

One Maidstone a Community Interest Company
Business Plan 2016-2018



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Vision Statement

We are an influential membership organisation with a mission to improve the trading environment in Maidstone and in so doing enhance its appeal to residents and visitors.

We are a not for profit organisation. Our agenda is completely independent of political motivation or affiliation.

Our membership list is diverse and includes multi nationals, independents, the finance and legal sectors, educational establishments, local charities and leading town centre employers.

We will raise Maidstone's profile as a place in which to live, work, shop, visit, spend leisure time and do business.

Our vision is to build upon the calibre and best interests of those members that we represent and the cultural heritage of the town itself. We will pool these resources, drawing together the respective expertise of our partners in order to develop our policies, campaign proactively and develop a clear track record of success.

We will innovate, developing practical and timely common sense solutions to Maidstone's strategic challenges.

Primarily we act as a catalyst, imparting an effective two way flow of communication between our members and local authority decision makers.

We are a mouth piece for our members in a public arena.

7000 Residents

500 Shops

70 Restaurants

20 Bars

1 Maidstone

One Maidstone

the town centre partnership

Key Objectives

- To work together with our partners to create a thriving town centre which our communities have pride in and to promote Maidstone as a go to destination.
- Work on a coherent approach to project delivery; eliminate duplication and satisfy joint objectives e.g. Maidstone Borough Council's Destination Management Plan
- Solidify the organisation's financial position; increase income and reduce costs. Become fully sustainable.
- Position the company as a significant point of contact for Maidstone related enquiries. If there is someone you need to speak to chances are we know them.
- Promote the town's status as County Town.
- Develop the town's reputation as a clean, safe, friendly environment – Purple Flag Accreditation, Safer Socialising Awards for town centre venues, wider promotion of MaidSafe
- Support both day and night time economies
- Support the voluntary sector – Involve
- Support the local authorities and agencies including Maidstone Borough Council, Kent County Council, Kent Police
- Be a fixer and a facilitator

What we will do in the first two years

a) Key Projects

Our structure has four main working groups who will deliver key projects that will benefit Maidstone town centre (as identified by the boundary map) and the town's Business Crime Reduction Partnership.

Events

- Plan and organise four large scale seasonal events during the year.

The events group would include representation from the main shopping centres in Maidstone and would invite personnel with experience and expertise in the delivery of large scale events and the associated administration e.g. road closures, stewarding, marshalling, volunteer recruitment and training, to attend.

Public Realm Improvements (Regeneration and Streetscene)

- Carry out street audits to identify shop fronts that are in need of improvement and recommend possible schemes in order to achieve this.
- Identify opportunities for distinctive lighting schemes
- Work on Maidstone in Bloom
- Green Walls – enhance otherwise bare walls with living displays of foliage

This group would include key MBC and KCC Officers to aid the delivery of aesthetic projects

Marketing

- Produce an information pack to attract and act as a guide to new businesses in Maidstone – this would include standards, charters, colour palettes, guides to local attractions and places of interest and key focal points in the town centre. A list of useful contacts could also be compiled.
- Work on the company's social media presence, better digital communication, include areas on the website for people who live in Maidstone to cater for residents as well as visitors

This group would make the best use of the experts that the CIC has at its disposal – town centre leaders in social media and marketing e.g. Play Mountain, Butterfly Media, Maidstone Utd., and Localise App.

Volunteers

- Programme of training for stewards to support the events and activities in the town centre undertaken by the other groups.
- Hold a database of volunteers.

This group would include existing contacts with the knowledge of, and access to, a pool of volunteers e.g. Jubilee Church, Involve

MaidSafe

The organisation also acts as the umbrella body for MaidSafe the town's nationally recognised Business Crime Reduction Partnership. It provides security radios, equipment, training and intelligence to its members. It identifies ways in which to increase awareness of business crime to retailers, licensed premises and their customers. It works to provide a safe environment for everyone using the town centre.

MaidSafe acts as an autonomous project, with its own board of management and accounts. Its links with Kent Police and CCTV Control at the Medway Hub are intrinsic to its success.

Please refer to MaidSafe's structure, constitution and protocols.

b) Sustainability

Income generation is a key priority for the CIC.

We seek to attract key fund sponsors by establishing a clear track record of success.

We intend to seek sponsorship for many of the key projects outlined above and undertake an integrated approach to fund raising with our partners.

A finite amount of remaining Town Team monies will be held by the CIC in 2016/17 for which applications for funding from the working groups can be submitted.

Once the above projects have been successfully delivered in years 1-2 longer term ambitions include research concerning the viability of a Business Improvement District (BID). A successful BID would guarantee income for the CIC but would demand extensive research and canvassing ahead of any

third attempt at delivery. Additional and specialist staffing would also be essential before undertaking the project.

We propose that work to develop a BID commence in years 2-3.

