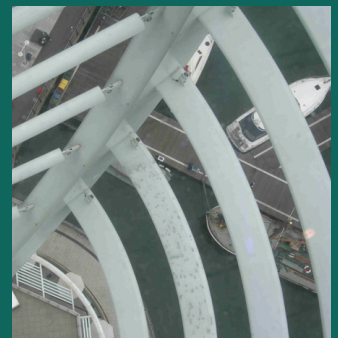
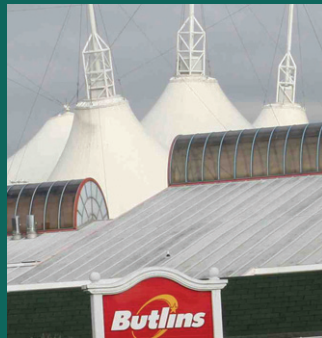


South East Coastal Towns: Economic Challenges and Cultural Regeneration

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A report funded by South East England Development Agency (SEEDA)
and commissioned through the Creative Foundation on behalf of
Arun District Council, Creative Foundation, Margate Renewal Partnership,
Portsmouth City Council, Shepway District Council, SEEDA,
University of Chichester and the University of Portsmouth.

David Powell, David Powell Associates Ltd. (DPA)
with Professor Fred Gray, University of Sussex

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Credits

This report was commissioned from DPA by the Creative Foundation on behalf of Arun District Council, Creative Foundation, Margate Renewal Partnership, Portsmouth City Council, Shepway District Council, SEEDA, University of Chichester and the University of Portsmouth. Funding for this research was provided by SEEDA.

The research was carried out by Fred Gray, University of Sussex and David Powell of DPA. They were assisted by Tabitha Timothy, and by Maria-Helena Santamaría and Maura Badoni who researched the data in Appendix 3.

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Executive summary

Commission and brief

This research was commissioned through the Creative Foundation, Folkestone, on behalf of Arun District Council, Creative Foundation, Margate Renewal Partnership, Portsmouth City Council, Shepway District Council, SEEDA, University of Chichester and the University of Portsmouth to identify the impact of the current economic downturn on regeneration activities and to explore how regeneration programmes led or largely driven by cultural and educational investment may provide responses to the current challenging conditions.

Regeneration, culture and education

The report places the four case studies in the context of the post-war decline of many coastal towns and the regeneration strategies that have been used in attempting to reverse decline. Government has recognised the particular challenges and opportunities which coastal towns share. Many coastal towns see cultural activity as an integral part of their approach to regeneration. Along with universities, these towns have realised the role of higher education in transforming local prospects.

Culture and higher education and the renewal of the four coastal towns

Margate has a strong arts and cultural emphasis in its regeneration programme, co-ordinated by the Margate Renewal Partnership centred on regeneration of Margate's Old Town and Turner Contemporary. Other important elements include the anticipated redevelopment of the Dreamland amusement park into a major heritage attraction. At present there is no significant higher (or further) education presence in the town.

Folkestone has developed a broadly based arts, cultural and education approach to regeneration, founded on the regeneration of the old town; use of events and cultural interventions such as the Folkestone Triennial; and the role of the Creative Foundation as a regeneration lead body. University Centre Folkestone is part of a wider commitment to invest in improving and delivering a broader educational offer.

Bognor Regis is pursuing its regeneration approach through large-scale investment, with commercial leisure (including substantial new investment in the Butlins resort), retail and housing development. These complement the comprehensive development of higher education through University of Chichester in the town which will include new infrastructure, curriculum development and widened participation.

Portsmouth, a long established city and a Unitary Authority, has an established array of heritage attractions (historic ships, the Royal Dockyard, museums) visitor and retail destinations (Spinnaker Tower, Gunwharf Quays) and an expanding relationship with the University of Portsmouth. These play an important role in the emerging regeneration strategies for the council and the city as a whole.

Conclusions

Each of the four towns has developed its own approach to make best use of the connections between regeneration, culture and higher education, exploiting the optimum benefits from connecting. Whilst no single model is shared, a number of themes emerging from the research provide the basis for conclusions and actions.

Cultural vitality is as importance as business vitality. Places with vibrant creative and cultural communities help attract and retain talented people and companies across the range of sectors. This works best when agencies and businesses invest in the programmes of quality which strengthen local distinctiveness for residents, businesses and visitors.

Culture, creativity and higher education play a substantial role in **placemaking**. Higher education investment and activity can be harnessed effectively to local regeneration and development processes.

Scale and locality: Some culture and education led regeneration programmes have large scale projects at their heart. There is equal value in encouraging small scale, autonomous, artist driven and community led and sometimes occasional activity.

Events and fixed term programmes enable agencies to test markets and ideas, intensify local cultural experience, and provide high quality programme which would not be sustainable year round.

Ownership, leadership and autonomy are determining factors in seeing projects from idea to actuality, and into the long term success. Locally driven, community and business facing regeneration can provide cost effective ways of generating commitment and change.

Independence of means: The coming reductions in public sector resources challenges projects to work out how best to survive with reduced, little or no dependency on such funding. Social enterprise, using commercial disciplines in sustainable and socially focussed programmes, can deliver effective culture and education led regeneration.

The long view: You don't turn around a failing seaside town in a few years. Decades of poverty and low self esteem take more than a few time-limited projects to remedy. Early and sustained action is important.

Concerted action: there is an increasing need to work more collaboratively and efficiently, simplifying decision making and delivery processes, sharing of knowledge and good practice between sectors, within sub regions and as part of a south-east and national coastal towns network.

Actions

Local authorities, delivery agencies and partnerships should review their regeneration delivery plans to see how and where less expenditure intensive approaches might be delivered, to make effective use of the increased involvement of cultural and educational bodies, by sharing resources and by joint action.

Cultural organisations should prepare for involvement in planning and direction of local delivery, identifying where and how they might contribute. Local delivery agencies should rethink ways of involving cultural and education bodies in planning and governance. **Universities and colleges** need to develop effective ways of engaging with and supporting local cultural organisations and networks, and to deliver professional development and management support to small cultural businesses.

Cultural and regeneration leadership in the four coastal towns are encouraged to work closely with private sector champions and networks to engage business skills and finance in cultural and education projects and their governance arrangements. For their part, cultural and education projects must be encouraged to participate in local business networks.

National and regional cultural and regeneration agencies should agree where responsibility for the engagement of culture and education in regeneration, and where these responsibilities will sit in the new institutional arrangements. Leadership in the four coastal towns should work collaboratively in support of this, and the actions which should result.

The substantive recommendation to **Government** is that coastal towns and their challenges and opportunities are a legitimate special interest group. These towns, both in South East England and nationally, should continue to be regarded as places in need of focussed attention. Investment in cultural and educational infrastructure and activity needs to be sustained because it demonstrably contributes to the broad regeneration process, delivering layers of value beyond the primary outputs of cultural and creative activity and teaching, training and research.

Excellent practice, nationally and within these four towns, shows how asset based social enterprise can deliver effective change. Government should continue to encourage locally controlled, not for profit, socially responsive and effective agencies, and must invest in strengthening local civic, cultural educational and private sector leadership to enable this to happen.

Next steps

The commissioning partners intend to review this research and its conclusions and develop local responses and to develop stronger practical links within Kent (Margate, Folkestone) and between Portsmouth and Bognor Regis and as a group to promote the key messages and promote their common case.

1 Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This research was commissioned by a number of regeneration, higher education and third sector partners to examine the impact of the current economic downturn on regeneration programmes with substantial cultural and higher educational investment in Margate, Folkestone, Bognor Regis and Portsmouth. They wished to identify how such regeneration approaches might offer practical solutions responding to the challenges of the recession, and decreasing levels of public and private regeneration funding.

The lead agencies for this project in the four South East coastal towns (SECTs)¹ are:

- Margate: Margate Renewal Partnership (MRP)
- Folkestone: The Creative Foundation (CF), Shepway DC
- Bognor Regis: Arun DC², University of Chichester (UC)
- Portsmouth: Portsmouth City Council (PCC), University of Portsmouth.

To enable this, the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) awarded a research contract to the Creative Foundation to manage the project. The research was carried out by Prof. Fred Gray, University of Sussex and David Powell of DPA. The research also depended on the contribution of a range of other organisations and individuals detailed in Appendix 1.

1.2 Future directions

This report provides regeneration and cultural agencies with an account of the four coastal towns, set in the context of social and economic data available from 2001 to date. It assesses ways in which culture, higher education and regeneration are interacting. It suggests a number of possible responses to mitigate the impact of the current economic conditions and to assist the sustainability of regeneration led locally by culture and education.

This research cannot determine which projects or approaches will survive in the current difficult economic and political context. This has become even less certain since the scoping of this task in early 2009. Research will be required to understand more fully the consequences of economic change on coastal towns and their cultural regeneration strategies and activities and, in turn, to develop proposals for future policy interventions.

The conclusions confirm the importance of integrating cultural and educational investment and activity as an integral part of local regeneration. This point is applicable to the four towns and also to similar places facing similar challenges elsewhere in the South East and more widely.

¹ Portsmouth is a city, but for shorthand the four places which are the primary subject of this research are referred to collectively as towns.

² Arun DC has been engaged in this research through the Bognor Regis Regeneration Task Force (BRRTF).

1.3 Research objectives

The brief agreed with SEEDA and the lead organizations in the four towns set out three research objectives.

Research objective 1: To describe the impact of the current economic context on South East Coastal Towns

- placing SECTs in a broader regional and national perspective
- analysing the impact of current economic change on particular localities, economic and social enterprises and social groups within specific towns.

Research objective 2: To identify the full range of regeneration programmes currently in place or proposed in the four case study SECTs and, in turn, to understand how current economic change may or will impact on them

- focussed on regeneration activities that are not capital intensive
- examining other projects such as the Turner Contemporary gallery project in Margate where new build or physical regeneration is a significant component in a regeneration project.

Research objective 3: To propose and assess further interventions and actions that will maintain and enhance SECT regeneration

- identifying existing innovative good practice in the four case study areas (and, if appropriate, elsewhere) and assessing how it might be replicated.

Each objective has been pursued through a range of research tasks and methodologies. The central research methods have been documentary and statistical analysis and qualitative interviews.

1.4 Definitions

Culture, for the purposes of this report, includes visual arts and music, the performing arts, crafts, museums, libraries and archives, sport, tourism, the natural and built environment as well as creative industries such as advertising, architecture, design, publishing, television and radio, film and video, software and computer services and antiques. Cultural energy and creative activity is the mark of an innovative community, helping attract and retain well-qualified people and businesses. It fosters higher inward investment, improved partnership working and greater diversity in the workforce.

Regeneration is a variously used and debated term. It was defined by the Department of Media, Culture and Sport (DCMS) 2006 as the positive transformation of a place – whether residential, commercial or open space – that has previously displayed symptoms of physical, social and/or economic decline.³ A harder-nosed Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) 2008 definition sees regeneration as a set of activities that reverse economic, social, and physical decline in areas where market forces will not do this. In this perspective, regeneration should not depend on mainstream and on-going funding but a time-limited investment designed to transform places and economies so that they do not need continuing subsidy.⁴

³ DCMS (2006) *Culture at the Heart of Regeneration*, 2006.

⁴ CLG (2008) *Transforming Places; changing lives: a framework for regeneration*.

An emerging convention, adhered to in this report, is that '**seaside towns**' refer to resorts/former resorts, with '**coastal towns**' casting a wider net to include a diversity of urban areas by the sea. Using this contrast, the SEEDA region has a rich array of seaside resorts and other coastal towns.⁵

There is no archetypal seaside or coastal town. Of the four coastal towns examined in detail in this report, three are best known as resorts – or former resorts – and the other (a city rather than town) for its naval base and dockyard. Portsmouth does include Southsea as a small resort town within its administrative boundaries. Coastal towns usually combine functions: they have mixed economies. Whatever their different characteristics, coastal towns share commonalities contrasting them with inland towns. At the most basic they have a common defining characteristic – the relationships with sea and coast – providing opportunities and constraints unapparent inland. The majority of the coastal towns of the South East region can also be defined, relative to other parts of the regions, in terms of high levels of economic and social deprivation, unfulfilled economic potential and significant challenges to their natural and built environment.

1.5 Structure of the report

This report is set out in the following chapters:

1. Introduction

2. Regeneration, culture and education

This chapter sets the context of the regeneration of coastal towns in England and the South East and reviews connections between regeneration, culture and education.

3. The renewal of the four coastal towns

This chapter reviews the contribution of culture and higher education in the renewal of the four coastal towns.

4. Regeneration, culture and education – comparing the four towns

This chapter compares the approach to developing and delivering culture and education led regeneration in the four towns.

5. The impact of the recession

This chapter examines the impact of the recession on the four coastal towns, culture and higher education.

6. Conclusions and actions

This chapter highlights the main conclusions of the report and proposes a number of interventions and actions.

⁵ The latter phrase is used in the 2006-07 House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee reports. See, for example, House of Commons ODPM: Housing, Planning, Local Government and the Regions Committee (2006) *Coastal Towns Volume II: Written Evidence*. Available at: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm/cm06pm.htm> and: House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee (2007) *Coastal Towns: Second report of Session 2006-07*. Available at: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/cgi-bin/search.pl> and: House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee (2007) *Coastal Towns: the Government's Second Response*. Available at: <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmselect/cmcomloc/cmcomloc.htm>

2 Regeneration, culture and education

2.1 Introduction

This chapter sets the context of the regeneration of coastal towns in England and the South East and reviews connections between regeneration, culture and education.

2.2 Coastal towns in perspective

The dominant perspective to the recent history of British coastal towns has been to treat them as places in decline. This includes the decline of traditional coastal industries such as fishing and shipbuilding and, in the case of seaside resorts, the devastation wrought by the explosion of more attractive holidays elsewhere in Britain and overseas. Related explanations stress the inevitability of decline for aging British seaside towns at the end of the 'resort life cycle' and the significance of the changing 'tourist gaze' viewing older seaside resorts as culturally deeply unfashionable.⁶ Within Britain, the countryside and nowadays-rejuvenated inland cities are powerful competitors, chasing government funding, employment opportunities, education initiatives, leisure visitors, conferences and entertainment spectacles.

However, we also recognise the distinctiveness of individual coastal towns each with its unique geography and history set within particular localities and regions.⁷ There are exceptions to and some significant regional variations in the performance of coastal towns. The South West of England – despite significant and persistent levels of poverty – is a special case, the coast re-imagined with a new seaside economy.⁸ Similarly, Brighton and Bournemouth are successful coastal conurbations with diversified economies in part because of the influence of the surrounding affluent regions, the significant resident gay populations, and because of the local expression of the rapid national expansion of higher education.

Despite the exceptions, various general consequences followed from the decline of the seaside holidaymaking industry: fewer visitors staying for shorter periods; staying visitors replaced by day trippers; ever older visitors not replaced by younger ones; declining incomes flowing into restaurants, accommodation and attractions; often a move downmarket; underinvestment or disinvestment in infrastructure and the environment; a search for alternative income streams – perhaps from benefit claimants; coastal public authorities increasingly unable to stem the decline and inland authorities and central government at times compounding it; the in-migration of poor, disadvantaged and sometimes transient groups; and, the decayed and redundant physical infrastructure of the holidaymaking industry and other aspects of a traumatised built environment.

⁶ Urry, John. (2002) *The Tourist Gaze*.

⁷ Good examples of this can be found in Walton, John K., (1983) *The English Seaside Resort: A Social History, 1750-1914* and Walton, John K., (2000) *The British Seaside: Holidays and Resorts in the Twentieth Century*.

⁸ See chapter three in Gray, Fred. (2006) *Designing the Seaside*.

There are alternative arguments to the decline thesis, with the most quoted counter-view being the work of Beatty and Fothergill into economic and labour market change in seaside towns (they exclude other types of coastal town).⁹ They reach the remarkable conclusion that:

Seaside towns do not on the whole suffer from a downward spiral of decline. Whilst there has clearly been restructuring in the wake of the rise of the foreign holiday, the continuing resilience of employment in and around the parts of the local economy most dependent on tourism suggests that there has often been successful adaptation. The seaside tourist industry remains one to be nurtured, not written off as a lost cause.

Following a stubborn reluctance to view coastal towns as an urban type with common characteristics, in 2007 government, too, attempted its own analysis of seaside towns,¹⁰ in the process conceding the case for further research and elements of a coordinated approach.¹¹

Much comparative analysis of seaside towns – such as Beatty and Fothergill's – has methodological limitations. In concentrating on readily available statistical sources analysis of social and cultural change is often partial. Information based on local authority boundaries also creates difficulties, for example, bypassing individual seaside towns within each authority: three of our case study towns are within larger administrative and data collection units.¹² Comparative coastal town research also usually fails to consider diversity within towns and the urban geography of individual resorts.¹³

A common pattern in the worst hit resorts includes the redundant resort infrastructure on the central seafront and, a few streets behind, the former commercial holiday accommodation now providing homes for people suffering multiple deprivation. In the suburbs of the same towns the built environment is more secure and the population, many of them in-migrants, more affluent. This suburbanisation of the seaside has also involved significant investment flowing into residential developments – either conversion or new build – as close to the sea as possible.

The failure of traditional seaside holidaymaking has then sometimes been counterbalanced by growth partially constructed around a residential influx of newcomers. Optimistically, this may herald a fundamental transformation of some former resorts into diversified new economies. Nonetheless, in most UK coastal towns there are significant and seemingly intractable problems of economic decline, multiple-deprivation and a decayed environment.

⁹ Beatty, Christina and Fothergill, Stephen (2003) *The Seaside Economy: The Final Report of the Seaside Towns Research Project*. Available at: http://www.shu.ac.uk/research/cresr/publication_downloads.html
See also: C. Beatty and S Fothergill (2004) 'Economic Change and the Labour Market in Britain's Seaside Towns', *Regional Studies*, 38, 5, July, pp. 459–78.

¹⁰ House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee (2007) *Coastal Towns: the Government's Second Response*. Available at <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200607/cmselect/cmcomloc/cmcomloc.htm>

¹¹ One valuable product of government commissioned research is the November 2008 study by Fothergill, S. et al, *England's Seaside Towns. A 'Benchmarking' Study*.

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/citiesandregions/englishseasidetowns>

¹² Margate is part of Thanet District Council, Folkestone within Shepway District and Bognor Regis part of Arun District Council.

¹³ See also Local Futures Group (2009) *The State of Coastal Towns*.

2.3 Developing interventions

Over the last two decades agencies in coastal towns have deployed a wide range of planned interventions, often with strong creative and cultural dimensions, designed to produce or enable regeneration have been used.

Powerful urban regeneration and economic development companies, developed by regional and local public authorities, have got to work in some of the seaside towns with the most intractable problems. In the North West, 'ReBlackpool' is working to a 15-year and £163m resort masterplan¹⁴ while on the south coast 'Sea Space' is designed to deliver a 'Hastings and Bexhill Renaissance'.¹⁵ These are interventions that work partially outside established processes and structures. The most significant private sector version is 'Urban Splash' with its property development initiatives in the historic seafront environments of Morecambe and Weston-super-Mare.¹⁶

Another dimension of coastal regeneration involves the restoration of key historic buildings and other structures, sometimes functioning as iconic tourist attractions in their own right, sometimes also playing an additional role, perhaps as a venue for an innovative arts and cultural programme. Examples range from Portsmouth's historic dockyards – perhaps the earliest use of coastal built heritage for regeneration – to Bexhill's De La Warr Pavilion and Brighton's Royal Pavilion and Dome complex. There is also recognition that coastal townscapes need to be treated as a whole, with open spaces and buildings considered together and groups of smaller scale older building sometimes being critical elements in the feel and quality of a coastal town.¹⁷

There has also been a growing stress on the importance of good design of new building at the seaside.¹⁸ New iconic buildings provide the physical structures housing new visitor attractions or are attractions in their own right. South East examples include the large-scale – the Turner Contemporary gallery under construction in Margate, the proposed Jerwood Gallery in Hastings, seafront towers both realized (in Portsmouth) and proposed (in Brighton) – and the small-scale including the Thomas Heatherwick designed Littlehampton East Beach Café and Chummy's Seafood Stall in Folkestone.

Coastal towns have also used festivals and other events as regeneration and economic development devices. The most sustained example is the annual Brighton Festival (originally designed get the holiday season off to an early start); although proclaimed as the largest arts festival in England a major challenge is to appeal to other than local audiences.¹⁹ Local and organic initiatives are more recent, vibrant additions. These include events such as 'Pride in Brighton and Hove' with its successful summer festival drawing tens of thousand of visitors from London and the South East and beyond²⁰ and community driven projects like Love Albert Road in Portsmouth.

¹⁴ <http://www.reblackpool.com/reblackpool/>

¹⁵ <http://www.seaspace.org.uk/>

¹⁶ <http://www.urbansplash.co.uk/>

¹⁷ For an early influential report on Weston-super-Mare see English Tourist Board (1993) *Turning the Tide: A Heritage and Environment Strategy for a Seaside Resort*. Extensive recent English Heritage research forms the basis of Brodie, A. and Winter, G. (2007) *England's Seaside Resorts* and Barker, N., Brodie, A., Dermott, N., Jessop L. and Winter, G. (2007) *Margate's Seaside Heritage*.

¹⁸ English Heritage and CABE (2003) *Shifting Sands: Design and the Changing Image of English Seaside Resorts* provides examples of new build.

