



# Economic Development

# Yearly

# Report 2021

## Contents

[Economic Strategy In Action](#)

[Supporting our local businesses](#)

[2021 Star project](#)

[Skills and Employment News](#)

[External Funding Successes](#)

[Activities and Campaigns](#)

[Encouraging Inward Investment](#)

[Our High Streets](#)

[Visitor Economy](#)

[Linking with Business](#)

[Linking it all Up](#)

[Climate Change Initiatives](#)

[The Economic Development Team](#)

[Summarising 2020](#)

[Looking Ahead to 2021](#)

## [Economic Strategy In Action](#)

This report includes some of the Economic Development Team's highlights across 2021.

2021 has been another challenging year, for our local businesses and for Horsham District. This year has seen many changes in public patterns as the movement between online and offline continues.

The Economic Development Team have prioritised support for local businesses (small, medium and large), on and off the High Street. Throughout 2022, the Economic Development Team will continue with these priorities.

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## [Supporting our local businesses](#)

The Economic Development Team has committed more resources to business support and expansion, creating more opportunities for businesses to build and thrive in Horsham District. With thanks to the EU's *Welcome Back Fund*, along with *Additional Restrictions Funding*, the ED team have been able to provide grant funded campaigns and business improvement grants.

The **LEAP Small Business Grant** and the **Shop Improvement Grant** were set up for businesses to complete projects which will significantly improve their customer offer. They may have been unable to make these vital improvements during the pandemic, when needs were prioritised toward keeping their business running.

The **Business Newsletter** grew by 38% over 2021. It is a fortnightly bulletin sent to businesses, including information about grant funding, workshops, COVID guidance and calls to action. It is created by the Communications Team with bulletins provided by the Economic Development Team.





## 2021 Star Project

The *2021 Star Project* is **Pop Up Horsham**. The pop-up shop located on West Street, Horsham, opened at the beginning of November, and was even featured on *The One Show*.

*Pop-Up Horsham*, which is funded by the *EU's Welcome Back Fund*, allows small and independent businesses their first taste of the High Street. Space inside can range from a shelf to the size of a small shop. Businesses range from bespoke gifts, to a Sussex Green Living demonstration. This pop-up shop has shown that there isn't one size fits all for a high street space, but anyone with an independent business and a passion can be on the high street.



The projects purpose is to offer training and support to independent businesses who haven't sold on the High Street before. The successful workshops have been provided by the **HDC Retail Training Programme**.

The Pop Up shop will run until the end of January, with training opportunities continuing online at the **West Sussex Retail Hub**.

## Skills and Employment News

The **Journey to Work** programme has now been running at HDC for 10 years. A decade of successful employment support from a team dedicated to helping local people get into work and local employers recruit. In that 10 years, more than 1500 people have experience support from the Journey to Work team and more than 50% have found work as a result.

Covid has seen an even greater need for the Journey to Work programme and as a direct consequence of this need, the team has received £95,000 from the Department of Work and Pensions, to support two new programmes – a Youth Hub in Horsham town, called **Y-WISH**, and a support service for 25+ called **In2Work**. The team has also expanded as a result, with 5 team members supporting people locally. Both projects, working in partnership with the local Jobcentre in Horsham, have combined to help 350 people in their quest for work. Many of these have been impacted directly by the pandemic, losing their jobs, or being furloughed for long periods of time.

The Youth Hub has operated physically from the hub in Swan Walk since July, with virtual support offered since February. Nearly 200 young people (18-24) have received a variety of support, including CV reviews, job application support and interview assistance. As a result we have seen some 63 people gain work, including opportunities from the Government's flagship Kickstart scheme, apprenticeships, and jobs, as well as some deciding to move to higher education and build their skills.

In2Work has provided support to more than 160 people over the age of 24 with many of these being mature workers (50+). A combination of one-to-one mentoring and workshop development in partnership with Jobcentre Plus and their SWAPs programme for recruiting local employers, has produced nearly 50 job outcomes.

We have applied for more funding from DWP to continue the successful programme and hope that we can build on the great work the team has carried out this year, for another year to come.





## External Funding Successes

### LEAP Funding

The **LEAP fund for small businesses** has entered its seventh year, and remains hugely popular in the business community.

The LEAP grant provides up to £2,000 to successful applicants, funded by the *Additional Restrictions Funding* and residual *Strategic Infrastructure Funding*. The application asks for a three-year business plan, to understand how this project will develop a business.

