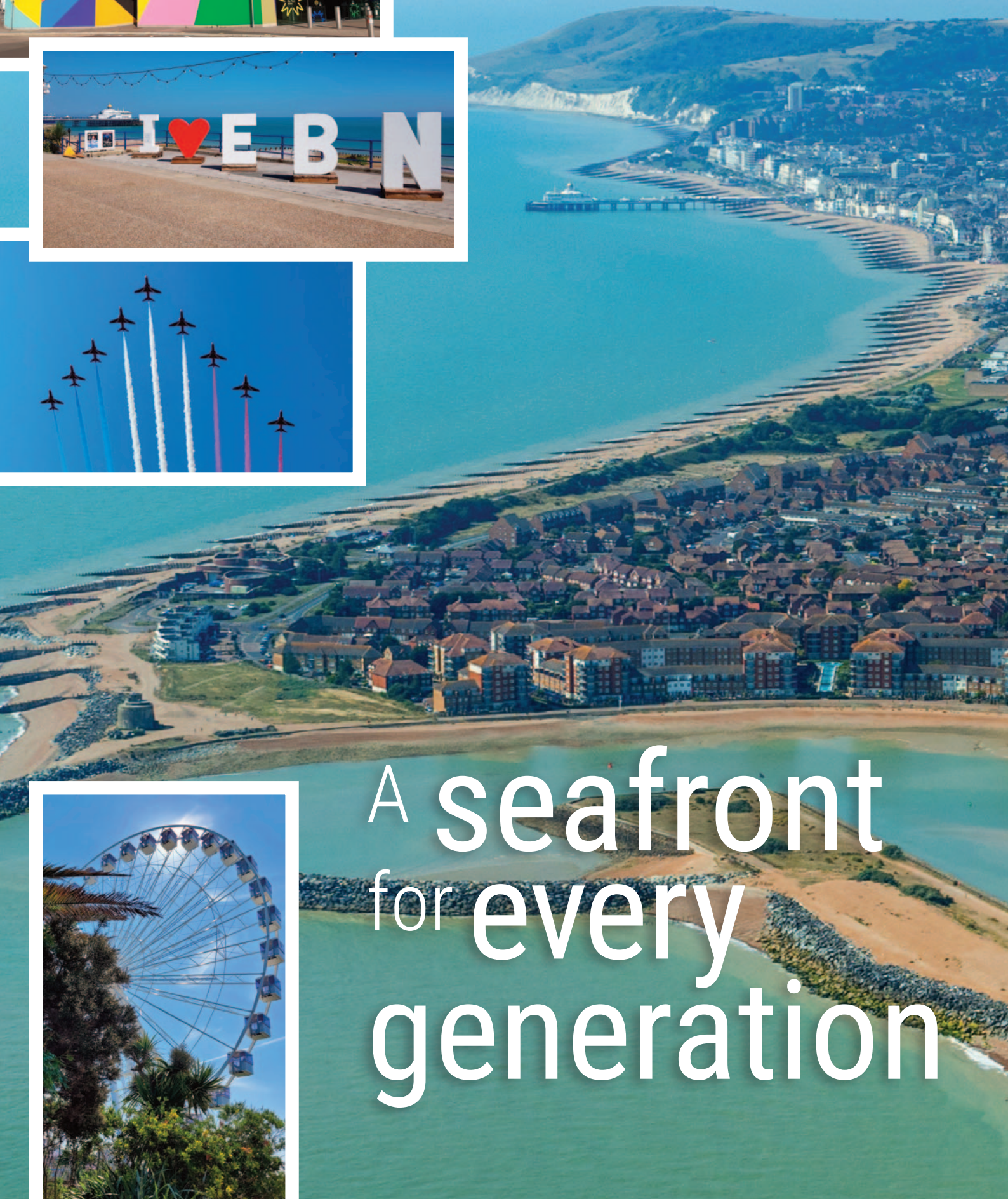




# EASTBOURNE

Seafront Strategy 2050



A seafront  
for every  
generation





“ To create a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable seafront that celebrates Eastbourne’s heritage, enhances community wellbeing, and welcomes visitors all year-round through accessible, high-quality spaces and experiences. ”

Look after our beach, put rubbish in the bin not the sea. Evie, age 8

## Executive Summary

The Eastbourne Seafront Strategy 2050 outlines a long-term vision for a vibrant, safe, inclusive, and sustainable seafront that reflects the values and aspirations of the community. Based on extensive consultation, the strategy prioritises heritage, culture, tourism, health and leisure, and being welcoming to all.