¹⁹ For a 2004 economic and cultural impact study see: <http://www.sam-culture.com/work-brighton.htm>

²⁰ <http://www.brightonpride.org/>. In 2004 the Brighton Festival Trust took over the year round programming of the Brighton Dome.

2.4 National and regional coastal regeneration policy context

Whilst regeneration has been a government priority for some decades, the development of specific approaches to coastal town regeneration is more recent. This was driven in good part by the emergence from the mid 1990s onwards of a generation of civic coastal town leaders and other local champions who effected a change in the perception about the future potential of coastal towns and, more recently, in government's understanding about the particular challenges which these towns share and which stand in the way of more prosperous local futures.

In its review of the coastal towns across the UK, Local Futures Group²¹ summarised national policy towards the coastal towns as at an early stage of development, tending to focus on harder regeneration and economic processes and outcomes and less (until recently) on a wide placemaking or community focussed agenda.

This evolving understanding is reflected in a series of CLG reports and consultation responses on Coastal Towns.²² CLG is also consulting on its new framework for regeneration,²³ which proposes that local government's chief task is to tackle the problems of worklessness. It will be important that this focus does not obstruct local efforts to tackle a wider range of issues confronting coastal (and other) places. This change in emphasis at national level should be seen as part of the wider pattern with CLG and others now more clearly accepting the importance of a broadly constructed approach to regeneration which embraces placemaking and within that the significance of the broader social, learning and cultural agenda. SEEDA has a key role to play in ensuring that new policy priorities are aligned to effective local, long term strategies.

This new coastal agenda is driven forward by an extensive range of networks and groupings. These include BURA Seaside Network, the British Resorts and Destinations Association, LGA's Coastal Issues Special Interest Group, the independent but largely local authority focussed Coastal Communities Alliance. In the South East Coastal Group (Kent and Sussex) is largely focussed on coordinated approaches to coastal defences. SEEDA also administers the RDA Coastal Network which coordinates RDA responses to this national issue.

SEEDA's Regional Economic Strategy and the associated Implementation Plan acknowledge the importance the region's long coastline and the difficulties confronting it. These documents set out how coastal towns in the South East have long been seen as underperforming economically (as places where business and employment activity rates were low, the skills base weak, and the incidence of deprivation high). The purpose of its 2008 Framework for Action for the Coastal South East²⁴ was to 'raise the [area's] economic performance, by realising its untapped potential in an inclusive and sustainable way'. It looks to a ten year transformation of the economy of the Coastal South East advancing a growth model 'consistent with carbon neutrality and in which the distinctive character of particular coastal places – both urban and rural – is enhanced and maintained'.

²¹ *Coastal Towns Project*, commissioned by the Leadership Centre for Local Government in mid 2008
<http://coastaltowns.wordpress.com/about/>

²² See note 5 above

²³ CLG (2008) *Transforming Places, Changing Lives: Taking Forward the Regeneration Framework*,

²⁴ SEEDA (2008) *Framework for Action for the Coastal South East*.

The Framework for Action does not replace strategies and plans that have been developed at sub-regional and local levels. It proposes three areas for concerted action:

- a creative and inspirational coast with high quality places in which to live, work, learn and invest with vibrant town centres central to this
- an inclusive and connected coast with confident and ambitious communities and businesses, citing the potential impact of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) domestic lines to East Kent
- a competitive coast with a strong economy.

This constructive policy context has to date informed the manner in which SEEDA supports local coastal town bids for investment and support from a variety of national and sectoral funding programmes. These include the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment's (CABE) Sea Change programme, worth £45 million for cultural and heritage projects across England over three years matched by the same level of local authority spend. This links interventions in the built environment and planned open spaces with arts and cultural projects. The programme, designed to place 'culture at the heart of regenerating England's seaside resorts by investing in arts, public space, cultural assets and heritage projects', has been the subject of bids from a number of SECTs including, in 2009, a major application from the Dreamland Trust in Margate.²⁵

However, SEEDA is faced with a substantial reduction in its resources and requirement to focus on getting the region's economy out of the recession and into growth, to increase employment opportunities and decrease worklessness. The agency has to reprioritise its activities and restructure its teams and their responsibilities, in the context of likely national political change.

Some estimates within the region see the public sector shrinking by as much as ten per cent. This has implications for every part of the cultural, creative, educational and wider regeneration economy.

2.5 Regeneration, culture and education

This outlook threatens the growing interest in and increasing levels of investment which national, regional and local government have made in cultural infrastructure and activity. The development of purposeful and integrated approaches to urban regeneration, to help change and improve the prospects of urban and rural areas and the communities which live in them, has grown alongside the expansion and professionalisation of the cultural sector and the wider creative economy.

In the last ten years in the UK, the relationship between regeneration and culture has been further complicated by the evolution of new policy relationships, and more complex opportunities and challenges in each domain.²⁶ Creative and cultural businesses and practice combine to make places more exciting and better to live in and visit, offer ways of engaging with communities in areas of multiple deprivation, and provide some of the conditions in which a forward looking business community can flourish. This synergy is evident in the ways in which cities like Brighton and Canterbury work, and is a key part of regeneration strategies in towns such as Hastings.

²⁵ <http://www.cabe.org.uk/default.aspx?contentitemid=2442>

²⁶ Policy and thematic connections between the two domains are explored in John Holden's *Publicly funded culture and the creative industries*, Demos, 2007.

Alongside this, regeneration²⁷ has extended its remit from a primary focus on the provision of infrastructure (buildings, facilities, public realm, housing) within which other agencies did their work, to a more integrated approach engaging a broad economic, social, skills, learning, and cultural agenda under the banner of placemaking. This brings together traditional regeneration agendas alongside a focus on community cohesion, healthy and active lifestyles and interventions to tackle the challenge of imminent and longer term climate and environmental uncertainties.

One increasingly explicit dimension of regeneration – and also a concern of this report – centres on education and, in particular, higher education. The contemporary success of Brighton and Bournemouth as coastal towns (although both also have significant problems of deprivation) is in part a product of the higher education institutions in both places. Being at the coast for not two but thirty weeks of the year and, in the process, spending cumulatively large sums, students have become the new holidaymakers.²⁸

For example, a recent Bournemouth University economic impact study indicates that the University helped increase local economic output by £172.5m and regional economic output by £240.8m in 2007, assisted in improving local income levels by more than £36.1M and supported the creation of some 1,055 full-time equivalent jobs throughout all sectors of the local economies. Of the £100m spend by students alone, 90 per cent was in the local area.²⁹ However, there may also be negative consequences, for example, on the local housing market. Three of the four case study SECTs examined in this report have significant engagements with higher education albeit sometimes embryonic in form; the exception is Margate.

The role of universities in regeneration further enriches the urban change process.³⁰ Universities play a central role in the lives of their communities and of the local economies where they are situated. They do this as major employers, as landlords and developers, and this forms a substantial part of local service and good supply chains. Students and staff contribute in a variety of ways to local communities, and business opportunities develop out of their core teaching and research roles.

Universities (and further education colleges too) are major contributors to the making of place, reputation and difference, key characteristics which the coastal towns have been working hard to develop. Universities, their students and their academic and other staff also have significant social and cultural impacts on an area ranging from the retail and entertainment offer to the skill and leadership profile of a place. Although the process is under-researched and not well understood, many universities take a leading role in the development of the cultural and creative economy, and in urban regeneration practice.

²⁷ Graeme Evans and Phyllida Shaw, London Metropolitan University (2006) *The Contribution of Culture to Regeneration in the UK: A Review of Evidence: A report to the Department for Culture Media and Sport*.

²⁸ Research from Oxfordshire has identified how foreign language students spend twice as much per day as the average day visitor to the county. Oxford Economic Partnership (2007) *Oxfordshire Economic Development Strategy 2006-2016 evidence insert*.

²⁹ John Fletcher and Yeganeh Morakabati (2008) *Bournemouth University Economic Impact Study 2007. The economic impact of Bournemouth University on the economies of Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole and the South West Region*.

³⁰ See for example Tom Russell, DIUS (2008) *The Future Of Higher Education: Universities And Urban Regeneration*, and NWUA (2007) *The contributions of Universities to Economic and Social Regeneration in England's North West*.

In a recent study DPA produced the first Cultural Footprint³¹ audit of its kind for the three universities in Canterbury (Canterbury Christ Church University, University of Kent and University College of the Creative Arts). Jointly commissioned with Arts Council England South East in response to *Arts, Excellence and Enterprise*³² its strategy for Higher Education, the audit sets out the resources and programmes through which the universities variously contribute to their locality and proposes some starting points for more effective joint working. This work did not consider their impact in the context of city renewal or regeneration.

There are important positive synergies between cultural regeneration programmes and higher education initiatives in coastal towns that hitherto have been often unacknowledged or undervalued both in policy and research.

2.6 Conclusions

Coastal towns in South East England and elsewhere have faced a period of long decline as some of their original purposes and core functions – as resorts and as travel gateways – have disappeared. As a consequence, they have economies which can no longer capitalise easily or in the traditional ways on the half of their hinterland which is water. The case for taking coastal towns and their economic and wider development challenges seriously, and for keeping in place a range of policy, strategic and programme mechanisms which recognise the commonality between many of these towns and which set out to tackle the particular challenges they face has been recently been acknowledged by government. This coastal focus, championed this far by SEEDA as well as local leadership, is perceived to be under threat, with less ability to attract the kinds of additional resources which have enabled a number of coastal towns to begin to turn themselves around.

Much of this activity has depended on public sector funding routed through local authorities and regional agencies. This is also likely to diminish. The case for taking these towns as priorities in their own right is under threat from new priorities and constraints in public spending. However, even with less to spend, the role of regional and local agencies as advocates for coastal town regeneration remains absolutely crucial, to ensure that policy and budget changes do not move resources away from the coast to the centre.

As part of this coastal focus, the role of culture in coastal regeneration is widely acknowledged and has assumed a high profile in some places. The role of higher education in this context is less well understood, as it is also in terms of universities and colleges contribution to the cultural vibrancy and prosperity of their home towns and cities.

We believe that the four towns in this report contribute in different and valuable ways to the wider pattern of practice referred to in this chapter. The contributions which culture and higher education make to the regeneration of coastal towns and the challenges and limitations which come as part of this approach are set out in the remainder of this report.

³¹ http://www.dpa-ltd.co.uk/documents/canterbury_cfr.pdf

³² http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/documents/publications/artsenterpriseexcellence_phpT0mNbm.pdf

3 The renewal of the four coastal towns

This chapter reviews the contribution of culture and higher education in the renewal of the four case study coastal towns. The four towns chosen for comparison share some common features and challenges, have significant differences in the character of the regeneration challenge and provide major contrasts in the ways in which they combine culture, higher education and regeneration.

3.1 Characterizing the four coastal towns, 2001 to date

This section is based on the statistical information, analysis and interpretation contained in Appendix 3.³³ The objective is to present information about some of the significant and recent social and economic characteristics four case SECTs. Mostly the information is for the period between 2001 to 2007 or 2008. While allowing a valuable understanding of the case study SECTs, much of the information is predates the recession, or touches only what has turned out to be its earliest stages.

The information reveals some substantial differences between the four case SECTs, not simply in terms of population size but also across measures such as age structure, poverty and deprivation, employment and unemployment, housing tenure and other characteristics. Such difference between SECTs is unsurprising. However, it is also the case that on many of these counts the SECTs as a group (or sometimes three out of the four SECTs) differ to a great degree from the figures for the South East and England overall: there are areas of convergence between them that in many cases result from the coastal town characteristics of these urban areas.

It is tempting to lean toward identifying the most disadvantaged or advantaged of each of the SECTs. Indeed, on a number of measures, Margate stands out as being particularly disadvantaged. But this is not always the case and each of the other three SECTs can lay claim to particular difficulties or issues to be confronted. Some of the indicators also enable us to look within the local authority or coastal town area at internal differences and all four SECTs have particular pockets of deprivation and poverty, most often in the older urban core. There are also extremes of wealth and affluence.

Population

The case studies vary greatly in population size: 32,000 people living in Margate, almost 61,000 in Folkestone and Hythe, 64,000 in Bognor Regis and 198,000 in Portsmouth. Between 2001 and 2007 growth rates varied between 2 per cent for Folkestone and Hythe and 5.2 per cent (above the regional and national increase) for Portsmouth. There are significant differences in the population profiles of the four towns. For example, the population of Bognor Regis is relatively old and that of Margate young. Portsmouth has the greatest proportion of people of working age, Bognor Regis the smallest. Bognor Regis has the highest dependency ratio at 85 per cent while Portsmouth's is 50 per cent (compared to 62 per cent in the South East and England).

³³ In parts of this section, the figures relate to local authority districts rather than towns: Margate is part of Thanet, Folkestone part of Shepway and Bognor Regis part of Arun.

Housing

All the towns, except Bognor Regis, show lower proportions of owner-occupiers than England and the South East. Proportionately Portsmouth has the largest social rented sector (19 per cent) and Margate the largest private rented sector (22 per cent). With the exception of Bognor Regis there is evidence of a decrease in housing need since 2005 but persistently high levels of houses in multiple occupation. Portsmouth apart, housing in the case study towns is both relatively expensive and unaffordable for lower income households.

Deprivation

Deprivation affects the four case study coastal towns in different ways. Most are characterised however by extremes of privilege and deprivation side by side. On most counts Margate is the most deprived of the four towns followed by Portsmouth, Folkestone has small pockets of fairly extreme deprivation in some central areas but in close proximity to privileged areas and Bognor Regis has the lowest levels of deprivation. The severity of Margate's deprivation is illustrated in a number of ways in Appendix 3.

Earnings

There are important differences between workplace based and residence based earnings. For the former, the full-time median hourly wages in all four towns were lower than in the South East region as a whole, and only in Portsmouth were they above the national average. Despite Bognor Regis being the least deprived of the four towns on many measures, the lowest hourly rates for full-time workers in Arun were almost 20 per cent lower than the national average. In contrast, the residence-based statistics reveal that on average residents in Shepway and Arun were reasonably well paid.

Businesses and performance

All four coastal towns have a lower number of VAT registered businesses than the South East region or England as a whole with the Thanet and Portsmouth rate being especially low. The rate of new business births is also considerably lower in the four coastal towns compared to the region and the country as a whole.

Employment

Over the period 2000 to 2006, Thanet had the greatest growth in terms of jobs in the area: an increase of 21 per cent, with a particularly large jump in 2001–2002 from 39,000 to 47,000 and with much of the growth being in the service sector. This compares to an 8 per cent increase in Shepway and 7 per cent in Portsmouth, whereas Arun only showed an increase of 4 per cent, in line with its county and the South East in the same period. Despite the growth in the number of jobs located in Thanet, the district had the lowest job density (the ratio of total jobs to working-age population) of the four areas and also experienced the lowest employment rate. Margate has an atypical occupational structure with its proportion of 'Other manual workers' above the county, regional and national levels.

3.2 Margate

Public-led and co-ordinated regeneration

Margate faces major and multi-faceted regeneration challenges. A traditional seaside resort serving London, from the 1960s – and the 1970s especially – a spiral of decline set in. Over the last decade many of Margate's visitor attractions and those in nearby companion resorts have closed: the visitor offering has been severely eroded. Most symbolically, the iconic Dreamland amusement park closed in 2006. Decline has been associated with the emergence of very significant social and economic problems and in comparative terms Margate is worse off than other South East coastal towns. Particular difficulties are centred on areas of former holiday accommodation now transformed into areas of poor quality Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) occupied by many people suffering intense disadvantage.

In this context existing public bodies – including Thanet District Council at district level, East Kent Local Strategic Partnership at sub-county level, Kent County Council at sub-regional level and SEEDA at regional level – recognised the need for an explicit regeneration strategy, a major investment of regeneration funds and the development of a dedicated regeneration co-ordination and delivery mechanism. The result was the establishment of Margate Renewal Partnership.

Margate Renewal Partnership

MRP is a multi-agency body and the town's leading regeneration organisation. Partnership members include Thanet District Council, Kent County Council (KCC), SEEDA, the Arts Council England (ACE), the Government Office of the South East (GOSE), the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Partnerships (part of the Homes and Communities Agency) and English Heritage.

MRP's work is focussed on the two wards – Margate Central and Cliftonville West – making up the most disadvantaged and significant renewal area of the town.³⁴ Based on sustained research and a well articulated cultural and creative vision and strategy,³⁵ MRP has adopted a cultural led regeneration strategy based on the premise that culture can function as a 'connector of communities, provider of confidence and an economic driver'. The overall vision is that 'by 2015, Margate will become a dynamic, thriving and successful town. It will be a major hub and driving force of creativity and culture that excites and inspires residents and visitors alike. It will embrace and celebrate its traditions as a place of relaxation, leisure and seaside fun.' Four more immediate priorities are described in the *Draft Framework & Implementation Plan: 2009–2011* as:

- Place shaping and placemaking
- Investing in key sectors – the creative, cultural and visitor economy
- Tackling housing challenges and rebalancing the housing market
- Supporting vibrant and cohesive communities.

These interventions, reflecting the reflective nature of a maturing partnership, are aimed at tackling deeply rooted and underlying problems at the heart of Margate's need for regeneration and establishing the preconditions for the success of the cultural and creative project. MRP has secured £35m of funding. Its work is based on detailed and impressive research and planning.

³⁴ Elsewhere in this report including Appendix 3 Margate is defined as including the following wards: Cliftonville East, Cliftonville West, Dane Valley, Margate Central, Salmestone.

³⁵ Tom Fleming Associates for Margate Regeneration Partnership (2008) *A Cultural Vision for Margate. Creative Margate Ten Year Delivery Plan*.

MRP has developed a complex set of projects to implement its renewal strategy. These depend on both private and public sector funding. The privately funded projects focussed on traditional development finance have mostly been hard-hit by the recession and many have been postponed. The two major and highest profile publicly funded cultural regeneration projects in Margate are Turner Contemporary and Dreamland. The first focuses on visual arts and is a 'high culture' project in the mould of Tate St Ives; the second is based on developing a 'popular' heritage attraction themed around amusement rides and youth culture. The two projects for the future echo Margate's historic balancing act over the visitor markets it targets. Funding has been secured for Turner Contemporary. In contrast, funding decisions for the first stage of the Dreamland project are awaited.

*Turner Contemporary*³⁶

Turner Contemporary is a visual arts organisation established in 2002 and governed by an Operating Trust with 13 trustees. Turner Contemporary draws on the town's artistic heritage and particularly JMW Turner's association with Margate and, 'through a varied programme of exhibitions and events, promotes an understanding and enjoyment of historical and contemporary art'. There are two main strands to Turner Contemporary's work: a programme of current exhibitions and related activities and the construction of a major new art gallery on the seafront.

Turner Contemporary has two current venues. Droit House, situated on Margate Pier, functions as an information centre about the new gallery project and a temporary exhibition space. Turner Contemporary Project Space is a former high street store that since February 2008 has been used for a series of temporary exhibitions. Turner Contemporary has also presented a number of public realm projects. Best estimates suggest that in 2006/07 these were seen by almost 500,000 people.

The new Turner Contemporary gallery has had a long gestation period. Initial plans to construct the gallery abutting Margate harbour pier were abandoned for reasons of cost and feasibility. Building work on a new site and with new designs started in November 2008 and the gallery is planned to open in 2011. At a total cost of £17.4m, the exhibition and associated spaces will form one of the largest galleries in the South East outside London. The majority of funding comes from a partnership of public bodies – KCC, ACE and SEEDA – with a charitable trust established to raise the remaining £2.9m. The regeneration objectives of Turner Contemporary include the physical realm, economic – particularly as a major iconic destination for tourists – and social. Although with its own distinctive seafront micro-geography, the new gallery is part of one of the most deprived wards in the coastal South East.

*Dreamland*³⁷

For much of the twentieth century the Dreamland amusement park was Margate's important visitor attraction. The park closed in 2006 and the large site has been subject to heated argument over future visions for its use. Subsequently a consensus developed, perhaps assisted by changing economic circumstances. The agreed intention is to use part of the site for private property development and part 'for the world's first heritage amusement park featuring thrilling rides that will authentically recreate an exciting seaside amusement park from the past'.³⁸ The complexities of Dreamland's regeneration subsequently led to the formation of the Dreamland Client Group

³⁶ <http://www.turnercontemporary.org/>

³⁷ <http://www.savedreamland.co.uk/>

³⁸ <http://www.joylandbooks.com/scenicrailway/dreamlandtrust.htm>

comprising The Dreamland Trust (charitable), Margate Renewal Partnership (multi-agency public partnership), Thanet District Council (public) and Margate Town Centre Regeneration Company (private). The public support for the heritage amusement park appears exceptionally strong.³⁹ The total funding required for the reinvented Dreamland is estimated at £12.4m and in recent months applications for grant funding have been made by the Dreamland Client Group for £4m to Wave 3 of the Sea Change programme and £2.6m to the Heritage Lottery Fund. The results of these applications will be known in 2009.

Further and Higher Education

Unlike the three other case study coastal towns, post compulsory education is currently not a significant dimension of the regeneration of Margate. Canterbury Christ Church University has new buildings – branded as the ‘Broadstairs Campus’ – at Westwood, the inland Thanet development site that includes a large shopping centre and entertainment facilities. Thanet College, currently based in Broadstairs, has ambitious £82m plans to relocate to Westwood but these have not yet received funding approval from the Learning and Skills Council. Thanet College also plans a new FE centre in Margate’s Old Town. In addition, Turner Contemporary has worked with a range of FE and HE organisations over the last 5 years.