To relaunch a new round in 2021, the Economic Development Team created a series of **LEAP marketing videos** with HDC's Communications Team. They profiled three successful LEAP businesses and asked how the grant funding has helped them to expand. The videos are available to view on Horsham District Council's YouTube or linked below. They include interviews with [Revolution Cycle Sport](#), [Stitch](#) and [Brick Bus](#).

Since the programme began in 2016, there have been **175** successful applicants with over **£282,000** worth of funding approved.



### Shop Improvement Grant

The **Shop Improvement Grant** is a grant scheme available for independent businesses. Local businesses can apply for up to £4,000, with 25% match funding. This is not a grant scheme for everyday use but for projects which will develop businesses, funded by *ARG* and the *West Sussex Retail Programme*.

Applications were received from across Horsham District, including Southwater, Henfield, Horsham and Storrington.

Applicants applied for a range of projects, such as new carpets, a CCTV system, the refurbishment of a new shop premises, a furnished kitchen and salon chairs.

This scheme committed nearly **£80,000** to local business projects, with **25** successful applicants moving their business forward.

Due to its success, the Shop Improvement Grant has relaunched with new funding and is open for applications until March 2022.



**Pulborough Exchange**

Recipient of the Shop Improvement Grant



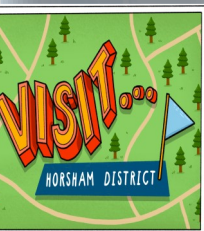
### Shop Improvement Grant for Landlords

A **Shop Improvement Grant for Landlords** has launched this January. Landlords of vacant premises can apply for up to £4,000 with 50% match funding. This project is designed to update vacant premises, making them desirable to long-term tenants. It is open to all landlords across Horsham District.



## Activities and Campaigns

Last year a number of activities and campaigns were launched to support Horsham District. The campaigns have focused on staying local, supporting the District and being sustainable, according to HDC's environmental ethos. The following projects have been created or supported by Economic Development. Follow the links for more information.



- [Buy Local, Gift Happy](#)
- [Jobs and Skills Fair](#)
- [Young Enterprise Fair](#)
- [Ice Rink at the REC Rooms](#)
- [LEAP success stories](#)
- [Visit Horsham District](#)
- [Steyning Food and Drink Festival](#)

### Ice Rink at the Rec Rooms

In the place of the bowling alley, an Ice Rink has opened at the Rec Rooms. This was originally open across Christmas but its run has been extended until March.

### Our High Streets

There have been several key changes to the High Street and Local Economy this year.

ED commissioned the **Horsham Town Markets Strategy Report** to advise on future strategy for Horsham's Markets. This report is due to be delivered in early 2022.

An **Eat Street marketing video** has been commissioned to spotlight the dynamic hospitality industry in Horsham.

## Employment Fairs

In addition to the work of the Journey to Work team on individual programmes, we have also put together two virtual jobs Fairs through our [Jobsfair website](#) – a place to find jobs, employment advice, training, and employability skills development. For the first Jobs Fair in April we reached 1800 local people, succeeding in filling more than 50 jobs as a result.

Since then we have also re-ignited our physical **Jobs Fair** at Horsham's Drill Hall, where more than 30 local employers promoted their opportunities and over 200 people attended – once again filling more than 50 roles. In February we will once again hold our successful **Apprenticeship Fair**, aiming to highlight the many excellent apprenticeship jobs currently available in a variety of different industries.



## Encouraging Inward Investment

Inward Investment this year has been focused on training and working with businesses to look at forward expansion in the District. The **West Sussex Retail Hub** provides online and in-person skills development for local businesses.

This year has also developed our District's **seven Community Partnerships**, who are working on a number of projects, like **Rewilding the High Street**.

**Visit Horsham District** Spring 2021 saw the launch of a multi-channel promotional campaign to encourage COVID safe visiting and discovery of the attractions to be found in six of our market Towns with a core focus of supporting the local high street. Created for ED by *Whistlestop Arts*, each town's 'Visit' has its own video, podcast, passport map and creative activity. Local promotion off and online was part of the project.



## Visitor Economy

As part of High Street support, ED are working with *Place Informatics* which provides **footfall data for Horsham District**. This information, compliant with GDPR, shows patterns of customer use in the High Street using GPS data on phones through access to third-party data from apps.