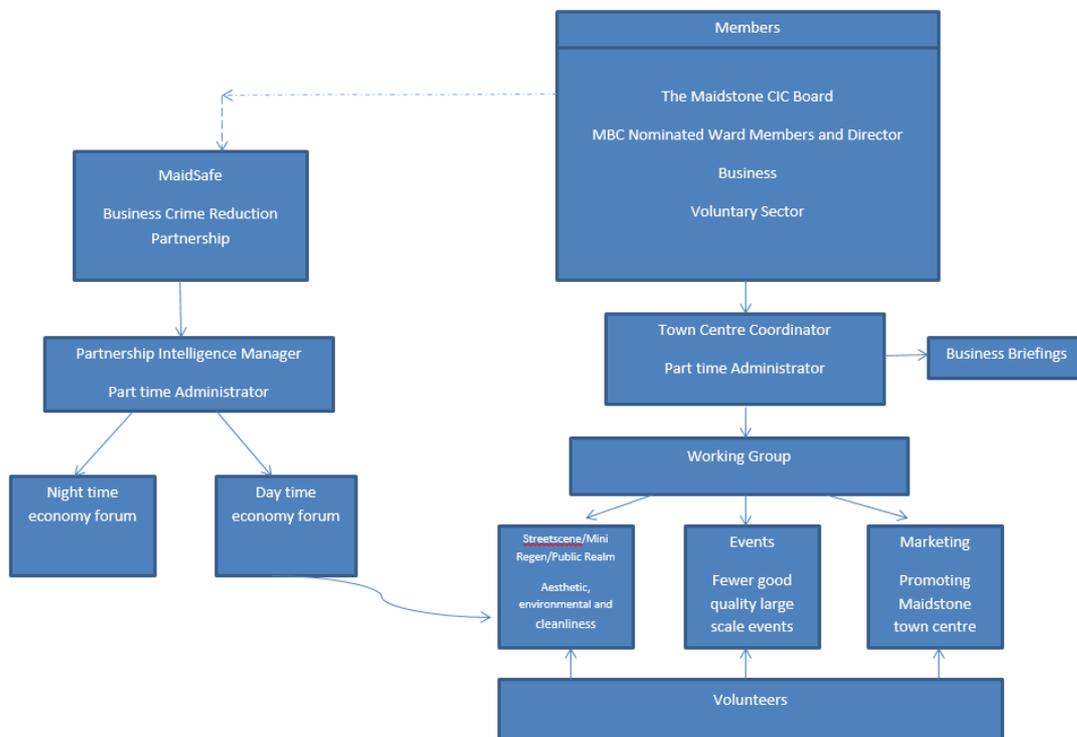
c) Challenges

Obstacles that the CIC will need to overcome include:

- Financial sustainability ahead of a BID – membership levels must be at the minimum maintained, ideally increased
- The CIC needs to become more adept at identifying the skills and expertise already available to it and allocate those skills more efficiently
- The CIC needs to be stringent in its adherence to the Business Plan and vision, it must not deviate and overstretch resources even in an attempt to please
- The CIC must be prepared for counter campaigns at such times as a BID is considered or undertaken – the CIC must be resilient and tenacious

Organisational Structure

The CIC structure will work in parallel with Maidstone Borough Council's high level Strategic Town Centre Development Board, but will be an entirely independent and self governing organisation,



Who are we targeting?

As identified in the Sustainability and Challenges section of this document, income generation is a key consideration if the CIC, and later on a BID, is to be successful we must continue to attract the confidence and investment of businesses.

However our members list already includes other organisations that are not businesses in a traditional sense and are key employers in the town centre e.g. Maidstone Borough Council, HMP Maidstone

Efforts continue to be made to sign up members who contribute to the diversity of the organisation and bring their own view point and expertise. The CIC is not representative of retail alone.

As the town centre evolves and further residential areas are created we must also consider the well being and interests of those who live here and also work on Maidstone's reputation as a destination to visit.

We feel that these objectives can be satisfied by the continuation of projects such as MaidSafe, the Purple Flag accreditation and the introduction of signature events and activities that maximise the appeal of the resources that are already at our disposal. We are committed to supporting the Borough's Destination Management Plan which we strongly believe will ensure that Maidstone can become a place in which people wish and choose to live, work, visit and to do business.

Maidstone needs to understand its own identity and to be confident that it is one of which it can be proud.

How we will promote our activities

The CIC will establish itself as a significant point of contact for Maidstone town centre related enquiries and in so doing facilitate introductions and effective redirection to our partners.

This can be achieved with an enhanced, effective and proactive online and social media presence.

We have identified that visitors to Maidstone are already catered for with the successful Visit Maidstone website but that there may be a need for quick reference for people who live here.

In order for social media to be effective it demands a level of concentration and dedication. The CIC has experts in this field existing within its ranks of members and we should use these resources accordingly.

The CIC enjoys a strong relationship with the local media and should make this work to our advantage with the promotion of our successes, events and future plans.

The CIC will continue to undertake its quarterly survey of the town centre businesses, holding a database of contact details that can be used for regular updates on our activities and projects.

The CIC will produce regular newsletters and bulletins to update and inform about town centre activity.

The CIC must not be self effacing and must publicise it's achievements and work to raise Maidstone's profile on a national stage as a great destination to visit, live, work and do business all in a safe, clean and friendly environment.

Who are our key partners

This document regularly refers to our partners and they are identified below as the key organisations with whom we work closely and without whose support our ambitions would be unachievable:

- Our members – see onemaidstone.com
- Maidstone Borough Council
- Kent Police
- Kent County Council
- The Association of Town Centre Management
- The National Association of Business Crime Partnerships
- Stephen Hill Partnership Accountants
- Hatten Wyatt incorporating Morlings Solicitors
- Metro Bank

Reference documents

- Community Interest Statement
- Asset lock
- Memorandum and Articles of Association
- MaidSafe Structure and Constitution
- Town Centre Boundary Map
- Destination Management Plan – visitmaidstone.com/dmp