Key components

Significant components to the Margate approach to regeneration include:

- The powerful, well connected and well supported MRP able to take a sustained and comprehensive approach to regeneration in the town. MRP is able to reach into aspects of regeneration sometimes excluded in other regeneration models. A key example is the MRP’s plans to tackle deeply rooted issues around housing and disadvantaged communities
- The diverse array of regeneration projects including both publicly and privately funded schemes and the challenge to the overall regeneration strategy as both sources of funding are being significantly eroded
- The strength of the cultural and creative vision and strategy for the town
- The significance of two iconic publicly funded projects, one under construction and the other awaiting funding decisions, as the critical dimensions of the cultural regeneration strategy
- In the case of privately funded projects the reliance on traditional development finance and, with the recession, consequent re-assessment and postponement of many projects
- The involvement of local people and organisations in the regeneration process and the concomitant need to balance local capacity building with capacity recognition of local champions
- The potential, yet to be fully realised, for cultural organisations to work together for example in branding, marketing, audience development, education and outreach activities
- The surprisingly limited current synergies between the arts and cultural regeneration strategies for Margate and further and higher education developments for Thanet.

³⁹ <http://www.joylandbooks.com/scenicrailway/news.htm>

3.3 Folkestone

Folkestone (population of 47,000) is the main centre of population within the District of Shepway (population 103,000), which also covers Hythe and the substantial rural coastal belt including Romney Marsh and Dungeness. As with most British holiday resorts, the rise in popularity of holidays abroad damaged the local tourist industry. The closure of ferry services between Folkestone and Boulogne and the opening of the Channel Tunnel hastened the demise of Folkestone as a destination of choice for travellers and visitors. The town has experienced several decades of economic retrenchment as a result of the decline of its tourism industry, which has fundamentally undermined the town's prosperity and the self-confidence of the community.

Folkestone, especially East and Central Folkestone, now suffers from multiple social problems, having one of the highest unemployment rates in Kent, seven of the 119 most deprived wards in the South East and high rates of teenage pregnancy, drug abuse and crime. Educational attainment and skills levels are low: take-up of higher education stands at 17 per cent against a national average of 40 per cent and, at secondary level, the Channel School which served central and eastern Folkestone was, in 2003, the fourth worst school in the country by GCSE results. Shepway Council data indicates that 40 per cent of housing in central and eastern Folkestone is unfit. The challenges the town faces, and its future potential, are recognised in regional, sub-regional and local strategies.⁴⁰

Folkestone, though, has one unique advantage that distinguishes it from other South East resorts. It is the headquarters of the Saga Group: one of Kent's largest employers, 2,400 of its 4,000 employees are based at the company's Folkestone headquarters. This company is variously the town's major private employer, a magnet for similar businesses, and an international brand in a place with little positive external reputation. It is also the anchor which has led the De Haan family to its long term commitment to the town. Its sale from family ownership into the private sector is the source of the charitable and other funds now available for reinvestment in the community.

Social enterprise in a leading role

The regeneration of Folkestone depends on a complex interaction between statutory and independent agencies. What makes Folkestone's regeneration programme distinctive is the prominent role played by social enterprise, in the form of the Roger De Haan Charitable Trust (RDHCT) and the Creative Foundation. The Foundation is the platform through which RDHCT is investing very substantial funding in social, education and cultural infrastructure, capacity building and projects.

The catalyst for this was the sale of the Saga Group from family ownership into the private sector and the family's decision to commit very substantial sums from that sale for reinvestment to improve opportunities for communities in East Kent. Much of this is being routed through RDHCT, which is active across East Kent, and which has its particular focus on Folkestone. Over the decade 2002–2012, the overall investment from RDHCT into Folkestone and East Kent is projected to total £60m.

⁴⁰ Information from Shepway DC and Creative Foundation 2009.

RDHCT's most substantial beneficiary is the Creative Foundation, which operates as a charitable company, a business-like and enterprising not-for-profit organisation, which is chaired by Roger De Haan. The Trust also sponsors a range of other activities in East Kent including the sponsorship of Academy Schools in Folkestone and Ramsgate. In his own right, Roger De Haan is also active as the owner of the (commercial) Folkestone Harbour Company.

It is easy to see how from the outside the Folkestone project can be read as the product of individual largesse at a seriously generous scale. However, this can also be seen as an exemplary process which other entrepreneurs, philanthropists, towns and cities might choose to emulate. Part of the proceeds from decades of substantial and profitable commercial activity has been retained for the transformation of the community which the company and its owners have long been associated with. This approach should hold good in other places and other times, even those which are considerably more straitened than the period in which Saga was sold.

Reviewing Creative Foundation's direction of travel

Creative Foundation is following a course of making a small number of intensive and high profile interventions, with a view to securing strategic impact and legacy value. These include:

- Physical regeneration: focus on more than 80 properties in a contained area between the Old High Street and Tontine Street
- Sectoral development: a curated community of businesses and practitioners
- Short term interventions: development of cultural capacity, audiences and reputation through festivals such as the Folkestone Book Festival and Folkestone Triennial
- Investment to build capacity and the quality of delivery: winning investment in capacity building projects such as Thrive and Find Your Talent
- New mixed economy cultural and educational facilities: early educational investment with University Centre Folkestone and The Cube, followed by the new Quarterhouse Performing Arts and Business Centre.

This project is only six years in progress. The long term intentions for the physical components of the programme are signalled by the length of the peppercorn leases (125 years) which RDHCT has entered into with the Creative Foundation. This is estate building with a suitably long term in view.

Creative Foundation and other public partners

However, the relative size of this philanthropic investment into Folkestone and the scale of its reach and ambition in a small coastal community might have led other funders to stay away or only to commit to a minimum role. This has required the Creative Foundation to work closely and effectively with the major funding agencies active in Folkestone. The Foundation has had to ensure that potential funders such as SEEDA, Kent CC, Shepway DC and Arts Council England, and project partners such as Canterbury Christ Church and Greenwich universities at the University Centre Folkestone, are encouraged to bring in investment and support for specific projects.

SEEDA's strategic guidance as a key project partner ensures that critical linkages are established and maintained between the project components and specific RES objectives. The local application of these wider strategies is contained in East Kent Local Strategic Partnership's Draft Sustainable Community Strategy,⁴¹ in which the cultural dimension is promoted as 'combining to form a world class visitor destination, celebrating its richly distinctive natural environment, heritage and culture'.

⁴¹ <http://www.eastkentlsp.org.uk/>: *Draft Sustainable Community Strategy March 2009*

The strategy recognises as one of the area's assets 'the development of Folkestone's Creative Quarter and Performing Arts and Business Centre (which) alongside the masterplan for Folkestone Seafront ... will embed creativity within further education and economic development'.

There is a set of pragmatic arrangements which in effect have allowed the Creative Foundation to develop its own long term regeneration, cultural and education focussed programmes relatively independently from the two Councils. The Creative Foundation Board members and senior management play an important role in making the kinds of strategic relationships required for effective multi-party working.

University presence in delivering regeneration

In terms of the ongoing reform of the town's educational infrastructure, recent investment has included the successful establishment of University Centre Folkestone (UCF). The centre has a primary focus on performing arts, visual arts and the creative industries and business facing courses. Whilst long anticipated changes and improvements are still awaited at South Kent College, the arrival of UCF has filled a significant gap in provision in this part of East Kent.

There are some interesting early indications of success. Despite the cap on student numbers imposed nationally, recruitment for the second cohort of drama students is up, with double the number of applicants from 2008, with slightly more than half from the greater South East, London and further afield, and the rest from Shepway and East Kent. UCF feels that demand is not yet firmly in place from Shepway and East Kent across the range of courses on offer, and that further work needs to be done both to present a learning offer which attracts a wide range of young and mature students from across the community, and also to ensure that UCF can play a fully engaged role in the community.

The HEIs involved in UCF, Canterbury Christ Church and Greenwich, are prepared to take a long view of their commitment to the town. The proposed UCF campus in the Harbour and Sea Front development no longer forms part of that eventual development. The UCF partners are keen to stay in Tontine Street, and this will help consolidate regeneration of this part of the town, keeping its student footfall and levels of activity in the centre of the Creative Quarter. A commitment to staying inside the Creative Quarter looks as though it will strengthen both the educational, cultural and economic regeneration of this part of town. However, it is too early to measure the impact of raising local levels of participation in HE either on local economic performance or other factors such as community health and aspirations.

Relationship with the commercial development sector

The Folkestone Harbour Company⁴² (set up and owned by Roger De Haan) commissioned Foster and Partners to produce a masterplan for Folkestone which was published in April 2006. The original plans, currently in detailed appraisal, envisaged rebuilding the harbour as a marina, a "Green Wave" along the sea front linking countryside west and east of the town, new housing, shops, a performance area and a small university campus referred to above.

⁴² <http://www.folkestoneharbour.com/pages/home.html>

A firm development programme has not yet been announced. The owners suggest that these changes and delays are not particularly driven by the recession, and certainly the process of appraisal and detailed review of the masterplan has been continuing for the last couple of years. However, every delay in this development further defers the moment when a newly invigorated harbour and sea front development will provide increased levels of footfall through the Old High Street, as a main pedestrian link between the Upper Town with its primary retail centre and whatever combination of housing, leisure, open space and access to the sea and shore the new development may provide. As with delays to the Turner Contemporary in Margate, the combination of uncertainty over timing and the deferral of the economic benefits of a substantial commercial development add to the pressures on existing specialist retailers, galleries, cafes and restaurants and may make the arrival of new operators less rather than more certain in the short term.

The role of other creative and cultural organisations

In a town in which so much is happening and with such relatively rich opportunities in front of it, and with such relatively powerful players close to hand, it appears to be difficult for the autonomous voice of artists, cultural and creative practitioners and businesses to make itself heard. In this environment, it is unclear to some of the independent cultural businesses and community organisations how they might best play an influential or enriching role in discussions which shape the overall direction of the cultural and regeneration future of the town.

Key components

There are a number of components to this approach to regeneration which include:

- The social enterprise/development trust model and the joint role of private philanthropy and social enterprise
- The value of early long term investment
- The scale of this independent, long term venture relative to the size of district, town, part of town centre and the wards involved
- Creative Foundation's scope, embracing education, cultural activity and development based regeneration enabling the approach, operating in a business like way and as a social landlord and entrepreneurial organisation
- Its flexibility and independence to complement potential public sector initiatives in areas of activity where third and private sector can make substantial impact
- Making connections between cultural programming and primary, secondary and higher education partners with additional resources and funding brought in from national and other agencies
- Building a community of traders, retailers, cultural and creative practitioners based in its own owned estate – its long term portfolio of properties
- The potential contribution of University Centre Folkestone (now joined by the Quarterhouse) in the intensification of the Creative Quarter/Tontine Street area.

3.4 *Bognor Regis*

Emerging public and private partnerships

Arguably the most prosperous and least disadvantaged of the four case study coastal towns, Bognor Regis' has a regeneration agenda which includes a mix of related issues: addressing pockets of deprivation; raising average educational attainment, skill levels and wage levels; improving transport and industrial infrastructure; attracting investment and 'spend'; reducing the high levels of 'out commuting'; increasing affordable and attractive housing; and addressing the challenges for small and medium sized businesses.⁴³

Planning and regeneration in Bognor Regis is organisationally pivoted on the Bognor Regis Regeneration Task Force (BRRTF) established in January 2007 by Arun District Council as a single point of contact for external regeneration partners. The Task Force has coordination, facilitation and monitoring functions for a variety of physical development and regeneration plans and projects including '£500m of private investment currently planned'. A particular tool has been to use council owned land and planning policy as a catalyst to secure private investment and other sources of funding. Compared with core regeneration agencies in the other case studies, however, BRRTF lacks financial muscle or the ability to directly and actively implement regeneration projects; it depends on its preparatory and development work and encouragement and facilitation of regeneration carried out by other bodies.

Beyond BRRTF the district and county council have important statutory and other responsibilities. Arun District Council is the significant planning authority guiding the physical development and regeneration of Bognor Regis. A recent important planning strategy is the forward looking, imaginative and comprehensive 2009 Bognor Regis Seafront Strategy.⁴⁴ West Sussex County Council (WSCC) provides a planning, strategy and policy framework within which district council strategy and planning is nested.⁴⁵

Since 2004 Bognor Regis has also been part of the innovative sub-regional coastal '5 Town Network',⁴⁶ funded by SEEDA and designed as a mechanism for sharing regeneration experience, knowledge, skills and best practice. The network has recently become part of 'Coastal West Sussex',⁴⁷ a larger partnership of local authorities, business support agencies, health, skills and business partners. The educational strategy for Coastal West Sussex is based on massive capital expenditure: 'over the next 5–10 years, £580m will be invested in educational facilities and institutions along the West Sussex Coast'.⁴⁸ The investment is designed as a means of addressing endemic negative features of the Coastal West Sussex economy.

Outside local authority structures there are three critical organisations – St Modwen Properties PLC, the University of Chichester and the holiday company Butlins – of direct relevance to the nature, shape and speed of regeneration in contemporary Bognor Regis.

⁴³ The list can be found in a number of Arun documents including the 2009 *Bognor Regis Seafront Strategy*.

⁴⁴ <http://www.arun.gov.uk/cgi-bin/buildpage.pl?mysql=3672>

⁴⁵ For West Sussex County Council's cultural strategy see: <http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/ccm/content/leisure-and-tourism/arts/background-information-about-the-arts-service.en?page=3>

⁴⁶ <http://www.5-town-network.org.uk/>

⁴⁷ <http://www.coastalwestsussex.org.uk/index.html>

⁴⁸ DTZ (2009) *Coastal West Sussex: Education-Led Regeneration. Final Report*.

Physical redevelopment

St. Modwen Properties PLC is Arun Council's development partner to deliver a comprehensive mixed-use regeneration scheme for important town centre and seafront masterplan sites. The prime seafront location is identified as the 'Leisure Heart' site in the masterplan. Plans include the transformation of the site through a mixed use development including a new leisure and cultural offer. The leisure development is also related to changes proposed for the seafront and detailed in the Seafront Strategy. Because of the impact of the recession on its business plans, in April 2009 St Modwen was granted permission by Arun District Council to defer the submission of its planning application for up to three years thereby postponing the core commercial redevelopment regeneration projects.

University of Chichester

The University of Chichester has two campuses, one of which is in Bognor Regis. The University's 2007 strategy is centred on the core aims of 'addressing employer engagement, economic and social regeneration, community cohesion and widening participation'. Implementation of the strategy is based around delivering strategic objectives including 'the development of the University as an essential local partner in education-led regeneration'. Physical development plans in part depend on the success of bids for capital funding to HEFCE and SEEDA. Proposals include the development of a 'high quality, versatile creative/cultural industries facility for both academic and community use, which will accommodate the planned expansion of this curriculum area, engage local young people and adults, and support community groups'. These proposals have received support from local and regional government and associated agencies.

The cultural impact of the University is revealed in other ways. For example, it supports creative and cultural networks and events. The University has also entered into a formal partnership with Butlins and its creative and cultural strategy has received widespread support from local stakeholders. There have been excellent application numbers for the new creative and cultural degree programmes.

Butlins

Butlins is an energetic and high profile holiday company that is a part of the privately run Bourne Leisure. Since 2000 Bourne Leisure has injected major investment in the company. In Bognor Regis the retro-modernist Shoreline Hotel and Conference Centre opened in 2005 at a cost of £10m. The hotel – a radical departure from the tradition of chalet accommodation – has had a significant impact in attracting new visitors and was the centrepiece of £39m of investment in the resort between 2004 and 2009.

At the same time the company has sought to reposition its product in a number of ways. Traditionally Butlins offered all-inclusive holidays with guests discouraged from venturing beyond the site; now Butlins is establishing a number of regional alliances to enrich its visitor offer. Butlins appears to be prospering during the recession. New proposals within the context of an overall masterplan for the Butlins site feature intensive investment in new leisure facilities and hotel accommodation. In August 2009 the £20m, 200-room Ocean Hotel opened.

Key components

Significant components to the Bognor Regis approach to regeneration include:

- The working together and mutual support of cultural regeneration partners (particularly BRRT, Butlins and the University of Chichester), with significant links – embryonic in some cases but full of potential – fostered between industry and education, the visitor and the wider economy
- A paucity of public funding from regional agencies leading to alternative regeneration strategies being pursued with recognition of the need for ‘regeneration with no money’
- Reliance on facilitating private sector funding and from other sources that are not usually or primarily seen as part of regeneration funding streams
- The fostering by University of Chichester of creative and cultural activity in a variety of formal and informal ways, with some significant achievements
- The broader Coastal West Sussex sub-regional approach.

3.5 Portsmouth

In the context of this study, Portsmouth City Council and University of Portsmouth play a lead role. However, there is a host of players of different size and influence in the regeneration of Portsmouth, who vary widely in terms of their commitment to cultural regeneration. Some are involved in major regeneration projects and initiatives while other smaller players are engaged in work that has regenerative effects. Unlike the other three comparator towns, Portsmouth is a large city: the island core has a population of 197,700 and the wider conurbation 442,252, making it the 11th largest urban area in England. Its long maritime and naval history makes it more comparable in many ways to other post-industrial cities in the UK and Europe – for example Manchester, Bilbao, and Naples.

Portsmouth City Council (PCC)

As the unitary authority, Portsmouth City Council has the lead role in pushing the city forward and in providing vision and leadership. PCC is an important driver for regeneration in the city, especially since private developers have delayed or pulled out of major regeneration projects. PCC is one of the main forces behind the Tipner development,⁴⁹ being joint landowners of the site along with Tipner Regeneration Company and SEEDA. PCC is pushing forward infrastructural and transport work for the Tipner site that also ties in with accessibility to the Port Solent development site.

The Council's responsibilities for regeneration sit across a number of strategic directorates and portfolios. Whilst there is a newly designated Director of Regeneration, responsibilities still sit separately with planning, transport, community and cultural tasks being driven as a series of parallel projects or programmes, coordinated by corporate project boards.

⁴⁹ <http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/living/8781.html>

The University of Portsmouth

The University of Portsmouth is a significant presence in the city's civic, economic and cultural life, as a landowner, developer and regeneration partner in the city centre and as a contributor to the city's wider reputation. It plays an important role on the key local, subregional and other partnerships, and is committed to developing a more integrated approach to culture and regeneration through projects such as the joint development initiative with New Theatre Royal and the work of its Faculty of Creative and Cultural Industries.

Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

The LSP⁵⁰ promotes partnership working in the city, and is committed to delivering the Local Area Agreement (LAA). It takes an overview of performance across the ten priorities in its 2008 Vision for Portsmouth, and monitors and makes recommendations to the council on the use of the Area Based Grant. The LSP vision sees Portsmouth as the premier waterfront city, with an unrivalled maritime heritage a great place to live, work and visit'. Objectives embrace education and lifelong learning; accessibility and integrated transport; innovation, enterprise and jobs for all; safety; sustainability; housing; health; reputation for and accessibility to culture; celebration of diversity; shaping public services for the vulnerable. For the first time culture has been identified as a key priority in the vision for the city.

Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH)

PUSH⁵¹ includes PCC and 10 other local authorities in South Hampshire and key external partners. Formed in 2003, the Partnership works to tackle the economic challenges of South Hampshire. PUSH is involved in regeneration in Portsmouth in a number of ways, including supporting the preliminary infrastructural work for Tipner; providing funds for the University and New Theatre Royal to develop their joint plans; and work to quantify infrastructure needs for South Hampshire.

One of its key aims is to create quality places, as set out in the *Cultural Strategy for the Quality Place Delivery Panel*⁵² – a 20 year vision for culture in South Hampshire, to 'sit below' the overall vision of PUSH. This proposes that 'South Hampshire will gain renown as a quality place offering prosperity and a high quality of life for residents'. Key objectives include: Capital of Culture – recognition nationally and internationally; accessibility and ease of information; pride in the city; raised aspirations via community facing spaces and buildings; flourishing of creative and cultural industries; good design. A consultee commented that 'PUSH makes people look beyond the island'.⁵³

⁵⁰ <http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/AtoZ/5245.html>

⁵¹ <http://www.push.gov.uk>

⁵² http://www.push.gov.uk/what_we_do/culture/intro.aspx

⁵³ <http://www.push.gov.uk/pdf/PUSHPublications/PUSHQPDPCulturalStrategyJan092.pdf>

The Partnership (Portsmouth and South Hants Partnership)

The Partnership⁵⁴ was set up 15 years ago by local companies and public sector organisations to deliver regeneration. Its work covers economic development and regeneration, business engagement, social inclusion and project development. The areas are Portsmouth, Havant, Gosport and Fareham with a population of just under 5 million people. The Partnership is used by public agencies and local authorities to develop and coordinate district wide regeneration schemes. These have included nine major schemes under the Area Investment Framework and Single Regeneration Budget programmes worth in excess of £150m. It is in the early stages of trying to develop and promote a creative ideas centre.

Cultural Consortium

In response to the government's directive that every local authority should have a cultural strategy, an independent voluntary consortium⁵⁵ was established to monitor the council's implementation of its cultural strategy and raise the profile of culture in the city and within regeneration initiatives. The consortium provides a forum to enable cultural contributions to and consultation on a variety of issues such as the cultural dimensions of the LSP's Vision for Portsmouth document in 2008.