The potential introduction of a sandy beach, and other key flood defence measures, delivered in partnership with the Environment Agency’s coastal management scheme, is a key opportunity to enhance the seafront experience.

An area zoning approach ensures that activities

are linked, and the shoreline is more easily accessible for residents and tourists. The strategy provides a framework for decision-making, informs coastal defence planning, and guides future development to enhance the seafront experience for residents and visitors alike. The implementation of this strategy will be overseen by the Council, ensuring the delivery of high-quality outcomes across the seafront. By activating distinct zones with tailored interventions, the strategy is designed to unlock economic opportunities, enhance public spaces, and provide a flexible framework for long-term regeneration.

### This strategy outlines a long-term vision for Eastbourne’s seafront through to 2050.

#### It aims to balance:

- Environmental sustainability.
- Economic vitality.
- Community well-being.

#### Key strategic goals include:

- Enhancing coastal resilience and climate adaptation.
- Promoting inclusive and accessible public spaces.
- Supporting sustainable tourism and local businesses.
- Improving connectivity and active travel infrastructure.
- Cultivating a sense of belonging and shared guardianship.

## 1. Introduction

Eastbourne's seafront is a defining feature of the town, a vital economic driver, and a focal point for tourism. With its iconic pier, scenic coastline, and rich heritage, the seafront holds significant potential for further development and enhancement. This Seafront Strategy sets out a vision for its future, guiding decisions and ensuring a consistent, coherent approach to its development over the next 25 years. This long-term vision is essential to inform coastal defence planning and create a framework that informs other strategic plans. The document sets out a vision, key objectives, and zones of action.

The need for a strategy was recognised in response to evolving community needs and environmental challenges. In the summer of 2024, a comprehensive consultation process was launched to gather public views. The resulting Seafront Strategy aims to be both visionary and practical, delivering tangible short-term improvements while laying the foundation for medium and long-term transformation.

This strategy is aligned with the Pevensey to Eastbourne Coastal Management Plan (2025–2050), ensuring that regeneration efforts complement flood defence and coastal resilience priorities.

## 2. Context

Eastbourne's seafront has a rich history as a popular seaside resort, evolving over time to meet the changing needs of residents and visitors.

Today, the seafront boasts a variety of assets, including:

- Beaches and Promenade
- The Bandstand
- The Pier
- Redoubt Fortress and Wish Tower
- The Sovereign Centre
- Beachy Head

However, challenges remain, including the need to:

