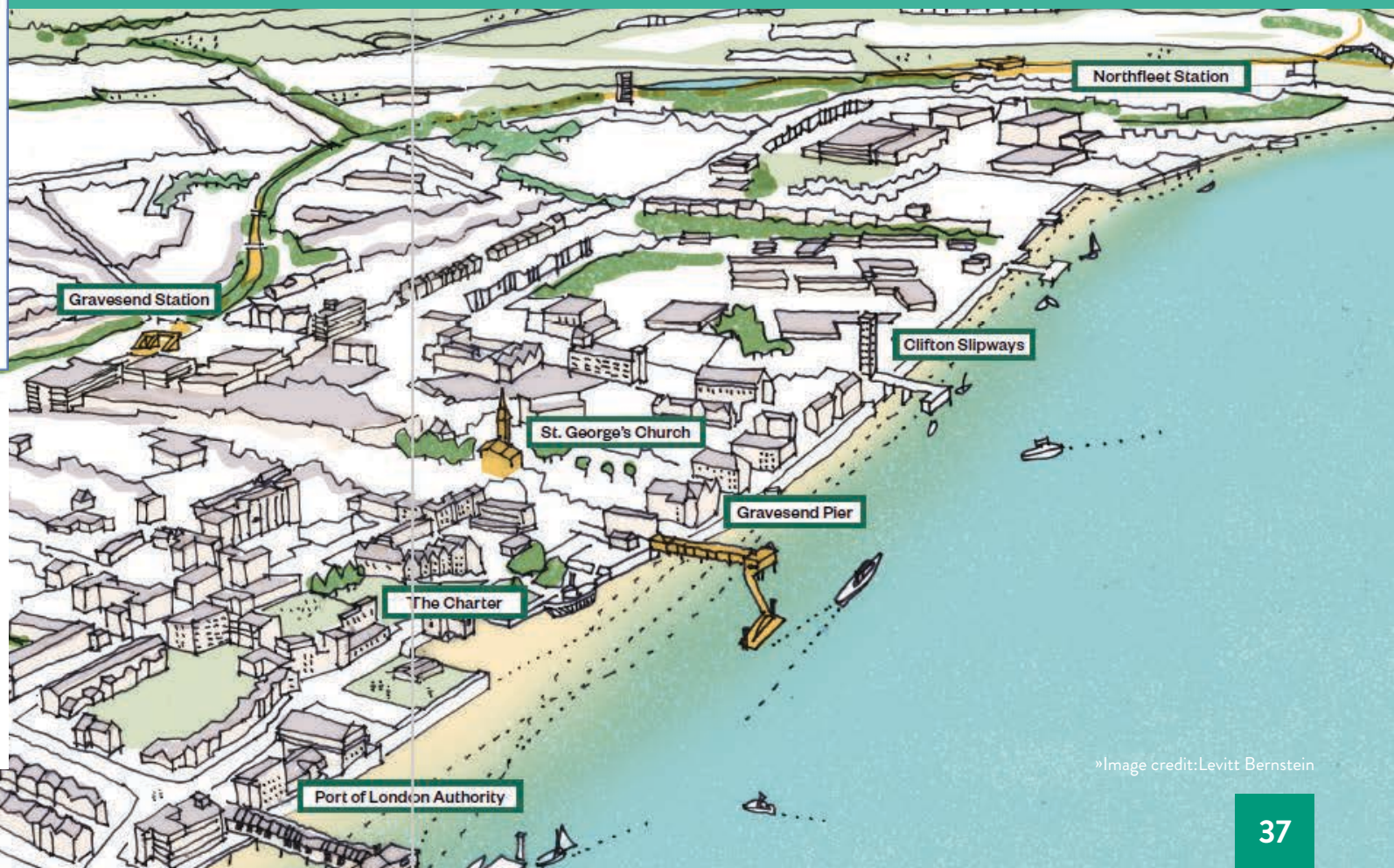


**5,848**

pieces of community  
feedback in Round 2 of  
consultation

**97,186**

amount of people who were  
shown the ads at least once in  
round 2 of consultation



