

HEADLINE OUTCOMES OF THE RICHMOND PARTNERSHIP CONFERENCE 2021

UNLOCKING THE POTENTIAL: A NEW VISION FOR OUR TOWN CENTRES AND HIGH STREETS



Town centres as destinations

- Town centres and high streets as a 'one-stop-shop' for locals and visitors.
- This could include public art, performances, and events as well as traditional retail and services such as banking and health facilities.
- Infrastructure for visitors such as public toilets, wayfinding, and parking must be considered to ensure that town centres and high streets are accessible to all.



People-focused centres

- A 15-minute city, or 'Living Locally' concept focusing on walkability and pedestrianisation. In some areas this brings logistical challenges but was a popular suggestion during the conference.
- Other benefits are the environmental and health impacts of reduced traffic, as well as a reduction in noise pollution and increased pedestrian safety.



Balanced footprint

- The need in some larger centres for a mix of residential and commercial lots, with space also planned for recreational areas.
- This requires active place management, such as filling vacant units with specialist shops that respond to local need. This would ensure that shops are recognised as playing an integral part in the community.



Creative town planning

- Making creative use of empty spaces through meanwhile and temporary uses. This could include pop-ups, public art, performances, and events.
- Repurposing spaces to serve both the day and night-time economies.



Digitalisation

- A long-term trend accelerated by the pandemic; the digital revolution should be seen as an opportunity not just a challenge.
- When utilised creatively, technology has the potential to make town centres a more desirable destination for all.