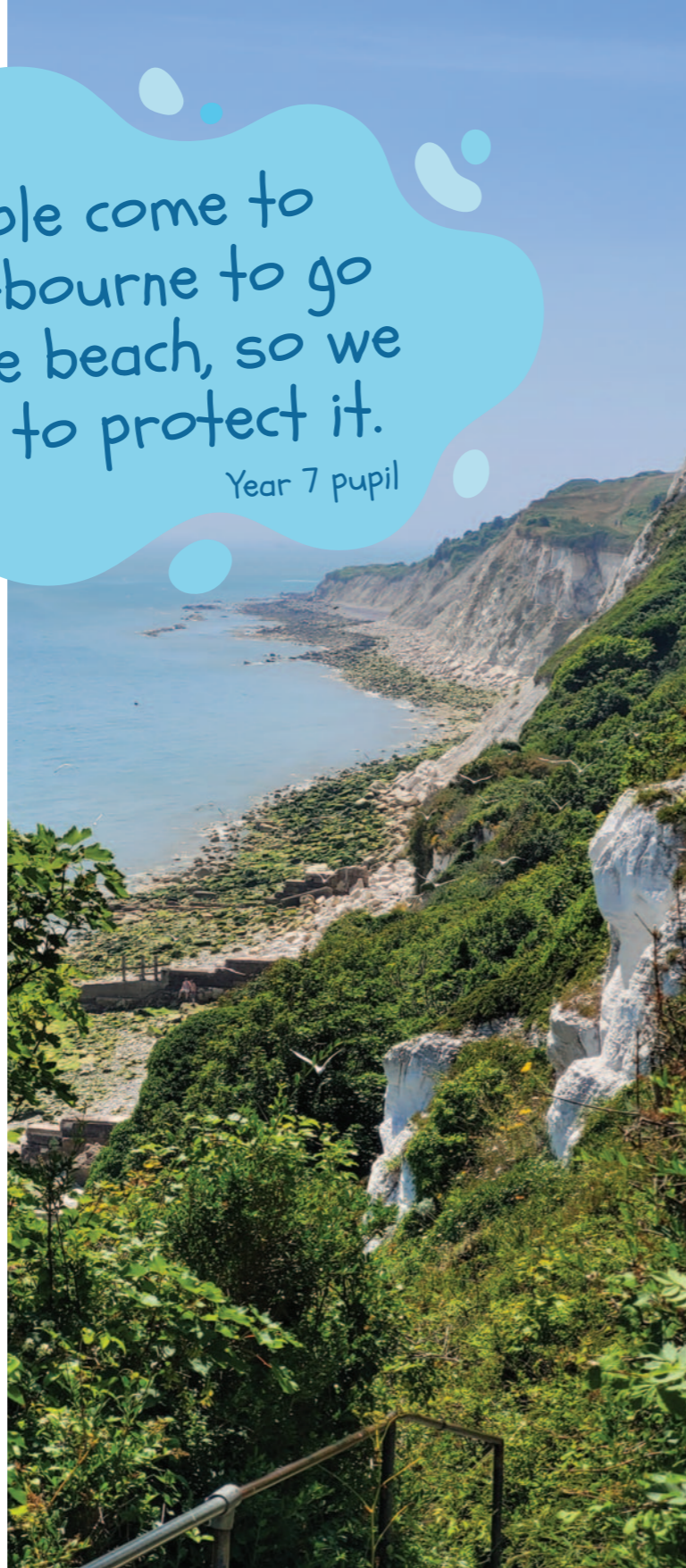
- Improve connections between the town centre and the seafront
- Enhance the quality and range of activities and facilities
- Address safety and accessibility concerns
- Balance the needs of residents and visitors
- Enhance protection from risks such as coastal flooding
- Encouraging tourists visiting the Seven Sisters to come into Eastbourne, stay and enjoy our seafront
- Improved active travel opportunities, including uninterrupted cycling path.

The Seafront Strategy operates within the context of the Eastbourne Local Plan and national planning frameworks. The Strategy seeks to support the relevant sections of Eastbourne's Corporate Plan for 2024-2028 and take account of local environmental strategy. In particular, local developments and activities are required to reduce the risk of coastal flooding.

The Strategy has been developed in partnership with key stakeholders, including the Environment Agency, local businesses, community groups, and residents.

People come to Eastbourne to go to the beach, so we need to protect it.

Year 7 pupil



play areas accessibility cycle public toilets heritage safety signage play events community sustainability cycle routes toilets seating safety accessibility space public routes cleanliness walking heritage lighting signage seating lighting cleanliness events green space

## 3. Consultation Findings

Consultation with over 2,000 residents, visitors, Eastbourne Hospitality Asc, Friends of Eastbourne Seafront, and local businesses in the summer of 2024 has shaped the vision and objectives of this strategy. Six workshops were held to gather community input. Additional consultation was carried out in the form of workshops in June 2025 to further explore those initial findings and to get greater detail for master planning of key features of our seafront.

Key findings from the consultation include:

- High levels of regular use by local residents, with many visiting multiple times per week.
- "Walking" is the most enjoyed activity.
- Desire for enhanced events and activities, especially at the Bandstand
- Strong support for maintaining and enhancing heritage assets.
- Concerns about safety, litter, and accessibility.
- A desire for a sandy beach to support year-round tourism and improve accessibility for families and individuals with mobility needs.
- Need for connection of cycle routes along the entirety of the seafront, to link to wider network of routes both East and West.

Top priorities for improvement include: pleasant public spaces, preserving heritage assets, improving disabled access, child friendly spaces, clean seawater and a wider range of places to eat and drink.