»Image credit: Levitt Bernstein

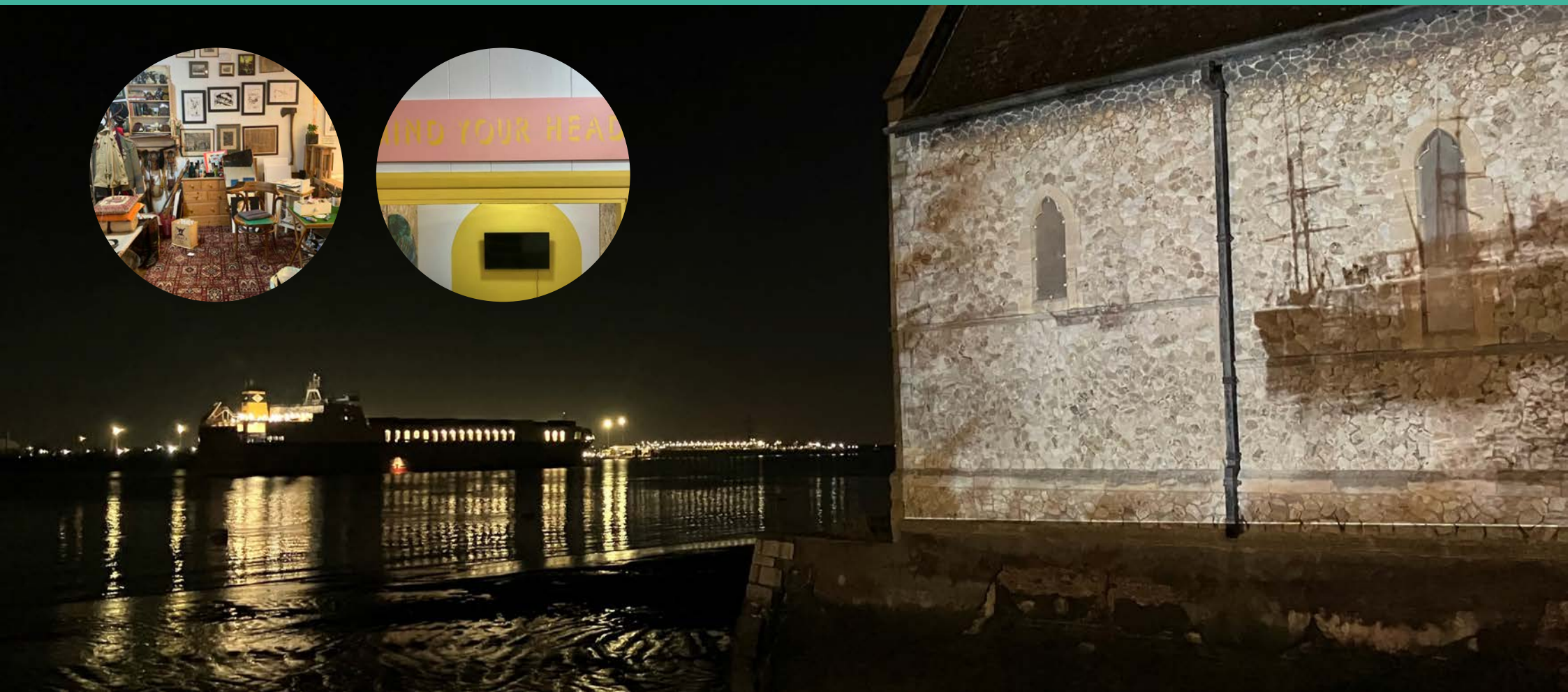


# COMMUNITY-LED POP-UPS

3

Community pop-ups  
supported in 2023/24

Building on the success of St George's Arts Centre, which transformed a vacant retail unit, the council has continued to support a range of community-led pop-ups, including the Art for All and Harbour pop-ups at St George's Centre, artist studios at Clubb's Yard and the Fourth Portal at St Andrew's, a 19th century riverside church which was part funded by Charles Dickens. The Fourth Portal has become a thriving community hub and vibrant event space, animating an underutilised council asset and drawing people back to the riverside.

