

# Theme: Town Centre Regeneration

Theme Pack for Board: objectives, projects, gaps, resources, dependencies and risks

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Prepared by	Programme Manager (PM)
Status	Draft for Board review
Source meetings	Strategic Planning Workshop (Theme Meeting #1) and Theme Group Meeting #2 (04 Feb 2026)

## 1. Theme name and agreed objective

Improve public spaces and the town centre offer so Ilfracombe is attractive, safe and fit for purpose for residents and visitors, tracking both practical and perceptual measures (vacancy, appearance, footfall and experience).

## 2. Context, scope and what success looks like

- Combines physical interventions (shopfronts/public realm) with perception and experience of the high street.
- Major issue identified: retail vacancy and poor shopfront presentation/condition.
- Includes repeat issues that must be progressed with ownership and handover notes (parking, congestion/traffic, Key Road and seafront connectivity/safety).
- Community safety is part of town centre experience and must have clear ownership/reporting.

## 3. Current activity and progress

- Property/shopfront database updated regularly (photos, occupancy status, priority grading, enforcement status).
- Engagement routes via letting agents to open communications with hidden landlords.
- Enforcement active on some priority properties (letters and follow-ups underway).
- Development need: a strategic piece on the future 'shape' of the centre (retail footprint, potential residential/mixed use shifts, standards/design guide approaches).
- Proposed: convene a best-practice workshop/roundtable with comparable town examples; identify realistic interventions for Ilfracombe; link to CNN/CNM and funding narratives.
- Opportunity noted to align with Local Plan engagement process over the next year.

## Project portfolio and tracker

Project / intervention	Purpose / description	Current status	Lead / partners	Next milestone	Dependencies / risks	Measures (headline)
Property/shopfront database	Baseline and ongoing tracking: photos, occupancy, priority grading, enforcement status.	In delivery	Town centre subgroup	Agree reporting cadence and baseline headline indicators	Capacity to keep updated	Vacancy rate; improved shopfront condition

Landlord engagement routes (incl. letting agents)	Use letting agents to reach hidden landlords; structured engagement plan.	In delivery	Town centre subgroup	Increase coverage; formalise engagement routes	Landlord responsiveness	Number of landlords engaged; improvements secured
Enforcement on priority properties	Letters, follow-ups, enforcement action where needed.	In delivery	Relevant authority partners	Report outcomes and next actions per priority property	Legal/enforcement capacity	Compliance actions; properties improved
Empty-shop window dressing / generic vinyl designs	Quick-win approach to improve appearance; permissions process.	In development	Town centre subgroup + comms support	Confirm design set and rollout approach	Permissions; budget	Number of empty fronts improved
Best-practice workshop/roundtable	Bring comparable town examples; identify realistic solutions; build strategic plan; link to CNN/CNM and funding narratives.	Proposed	Town centre subgroup + PM	Hold workshop; produce options output	Partner participation	Strategic plan produced; projects commissioned

### Gaps, decisions and additional interventions needed

- Develop a strategic position on the future shape of the town centre (retail footprint, mixed use/residential shifts, standards/design guidance).
- Agree baseline measures and a regular tracking cadence (vacancy, appearance, footfall and experience).
- Clarify ownership/reporting for community safety as part of town centre experience.
- Clarify subgroup structure and relationship to IRB/trader engagement.

### 5. Resources required

- Capacity to maintain the property/shopfront database and report baselines.
- Landlord engagement capacity and enforcement follow-through.

- Small quick-win budget for empty-shop window dressing/vinyl and minor appearance improvements.
- Convening capacity for best-practice workshop and for aligning to funding/Local Plan routes.
- Community safety link capacity where needed to improve perceptions and experience.

## Measures and reporting

Measures below combine those explicitly discussed and a small set proposed for Board agreement based on the meeting framing.

Suggested headline measures (for Board agreement):

- Vacancy rate and changes over time (by street/zone).
- Shopfront condition/appearance score (from database grading).
- Footfall or proxy activity measures (where available).
- Perception/experience indicator (simple pulse survey or resident/visitor feedback).
- Community safety indicators relevant to town centre experience (agreed ownership).

## Dependencies and risk register

Initial risks recorded in the two theme meetings. RAG and mitigations can be refined by the Board.

ID	Risk / dependency	Impact	Likelihood	RAG	Mitigation / action
TC-1	No agreed strategic direction for the future shape of the town centre.	High	Medium	Amber	Best-practice workshop to produce options paper; Board steer to confirm direction.
TC-2	Landlord engagement remains weak (hidden landlords) limiting improvements.	High	Medium	Amber	Strengthen letting-agent routes; structured engagement plan; escalate via enforcement.
TC-3	Safety/ASB ownership unclear, undermining perceptions and town centre experience.	High	Medium	Amber	Board decision on ownership/reporting; integrate into plan and measures.
TC-4	Measures not agreed so progress becomes anecdotal.	Medium	Medium	Amber	Agree a small measurement set; monthly cadence; baseline and tracking.

## Action log

Action	Owner	Timescale / next date	Notes
Maintain property/shopfront database and agree reporting cadence and baseline indicators.	Town centre subgroup	Next reporting cycle	Include vacancy and appearance measures.
Develop and run best-practice workshop/roundtable and produce options output for future shape of centre.	Town centre subgroup + PM	Within 90 days	Link to CNN/CNM and Local Plan engagement.
Confirm subgroup structure and relationship to IRB/trader engagement and reporting route.	PM + theme partners	Before ongoing monthly reporting begins	Clarify ownership.

## 6. Programme-wide links and cross-cutting items

- Community safety/ASB is a cross-cutting issue shaping outcomes across themes; ownership and reporting need an explicit decision and measures.
- Coastal Navigators Network (CNN/CNM) integration must be visible, particularly for sector priorities, investment opportunities and partner alignment.
- Campus model and public sector estate strategy must be aligned so service navigation does not duplicate or compete with building-based solutions.
- Poverty Truth Commission (PTC) outcomes should be shown as continuing within One Ilfracombe with clear accountability and lived-experience involvement.
- Communications capacity is a key enabler; Kara Stevens (new Comms Officer) noted as an enabling resource once bedded in.