Key recommendations for future actions are that they target key priorities of the residents. This suggests a focus on a handful of high-priority objectives. As such, the strategic contexts for regeneration that need to be understood are improving public transportation, traffic along the seafront, improving pedestrian walkways, and cycle options for residents and visitors.

The strategy will respond to resident concerns about shared walking and cycling routes by prioritising safety and exploring clearer separation of uses where appropriate. Looking ahead, it will also consider how to attract more tourist visitors who enjoy public spaces without paid entry, but contribute to the local economy through spending on food, retail, and services. At the same time, the strategy will explore ways to enhance the quality and accessibility of spaces for residents.

Coral reefs and sharks!

Year 7 pupil



## 4. Vision and Objectives

Our vision for Eastbourne Seafont in 2050 is to create a vibrant, safe, and inclusive space that reflects the community's values and aspirations through a clean and elegant seafont. Key objectives to achieve this vision are organised around the emerging themes:

### Heritage:

- Preserve and enhance heritage assets (Bandstand, Redoubt, Wish Tower) to maintain town identity.
- Secure funding and investment for heritage projects.
- Ensure sea defence protection for heritage buildings.
- Use adaptive reuse strategies for heritage buildings
- Engage the community and younger generations in understanding the historical significance of these sites.
- Establish a Bandstand Task Force to lead on the restoration works, funding strategy, and partnership development.

### Culture:

- Provide more varied and innovative cultural programming (collaborations with artists and musicians).
- Create designated performance spaces and community art displays.
- Ensure cultural venues and facilities are accessible and well-equipped.
- Develop year-round programming with events and activities throughout the year, including large-scale festivals and reimagined programming at the Bandstand that reflects the theme of a Seafont for Every Generation.

### Tourism:

- Establish Eastbourne as a year-round destination.
- Provide a wider range of food and drink venues.
- Improve public spaces for events.
- Collaborate with the Tourism Team to deliver events throughout the year.
- Improvements to beach and promenade will enhance the seafont experience.
- Support local businesses.
- Enhance and revitalise existing tourism facilities.

### Health and Leisure:

- Retain key leisure facilities on the Seafont
- Promote active lifestyles through improved cycling and walking routes.
- Improve infrastructure and add safety and accessibility enhancements to walking and cycling routes.
- Create children's play trails to encourage activity.
- Encourage water sports and water related activities with facilities for water sports, fitness classes and rentals.

### Welcoming for all:

- Create a welcoming and accessible seafont for everyone.
- Improve disability access.
- Address anti-social behaviour.
- Increase lighting, signage and safety measures.
- Improve environmental stewardship and cleanliness.



I would like a park with a seesaw shaped like a Dolphin  
James aged 6

## 5. Eastbourne Seafont – Strategic Zones

Based on the received feedback, the seafont has been divided into several strategic zones. Each zone has a specific function, such as heritage, leisure, tourism, or environmental focus, designed to reflect local priorities and guide future improvements.

### 1. Western Seafont

(Holywell to The Bandstand)

Focus: **Heritage & Environment**

- Enhanced walking trails and interpretive signage
- Improved access to South Downs National Park.
- Eco-tourism and wellness activities
- Enhanced Heritage assets in Bandstand and Wish Tower
- Connectivity of the promenade around the Bandstand

### 2. Central Seafont

(The Bandstand to Pier)

Focus: **Culture & Events**

- Revitalised public realm with lighting, seating, and landscaping
- Seasonal events, markets, and performances
- Improved varied offering of music and events
- Accessible Beaches and improved accessibility
- Introduce climate-resilient planting and green infrastructure to support biodiversity and coastal resilience
- Increase emphasis on pedestrian priority

### 3. Eastern Seafont

(Pier to Fisherman's Green)

Focus: **Recreation and Family**

- Modernised play areas and cycle paths
- New food and beverage outlets
- Create destination venue at the Redoubt
- Improve facilities at the Fishermans Green site, preserving marine heritage through enhanced facilities and beach based activities for all

### 4. Eastern Gateway

(Fisherman's Green to Sovereign Harbour)