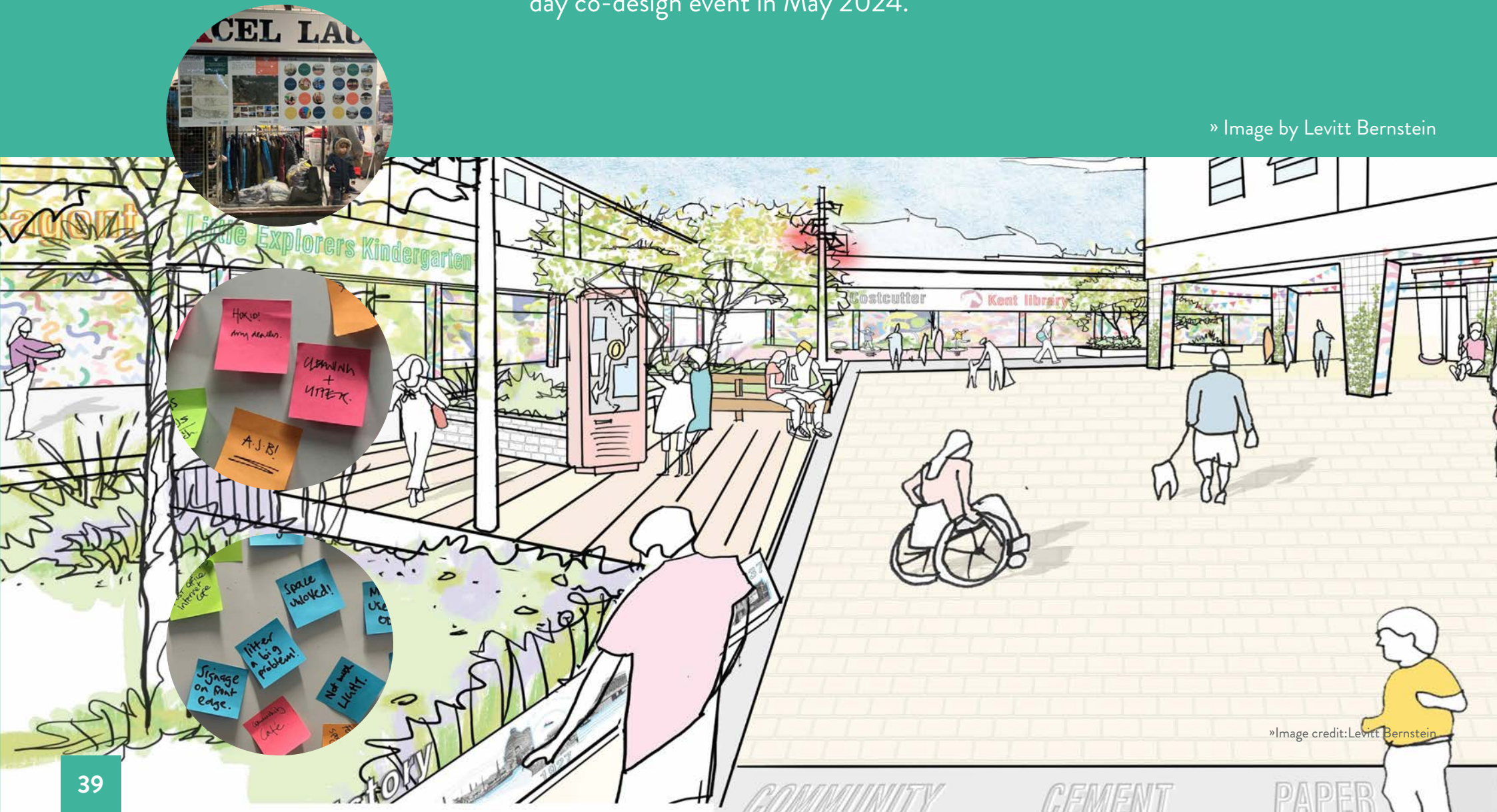




# CO-DESIGN AT THE HIVE

The Hive is a 20th century precinct and estate in Northfleet. This project works directly with the community in a co-design process to determine improvements that can be made to the buildings/signage, public realm and how the vacant units are best used. An initial listening event took place in December 2023, with a three day co-design event in May 2024.

» Image by Levitt Bernstein



»Image credit:Levitt Bernstein



# DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS & SOCIAL VALUE

As part of the planning process planning obligations are sought from the developer, by way of section 106 contributions. These contribute to improving local infrastructure and the environment. Alongside this the council has a Social Value policy to secure wider benefits from contractors to provide wider more holistic benefits for Gravesham's community.

**£502,000**

**Social value contributions to  
date (March 2024)**



**“Local contractors are a more sustainable option  
and I think GBC could make a difference here  
e.g. what social value are you delivering (jobs,  
emissions reductions)?”**

Resident comment





5

Ensuring that our infrastructure for transport and connectivity infrastructure for all forms of transport are improved allowing for full mobility within and out with the Borough and that it is accessible, value for money and timely.

“Gravesham’s vision sits well alongside Homes England’s and we have been delighted to work with the council to create the right homes in the right places.”

Shona Johnstone,  
Thames Estuary Growth Board

Gravesham has a strong and nationally significant transport network which will see further improvements in the coming years. This will unlock new opportunities to densify housing around transport hubs and ensure that intra-borough connections connect people to economic opportunities.

# RAPID RIVER TRANSPORT



**20 MINUTES TO  
BARKING**



**40 MINUTES  
TO GREENWICH**



**59 MINUTES TO CENTRAL  
LONDON**

Following their acquisition of the Town Pier, Uber Boats by Thames Clippers are planning a regular rapid river service between Gravesend and London. This is due to come online in 2026 and currently Uber Boats are running leisure sails through school holidays and to coincide with key events.





# EMPLOYMENT LAND AND WORKSPACE ASSESSMENT.

A key objective of the Corporate Plan is to create an Energised economy: attracting new investment to deliver a more balanced local economy and provide a platform for sustainable growth, supporting existing companies and inspiring new business start-ups. The Employment Land and Workspace Assessment recognises the need to bring forward a range of employment opportunities in the borough. The Assessment will appraise the current offer and identify S, M, L sites in the borough and promote opportunities to the market.