Key components

Portsmouth City Council claims not to have adopted a particular regeneration model, and this perception may be reflected in the pragmatic and project driven approach which the City has taken in the recent period. Its emerging strategy may change this, and gives it the opportunity, amongst other things, of more closely integrating the role of the University and the key creative and cultural institutions and sector leaders as partners in this. However, there is already a developed set of relationships between the city and its local partners, and the city based institutions such as the University which have a wider remit and a longer reach.

Portsmouth's approach to regeneration, culture and education has a number of components which include:

- The Unitary Authority in the lead role for regeneration in the city, working alongside and with a range of agencies
- The University's multiple roles as an actively developing cultural regeneration projects alongside expertise in, knowledge of and support for the wider local creative and cultural economy
- A perception that there are reasonably strong networks between civic, cultural and other leaders and people active in regeneration, culture and higher education
- A recognition that many people active in the cultural and creative community, in the creative business sector and in community based activities find it difficult to understand the council's approach to regeneration, and value and role which it sees cultural activity playing
- A growth in expertise and capacity in consulting widely on culture related activity, both through the Portsmouth Cultural Consortium and in consultation processes such as the recent Shaping Southsea exercise, and in deferring responsibility to community led regeneration initiatives such as Love Albert Road.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ <http://www.the-partnership.co.uk/>

⁵⁵ <http://www.cultural-consortium.co.uk/>

⁵⁶ <http://www.albertroad.insouthsea.co.uk/>; <http://www.lovealbertroad.co.uk/>

3.6 Conclusions

There are a number of conclusions to be drawn from this brief review of the some of the factors in the approach to regeneration being pursued in the four coastal towns. These include:

- The mutual benefit of partnerships of between agencies and institutions across sectors (particularly private-public-third sector and culture-education collaborations)
- The strength of a commercial disciplined social enterprise model
- The potential of complementing investment in high quality cultural offers and venues with greatly improved commercial leisure attractions
- The practice of paving the way for planned venues and attractions through preparatory programmes
- The role of events and fixed term programmes to test markets and ideas.
- The recognition and support of local champions and locally driven, community and business facing regeneration models
- The value of ensuring that the full range of higher education capacity can be harnessed to local regeneration activity.

These factors identify a number of elements – structure, leadership, temporary and short term projects and the important connections between higher education and culture and between these two domains of activity and the wider regeneration context – which are tested further in the next chapter. These will also inform the types of actions and interventions which this report will conclude with in the final chapter.

4 Regeneration, culture and education: comparing the four towns

4.1 Introduction

This chapter compares the approach taken in developing and delivering culture and education led regeneration in each of the four towns. It looks at the strategic and delivery models, assessing the governance and delivery mechanisms which distinguishes each of these places and in particular the contributions and role of cultural and creative sector leadership and of higher education.

4.2 Cultural, creative and educational infrastructure

The main elements in the four local approaches to developing cultural, creative and educational infrastructure, in the period 2000–2009, in each place are set out below:

Margate

The approach to developing cultural, creative and educational infrastructure has focussed on:

- A well-articulated cultural and creative vision and strategy
- A significant role for a partnership body, bringing together public, private and not-for-profit stakeholders
- The creation of a major cultural destination in the form of Turner Contemporary as the focal cultural point in Margate
- Building Margate's cultural offer through projects such as the reopening of Theatre Royal and Turner Contemporary's precursor projects
- Developing the creative quarter, with an emphasis on workspace, public realm improvements, and interventions to reinvigorate the existing retail and leisure centre of the town
- Planning future investment in Dreamland, the former seafront amusement park, as a major heritage leisure attraction
- Planned intensive interventions in the housing conditions of the renewal area.

MRP and its partner organisations have secured £35m of funding for the overall programme of investment including the £17.4m Turner Contemporary new build project. Additional public and private funding is being sought for new projects including £12.4m for Dreamland.

The benefits and opportunities of this approach include:

- The strength of the partnership and ownership by and commitment of a range of critical regional, county-level and local partners
- The ability to take a cohesive approach to regeneration that while featuring cultural projects as a positive strategy is also able to attend to underlying infrastructure and socio-economic difficulties
- The ability to secure significant funding from a diversity of sources and develop a range of complementary projects at various scales
- The investment in the built form to provide both iconic buildings and an array of smaller flexible spaces making a lasting contribution to the regeneration of the town
- The ability to engage with and support a range of stakeholders outside the formal partnership.

The risks attached to this approach include:

- The possibility that important members withdraw from the partnership
- The increasing difficulties in maintaining flows of public money in the face of growing competition from elsewhere and substantial reductions in public spending
- Securing, in particularly adverse market conditions, private sector funding whether commercial – for development – or charitable or sponsoring contributions to cultural projects
- Dependency on the actions of other public bodies
- Successfully implementing critical but difficult to deliver elements of the regeneration programme such as the interventions in the housing market
- Developing cultural projects that are sustainable and attractive enough to make a major on-going future contribution to the regeneration of the coastal town.

Folkestone

The approach to developing cultural, creative and educational infrastructure has focussed on:

- The significant role of the Creative Foundation, a largely independently funded social enterprise delivering infrastructure, programme and leadership
- The regeneration of the Old Town as a Creative Quarter with creative and educational workspace, live/work studios, retail and leisure, improved public realm etc
- Creating a long term asset based trust which holds properties on 125 year peppercorn leases
- Substantial investment in secondary and tertiary education – University Centre Folkestone , The Cube (with Kent Adult Education) and Folkestone Academy through the RDHCT
- Investing in a small scale mixed economy venue⁵⁷ rather than a major iconic capital project
- Promoting iconic projects with different business models: the Folkestone Triennial which carries a different order of risk than the long term maintenance of a programme and a building; the educational buildings with anchor tenants in place; the creative quarter portfolio of rentable space
- Planning for the Harbour and Sea Front, assisting the Folkestone Harbour Company provide a mix of commercial, cultural and civic benefits to help secure, extend and complement the work done in the Creative Quarter.

The benefits and opportunities of this approach include:

- The mounting degree of support across the public and business sector for the investment programme delivered by Creative Foundation
- Quality of building design and public realm, and an increasing focus on ensuring high levels of environmental performance in design, construction etc
- Increased size of cultural sector in Folkestone,⁵⁸ with tenants chosen for quality of work, sustainability as businesses and willingness to work as part of the placemaking process.
- Substantial commitment to the quality of places for learning and teaching and the size and range of facilities available
- The investment in the built form to provide both iconic buildings and an array of smaller flexible spaces making a lasting contribution to the town
- The ability to engage with and support a range of stakeholders outside the formal partnership
- A localised property development approach allied to an approach to cultural and educational engagement which is cohesive and embraces all of the town.

⁵⁷ Quarterhouse with 220-500 capacity auditorium, bar/restaurant and business units.

⁵⁸ From 1 (2003) to 58 businesses in 2009.

The risks attached to this approach include:

- Maintaining flows of public money in the face of growing competition from elsewhere and securing further private sector funding, particularly in adverse market conditions
- The necessity in difficult economic conditions to move from a high level of dependency on a single funding source to a sustainable business model based on long term property based income generation allied to project funded initiatives
- Dependency on the actions of other public bodies
- The slow pace at which critical but difficult to deliver elements of an overall regeneration approach tackling widespread sub-standard housing, which militate against progress made in (for example) increasing levels of educational attainment
- Developing cultural projects that are sustainable and attractive enough to make a major on-going future contribution to the regeneration of the coastal town.

Bognor Regis

The approach to developing cultural, creative and educational infrastructure has focussed on:

- The local authority-led Bognor Regis Regeneration Task Force adopting a developmental and co-ordinating role but depending on the actions and agreement of other bodies for funding and infrastructure delivery
- Limited specific public sector regeneration money, mostly used to improve public spaces (including a public realm arts and regeneration project and the restoration of Hotham Park)
- Including culture and leisure elements in proposed landmark commercial redevelopment projects
- The substantial and continuing private sector capital reinvestment in Butlins, the major and critical tourist site in the town
- The active involvement of the University of Chichester in regeneration and regeneration-related activities focussed on capital projects with strong cultural dimensions on the Bognor Regis campus
- Being part of the broader Coastal West Sussex initiative fostered by the county council and supported by major public sector partners and, in particular, the multi-dimension and long-term strategy for substantial investment in the educational infrastructure and curriculum of the coast.
- The education strategy, designed to address long-standing skill deficits and help realise the economic potential of the area and sub-region: as well as the University of Chichester's developments, Bognor Regis Community College is currently being rebuilt.

The benefits and opportunities of this approach include:

- The role of the BRRTF in carrying out preparatory and development work and encouraging partners to work together
- The ability of the two dominant organisations – the University and Butlins – to secure and use significant capital funding streams
- The strength of the broader Coastal West Sussex strategy that has assisted in regional recognition of the West Sussex coast as a single unit with common strengths, opportunities and regeneration needs.

The risks attached include:

- The BRRTF's lack of access to funding streams and need to coordinate, prepare and persuade rather than adopt a more interventionist or directive role
- The dependency on two dominant local organisations
- The related dependency on two distinct streams of inward funding, one from the public sector, the other from the private
- Dependency on current market conditions for private sector investment to realise the related cultural and leisure projects
- The sustainability of the broader Coastal West Sussex education strategy in the context of its reliance on continuing public sector investment.

Portsmouth

The approach to developing cultural, creative and educational infrastructure has focussed on:

- The development of a very substantial set of cultural assets and visitor attractions in and around the naval dockyards and the related built and natural heritage
- Creating a waterside retail and leisure offer with a number of high quality developments,
- Securing iconic buildings like the millennium lottery funded Spinnaker Tower
- Substantial investment (£23m in 2007/08) through the University enabling a significant city centre presence, and preparing for future projects including the Eldon Site which will include a major new building to accommodate provision of architecture, visual/digital arts and cultures and creative technologies
- Improving the city's large scale sports and leisure infrastructure, through the £25m Mountbatten Sports Centre redevelopment and the plans for the new Portsmouth FC stadium
- Reviving the seafront at Southsea to deliver local economic and environmental benefits and consolidate the town's visitor economy
- An emerging community led regeneration process.

The benefits and opportunities of this approach include:

- A substantial spread of commercial and cultural activity, building up a critical mass of retail and leisure footfall and cultural tourism
- Substantial investment through the University of Portsmouth enabling its to develop a significant city centre presence
- The emergence of a hub of creative sector business activity
- Joint culture and university led projects such as the investment in the New Theatre Royal as a national touring and producing theatre
- Buy in, engagement with, and pride within local communities.

The risks attached include:

- Increasing dependence on scarce private sector development activity at the point at which funds available through the public sector become equally scarce
- Delay in larger scale development activity with projects such as the Northern Quarter, Tipner and the proposed Portsmouth FC stadium
- With development momentum slowing, smaller, community based regeneration projects not being able to pick up the slack
- The range of partnership bodies and the complexity of delivery structures hindering an easily understandable and marketable cultural and educational regeneration story being developed for the next phase of the city's development
- Cultural investment being seen as completed, or marginal in times of tight or non existent capital budgets, or both.

4.3 Programme, activity, and capacity building

Alongside the focus on investment in infrastructure, each of the four towns has taken its own approach to improving and increasing the quality and level of cultural programme, activity and capacity building, and its further and higher education offer.

Margate

The approach to developing the cultural, creative and educational offer has focussed on:

- A comprehensive ten year creative and cultural delivery plan laying out objectives, measures and strategy
- Building profile through a mix of high profile events and developing and promoting a new vision and brand for Margate Turner Contemporary and Turner Contemporary's precursor projects
- Building and attracting local and East Kent audiences – for example, Turner Contemporary's pre-opening projects and the Theatre Royal and its outreach programme
- Engaging young people, particularly those experiencing deprivation or disadvantage, from across the local authority and the larger sub-region
- Recognising, supporting and engaging local stakeholders as individuals and in not-for-profit bodies in regeneration proposals and projects: these range from the smaller scale of music festivals and board membership to the larger scale of critical involvement in, for example, the Dreamland bid.

Key outputs and implications of this approach will include:

- Agreed objectives and measures that allow MRP and its stakeholders to assess progress and success
- Increasing visitor numbers and broadening visitor diversity
- Developing the promotion of Margate and its attractions in the critical period leading to and during the opening phase of Turner Contemporary
- Engaging with organisations working with priority groups and audiences
- Continuing to recognise local organisational capacity and provide resources and opportunities for its development.

Folkestone

The approach to developing the cultural, creative and educational offer has focussed on:

- Building profile through high profile events and festivals such as the Folkestone Triennial
- Developing high quality programmes on a festival and seasonal basis to develop local audiences and a market for new and different kinds of cultural experience
- Providing local access to higher education with University Centre Folkestone, recruiting students from all sectors of the community in East Kent as well as further afield
- Increasing levels of participation amongst young people by securing funding for extensive projects like Find Your Talent working in 45 schools on a two and a half year national pilot scheme
- Developing an expanding and increasingly diverse group of small businesses and practices in the creative quarter.

Key outputs and implications of this approach will include:

- The engagement of local people, including priority groups of young people, both raising educational aspirations and achievement and also linking this to a broader, locally accessible cultural offer
- The establishment of a body of higher education students and related activity in the centre of the town
- Sustainable workspace and support for a wide range of individual cultural and creative practitioners and small businesses
- Creating strong relationships between the development of the Creative Quarter and cultural regeneration and local employment
- Continuing attraction of other creative and related businesses, choosing to relocate to Folkestone on the basis of the perceived success of the project to date.

Bognor Regis

The approach to developing the cultural, creative and educational offer has focussed on:

- The University's development of a curriculum with a strong cultural dimension, its support of local grassroots cultural initiatives; and, the developing partnership with Butlins
- The University of Chichester's willingness to adopt a local civic role including an active regeneration focus
- The mutually supportive partnership developing between the two critical local employers, each with important regeneration roles, the University of Chichester and Butlins
- The decision of Butlins to work with local partners to develop its resort and the company's proven market awareness and willingness to invest locally
- BRRTF's involvement in a variety of preparatory and development work including the launch of a Development & Partner Charter designed to ensure employment and related standards are maintained; proposals for enterprise units making use of vacant premises; planned graduate placement programmes; and the establishment of a Bognor Regis education, skills and training alliance.

Key outputs and implications of this approach include:

- The recruitment of new students to the locality
- The engagement of local people with education, including priority groups of young people
- The support and sustaining of grassroots cultural organisations
- Strong relationships between the development of employment opportunities and cultural regeneration projects
- BRRTF's preparatory and development work, if implemented and successful, leading to an improved and better understood cultural, creative and educational offer.

Portsmouth

The approach to developing the cultural, creative and educational offer has focussed on:

- The benefit of the substantial educational and cultural offer made through the naval heritage in the Historic Dockyard and elsewhere
- Building high quality programme delivery through projects such as Aspex Contemporary Art Gallery and New Theatre Royal
- Providing business and other support for companies in the creative sector through the University, for example via the CIBAS project
- Engaging with and developing support for community led regeneration projects such as Love Albert Road.

Key outputs and implications of this approach include:

- Buy in, engagement with, and pride within local communities
- The need to maintain support for smaller, community led cultural regeneration projects, particularly in terms of their management and development capacity
- Providing and signposting support for innovative cultural venues to maintain and build audiences.

4.4 Conclusions

A number of themes emerging from the research on the SECTs and the recession provide the basis for some conclusions which we summarise below. There is no single model shared between the four towns, in terms of exploiting the optimum benefits from connecting regeneration, culture and higher education. However, we believe that the different approaches and experiences in the four towns offer a number of conclusions.

Culture and regeneration

In the context of culture and regeneration, there are differences in the approaches taken in each of the four places:

- A strong arts and cultural emphasis in the regeneration programme and a focus on major investment projects with Turner Contemporary and Dreamland (Margate)
- A broadly-based arts, cultural and education approach to regeneration driven by events, festivals and fixed term projects to drive up local capacity, aspiration and new cultural markets, and delivered by an autonomous social enterprise body (Folkestone)
- Large-scale investment, with commercial leisure including substantial new investment in the Butlins resort, building on programme delivery in partnership with University of Chichester (Bognor Regis)
- Building on established array of naval, maritime and related heritage attractions, and visitor and retail destinations with an established and expanding relationship with the university and a range of mature cultural producers (Portsmouth).

Higher education and regeneration

This research has identified important positive synergies between cultural regeneration programmes and higher education initiatives in coastal towns that hitherto have been often unacknowledged in strategic and policy terms. The clearest differences in the way in which the contribution of HEIs have been planned, and/or in which the roles of the individual universities have been engaged as partners:

- HEIs not involved yet as an active regeneration partner, nor with a significant physical presence in town (Margate)
- HEIs brought in as part of major education transformation, and to help intensify the regeneration impact of the creative quarter (Folkestone)
- HEI activity rolled out through programmes etc but planned investment not yet in place, to integrate higher education in town centre/cultural quarter regeneration (Bognor Regis)
- Long term higher education presence in the city has enabled the HEI to become a substantial regeneration partner, developing solid relationships and joint projects with cultural partners, and building the capacity and sustainability of the local cultural and creative sector (Portsmouth).

5 The impact of the recession

5.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the impact of the recession on the four coastal towns, in the context of culture and higher education within regeneration.

5.2 The economic downturn

The speed, severity and reach of the economic downturn has profound implications the South East economy and for coastal communities in particular. It endangers recent economic growth, threatens regeneration progress, and has potential negative consequences for many aspects of the economy, society and culture of coastal towns.

There are no single, shared set of indicators of the progress of the recession produced for the four coastal towns, nor for government at large, the cultural sector or higher education. Useful annual snapshots such as the Town Centre Health Indicators (in Kent, for Margate and Folkestone) report only in outline on the cultural and educational aspects of the economy which this research concerned with. There are some outline figures for the evening economy (split between different types of food and drink establishments), high street footfall, visitor enquiries at the tourism information centres and the cultural sector. Comparison of the two most recent Margate reports (2007 and 2008)⁵⁹ shows that footfall and visitor number enquires are fairly static. The cultural sector's section is descriptive rather than numerical. It would be valuable to establish a more informative cultural section in this annual headline survey.

In terms of the range of indicators briefly reported on in Section 3.2 above, and detailed in Appendix 3, the Claimant Count Unemployment data give a sense of the impact of the downturn on individuals. Since April 2008 the greatest rate of increase in Job Seeker Allowance (JSA) claimant rates is in the most prosperous wards: the recession does indeed appear to be reaching into groups that were previously reasonably immune to disadvantage. However, the overall claimant rate is still increasing and still much higher in the most deprived areas of the four SECTs. The relative disadvantage remains. Margate stands out for its very high claimant rates – the overall rate of 8.5 per cent is more than double the national average. It has two of the most deprived wards in the South East region with Cliftonville West ward continuing to top the table for unemployment in the region with 13.2 per cent of working age people claiming unemployment benefits in April 2009.

Whilst there is some data from individual places, there is as yet no conclusive pattern which establishes whether or not towns with a particular approach to the substantial involvement of culture or education in their regeneration are particularly affected by or resistant to the impact of the downturn. The four towns under scrutiny face a number of challenges shared across the region.

⁵⁹ Kent CC (2007, 2008) *Town Centre Health Indicators (year) Margate* available at http://www.kent.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/A3C7F457-8DFC-4342-AB56-DD2B2822700A/0/margate_tchi_08.pdf

It is not yet apparent whether the notion of private sector growth and development being the engine of change and 'progress' – the underlying premise of national, regional and local government policy – has been challenged in more than the short term. Many significant private sector led developments (especially those based on residential growth) are on hold and may in some cases have been abandoned. More fundamentally, the model of profitable development activity generating the kinds of returns which pay for part or whole contributions to essential infrastructure is in question. Local authorities and delivery vehicles have become increasingly dependent on planning agreements and local mechanisms like community infrastructure levies to generate funds for infrastructure projects. Occasionally these include contributions to cultural projects.

It is quite uncertain how soon, if at all, this mechanism will begin to work again with sufficient return to enable projects not deemed to be essential infrastructure and therefore given a lower priority, like many if not all cultural projects, to benefit. Even in, perhaps especially in these conditions, SEEDA and other regional and local policy, leadership and strategic agencies have an essential role in helping local regeneration and renewal by promoting culture and higher education as an essential part of local infrastructure, economy, and of local quality of life and distinctiveness of place.

Many income and funding streams available for local regeneration have also been reduced by the downturn. Local authority income as being hit in a number of ways, as fewer developers seek planning permission, people visit resorts and market towns less, businesses spend less, and travel and leisure patterns change towards the more economical. Similarly, demands on some local authority core services including education and housing have increased without a compensating increase in resources.

In the South East, local leadership has also to be alert to the changes which SEEDA is anticipating. This will substantially reduce its budgets, and give it more narrowly drawn priorities and targets. This is will diminish if not remove the RDA's role as a funder of or investor in cultural and creative projects. The challenge for local and cultural leadership is how to operate effectively and to continue to aspire and grow in the absence of funding from the RDA, local authorities, cultural funders and local regeneration planning and regeneration contributions. This has potentially grave consequences for local and regional regeneration agencies supporting economic development and placemaking along the South East coastal zone.