Focus: **Environment, Sustainability and Swimming**

- The primary objective is to safeguard and enhance existing leisure and swimming facilities, with consideration given to a mixed-use development model
- Enhance beach access and inclusive facilities for swimmers of all abilities.
- Consideration may also be given to expanding the tourism offer in this area, with potential for a landmark attraction that celebrates Eastbourne's natural and coastal heritage while supporting year-round visitor engagement.
- Introduce climate-resilient planting and green infrastructure to support biodiversity and coastal resilience
- Develop environmental education features such as interpretive signage and habitat protection zones
- Enhance tranquil, nature-connected spaces for walking, relaxation, and low-impact leisure
- Explore funding options for the Sovereign Centre

Space for drama or music students to perform  
Year 12 pupil



## 6. Area-Wide Action Plan

To support the delivery of the Strategic Zones and ensure the overall success of the Eastbourne Seafront Strategy, a series of coordinated, area-wide actions will be implemented. These actions focus on improving access, sustainability, connectivity, and the quality of the public realm.

### Seafront Transportation and Access Assessment

A comprehensive assessment will be undertaken to improve movement along the seafront and reduce congestion.

Key priorities include:

- **Pedestrian and Cyclist Priority**  
Introduce traffic calming measures and safer crossings to make the seafront more walkable and cycle-friendly.
- **Seafront Cycle Network**  
Explore options to create a continuous, accessible cycle route along the entire seafront, linking to the National Cycle Network routes, linking Eastbourne to Paris.
- **Parking Strategy**  
Assess the feasibility of a new parking approach, including potential park-and-ride schemes and better management of existing facilities.
- **Public Transport Enhancements:**  
Improve bus routes, stops, and shelters to increase accessibility and encourage sustainable travel.

### Digital Infrastructure and Connectivity

To support digital inclusion and enhance the visitor experience, public Wi-Fi zones will be introduced along key areas of the seafront. These will enable smart tourism initiatives, improve access to information, and support local businesses. Partnerships with telecom providers and local cafés will be explored to deliver reliable connectivity, particularly in high-footfall zones such as the Bandstand, Pier, and Fisherman's Green.

### Public Realm and Environmental Improvements

The strategy also focuses on enhancing the character and sustainability of the seafront's public spaces.

This includes:

- **Designing Unique, Accessible Spaces**  
Improve connections between the town centre and the seafront, while celebrating Eastbourne's historic architecture and landscape.
- **Planting and Landscaping**  
Introduce climate-resilient planting schemes that offer year-round interest and reflect the identity of the seafront.
- **Consistent Street Furniture and Signage**  
Ensure a cohesive visual identity across bins, benches, lighting, and wayfinding.



There should be signs to tell people not to litter as it will hurt the fish  
Sam aged 11

## 7. Seafront Management and Programming

### Establish a Seafront Executive Board

The Seafront Executive Board will be responsible for developing and implementing a year-round programme of events and activities that enhance the seafront experience and attract visitors. The Board will include representatives from:

- Local arts and culture organisations
- Local businesses and hospitality providers
- Community groups
- Relevant Local Authority officers

To strengthen governance for key heritage assets, a Bandstand Taskforce will be established under the Executive Board. This dedicated group will:

- Assess restoration works and long-term sustainability requirements
- Investigate funding streams and partnership opportunities
- Initiate discussions with the Environment Agency to align improvements with coastal resilience plans

The Bandstand Taskforce will report directly to the Seafront Executive Board, ensuring integration with wider programming and investment priorities.

The strategy will also focus on making the most of Eastbourne's existing physical assets, such as its promenade, heritage structures, open spaces, and natural coastline. Providing a strong foundation for creating a vibrant, inclusive, and economically resilient seafront.

Key principles for future operation include:

- **Stewardship of Place**  
Ensuring each area is well-maintained, thoughtfully designed, and reflects Eastbourne's character
- **Affordability**  
Offering a range of price points for food, activities, and events to ensure accessibility for all
- **Safety and Comfort**  
Creating a welcoming environment through improved lighting, clear signage, active monitoring, and inclusive design

There should be more green spaces and native plants, not just concrete  
Aged 17



## 8. Economic and Financial Assessments

The Management plan set out above focuses on the need to consider economic activity and sustainability. In summary, these are:

- **Tourism:** In 2024, England recorded 906 million day visits, with an average spend of £53 per visit
- **Local Impact:** Eastbourne's tourism economy benefits significantly from day visitors and short stays
- **Investment Return:** Expected through increased visitor numbers, longer stays, and higher local spending
- **Strategic Focus:** Sustainable growth aligned with cultural and environmental assets

Funding will be sought from a blend of public sector grants (e.g. National Lottery Heritage Fund, Arts Council England, Sport England), local developer contributions (e.g. Section 106), and private investment. Community-led governance models such as CICs will also be explored to unlock new funding streams and ensure long-term sustainability

To enable delivery of key regeneration projects, the strategy may consider mixed-use development models where appropriate. While the primary objective remains the delivery of high-quality public and leisure facilities, residential or commercial elements may be explored as a means to unlock funding and ensure long-term viability.