Gravesham is a unique borough, with historic Thameside towns, characterful villages and some of Kent's finest countryside. It is a borough with a history centuries deep, on the banks of the Thames and at the end of the grove, with stories and legends from Dickens to Pocahontas. The borough has over 300 historic buildings and destination venues attracting a growing visitor economy (50% increase since 2020). The ambition of this objective is to steward our historic environment and heritage for future generations, establish Gravesham as the cultural hub of North Kent and tell the story of this great borough to enhance the visitor economy and make Gravesham a destination of choice.



6

Protect, maximise and  
enhance the variety  
of history, heritage  
and identities of our  
diverse Borough to make  
Gravesham the best place  
to live, to work and to  
visit.

“We are thrilled to take ownership of this historic pier ... We currently serve 24 other piers in the capital, five of which we own, manage and maintain ourselves.... ensuring the local communities can benefit from the river transport links that they provide.”

Sean Collins, CEO at Uber Boat by Thames Clippers





# DEVELOPING A DESTINATION APPROACH

21st century Thameside, historic town Gravesend has a history centuries old, full of stories, myths and legend.

The town was a thriving local retail centre at the end of the 20th century but today the town centre faces familiar challenges and needs to diversity to offer more for the community and visitors to the town.

This includes a rich mix of opportunities; from a retail offer on New Road, to an independent offer of small businesses and artisans along the historic High Street, a vibrant riverside shifting the town back to the Thames, cultural destinations, from a Theatre, art centres, to community pop-ups and LV21 to brownfield regeneration sites that deliver housing and employment, stimulating footfall and economic investment in the town.