The downturn can also be an opportunity for the cultural sector and the coastal towns. Cultural regeneration can continue be promoted as an inventive, economical, and socially cohesive means of delivering regeneration whilst more conventional commercial approaches are postponed or cancelled. The role of cultural activity as the provider of some of the glue which holds communities together may be more highly valued as the recession continues, people lose jobs, income and confidence, and crime and antisocial behaviour begins to rise.

5.3 Creative industries, arts, heritage and cultural projects

Arts Council England's analysis⁶⁰ shows that the recession has already had

- a serious effect on box office income,
- difficulties in securing sponsorship and donations likely to cause significant difficulties
- adverse impacts on individual arts organisations.

ACE also reports that local authority funding to the arts, already under severe pressure, is further under threat, and the climate for business sponsorship in the arts remains difficult. In addition, early indications from the trusts and foundations are that their income is affected by the stock market and grants are becoming more difficult to obtain. *'It is also clear that arts organisations and funders will need to respond flexibly and creatively over the coming period. Maintaining levels of core public funding will become increasingly important in order to protect the investment that we have already made and to ensure the arts can grow after the recession and support the recovery.'*

NESTA⁶¹ views the creative sector as a key part of UK's climb out of recession, reporting that:

Between 2009 and 2013 the UK creative industries – which are responsible for films, music, fashion, TV and video games production – will grow on average at 4% – more than double the rate of the rest of the economy. By 2013, the sector is expected to employ 1.3 million people, likely to be more than the financial sector.

The optimistic medium-term outlook is primarily due to the opportunities for innovation as increasing numbers of creative businesses take advantage of digital technologies to develop new business models.

By 2013, there may be as many as 180,000 creative businesses in the sector, compared to the current number of 148,000. In the same year, the sector is expected to contribute as much as £85 billion to UK value added, up from £57 billion.

NESTA's figures also show that although gross value added (GVA) in the sector is likely to drop sharply in 2009, perhaps by as much as 6 per cent, reflecting the general economic environment, the sector will quickly recover to show stronger than average growth from 2010 when it is expected to rise back to 3 per cent.

In the short term, there may be a range of factors which will not be coastal town specific but which may bear on the fortunes of companies and practitioners based in the South East coastal economy. The cost of skilled labour may go down, enabling small companies (for example) to recruit in ways which they could not do at the top of the market. A larger number of skilled people working from home, in a freelance or part time manner (or at least seeking to do so) and forming a larger core of people interested in developing networks, professional development and training opportunities. It may be a good time for networking and collaboration. Less development activity will mean more temporary sites and buildings for creative and cultural use.

Leisure and consumption patterns seem to be changing, away from more expensive, perhaps more formal activities, venues and ways of relaxing and celebrating towards less costly, less formal activities and expenditure. Many coastal towns notably offer a range of less formal cultural opportunities – their music scene, clubs and pubs, places to eat, markets, etc. These may be places and activities which can resist the current downward trends.

⁶⁰ http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/aboutus/project_detail.php?rid=0&sid=&browse=recent&id=1132

⁶¹ <http://www.nesta.org.uk/uk-creative-industry-to-drive-significant-growth-in-uk-economy/> February 2009

Even more fundamental than the recession may be the impact on creative, commercial and wider social practice of the digital shift, which is impacting on the ways in which individuals, communities, businesses and civic institutions experience almost every aspect of living, learning, buying and selling, creating and making. The impact of Web 2.0, social networks, and the digitisation of commercial and non-profit making business practice are threat, challenge and opportunity rolled into one.

For the sectors under review here, the knowledge economy and the digital shift require better business intelligence, more effective ways to collaborate with peers and across disciplines and industry sectors. The impact of new technologies on all sectors will continue to make forecasting difficult but may lead to smaller workforces more heavily focussed on higher level digital economy and content focussed skills. In coastal town communities, this may exacerbate the challenge of the digital divide: how best to provide access to people who, for a variety of reasons, find themselves unable easily to access and benefit from the opportunities and information which the digital domain can provide.

Experian's report for SEEDA *The impact of the downturn on the creative industries*⁶² reviews such conclusions in a regional context. Their draft findings suggest that the South East is predicted to experience a shallower recession than other parts of the UK, and that particular parts of the creative sector – those in the digital economy, the less traditional sectors such as design and computer games and electronic publishing and these less tied to the financial services and construction sectors might feel quick sharp effects but bounce back relatively quicker than more traditional industries such as radio, television, publishing, advertising and architecture. In the context of the regional picture, none of the four towns in hand register amongst the larger clusters of creative economy activity, a pattern which underpinned previous research into the state of the creative economy in the region.⁶³

The cultural and creative economy largely consists of micro businesses, depending either on the local visitor economy or on relationships with the main stream business and public sector. However, the visible (though small) clusters of activity reported by Ancer Spa show that in each of the four towns there have been a number of companies in the computer games and electronic publishing subsectors. Experian reports the presence of film and video companies (all four towns) at the regional average, and more music, visual and performing arts companies than the regional average in Shepway. The leisure games sector is reported to be vibrant both in Portsmouth, and by both universities (Portsmouth and Chichester) in the sub-region. This may be evidence of a creative business ecology in each of the towns which is tied to newer forms of practice and less constrained by older industries and practices.

Companies involved in smaller scale digital activity (from games to web design) seem to be riding the recession this far more easily than industries whose main markets have been hit harder and more (architects, advertising, publishing) by cuts in budgets and retrenchment elsewhere in the economy. Whilst coastal holidays in the UK may become more popular than in more affluent years, it is not at all certain either that there has been a major shift in favour of the coastal towns in question, or that they have a solid, sustainable high quality offer yet in place. Indeed, addressing the latter issue is the purpose behind the investment in projects like Turner Centre in Margate, Folkestone Triennial and Butlins in Bognor Regis.

⁶² Experian for SEEDA (2009) *The impact of the downturn on the creative industries*.

⁶³ South East Economic Partnership, Business Link Kent, UCCA, Arts Council of England (South East) and SEEDA, ANCER SPA (2007) *Strategic Framework and Action Plan for Development of the Creative Industries in South East England*.

Finally, government and others⁶⁴ also are looking at whether the kind of risk management and fluid thinking embedded in much successful arts and cultural activity represent a valuable additional response mechanism to the challenges of recession and change. In any event, changed circumstances, priorities and resources will undoubtedly bring change, restructuring, economising, better collaboration, and, implicitly, a combination of fewer leaner organisations and more innovative start-ups.

5.4 Higher and further education

By the end of June 2009 the number of home and EU people applying for full-time undergraduate courses in UK universities and colleges was up 9.7 per cent (to 592,312) on the same time in 2008. There was pronounced increase in mature applicants, with those who fall into the category of 21 to 24 years showing a rise of 14.9 per cent, and an increase of 18.8 per cent from applicants over the age of 25. Above average increases in applications applied in particular to a range of vocational courses. These include a 17.4 per cent increase in applicants for Hospitality, Leisure, Tourism and Transport, combinations within Creative Arts and Design up by 11.4 per cent and a 27.2 per cent increase for Journalism. In contrast applications for some more traditional creative subjects including Dance, Music and Fine Art increased below the 9.7 per cent average.⁶⁵ Many FE colleges experienced similar strong increases in the number of applicants for autumn 2009 entry.

Universities working in the case study areas experienced very strong growth in applicant to March 2009 compared with the same period the previous year. Set against a national increase of 8.1 per cent, applications to the University of Portsmouth increased by 24.4 per cent, to the University of Chichester by 17.3 per cent and to Canterbury Christ Church (with a campus in Thanet) by 12.4 per cent.

However, government for the first time in a decade in large part withdrew from its financial support of additional FE and HE entrants. In effect the expansion of post-compulsory education, a hallmark of the current government, has been halted at least for a temporary period. There are also indications that the government will wish to see HE and FE funding more explicitly support the economy, employer engagement and workforce development. One early response to the recession from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) was the establishment of an Economic Challenge Investment Fund to enable higher education institutions and further education colleges support individuals and businesses affected by the recession.

Despite such responses the government through HEFCE has made it clear that it will not support substantial expansion of home/EU numbers in the next two to three years. For any university growth in a particular curriculum area must be self-supported through the redistribution of funded student numbers between subject areas. Where additional infrastructure investment in buildings or facilities has been made – for example, in a new university centre or developing an existing campus – universities can no longer rely on the funding council to provide additional recurrent funding through the support of additional home/EU students. Universities and colleges remain able to increase international (beyond the EU) fee-paying student numbers and this is one activity that, especially in the context of exchange rate movements, will allow HEIs to grow external income.

⁶⁴ Notes from CPPS April 2009 Seminar: *“Arts and Culture through the economic downturn”*.

⁶⁵ http://www.ucas.ac.uk/website/news/media_releases/2009/2009-07-09

Government spending restrictions will in the medium term lessen HEFCE support for capital investment by universities; in contrast and in the short term, in response to the recession and government wish to support the construction industry, HEFCE funding of capital investment projects in individual HEIs has been bought forward. In the FE sector and not directly related to the recession, a disastrous capital project-bidding programme conducted by the Learning and Skills Council finally unravelled in 2009. The ambitions, plans and bids – typically based on significant and already incurred development costs – of literally hundreds of FE colleges to renew or replace existing buildings and campuses came to nothing. None of the FE proposed capital projects in the four case study towns and adjacent areas were in the select group of just 13 colleges nationally whose proposals were short listed for further development at the end of June 2009.⁶⁶ In summary, despite increased student demand in part generated by the recession, funding – both capital and recurrent – of FE and HE expansion has been halted. At this point no announcements have been made about the extent to which government funding of post compulsory education will be reduced and perhaps also redirected toward particular government priorities.

5.5 Responses from government and sector agencies

In the context of coastal towns, culture and regeneration, a number of recent Government initiatives offer some ideas for local adoption, although the sums available to fund these are small in the context of likely national demand and need. It is too early to see what effect these will have. However, they do form part of the context within which actions and interventions relating to coastal towns, culture and regeneration set out in the next chapter. These also need to be measured against the likely negative impacts of substantial reductions in funding available to the public sector at large (remembering Oxfordshire's estimate that its public sector may shrink by 10 per cent over the next five years, and SEEDA's imminent budget reductions and realignments).

DCLG⁶⁷ has announced (April 2009) new measures and up to £3m to help communities find creative ways to reduce the negative impact empty shops have on the high street – vital for town centre and business confidence. The new provisions including special planning application waivers, standard interim-use leases, and temporarily leasing shops to councils will allow empty shops to get makeovers for use as cultural, community or learning services.

These measures are published as *Looking after our Town Centres* which identifies the best ways and steps communities can take to keep town centres thriving. The Government will introduce new rules soon to give extra protection to existing shops that serve the community such as local post offices and pubs. These steps are part of wider action designed to help business during the downturn.

On the cultural side, ACE has announced a £44.5m fast track initiative⁶⁸ to help recession-hit artists and art organisations over the next two years. The main tranche will be targeted primarily at existing strategically important organisations suffering directly because of the recession. The £500,000 to enable empty retail spaces to be used for artistic activities as part of the government's Town Centres Initiative is a tiny amount, but might prompt some similar local activity in coastal towns.

⁶⁶ <http://www.lsc.gov.uk/news/latestnews/news-290609.htm>

⁶⁷ <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/towncentres>

⁶⁸ http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/aboutus/project_detail.php?rid=0&sid=&browse=recent&id=1134

ACE is seeking to identify ways in which arts organisations can access the Future Jobs Fund⁶⁹ through which Government plans to support at least 5,000 short-term job opportunities for long-term unemployed young people in the arts and cultural sectors. As part of this New Deal of the Mind⁷⁰ is developing a proposal with partners to create hubs based regionally, which act as clearing houses and support for placements for young people.

Government⁷¹ has also set out plans for helping charities and third sector organisations through the economic downturn, partly in the belief that third sector organisations will emerge from the downturn stronger as a result. The measures include grants, support for skills development and increased volunteer development.

These are in addition to the business and economy focussed action which will follow from the *South East Joint Regional Recovery Plan*,⁷² which SEEDA, Jobcentre Plus and the Learning and Skills Council are promoting; and programmes such as Business Link's *Real help now for businesses and people*⁷³. However, all of these initiatives are still largely or wholly untested, and their cumulative impact remains to be seen.

5.6 Implications for recession based, resource scarce practice

Artists' capacity to operate economically, inventively and to stretch the pounds they work with – to galvanise change, access buildings and spaces for work and performance or exhibition – becomes a valuable commodity. This is not an argument for poverty, but a recognition that artists and cultural organisation often move quickly, lightly and laterally in ways which more formal, statutory or quasi statutory bodies cannot and do not. A cluster of smaller scale projects devised eclectically and driven by local creative passions have a dynamic and a potential for quick delivery and unexpected outcomes in ways which large scale set piece infrastructure almost always envy. These characteristics – lightness of touch, fleetness of foot – are shared by cultural practitioners and organisations, by students and graduates breaking out of learning and into their own professional practice, and by young companies.

In a world with extremely scarce public and private resources available for culture, some local authorities and delivery bodies already recognise this. But they will need to embrace and support this dynamic, and build it into their thinking, developing the creative and cultural sector into their leadership, governance and planning arrangements.

⁶⁹ <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/campaigns/futurejobsfund>

⁷⁰ <http://www.newdealofthemind.com>

⁷¹ http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/real_help_for_communities/summary.aspx

⁷² http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/SouthEast/SE_Joint_Regional_Recovery_Plan_Executive_Summary_MARCH_2009-22mar09.pdf

⁷³ <http://www.businesslink.gov.uk/bdotg/action>

6 Conclusions and actions

How can this research assist local partnerships to sustain themselves in the face of coming shocks and in continuing times of great financial stringency? What are the important messages for local government, delivery partnerships, cultural agencies, higher education and for the cultural and creative community?

This review of the ways in which the four coastal towns currently experience the interaction between culture, higher education and regeneration suggest a number of conclusions. In each of the four towns, the local civic, cultural and educational leadership can take steps better to identify and make use of local strengths and opportunities to support the continued role of culture and education through challenging and financial stringent times.

6.1 Conclusions

We draw the following conclusions from this review of practice in the four coastal towns.

Cultural vitality is as importance as business vitality. Each of the coastal towns is looking to develop its own combination of cultural activity for its residents and programmes, events and places which can attract visitors and tourists. This works best when people invest in the quality of programmes and on local distinctiveness. Giving visitors' the best possible experience is essential. Cultural vitality is also important to business vitality. Government and local civic leadership in many places recognise that places with vibrant creative and cultural communities help attract and retain talented people and companies across the range of sectors.

Culture, creativity and higher education play a substantial role in **placemaking**. Higher education investment and activity can be harnessed effectively to local regeneration and development processes. Cultural talent, activity and infrastructure are already helping raise profile of the place and individuals' aspirations in towns like Folkestone. Cultural, educational and civic bodies need to work together effectively to make their towns work better.

Scale and locality: Some culture and education led regeneration programmes have large scale projects at their heart. Where this is the case, all partners involved need to do whatever they can to ensure that they are sustainable, and bring the benefits that investment of scale demands. However, there is equal, though different value in encouraging small scale, autonomous, artist driven and community led and sometimes occasional activity. The range of artists' studios, galleries, cafes, small music venues and other arts projects help build a rich offer in Margate which that the Turner Contemporary will complement, but also requires for its own survival and sustainability.

Events and fixed term programmes enable local agencies to test markets and ideas. Seasonal events and festivals intensify local cultural experience, and provide high quality programme which small coastal towns and markets could not sustain year round.

Ownership, leadership and autonomy are determining factors in seeing projects from idea to actuality, and into the long term success. Portsmouth's Love Albert Road is just one example of recognising and supporting local champions, and supporting effective grassroots and locally driven, community and business facing regeneration. This approach can provide locally embedded, cost effective ways of generating commitment and change.

Independence of means: The leadership and delivery role of the Creative Foundation and the Roger De Haan Charitable Trust demonstrate the strength of the social enterprise model, where it is using commercial disciplines in sustainable and socially focussed development programmes, and in particular where it can develop an asset based approach to culture and education led regeneration. The case of Butlins in Bognor Regis shows the potential of enriching and complementing the investment in high quality culture and/or education with commercial leisure attractions. In any event, the prognosis for the reduction in public sector funding is both challenge and opportunity: projects will need to work out how best to survive with reduced, little or no dependency on public sector funding.

The long view: You don't turn around a failing seaside town in a few years. The data shows how little relative change has been experienced between these four towns and regional and national benchmarks through the years which preceded the recession. These places are still haunted by embedded poverty. Decades of poverty and low self esteem take more than a few time-limited projects to remedy.

The long view also commends early and sustained action. The Creative Foundation manages its charitably owned properties on 125 year leases. Early and continued commitment should help secure the value of new projects and investment, paving the way (for example as Turner Contemporary is doing) for new venues and attractions by investing in programmes and capacity building activity and pre-opening programmes. The universities of Chichester and Portsmouth demonstrate a similar sustained commitment to their home places.

Concerted action: The partners in this research study already place a high value on sharing intelligence and taking concerted action across their local communities. They recognise the local, collective and mutual benefits of partnerships between agencies and institutions across sectors working more collaboratively and more efficiently with partners by simplifying decision making and delivery processes. They are interested in continued sharing of knowledge and good practice between sectors, within sub regions and as part of a south-east and national coastal towns' network of leaders, and in reliable local intelligence mechanisms and indicators for tracking impacts and opportunities.

6.2 Interventions and actions

Based on this, there are important messages and recommendations for action for the main parties involved in the continued cultural and educational transformation of coastal towns. Whilst, for simplicity here, we direct each of these particularly at one or other of the main parties in regeneration – local government, delivery partnerships, cultural agencies, higher education, the private sector and the cultural and creative community – each of these actions or interventions is a shared responsibility across this matrix of players.

These start with the local and conclude with the national, reflecting the understanding shared by the commissioning partners that locally self determined action has already made the difference in coastal towns and will continue to be the only readily available source of support for local regeneration projects. Regional support for projects is going to be subject to major constraints and radical changes are likely and imminent. These will affect the regional and national institutional landscape and its governance, with sharp, reductive consequences for resources.

Local authorities and delivery agencies/partnerships

Faced with reductions in public spending on regeneration, and the impending changes to SEEDA's priorities and resources, local authorities, delivery agencies and partnerships need to find new ways to deliver effective regeneration. The key message for these local frontline public bodies is that new approaches to regeneration will almost certainly be needed in a period when commercial and taxpayer funds will be hard to attract. The public sector itself will shrink and retrench. These new projects, processes and programmes will probably be less capital intensive, perhaps more flexible and lighter on their feet. This may require action plans to be reviewed, perhaps radically. The involvement of creative and cultural practitioners and other local champions may require fresh approaches to consultation and to recruitment. The four towns have an opportunity to build some local good practice, integrating cultural and educational practitioners into panels, boards and other parts of governance, putting this practice at the heart of the governance and delivery of locally owned innovative regeneration solutions.

Experience across the four coastal towns shows how culture and education can help redirect and deliver local regeneration strategies. Social enterprise, development trust and other innovative models for local delivery, well directed and properly resourced, can deliver benefits effectively. They become sustainable when they incorporate income generation based on assets. Transfer of assets into these types of bodies is being piloted by government across the country. These examples and the expertise of the Creative Foundation offer good, replicable practice to build on.

Action: Local authorities, delivery agencies and partnerships should review their regeneration delivery plans and see how and where less expenditure intensive approaches might be delivered by increased involvement of cultural and educational bodies.

Individual regeneration agencies can review how to use resources more effectively (either sub-regionally, for example between Margate and Folkestone) or between individual agencies. Invest to save projects across the country offer examples of how property development and management, marketing, and other service provision might be delivered more cost effectively.

Building on this study and other replicable research and evaluation models, local delivery agencies, local and regional government can evaluate the long term impact of their programmes, working alongside cultural and educational partners to find ways to structure, plan and deliver these.

Cultural organisations and practitioners and higher education institutions

Cultural organisations and practitioners say that they would like more consultative, earlier, consistent, and more influential involvement in local policy and priority setting, and in delivery. To see this happen, cultural organisations and networks in coastal towns and elsewhere should work together to ensure that the value of their creative contribution to governance and planning is well understood, and their experience in creating dramatic, inspiring results – often with minimal resources – is valued as a signal of enterprise and success and not marked down as poverty and impracticality.

A key message to local delivery bodies is to ensure that they find ways of strengthening effective networks and effective ways of engaging practitioners in local partnership and governance and in making coastal town centres work. One or more cultural practitioners for every board!

The complementary action must be to take the development of governance, management and operational skills extremely seriously. Much advice on offer to the innovation sector says that the best response to dealing with the recession is to do the basics of management and direction even better, rather than looking for clever solutions. Most small businesses, which are what almost every cultural practice is, have little built-in capacity to engage in professional and management development. Responses to this might include extending sector targeted advice and training project like CIBAS, being promoted effectively in and around Portsmouth by the University there.

The higher education community needs to think in similar ways when it is looking to develop local engagement. It is essential, as good experience in Chichester and Portsmouth shows, to recognise and use the resources of the locality and the skills and experiences of local people in developing a local education offer. Experience in Folkestone shows how potentially important the presence of a University Centre can be in making town centre based regeneration more sustainable. HEIs also must be encouraged to support culture regeneration by fostering, sustaining and growing local cultural organisations and their activity, as these organisations need to be on top of their game, making accessible and freely sharing intelligence and good practice, and providing locally relevant educational and research programmes and related support of and engagement with business and community partners

Action: Cultural organisations should prepare for involvement in local governance, identifying where and how they might contribute and ensuring that they are prepared for this. Local cultural networks and clusters should consider how best they might do this, both thinking of their own interests and also how best to inform and improve local; regeneration and education activity.