We need more affordable things for young people to do. Year 12 pupil

## 9. Monitoring and Evaluation

The implementation of the Eastbourne Seafront Strategy 2050 will be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis. Key performance indicators (KPIs) will be developed to track progress against the strategy's objectives.

**These KPIs will include:**

- Visitor numbers and satisfaction
- Economic impact (spend, jobs)
- Environmental quality (cleanliness, biodiversity)
- Accessibility and safety improvements
- Delivery of milestones for infrastructure

**Reporting:**

- Public updates via Council Cabinet
- Strategy review every five years

Regular reports on progress will be presented to the Council and the Seafront Working Group. The strategy will be reviewed and updated as needed, to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness.

### SMART Objectives

SMART objectives will be developed and agreed by the new Seafront Executive Board to ensure delivery is measurable and accountable. These objectives will be designed to reflect the strategy's priorities and may include targets for accessibility, cultural programming, active travel, and community engagement.

### Governance and Delivery Framework

To ensure effective implementation, the Seafront Strategy will adopt a layered governance model:

**Seafront Executive Board** – Provides strategic oversight, sets priorities, and monitors progress across all zones and projects.

**Bandstand Taskforce** – A dedicated governance group reporting into the Executive Board.

Its remit includes:

- Assessing restoration works and long-term sustainability requirements
- Investigating funding streams and partnership opportunities
- Initiating discussions with the Environment Agency to align improvements with coastal resilience plans

Alongside these governance structures, Community Interest Companies (CICs) are being explored for the Redoubt and Fisherman's Green. These models will enable collaborative governance, sustainable funding, and community-led programming.

Each site will follow a phased approach:

- Initial scoping and feasibility
- Formal CIC establishment
- Full delivery and activation

The Council will maintain strong engagement with residents, clubs, and stakeholders throughout all phases, ensuring transparency, co-design, and responsiveness to evolving community needs.

We need some better bins so people clean up after themselves and not get plastic into the sea, one of those huge fish shaped ones would be good.

Megan aged 14

## 10. Making It Happen

Delivering the Eastbourne Seafront Strategy 2050 will require a collaborative, phased, and adaptive approach. This strategy sets out a bold vision for transformation, but its success depends on our ability to translate ambition into action.

The accompanying Deliverables Plan provides a dynamic framework for implementation. It outlines key projects across three phases; short, medium, and long-term. Each designed to build momentum, secure investment, and respond to evolving community needs. From early scoping and feasibility work to full-scale delivery of cultural destinations and infrastructure, the plan will remain a living document, updated regularly to reflect progress, opportunities, and feedback.

Governance will be strengthened through a layered model:

The Seafront Executive Board will oversee activation, strategic alignment, and engagement.

The Bandstand Taskforce, reporting into the Executive Board, will focus on restoration planning, cultural programming, funding streams, and coordination with the Environment Agency.

Community Interest Companies (CICs) will play a central role in shaping and sustaining key sites, including the Bandstand, Redoubt, and Fisherman's Green. Each will follow a phased approach: initial scoping and feasibility, formal CIC establishment, and full delivery.

Through clear governance, robust monitoring, and a commitment to co-design, we will ensure that Eastbourne's seafront becomes a place of pride, purpose, and possibility

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## 11. Appendix

### SWOT Analysis

#### Strengths

- Iconic heritage assets
- Strong tourism base
- Active community involvement

#### Weaknesses

- Ageing infrastructure
- Limited year-round attractions
- Fragmented governance

#### Opportunities

- Green infrastructure investment
- Digital innovation in tourism
- Coastal regeneration funding

#### Threats

- Climate change impacts
- Economic uncertainty
- Competition from other destinations



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