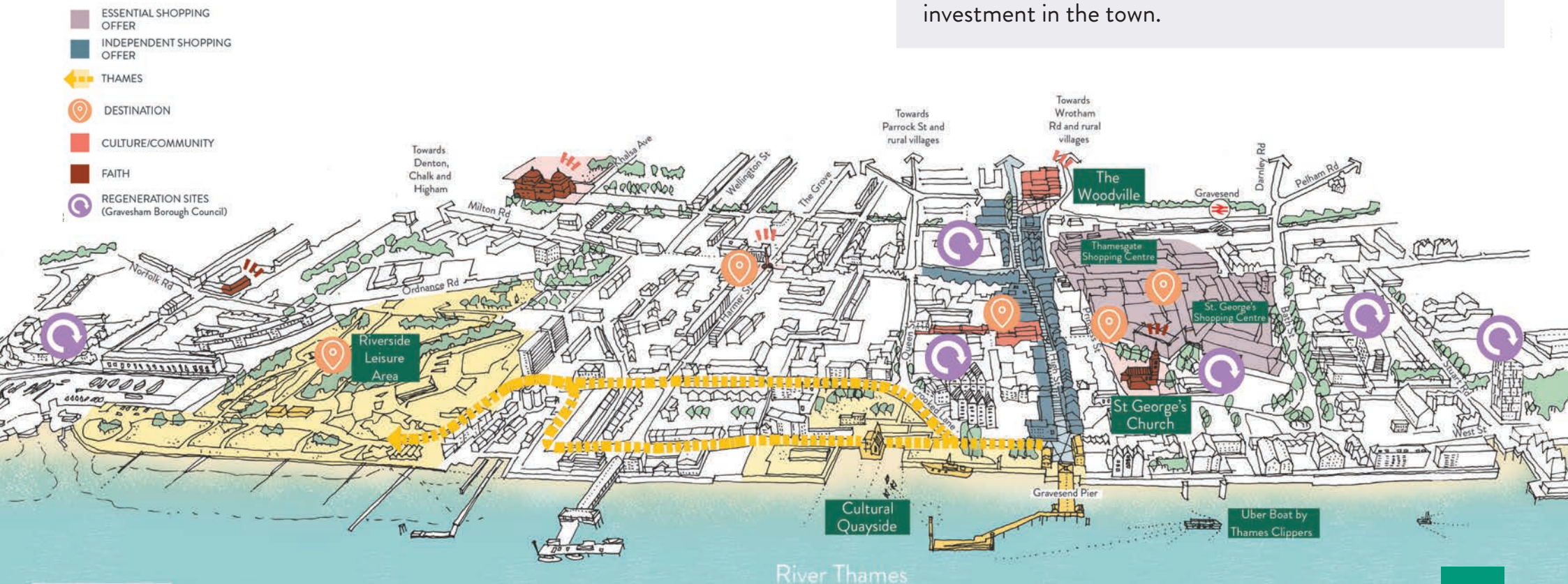


Fig.1 Gravesend emerging vision



## GRAVESHAM; THE CREATIVE HUB OF NORTH KENT.

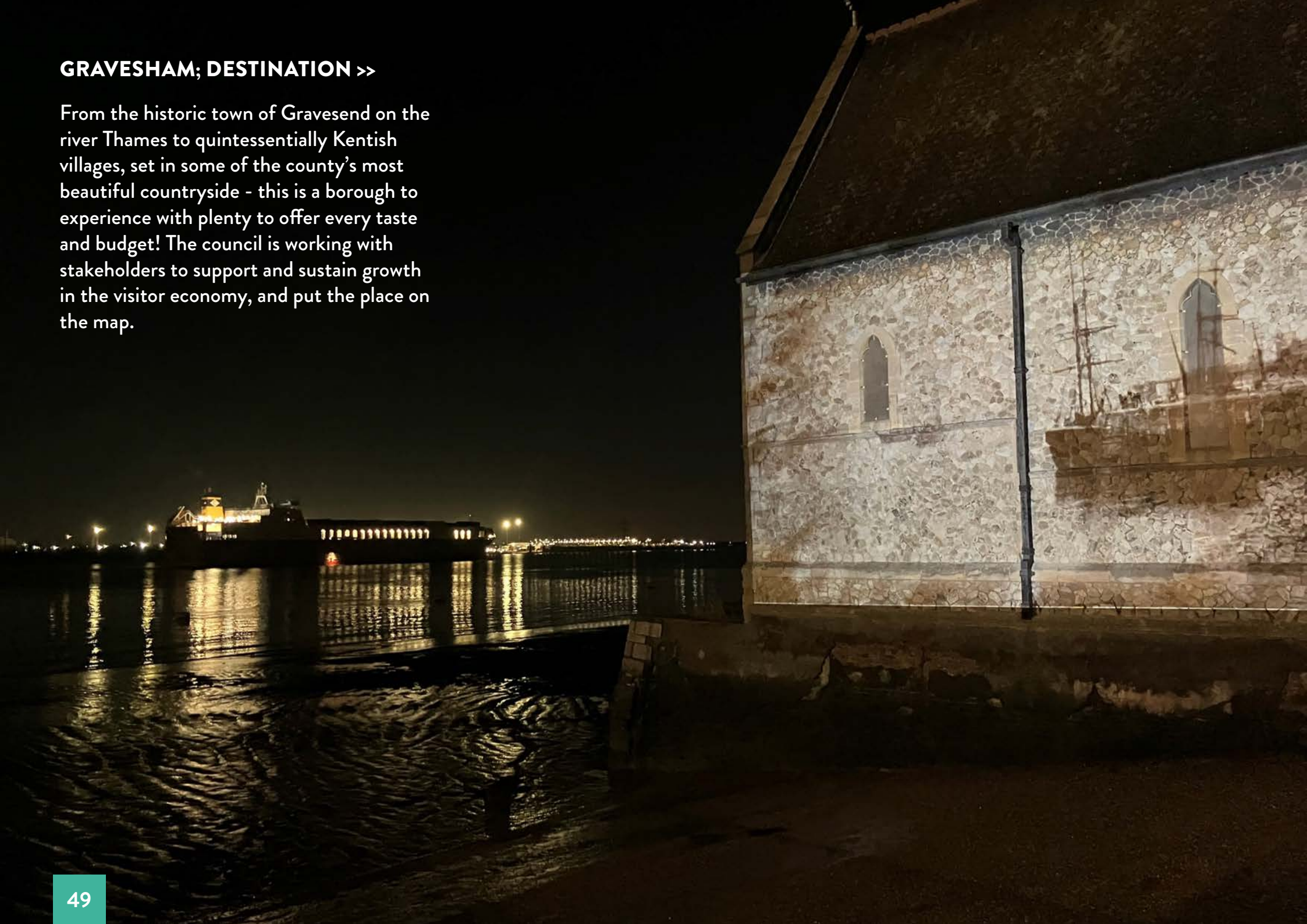
Gravesham's creative strategy states that 'Gravesham will be the cultural and artistic hub of North Kent. Defined by a thriving artistic community and a diverse, innovative and accessible programme of events for residents and visitors to enjoy.' The council's Cultural Strategy sets-out the council's ambition to be the Creative Hub of North Kent. The key priorities outlined: Growing a cultural and creative community, supporting and developing artists and creatives, establishing a vibrant and aspirational arts and cultural events programme, enhancing and promoting our assets and heritage and developing our children and young people creatively.