Action: HEIs need to deliver effective ways of engaging with and supporting local cultural organisations and networks. New approaches to delivering professional development and management capacity building will be needed to tackle the barriers precluding small cultural businesses from taking part in such activities.

Private sector

The key message to the private sector is that if you invest in a place you get it back. Many business leaders already take cultural activity and higher education seriously, as inspirational and practical contributors to successful placemaking, and that they essentially require a long term commitment for greatest effect. But there are short term gains for businesses, including improved locational reputation, and an improved quality of life to help in recruiting and retaining employees. Private sector leaders need to advocate this hard amongst their more sceptical colleagues, and those who have not perhaps yet focussed on the importance of these local commitments.

Even in tough financial times, there are major companies which make substantial profits. The scale of social investment generated by the sale of Saga may not be easy to replicate, but the philanthropic intention and the tough and business like approach to developing an asset based social enterprise is an approach which can be replicated in many places whatever the scale and source of wealth that might be available.

Action: Cultural and regeneration leadership in the four coastal towns are encouraged to work closely with private sector champions and networks to engage business skills in local governance arrangements for cultural and education projects. The reciprocal offer needs to be made. Cultural and education projects must be encouraged to participate in local business networks and see how the serendipity of business to business interaction can be made to work through effective local networking.

Regional agencies

SEEDA has an important role to play in ensuring that the regional policy context, and the interaction between national government and local initiatives, is working effectively for the coastal towns and these culture and education regeneration processes. Policy support and clear public support, valuing the activity even in a resource poor environment is very important. Even though a project is not RDA funded, it may still deserve and require clear public support.

Regional agencies have an important role in helping identify and support and invest in leadership and governance arrangements for regional, subregional and local initiatives. Funding should be identified to ensure that innovative business practice and new enterprise models are helped to flourish.

SEEDA and the cultural agencies such as ACE through their own regional arrangements must continue to disseminate good practice across the region and learning from other regions in Britain and abroad. Local projects and leadership should be able to access monitoring and benchmarking of economic and social change and cultural and educational impacts.

In addition to the responsibility of providing policy coordination and disseminating and good practice, cultural, education and regeneration leadership in the four coastal towns will press regional agencies to support existing major cultural and higher education investments to the hilt (such as Turner Contemporary and Folkestone Triennial) and to exert every effort to make sure they work effectively, start on time, sustain and flourish. Clearly the primary responsibility for this will always lie with the boards of the projects in this group, but the development of these towns and more generally, wider public confidence in coastal and cultural and education driven regeneration will be badly dented in projects like Turner Contemporary or the Folkestone Triennial fail for lack of public support at the crucial moment.

The complementary action to this is that local leadership and regional agencies together need to understand recognise the cumulative, aggregate and strategic value of small scale cultural activity clustered in smaller towns. "Strategic" does not have to be a single large unit. Experience in coastal towns and other places shows that artists' clusters, groups of practitioners and streets full of smaller businesses and facilities are as important in the wider scheme of things as single set piece iconic projects.

Action: SEEDA and national and regional cultural agencies should agree where, at Board and senior management level, the ownership of this analysis and these responsibilities will sit in the new institutional arrangements. Leadership in the four coastal towns would work collaboratively in support of this, and the actions which should result.

Government

The substantive recommendation to Government is that coastal towns and their challenges and opportunities are a legitimate special interest group. These towns, in the region and nationally, should continue to be regarded as places in need of focussed attention. This recommendation is particularly intended for the departments responsible for communities, local government, culture, higher education and economic development.

The coastal town networks and leadership arrangements which are already in place need to be strengthened and listened to more attentively whilst times are hard and resources scarce. Investment in cultural and educational infrastructure and activity needs to be sustained because it demonstrably contributes to the broad regeneration process, delivering layers of value beyond the primary outputs of cultural and creative activity and teaching, training and research. The four local examples bear out what is already clear over the longer term and across the country.

Excellent practice, nationally and within these four towns, shows how asset based social enterprise can deliver effective change. Government should continue to advocate and encourage these kinds of locally controlled, not for profit, socially responsive and effective agencies, and must invest in strengthening local civic, cultural educational and private sector leadership to enable this to happen.

Action: Lead delivery agencies in each of the four towns should work together and with the existing networks⁷⁴ to deliver these messages clearly and consistently to Government.

6.3 *Four coastal towns: next steps*

The commissioning partners are intending to review this research and its conclusions and develop local responses to this review of their local circumstances and the proposals for intervention and action below. The detail of these falls outside the scope of and will follow on from this report.

The lead agencies in the four coastal towns engaged in this study have expressed an interest in developing stronger links both within Kent (Margate, Folkestone) and between Portsmouth and Bognor Regis and between all four in order to promote the key messages and promote their common case in the context of the analysis and actions set out above.

⁷⁴ See page 7 above. These include BURA Seaside Network, British Resorts and Destinations Association, LGA's Coastal Issues Special Interest Group, the Coastal Communities Alliance, the South East Coastal Group (Kent and Sussex) and SEEDA with the RDA Coastal Network.

Appendix 1: Consultees

Margate	
Dreamland Trust	Sarah Vickery, Trustee
Harbour Café	Lesley Green, Proprietor
Limbo Arts	Sarah Vickery, Company Director
Margate Renewal Partnership	Derek Harding, Programme Director
Shell Grotto	Sarah Vickery, Proprietor
Theatre Royal	Will Wollen, Artistic Director
	Art Hewitt, General Manager
Turner Contemporary	Victoria Pomery, Director
	John Haywood, Marketing Director
Walpole Bay Hotel	Jane Bishop, Proprietor

Folkestone	
Canterbury Christchurch University	Prof Jan Druker, Pro Vice Chancellor
Creative Foundation	Nick Ewbank, Artistic Director
	Robert Green, Director of Property and Operations
	Sharon Senior, Business Development Manager
East Kent LSP	Trevor Minter
Folkestone Forward, KCC	Lucy Ann Bett
Holiday Extras	Steve Laurence, Chief Executive
Jenners' Construction	Simon Pentecost, Chief Executive
Shepway DC	Keith Cane, Director Planning and Communities
	Jeremy Whittaker, Regeneration and Economic Development Manager
Strange Cargo	Brigitte Orasinski, Artistic Director

Bognor Regis	
Bognor Regis Regeneration Task Force	Lucy Knott, Research and Development, Officer
	Richard McMann, Coordinator,
Arun District Council	Sadie Tooley, Cultural Development Manager
Butlins	Jeremy Pardey, Resort Director
	Michael Thomas, Operations Manager
Inspire Leisure	John Stride, Chief Executive
Jobcentre Plus	King Cheung, Accounts Manager West Sussex
	Maria Turner, Acting Partnership Manager West S
University of Chichester	Dr Roni Brown, Executive Dean, Faculty of Business, Arts and Humanities
	Romy Jones, Strategic Implementation Manager
West Sussex County Council	Lorna Brown, Head of Arts & Cultural Strategy, County Arts Service,
	Ron Crank, Head of Sustainable Development
	Gemma Warr, Coastal West Sussex Partnership Manager

Portsmouth	
Aspex Gallery	Joanne Bushnell, Director
Gambol Parker Deputy Director	
CIBAS	Steve Fisher, CIBAS Advisor
Climax Studios	Simon Gardner, Head of Development
Deerparkalpha Architects &	
South Coast Design Forum	Karl Leroy Smith, Chair
Independent Consultant	Leigh Rampton
Independent Cultural Consortium	Stephen Morgan, Chair
Land Securities	Peter Emery, Gunwharf Quays
Love Albert Road Day	Ian Parmiter, founder
Mary Rose Trust	John Lippiett, Chief Executive
New Theatre Royal,	Caroline Sharman, Director
Portsmouth CC	Kathy Wadsworth, Strategic Director
	Cllr Cheryl Buggy, Design and Heritage Champion for Portsmouth (and Managing Director Express FM)
	Paddy May, Corporate Strategy Mgr
	Claire Looney, Arts and Cultural Development Manager
	Roger Ching, Strategic Director
	Barry Walker, City Centre Manager
	John Slater, Head of Planning Services
	Stephen Bailey, Head of Cultural Services
Portsmouth Football Club	Lucius Peart, Head of Operations
Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust	Peter Goodship, Chief Executive
South Coast Money Line	Simon Frost, Director
The Partnership	Martin Dennison, Executive Director
University of Portsmouth	Mark Baker, Head of Research and Knowledge Transfer Services, CIBAS
	Simon Claridge, Dean of Faculty of Cultural and Creative Industries

Regional and elsewhere	
SEEDA	Stella Bellem, Head of Culture and Creative Economy
Arts Council England	Pip Wittenoom, Arts Projects Officer, ACESE
Learning and Skills Council	Hannah Caldwell
	David Smith, Area Director, Kent, Sussex and Surrey
Sheffield Hallam University	Prof Steve Fothergill, Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research

Appendix 2: Indicators

ID	Indicator name	Data set	Data source	Where to find	Time period	Frequency of release	Next Release date	Geography/ coverage
POPULATION								
1	Population size	Total population	MYE - ONS	NeSS website	2007	Annually	Aug-09	LA/LSOAs
		Total population	CACI	Counties	2008	Annually	Aug-09	OAs
2	Population growth	% Pop growth 2001-2007	ONS (MYE)	NeSS website	2001-2007	Annually	Aug-09	LA/LSOAs
3	Age distribution of population	Pop by broad age groups (%) 2001 to 2007	ONS (MYE)	NeSS website	2001-2007	Annually	Aug-09	LA/LSOAs
	Dependency ratios	Dependency ratio for all dependents 2001 to 2007	ONS (MYE)	NeSS website	2001-2007	Annually	Aug-09	LA/MSOAs/LSOAs
		Dependency ratio for elderly people 2001 to 2007	ONS (MYE)	NeSS website	2002-2007	Annually	Aug-09	LA/MSOAs/LSOAs
	Natural Change and Net migration	Births, deaths, natural change and net migration 2002-2007	ONS	ONS website	2002-2007	Annually	Nov-09	Districts
	Volume of Migration	Internal and International migration (In/Out) 2002-2007	ONS	ONS website	2002-2007	Annually	Aug-09	Districts
	Migration by broad age group	Internal Migration by broad age group 2002-2007	ONS	ONS website	2002-2007	Annually	Aug-09	Districts
EMPLOYMENT, SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS								
4	Employment	Employee jobs	NOMIS	NOMIS	2000-2006	Annually		Districts
	Job density	Jobs to the resident working-age population	NOMIS	NOMIS	2000-2006	Annually		Districts
5	Change in employment	Change in employment, 2000-2006	NOMIS	NOMIS	2000-2006	Annually		Districts
6	Employment change over time	Employment change over time, 2000-2006 (2000=100)	NOMIS	NOMIS	2000-2006	Annually		Districts
7	Structure of employment	Employee jobs by sector	ABI	NOMIS (ABI License)	2007 latest	Annually		SOAs
	Employment in creative industries	Employee jobs by sector	ABI	NOMIS (ABI License)	2007 latest	Annually		SOAs
8	Employment rate	% of working age population in employment	Annual Population Survey (APS)	NOMIS	2006-2008	Annually		Districts
9	Occupational structure of residents in employment	% of workforce by four broad occupation groups	ONS, 2001 Census	NeSS website	2001			SOAs
	Occupational structure of residents in employment	% of workforce by four broad occupation groups	Annual Population Survey (APS)	NOMIS	2006-2008	Annually		Districts
10	Highest qualifications of working age population	% of working age population by qualification levels	ONS, 2001 Census	NeSS website	2001			SOAs
	Highest qualifications of working age population	% of working age population by qualification levels	Annual Population Survey (APS)	NOMIS	2005-2007	Annually		Districts
11	Pupils achieving 5 or more A-C grades at GCSE	% of pupils achieving 5 or more A-C grades at GCSE	DFES	DFES website	2006-2008	Annually		Districts
BENEFITS AND SEASONAL UNEMPLOYMENT								
12	Working age claimant rates	JSA claimant count	DWP claimant count/ONS	NOMIS	Jan 08-Jan 09	Monthly	11/2/09	Wards
		IS lone parent benefit claimants	DWP working age client group/ONS	NOMIS	Jul-Sep 07- Jul-Sep 08	Quarterly	11/8/09	SOA
		IB/SDA claimants	DWP working age client group/ONS	NOMIS	Jul-Sep 07- Jul-Sep 09	Quarterly	11/8/09	SOA
13	Change in working age claimant rates	JSA claimant count	DWP claimant count/ONS	NOMIS	Jan 08-Jan 09	Monthly	11/2/09	Wards
		IS lone parent benefit claimants	DWP working age client group/ONS	NOMIS	Jul-Sep 07- Jul-Sep 08	Quarterly	11/2/09	SOA
		IB/SDA claimants	DWP working age client group/ONS	NOMIS	Jul-Sep 07- Jul-Sep 09	Quarterly	11/2/09	SOA
14	Pension credits claimant rate	Pension credit benefit claimants	DWP Benefits data	NOMIS	Jul-Sep 07- Jul-Sep 09	Quarterly	11/2/09	SOA
15	Average seasonal fluctuation in claimant unemployment rates	JSA claimant count	DWP claimant count/ONS	NOMIS	Jun 83-Jan 09	Monthly	11/2/09	Wards
EARNINGS AND BUSINESS STOCK								
16	Median hourly earnings	based)	ASHE (residence based)	NOMIS	2008	Annual	Nov-08	District
17	VAT registered businesses - stock per 10,000 residents	VAT registrations/deregistrations by industry	BERR small business service	NOMIS	2007	Annual	2/12/08	District
	Business start ups and closures	VAT registrations/deregistrations by industry	BERR small business service	NOMIS	2007	Annual	2/12/08	District
	Business births and deaths	Business demography	ONS	ONS	2007	Annual		District
	Number and percentage of businesses in Creative Industries	Industry units in Creative industries	ABI	NOMIS	2007	Annual		Available at SOA or ward level - may not be that robust
	Vacant shops in town centres (as % of all units or growth year on year?)	Town centre businesses from Experian-GOAD maps	Experian-GOAD	Obtained directly from CC/UA or Districts (ESCC collect this data)	March 2008 latest maps available in ESCC	periodical		Town centres (central district)
MIGRANT WORKERS								
18	Migrant workers	New National Insurance registrations non-UK nationals (number and % working age)	DWP, ONS	DWP website	2003-2008	Annually	Aug-09	Districts
	AS Migrant workers	Applicants to the WRS from 2005 to 2008 (quarterly)	Home Office	LG website	May 2004 to Dec 2008	Quarterly		Districts
ECONOMIC OUTPUT								
19	GVA per head in NUTS 3 region	NUTS 3 GVA 1995-2006	ONS		2006	Annual	12/12/08	Counties
HOUSING								
20	Housing tenure	% of households by tenure	2001 Census - ONS	NeSS website	2001			SOAs
21	Overcrowded households	% of households living in overcrowded conditions	2001 Census - ONS	NeSS website	2001			SOAs
22	Households lacking key amenities	% of households lacking key amenities	2001 Census - ONS	NeSS website	2001			SOAs
	Social Housing	Social housing and private sector stock dwellings	Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix (HSSA0)	CLG website	2005-2008	Annually		Districts
	Housing need	Households on the waiting lists	HSSA	CLG website	2005-2008	Annually		Districts
	Empty houses	% Long-term empty properties (vacant over 6 months)	HSSA	CLG website	2005-2008	Annually		Districts
	Multiple occupation	Houses in Multiple Occupation 2001 to 2008	HSSA	CLG website	2005-2008	Annually		Districts
	House building	Dwellings started and completed 1999 to 2008	CLG table 253	Live tables CLG	1999-2008	Annually		Districts
	Affordability	Median house price/earnings and Lower quartile house price/earnings	Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings	Live tables CLG	1997-2008	Annually		Districts
	House prices	Median house prices and Lower quartile house prices - Annually	Land Registry	Live tables CLG	1996-2007	Annually		Districts
	House prices	Median house prices and Lower quartile house prices - Quarterly	Land Registry	Live tables CLG	2003-2008	Annually		Districts
DEPRIVATION								
23	Average overall deprivation ranking of LSOAs, 2007	Indices of deprivation 2007	CLG	CLG	2007	Occasional	Dec-08	SOA
24	Average ranking of LSOAs on income deprivation domain	Indices of deprivation 2007 - income deprivation domain	CLG	CLG	2007	Occasional	Dec-08	SOA
25	Average ranking of LSOAs on employment deprivation domain	Indices of deprivation 2007 - employment deprivation domain	CLG	CLG	2007	Occasional	Dec-08	SOA
26	domain	domain	CLG	CLG	2007	Occasional	Dec-08	SOA
27	domain	Indices of deprivation 2007 - education, skills and training domain	CLG	CLG	2007	Occasional	Dec-08	SOA
28	domain	domain	CLG	CLG	2007	Occasional	Dec-08	SOA
29	Average ranking of LSOAs on crime domain	Indices of deprivation 2007 - crime domain	CLG	CLG	2007	Occasional	Dec-08	SOA
30	Average ranking of LSOAs on living environment domain	Indices of deprivation 2007 - living environment domain	CLG	CLG	2007	Occasional	Dec-08	SOA

Appendix 3: Economic and social data 2001–2008

1. Introduction

This appendix contains the core statistical information and analysis carried out into the four case study SECTs and used in the report and especially chapter 3. The material in this annex is in turn supported by more detailed statistical series and analysis.

The objective here is to present information about some of the significant and recent social and economic characteristics four case SECTs. Mostly the information is for the period between 2001 to 2007 or 2008. While allowing a valuable understanding of the SECTs much of the information is pre or early recession: often the indicators provide little real insight into the impact of the current economic conditions. This will depend on the publication of future annual data series. However, in the small number of cases where it is available we also provide information and discussion of the more recent period.

One important conclusion here (applying in particular to the Job Seeker Allowance (JSA) information from April 2008 to April 2009) is that the greatest rate of increase in JSA claimant rates is in the most prosperous wards: the recession does indeed appear to be reaching into groups that were previously reasonably immune to disadvantage. However, although the rate of increase in JSA claimants is lower in the most deprived areas of the four SECTs the overall claimant rate is still increasing and still much higher in these localities. The relative disadvantage remains.

The information reveals some substantial differences between the four case SECTs not simply in terms of population size but also across measures such as age structure, poverty and deprivation, employment and unemployment and housing tenure and other characteristics. Such difference between SECTs is unsurprising. However, it is also the case that on many of these counts the SECTs as a group (or sometimes three out of the four SECTs) differ to a great degree from the figures for the South East and England overall. So there are areas of convergence that in many cases result from the coastal town characteristics of these urban areas.

2. Population

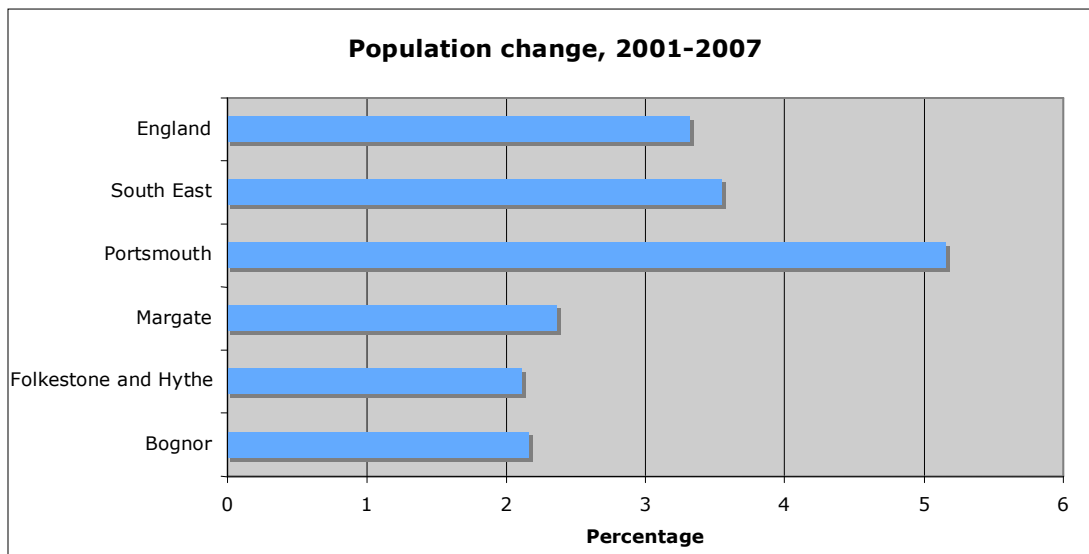
Around 32,000 people lived in Margate in mid-2007 with the town's population representing only one fifth of the Thanet population. Margate's populations increased by 700 people – 2.4 per cent – between 2001 and 2007.

Folkestone and Hythe had a population of almost 61,000 people in 2007, and an increase of just over 2 per cent – 1,300 people – since 2001. Its population growth accounted for one-third of the Shepway growth, although Folkestone and Hythe population represented 60 per cent of the total population of the district.