This data shapes ED business support, the enforcement / easing of COVID restrictions and is published in the monthly **High Street Monitoring Reports** produced by the team.

Also, ED have been working with Parking Services and data shows that the High Street remains strong, with people shopping for extended or targeted periods.

Equally, the Economic Development Team is working with leisure businesses, like **the Co-Working space, Ice Rink and Escape Rooms**, in response to changing customer patterns.

We collaborate with **Experience West Sussex** and signpost businesses to EWS for further support and guidance.

## Linking with Business

The ED team and Councillors started a series of business visits around Horsham District.

These small, medium and large businesses all within Horsham District are integral to our community and economy.

The visits opened a discussion into how HDC can support businesses to expand and better signpost initiatives which will spotlight the community, environment and encourage local employment.

Some of the points raised include sustainability, footfall information and campus-style business growth.

**Leader Jonathan Chown will continue these visits in the New Year.**



## Linking It All Up

Our business support pages remain updated with opportunities, information and grant funding applications.

The highlighted section below links to Horsham District Council's Business Pages. They offer support for new and established businesses.

The **West Sussex Retail Hub**, linked, continues to support and develop businesses, with enthusiasm from businesses remaining high.

ED continued to support **Horsham.TV** until July 2021. It is an online news channel for local business support. Discussions regarding its continuation as a privately funded venture have not born fruit so far.

### Start Up Local Guide

### Sign Up for the Business Newsletter

### All Available Grant Funding

### Buy Local in Horsham District

### West Sussex Retail Hub

Click the links for further information and to keep updated with HDC and ED projects



## Climate Change Initiatives

In 2021, ED have prioritised sustainability in all of our projects. Across this year,

- One of the Economic Development team, Ellen Kendrick, has been appointed the role of **Environmental Awareness Officer** to ensure all projects must be as sustainable as possible.
- Grant applications question if businesses are incorporating sustainability into their projects.
- **Climate Action Week** promoted businesses working for a better, healthier environment
- Sustainability has been prioritised in **HDC's Sustainable Procurement Charter**, when awarding a contract to a supplier.
- **HDC's Rewilding the High Street** provides funding and support to Community Partnerships (funded by *EU's Welcome Back Fund*) to run green projects.



## The Economic Development Team

The ED team have responded to the changing local economy and have increased their support for local businesses and employment .

The Journey to Work Team offer employment support and assistance to get people into work, from 18-24 and 25+. This will continue into the new year.

ED team members are working with businesses of all sizes across every community in Horsham District to provide the best support possible. This includes workshops, signposting, grants, initiatives and training, to help businesses take their next steps



## Summary of 2021

Economic Development has expanded its support of businesses, committing more resources to business support and expansion.

Also, Horsham District, with Economic Development support, has expanded its high street offer. There are more independent businesses on the high street, more diverse types of leisure alongside traditional retail, and start-ups being supported into high street spaces.

The Journey to Work team have run workshops, training sessions and one-to-one meetings, and will continue to do so whilst the need remains great for their services.

HDC were granted funding from the *EU's Welcome Back Fund* to launch two projects beginning in 2022. **Instagramability** is open to high street businesses across Horsham District who want to learn how to use Instagram to boost their customer sales. **Mystery Trails** is an interactive experience across the District. These projects went to tender last year, and following an evaluation process, the contracts were awarded and the projects launch from January.

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## Looking Ahead to 2022

There are several exciting projects starting in the new year.

Journey to Work are running an **Apprenticeship Fair** in February 2022.

The **Instagramability** workshops will run through January and February. Applications for a grant to create physical Instagramable spaces will close in February 2022.

**Mystery Trails** is launching before the end of March 2022, designed to attract people to spend time exploring our seven market Towns. The core concept is that of 'a series of outdoor escape rooms' to appeal to a broad audience. The project offers great scope for promotion, community and business involvement to drive visitors and spend across the District throughout 2022

**Rewilding our High Streets**, another *Welcome Back Fund* project, in which HDC supports the community in each of our seven towns to lead on a local wildlife project. They highlight sustainability as a core element of recovering footfall and appreciation of place.

Alongside these projects, the Economic Development team will continue to support businesses with more grant funding opportunities and training, such as;

**LEAP funding** for small businesses, up to £2,000.

**Shop Improvement Grant for Businesses and Landlords**, up to £4,000 each.

**West Sussex Retail Hub** continues to offer training through online support.