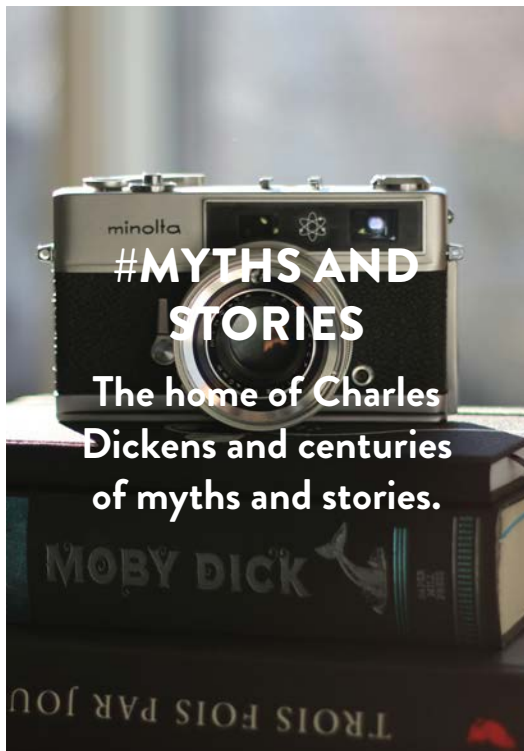


## GRAVESHAM; DESTINATION >>

From the historic town of Gravesend on the river Thames to quintessentially Kentish villages, set in some of the county's most beautiful countryside - this is a borough to experience with plenty to offer every taste and budget! The council is working with stakeholders to support and sustain growth in the visitor economy, and put the place on the map.







## #MYTHS AND STORIES

The home of Charles Dickens and centuries of myths and stories.



## #ARTS AND CULTURE

A thriving art scene.



## #IDYLIC COUNTRYSIDE

Acres of North Kent's Area Outstanding Natural Beauty, from open spaces to vineyards.



## #KENTISH VILLAGES

Some of the finest villages in all of Kent.



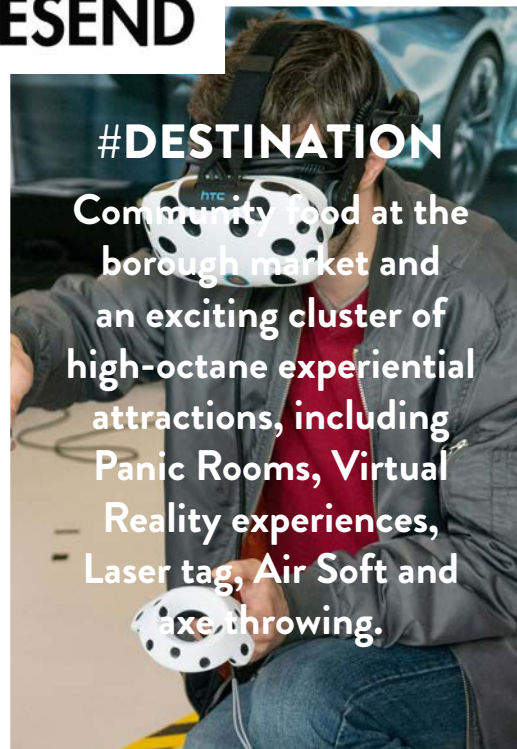
## #RICH IN CULTURE AND DIVERSITY

A melting pot of identities, with one of Europe's largest Sikh temples which is open to all faiths and visitors.



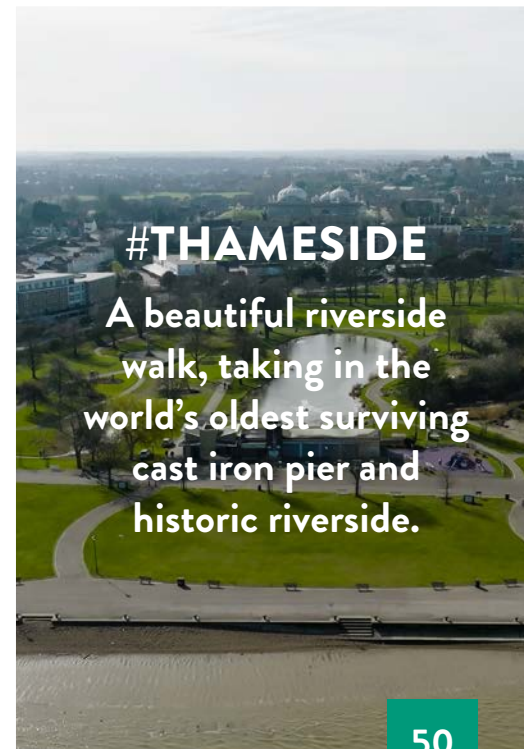
## #INDEPENDENT

Growing independent offer of makers, small businesses and atmospheric coffee shops, eateries, atmospheric tea and tap rooms.



## #DESTINATION

Community food at the borough market and an exciting cluster of high-octane experiential attractions, including Panic Rooms, Virtual Reality experiences, Laser tag, Air Soft and axe throwing.



## #THAMESIDE

A beautiful riverside walk, taking in the world's oldest surviving cast iron pier and historic riverside.