At mid-2007 the population of Bognor Regis was estimated to be about 64,000 people, an increase of 1,400 persons – or 2.2 per cent – since 2001. Bognor Regis accounted for one fifth of the growth of the population of Arun from 2001 to 2007 and its population represented 44 per cent of Arun's total population in 2007.

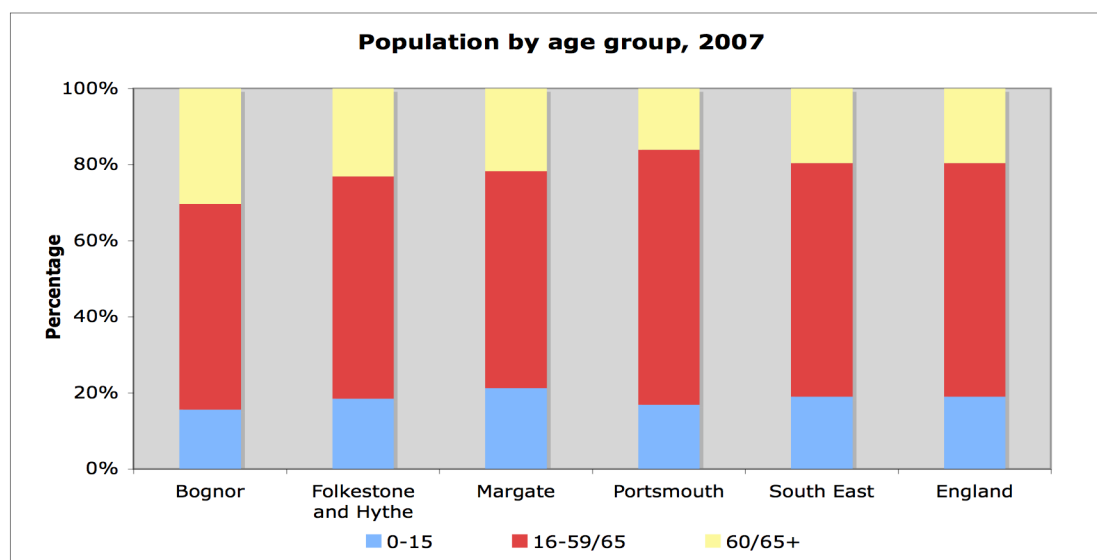
Portsmouth had the greatest population increase of the four coastal towns. Its population was estimated to be around 188,000 in 2001 and increased by 10,000 people to 2007. The growth rate of 5.2 per cent was substantially higher than both national and regional rates.

Population change, 2001–2007



There are significant differences in the age structures of each SECT. For example, Bognor Regis has the highest proportion of elderly people (60/65+) at 30 per cent and Portsmouth the lowest with 16 per cent. Young people in Bognor Regis and Portsmouth make up just 16 per cent of the population, both lower than the regional and national levels, whereas in Margate people aged 0–15 represented 21 per cent of all residents. Portsmouth has the greatest proportion (67 per cent) of working age population (16–59/65) amongst the four towns. This is also higher than the regional and national levels. In contrast, the working age population in Bognor Regis only account for 54 per cent of total population.

Population by age group, 2007

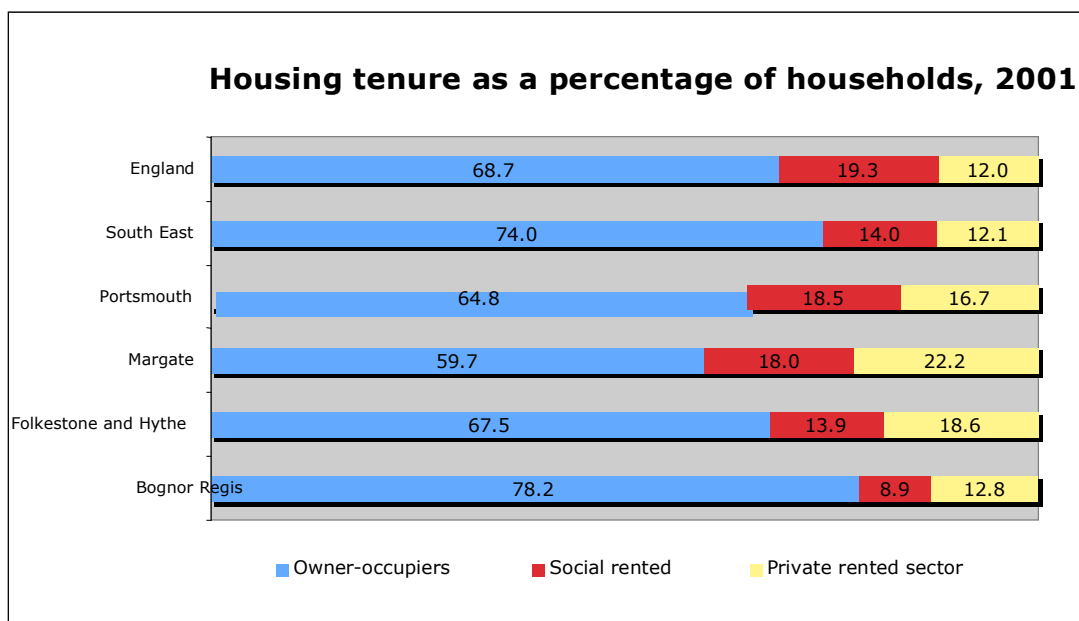


Bognor Regis has the highest dependency ratio at 85 per cent, followed by Margate and then Folkestone and Hythe. On the other hand, the proportion of dependents in Portsmouth is 50 per cent, compared to 62 per cent in the South East and England. The dependency ratio for elderly people is almost 60 per cent in Bognor Regis, compared to 31 per cent regionally and nationally and in Portsmouth just 24 per cent in 2007.

Lying behind these population changes are the details of births, deaths and migration – inward and outward, national and international, temporary and permanent.

3. Housing

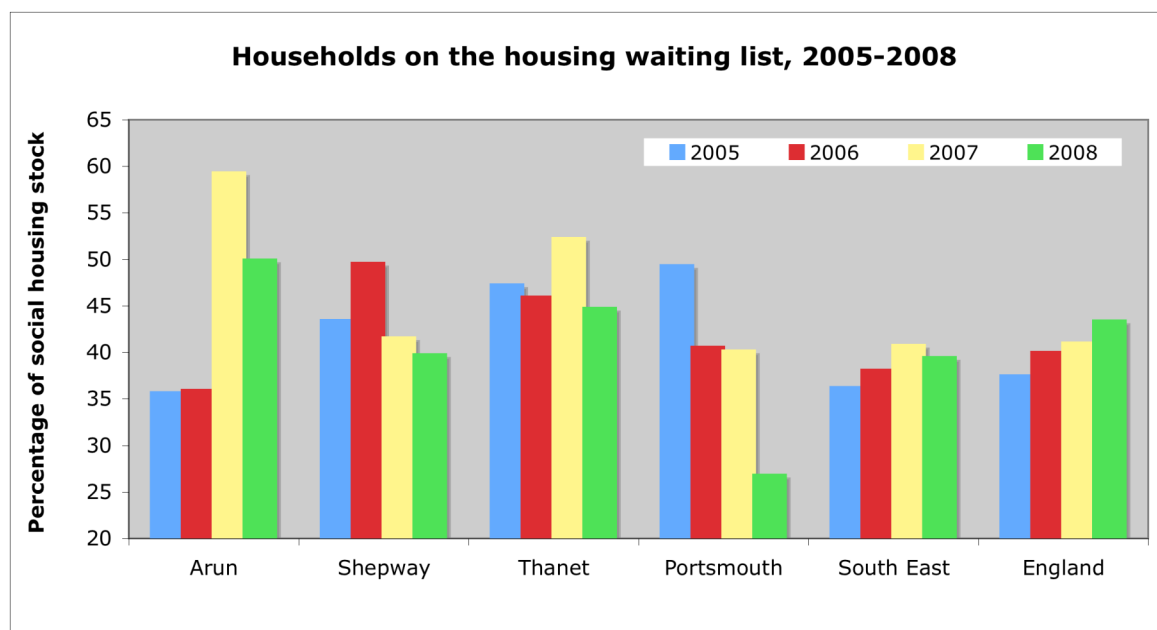
All towns, except Bognor Regis, show lower proportions of owner-occupiers in relation to the total households, than England and the South East. In 2001, this percentage ranged from 78 per cent in Bognor Regis to 60 per cent in Margate, compared to 74 in the South East and 69 per cent in England. Households in social rented accounted for only 9 per cent in Bognor Regis and almost 19 per cent in Portsmouth, which is higher than the regional average, but slightly lower than nationally. As for the private rented sector, the national and regional average is about 12 per cent, whereas the towns show higher percentages, varying from 13 per cent in Bognor Regis to the high 22 per cent in Margate.



There are also significant differences between the SECTs individually and between the coastal towns and regional and national figures for measures such as overcrowding and lack of basic amenities.

Over the period from 2005 to 2008, all districts, except Arun, experienced a decrease in demand for social housing, particularly in Portsmouth where households on the waiting list decreased from 8,000 in 2005 to 4,500 in 2008, a drop of 43 per cent. In the case of Arun, however, the number of households in housing need increased by 44 per cent to 3,300 in 2008. At national and regional level, there was also an increase in demand of social housing of 14 and 12 per cent respectively.

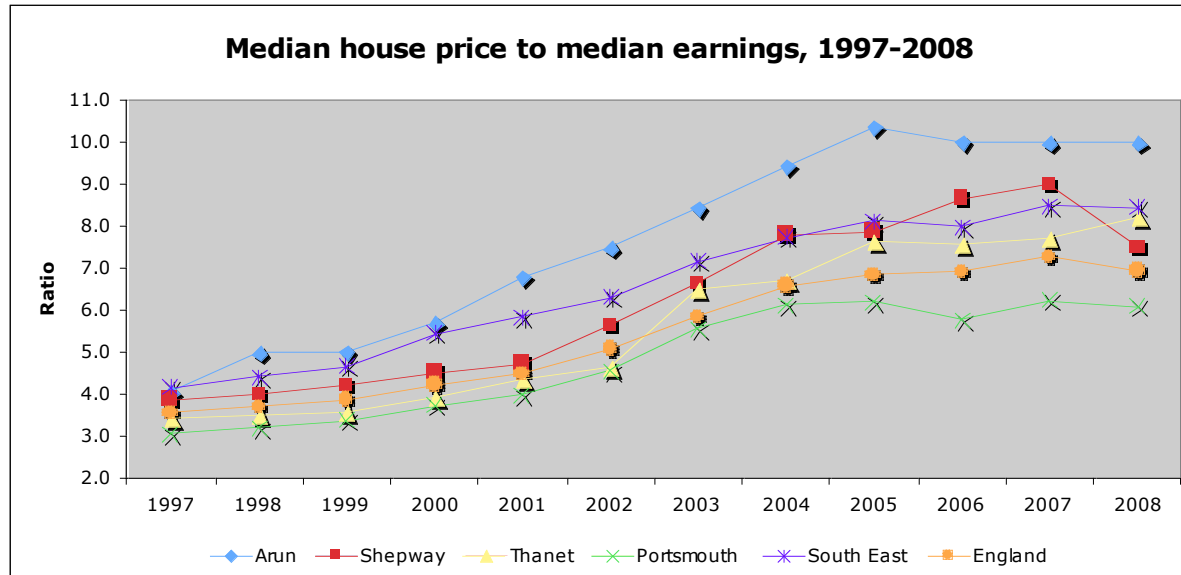
In relation to the total dwellings, all districts have a demand for social housing lower than nationally and regionally. In Arun, the social housing demand is about 5 per cent of the total dwellings, compared to 5.6 in the South East and almost 8 in England. Portsmouth is in line with the South East and Shepway has the lowest percentage of households in housing need at 4.4 per cent of total dwellings.



In relation to the total dwellings, 42 houses per 1,000 dwellings are in multiple occupation in Shepway and Portsmouth compared to 17 in the South East and England. Thanet also has a high rate in terms of houses in multiple occupation of 32 every 1,000 dwellings, whereas Arun has the lowest rate with 12 per thousand of total dwellings.

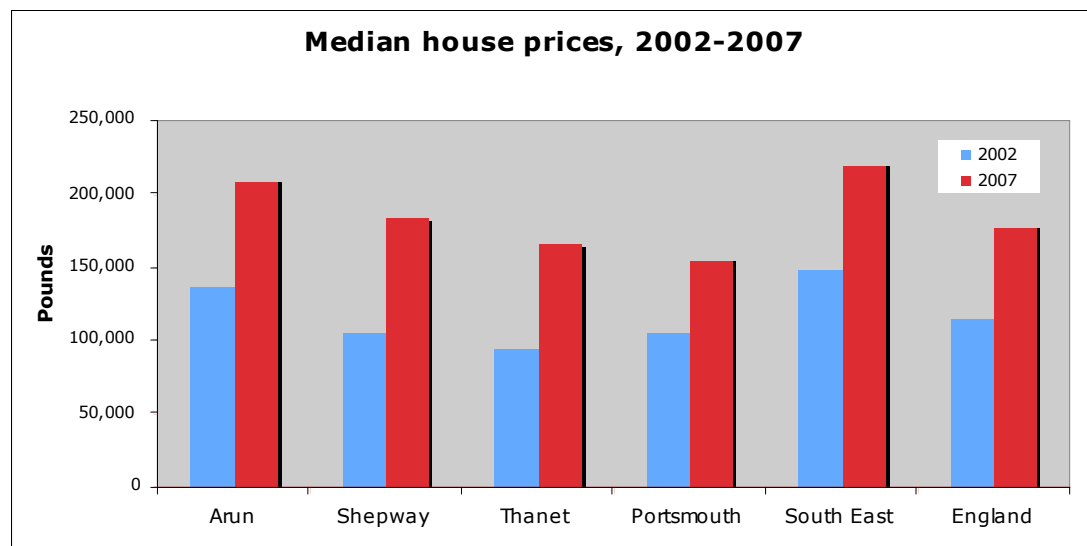
Turning to affordability and house prices, in all districts, except Portsmouth, homes are less affordable than in England. In 2008 average (median) house prices were 10 times median earnings in Arun, compared to 7 nationally and 8 regionally. In line with the South East are Thanet and Shepway, whereas Portsmouth is below both the regional and national level with average house prices 6 times average earnings.

Affordability amongst the less well off is measured by comparing lower quartile earnings with lower quartile prices. For the lowest paid, homes are slightly less affordable than for those on average wages. In particular, in Portsmouth the ratio is now in line with England, which is 7 compared to 9 in the South East.



Average house prices increased in Thanet by 76 per cent, from £94,000 in 2002 to £166,000 in 2007, compared to 56 per cent in England and 49 per cent regionally. House prices had a similar increase in Shepway, reaching £183,000 in 2007, an increase of 72 per cent. The increase of 54 per cent in Arun and 48 per cent in Portsmouth are both in line with the regional and national average. By 2007 the average house price in Arun was £209,000 and £155,000 in Portsmouth, whereas the national average was £178,000 and £220,000 in the South East.

Although not detailed here, there has been a decline in house prices in all four towns since 2007, with estimated falls in excess of 20 per cent for Margate and 17 per cent for Bognor Regis.



4. Deprivation

The material in this section is based on the Government's Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). It allows us to compare SECTs with each other and also look within each town at the geographical nature of deprivation. The geographical units – each with an average population of 1,500, are called Super Output Areas (SOAs) of which there are 32,482 in England. Rank 1 represents the most deprived SOA and 32,482 the least deprived. Deprivation affects the four case study coastal towns in different ways. Most are characterised however by extremes of privilege and deprivation side by side. Specific indices of deprivation including those for income and employment deprivation; health deprivation and disability; education, skills and training deprivation; barriers to housing and services; crime; and the living environment.

In terms of the overall deprivation index, of the four town under consideration, over half of the SOAs in Margate rank in the most deprived 20 per cent in the country and over a quarter in the most deprived 10 per cent. These are situated in Cliftonville West, Dane Valley and Margate Central wards. The highest scores are in two SOAs in Margate Central that are among the most deprived 1 per cent of SOAs in the country. The overall calculated rank for Margate would put it among the most deprived 20 per cent.

Portsmouth has 24 LSOAs in the most deprived 20 per cent in the country out of a total of 123 SOAs, of which 12 are in the most deprived 10 per cent in the country. These 12 are predominantly in Paulsgrove and Charles Dickens wards. Portsmouth is characterised by extremes, with some wards scoring very low for deprivation.

Folkestone has small pockets of fairly extreme deprivation in some more central SOAs but in close proximity to privileged areas, for example, Harvey West ward has two SOAs side by side, one falling into the least deprived 20 per cent and one falling into the most deprived 20 per cent. Nine out of 41 SOAs are in the most deprived 20 per cent, 3 of which are in the most deprived 10 per cent nationally. Two of these SOAs are found in Harvey Central ward, where the remaining SOA falls in the most deprived 20 per cent. No deprived ward is in Hythe.

Bognor Regis has the lowest levels of deprivation of the four towns under consideration, with only 3 SOAs falling into the 20 per cent most deprived in the country (overall IMD ranking). Two of these are in Bognor Regis Town (Pevensy and Marine wards) and one is in Bersted ward. However overall deprivation scores are considerably poorer in the four wards of Bognor Regis Town itself than in the surrounding suburban wards.

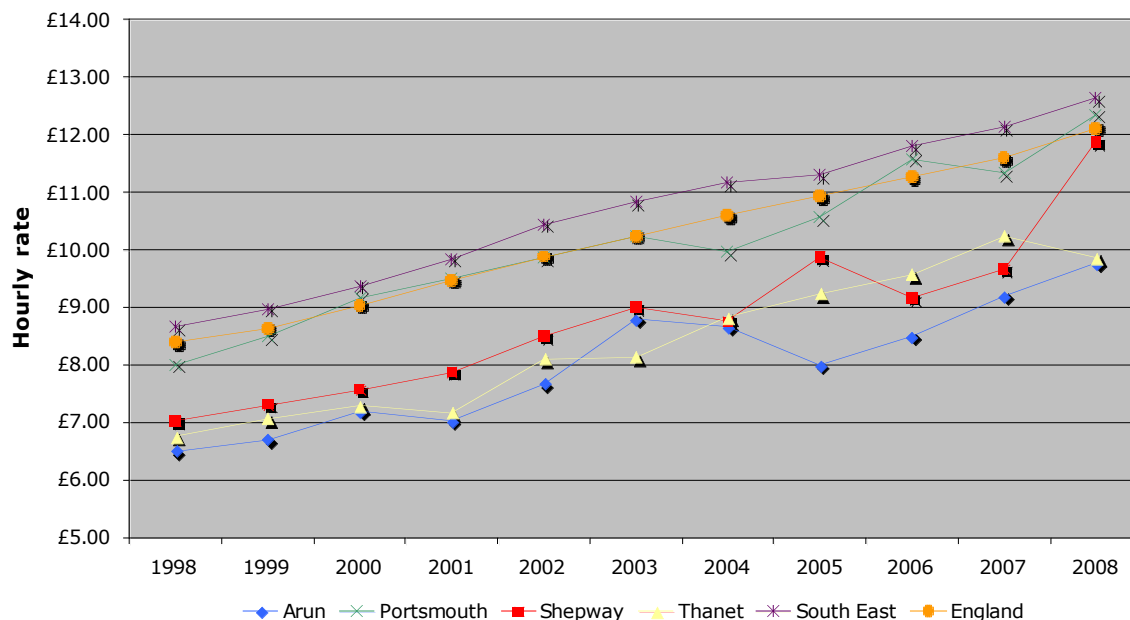
5. Earnings

In analysing earnings it is valuable to distinguish between workplace based and residence based statistics.

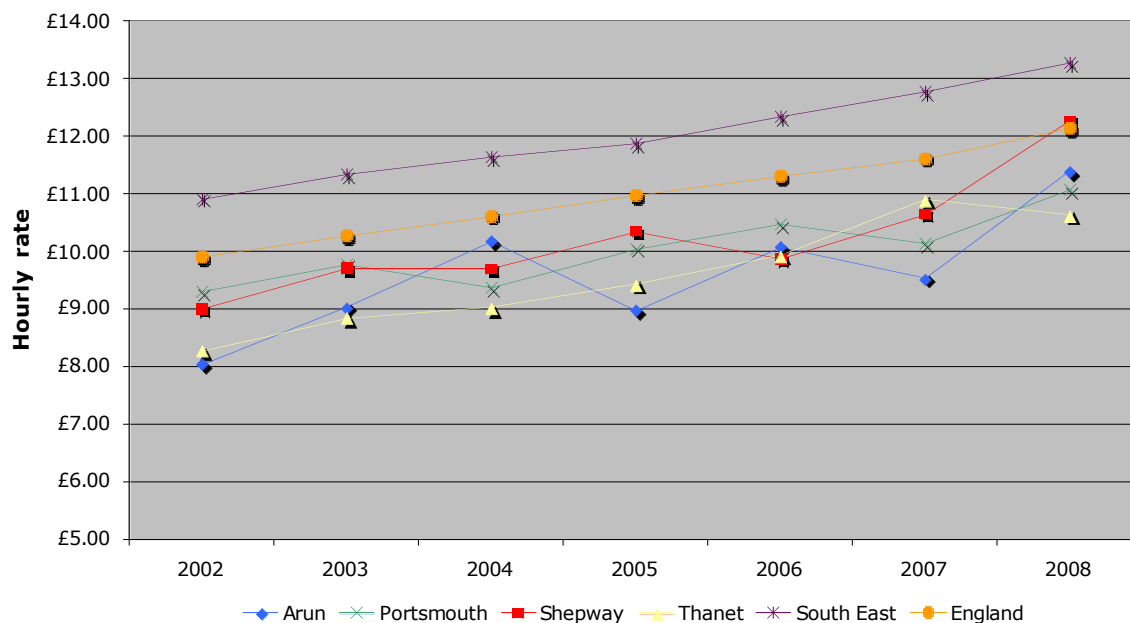
Looking first at workplace based earning, in 2008, full-time median hourly wages in all four towns were lower than in the South East region as a whole, and only in Portsmouth were they above the national average. Despite being the least deprived of the four towns on many measures, the lowest hourly rates for full-time workers were in Arun, almost 20 per cent lower than the national average; this in part reflects the type of work opportunities such as seasonal tourism and leisure work and caring occupations. Thanet also has a very low average hourly rate, 19 per cent below the England average. Earnings in Portsmouth while higher than the national figure remain lower than the South East average. In the context of data from earlier years showing earnings on average 15 per cent lower than nationally, and in the light of a confidence level of almost 10 per cent, the 2008 Shepway figure just 2 per cent lower than average may be unreliable.