# Visit GRAVESEND



# OUR NEXT STEPS...

Our next steps will build on the significant body of work undertaken thus far to further shape and delivery our priority projects for Gravesham 2040:

## UNLOCKING CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Unlocking critical infrastructure is key to delivering sustainable growth throughout the borough. Taking a Theory of Change approach to sustainable growth means carefully planning for regeneration and development opportunities. It also means making sure that we have done what we can do to make our brownfield sites investment ready. We will therefore welcome investment, working together with government agencies and the private sector, to tackle our local priorities to deliver Gravesham 2040.

Infrastructure is a critical part of the puzzle to unlock brownfield regeneration that delivers holistic opportunities for Gravesham. Targeted enabling infrastructure investment on key brownfield sites will be significant drivers of the potential for future development across the borough.

Brownfield sites are some of our largest and most obvious opportunities to meet local and regional housing need. We will work with key government agencies to secure funding to unlock brownfield regeneration.

Ensuring that our utilities and transport networks are resilient and can sustain the existing network and support growth is also important. While these aspects are not within our direct control, we will engage providers, be it energy and water utilities and in transport for rail, road and the river make the case for improvements to our transport and utilities networks - to keep up with demand from residents, visitors and economic activities. We will also link Gravesham locally, regionally and nationally engaging the Thames Estuary Growth Board, Thames/Southern Water, National Grid, Port of London Authority, Kent County Council and National Highways.

Sustainable growth also means planning ahead for health and education infrastructure investment. While these services are not within our control, we will work with health and education providers to do this. Regeneration should create benefits for all residents and that they can continue to have local access to the essential services they need across the borough.

Key investments such as Cascades exemplify that small step changes can support big results through opportunities to bring together and co-locate different types of services, such as health centres, leisure facilities and may even include skills hubs. We engage Dartford and Gravesham NHS Trust, Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley HCP, Kent County Council, the NHS and South East LEP to progress these aims.

We have a responsibility to protect and mitigate the impacts of climate change on our residents and businesses as Gravesham is first our home but also a destination for others. One of the key opportunities we will explore is ways to enhance our borough's climate resilience, including with respect to estuary flooding. This may involve wider engagement with Thames Estuary Growth Board, Kent County Council, Environment Agency and DEFRA to make the case for further flooding protection downstream of the existing Thames Barrier.



## AN AMBITION TO WORK TOGETHER WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS, ORGANISATIONS AND GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO SUSTAIN AND SUPPORT GRAVESHAM'S EXISTING AND EMERGING CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE DEMANDS...



### Health infrastructure

An assessment of current and future health infrastructure requirements is being undertaken by the ICB, further details awaited.



### Education

Engaging education providers to ensure infrastructure is enabled to support growth.



### Environmental

Tackling environmental challenges up front to mitigate against the impacts of climate change, protect from flooding and unlock regeneration.



### Infrastructure

Investment required to unlock riverside brownfield regeneration.



### Utilities

Investment needed to support existing infrastructure and future growth



### Rail Network

Investment needed in existing stations for existing users, as well as to support growth.



### Road Network

Capacity constraints on key junctions in the Borough will require investment to allow growth to occur.



### Bus Network

Improved provision needed to support growth and to provide a realistic and reliable alternative to car journeys.



### River

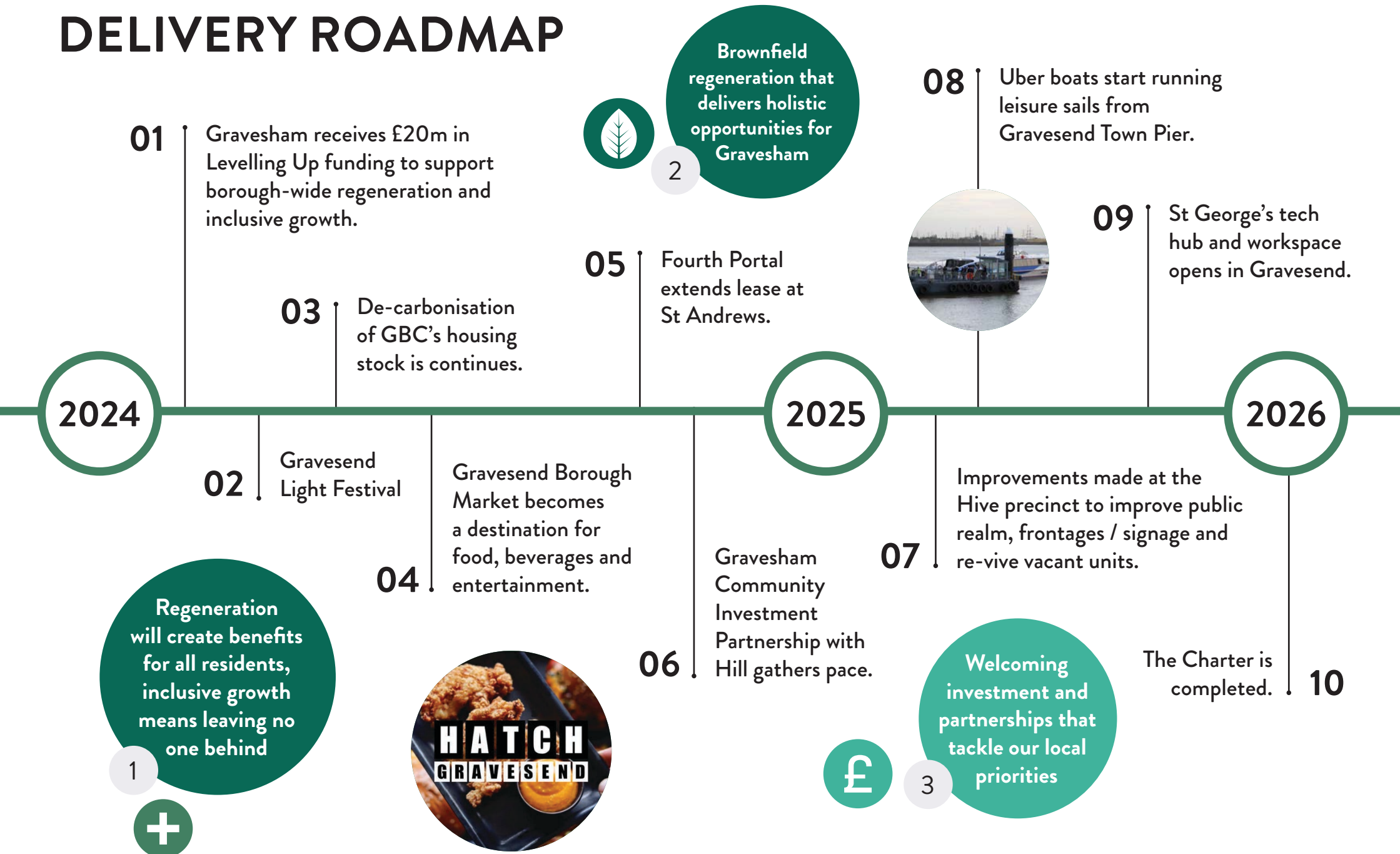
Making the most of the Thames as a leisure and commercial asset to support economic growth.



### Cycle and pedestrian links

As part of a balanced approach to transport, enhancing and integrating cycle and pedestrian links.

# DELIVERY ROADMAP





11

Wider regeneration along Gravesham Riverside starts to unlock at Albion Waterside, Northfleet Harbourside, Former Police Station & M block.



14

Cascades Health and Well-being Centre opens.



Gravesham is first our home but also a destination for others

5

17

Strategic development sites at Albion Waterside and Northfleet Harbourside are completed and scale up Gravesham's housing offer.

2027

2030

2035

2040

12

Uber boats start regular service from town to the capital.

Small step changes will support big results

4



15

North Northfleet community hub and workspace opens.

16

Gravesham is fast becoming a food and drink destination and Kent's latest wine region.

13

Gravesend's Riverside is transformed into a visitor destination. Gravesham is fast becoming a food and drink destination and Kent's latest wine region.

Connecting Gravesham locally, regionally and nationally

6





# OUR NEXT STEPS...

## KEEP WORKING TOGETHER:

- We will continue cross-departmental working arrangements to shape and deliver a 24-month activity plan to start to mobilise Gravesham 2040.
- This will include a targeted and proactive plan for partner, funder and market engagement, including promoting our case to Government for the funding we deserve.
- We will keep working with our communities to ensure their needs and views are at the heart of what we do.

**GRAVESHAM 2040** supports the Corporate Plan and the Local Plan to confidently articulate a long-term vision for the borough. Together with the community, government agencies and the private sector we will work to unlock Gravesham's potential bringing about holistic and tangible benefits and inclusive growth for all.



An aerial photograph of Gravesham, showing a mix of residential and commercial buildings along the River Great Ouse. The town is densely packed with houses and some larger commercial buildings. The river flows through the town, and there are green spaces and trees interspersed among the buildings. The sky is clear and blue.

## BUILDING OUR CASE TO ACT:

- Using the theory of change and logical models for each project as our foundations, we will update the business case for each project.
- We will further develop the evidence case of needs, impacts and outcomes for each project and our rational to act.

## PROGRESSING TO DELIVERY:

- We will develop and test options for routes to market for each project, investigating how we can act as a Council to unlock different funded delivery and operational models.
- We will identify preferred delivery strategies for each project and will establish a detailed business plan, procurement approach and delivery plan for each.

## PROMOTING THE OPPORTUNITY:

- We will continue to work strategically with key agencies and stakeholders to unlock Gravesham's place potential.
- We will sharpen our brands to better put Gravesham on the map.
- We will update our web platforms to better promote the borough's tourism and regeneration potential.





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To find out more, please contact us at  
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**Gravesham**  
Borough Council



INVEST IN  
GRAVESHAM