Turning to residence based earnings, median full-time hourly earnings have a very different distribution from the workplace based data. Shepway has the best-paid residents with earnings higher than the national figure. Arun residents are also reasonably well-paid, in part reflecting commuting out of the district. In contrast the earnings of Portsmouth residents is quite low (especially in the context of Portsmouth's workplace earnings). Thanet, however, has the lowest residence based pay, 12 per cent lower than the national average.

Median hourly earnings, workplace based - full-time

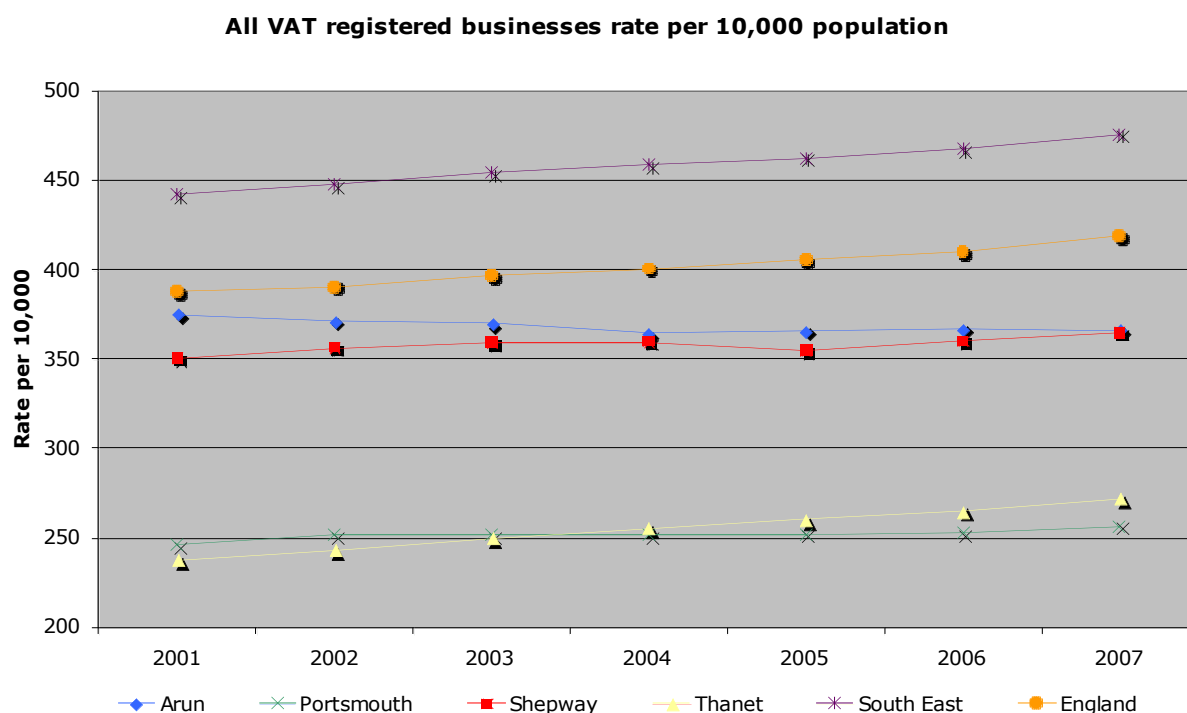


Median hourly earnings, residence based - full-time



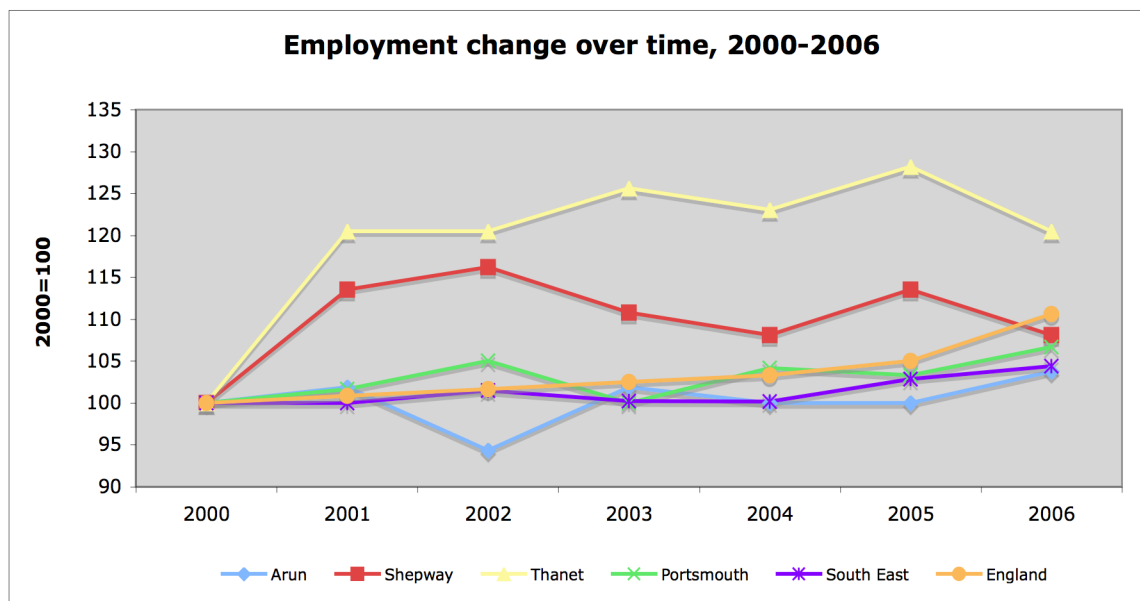
6. Businesses and performance

Two of the key points to make are first, that all four coastal towns have a lower number of VAT registered businesses per 10,000 people (registration rate) than the South East region or England as a whole with the Thanet and Portsmouth rate being especially low and, second, the rate of new business births is also considerably lower in the four coastal towns compared to the region and the country as a whole.



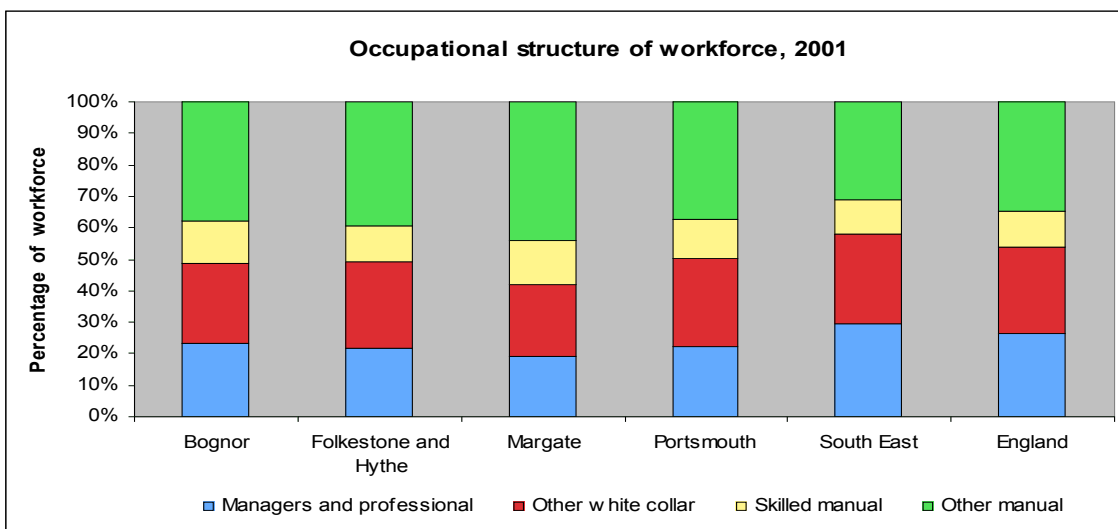
7. Employment

The total number of jobs in the four districts varies from 40,000 in Shepway and 47,000 in Thanet to 55,000 in Arun and 128,000 in Portsmouth. Over the period 2000 to 2006, Thanet had the greatest growth in terms of jobs in the area: an increase of 21 per cent, compared to 8 per cent in Shepway and 9 per cent in Kent as a whole. Portsmouth had an increase of 7 per cent in the same period, whereas Arun only showed an increase of 4 per cent, in line with its county and the South East.



Between July 2007 and June 2008, the employment rate in Arun and Shepway was above the South East and England average and also higher than the respective county levels. In contrast Thanet had the lowest employment rate amongst the four districts and lower than the county and regional rates. Arun and Shepway stand out for the significant growth in their workforce over the period 2006 to 2008.

Turning to occupational structure, in 2001 managers and professional together with other white collar accounted for half of residents in employment in Bognor Regis, Folkestone and Hythe and Portsmouth, whereas in Margate the same categories made up 42 per cent of the workforce and 44 per cent were in 'Other manual workers'. This was above the county, regional and national levels. In all towns the proportion of 'other manual' was higher than the South East and England, whereas the proportion of managers/professional and other white collar was below the national and regional average.

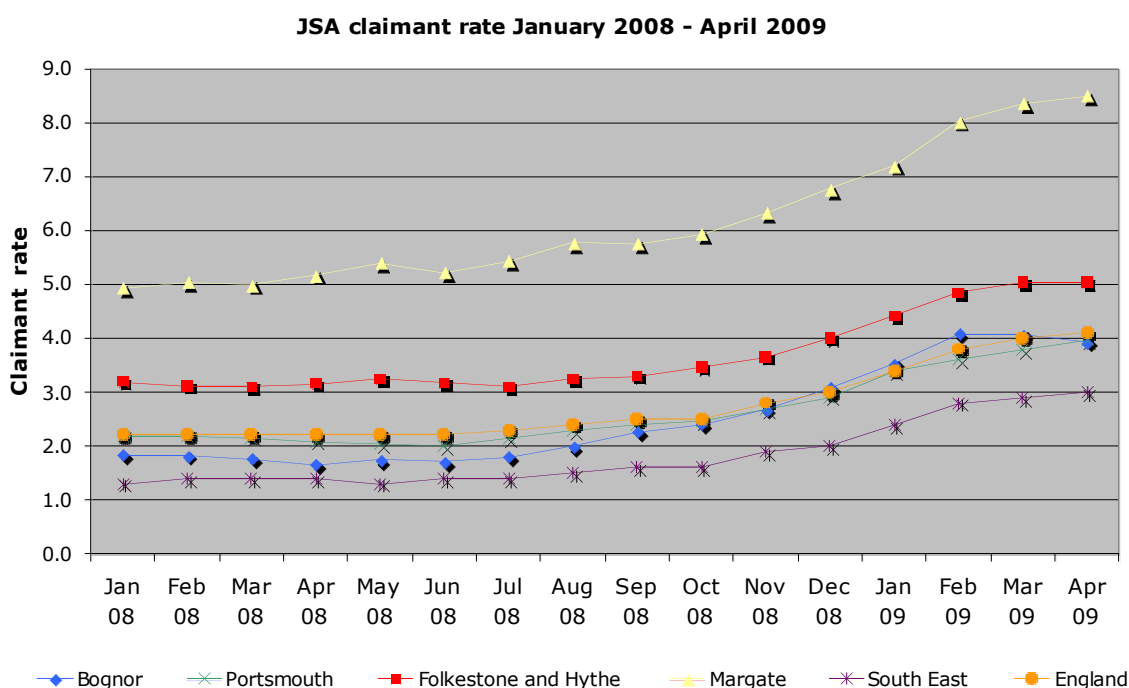


8. Claimant count unemployment

Since the summer of 2008 claimant count unemployment has been increasing in all four towns, as in the whole South East region. Across the region as a whole there is some evidence that the increase is faster in less deprived localities than in places where unemployment has traditionally been a problem, although the impact of large rises in areas of deprivation where regeneration effort has been concentrated cannot be underestimated.

Rates rose fastest in the month of February 2009 when the South East saw an increase in claimant numbers of 19 per cent in one month. The increases may be beginning to taper off and claimant numbers in the region only increased by 2.5 per cent in April, but normally this would be a month when we might expect to see falls in unemployment.

	Claimant rate						Per cent increase in claimant numbers since April 2008
	Nov 08	Dec 08	Jan 09	Feb 09	Mar 09	Apr 09	
Bognor Regis	2.7	3.1	3.5	4.1	4.1	3.9	135.9
Portsmouth	2.7	2.9	3.4	3.6	3.8	3.9	89.1
Folkestone	3.6	4.0	4.4	4.8	5.0	5.0	59.4
Margate	6.3	6.8	7.2	8.0	8.4	8.5	64.3
South East	1.9	2.0	2.4	2.8	2.9	3.0	122.3
England	2.8	3.0	3.4	3.8	4.0	4.1	87.6



Bognor Regis experienced a massive increase in claimant numbers of 136 per cent, with rates rising from 1.7 per cent to 3.9 per cent since April 2008, with the highest rises in Pagham and Rose Green ward (226 per cent) as well as more affluent wards such as Bersted (182 per cent) and Middleton-on-Sea (171 per cent). Numbers may have peaked as there is some evidence of a slight fall in claimant numbers in April, but this might be expected given the usual seasonal pattern,

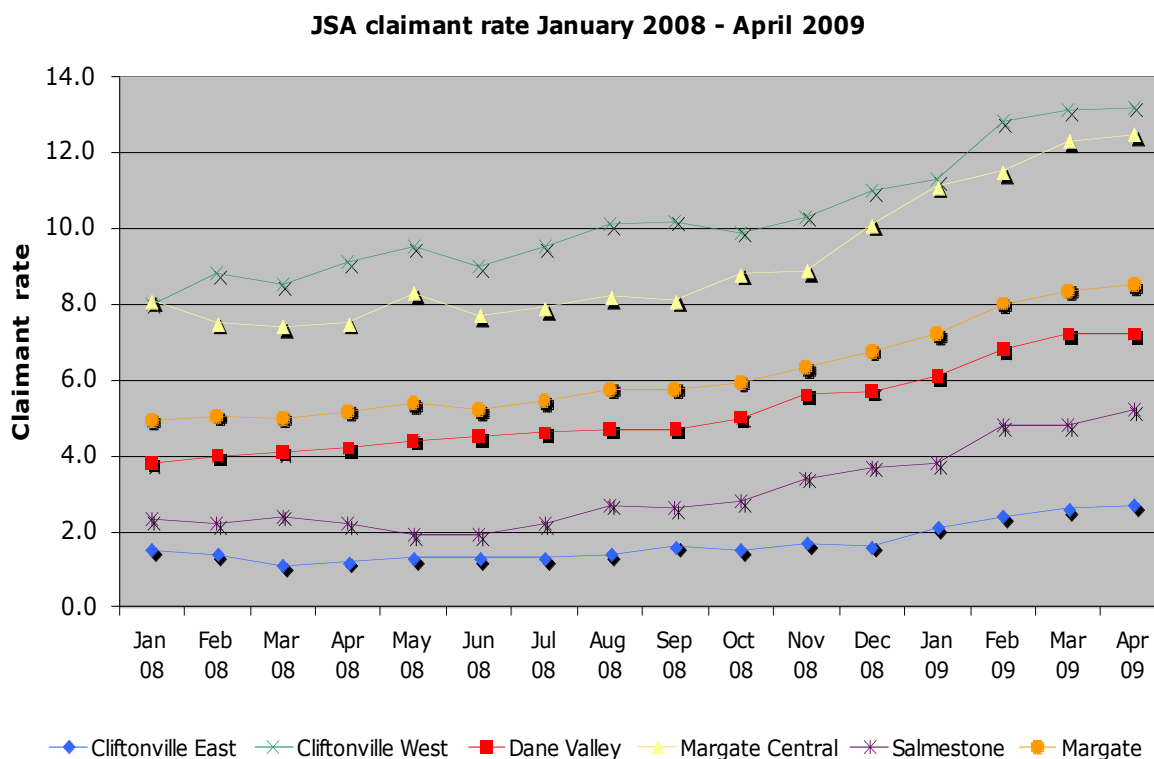
The claimant rate in the four wards comprising Bognor Regis Town Parish is appreciably higher than the nation (4.1 per cent) or district (3.4 per cent) as a whole: Hotham (5.3 per cent), Marine (6.0 per cent), Orchard (4.8 per cent) and Pevensy (4.9 per cent), and the annual increases in claimant numbers in these areas have been very large. In Bersted ward the unemployment rate has risen from 1.3 per cent a year ago to 3.8 per cent in April 2009.

Portsmouth has experienced a lower annual increase (89 per cent) in claimant numbers than the regional rate of change (122 per cent), and has a claimant rate similar to the national average (Portsmouth 3.9 per cent, England 4.1 per cent). However some wards have seen sharp rises in claimant numbers, more than doubling over the year, all of which have lower claimant rates than average: Drayton and Farlington, Copnor and Hilsea. Portsmouth's most deprived ward, Charles Dickens has a claimant rate of 6.9 per cent which is comparatively low next to other some other deprived areas (see Margate and Folkestone) although numbers there continued to increase sharply with a monthly rise of 35 claimants (5 per cent) in April 2009.

Folkestone and Hythe bucks the trend with the most extreme claimant rises happening in two of the more affluent wards but also in two less well off wards. The biggest annual rise was in Folkestone Cheriton ward where numbers more than doubled and the rate rose from 1.7 per cent in April 2008 to 3.8 per cent in April 2009. Big percentage increases were also seen in Folkestone Harvey West, Folkestone Sandgate and Folkestone Park – and of these, Harvey West and Park wards have above average claimant rates. Although the annual rise in the town's most deprived ward of Folkestone Harvey Central was modest (32 per cent) the rate is now very high at 11.3 per cent.

Margate has an overall claimant rate of 8.5 per cent, more than double the national average. It has two of the most deprived wards in the South East region. **Cliftonville West** ward continues to top the table for unemployment in the region with 13.2 per cent of working age people claiming unemployment benefits in April 2009. The annual increase in claimant numbers (44 per cent) in the ward was considerably less extreme than in the region as a whole (122 per cent) but in a ward with such high existing levels of poverty, having an additional 186 claimants over the year can only exacerbate the problems of social exclusion. **Margate Central** ward also has a very high claimant rate with 1 in 8 working age people (12.5 per cent) unemployed and claiming benefits in April 2009. The ward experienced a rise in claimant numbers of 66 per cent since April last year.

However in Margate's less deprived wards, the rate of increase has been much more extreme. **Salmestone** has seen a 136 per cent increase over the year to April 2009 and the claimant rate is now 5.2 per cent. This is now considerably higher than the national average of 4.1 per cent, although in April 2009 the ward had a claimant rate equal to the average rate of 2.2 per cent. **Dane Valley** ward, which contains pockets of extreme deprivation in certain lower layer super output areas, has seen a rise of 72 per cent and the claimant rate there is now 7.2 per cent. Comparatively affluent **Cliftonville East** has also seen a marked rise in claimant numbers of 116 per cent in the year to April 2009, although the claimant rate there is still lower than the regional average.



9. Means-tested and non means-tested benefits

Three particularly illuminating benefit indices for the four SECTs are income support as a lone parent, disability benefits and pension credits. Margate has a much higher rate of lone parents claiming income support compared with other towns, although Folkestone and Portsmouth also have a lone parent claimant rate above the national and regional average. Pension credit claimant rates have been rising slowly in all four towns under consideration, although rates have remained steady in the South East region and England as a whole. Margate stands out for its relatively very high rates – compared with the region, England and the other case study SECTs – of disability benefits claimants and pension credit claimants.

10. Conclusion

It is tempting in this analysis to always lean toward identifying the most disadvantaged or advantaged of each of the SECTs. Indeed, on a number of measures Margate stands out as being particularly disadvantaged. But this is not always the case and this chapter indicates that each of the other three SECTs can lay claim to particular difficulties or issues to be confronted. Some of the indicators also enable us to look within the local authority or coastal town area at internal differences. Here all four SECTs have particular pockets of deprivation and poverty, most often in the older urban core. But there are also extremes of wealth and affluence.

The social and economic characteristics of each SECT and the nature, speed and distribution of recession induced changes provide an important context for local regeneration, producing specific issues and also providing challenges and opportunities.