



Holmfirth -

**vibrant, homely, welcoming
and thriving**



Holmfirth Blueprint

In Holmfirth we want to prioritise the town's vibrancy as a place for people of all ages to meet, enjoy local businesses, culture, and events.

Nestled in some of our most beautiful countryside, it is already a great place to celebrate the landscape and local heritage. But as a modern market town, one of our priorities is helping local businesses thrive and face future challenges head-on.

Kirklees Council, local organisations, businesses, and residents are working together to develop a blueprint which defines a long-term shared vision and number of key projects for the town centre that its residents envisage.



Getting local people involved

As always, our plans are shaped by your views. The blueprint pulls together the results of several major engagement exercises by Kirklees Council, and important work that has been carried out by local groups including the Parish Council's Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The blueprint recognises that the future wellbeing and resilience of Holmfirth town centre requires more than the input of the council. It will require partnership working across Kirklees Council, new and existing local businesses, and community groups.

We first began engaging with the public about changes to Holmfirth in 2019, exploring ways to address traffic issues within the town centre. This resulted in the Town Centre Access Plan, a £7.5million scheme funded by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority. This scheme will introduce wider pavements and better crossings, creating more space for pedestrians. The Town Centre Access Plan now sits at the heart of the Holmfirth Blueprint.

In autumn 2021, the community were asked to engage with our Place Standard team. Place Standard is a tool developed to help start conversations about specific locations, and we use it to find out what matters to our residents about their local area. This work formed a baseline which influenced the vision and objectives of the Holmfirth Blueprint. This can be found at howgoodisourplace.org.uk/your-voice-your-holmfirth

Following this, we held a public consultation last year specifically around our initial blueprint plans, inviting people who live in, work in, or regularly visit Holmfirth to get involved and share their views.

In November and December 2022, hundreds of local people gave their opinions on the plans, both online and in person. The results were largely positive and have really given a boost to our initiatives, as well as identifying key priorities for us going forward.



The priorities

Clear priorities have emerged from those who live in, work in, and regularly visit the town centre, and these will continue to shape our plans going forward.

The blueprint focuses on five main objectives which were guided by stakeholder workshops held in July 2022 and then the results of public consultation in Dec 22. These objectives aim to deliver the long-term shared vision of:

- **Bringing Holmfirth's streets to life**
- **Helping the local economy to thrive**
- **Making the town centre accessible for everyone**
- **Putting the River Holme back at the heart of the town**
- **Finding ways to celebrate and build on Holmfirth's identity**

Based on feedback from the community, we are developing 'priority projects' within the blueprint.

Whilst there was strong community support across all areas (with an average of 54% strongly agreeing), feedback suggested that three of the five objectives were particularly well supported:

- **Putting the River Holme back at the heart of the town**
- **Celebrating Holmfirth's identity**
- **Making the town centre accessible for everyone**

Holme River

As the Holme River gives Holmfirth its name, and is very much a part of the town's heritage and history, it's unsurprising that this objective has received the most public support so far.

We want to make the river a picturesque feature within the town centre once more. We'll create better access to the water's edge, as well as improving the river environment itself.

Through consultation we found out that improving the natural environment and access is more important to people than creating public art along the river, though this suggestion still received support.

Identity

Holmfirth is where the heart is, and this was clear during our consultation.

We have seen great public support for new initiatives to celebrate the town's rich and varied heritage, its unique history and identity. We will be finding new ways to highlight this heritage and culture through projects and developments in the town centre.

We also received high support for an initiative to improve 'gateway spaces' in Holmfirth - meaning that whether we are welcoming you for a visit or welcoming you home, we want you to see the best of Holmfirth from the moment you arrive.

Accessibility

At the heart of the Holmfirth Blueprint is the Town Centre Access Plan. This scheme focuses on improving travel around Holmfirth, as well as access for pedestrians and cyclists.

Your feedback tells us this will make a big difference, and it is one of our most important initiatives.

Our suggestions to improve the accessible environment for everyone in Holmfirth received some of the highest support during consultation, along with improving crossings, roads and pavements, and general pedestrianisation.

This is understandable as pedestrians make up a substantial portion of visitors to the town centre.

The Town Centre Access Plan will introduce wider pavements and better crossings, creating more space for pedestrians.

We are also working on balancing the needs of traffic with those using active transport, and reassessing parking in the town centre. This includes creating a new multi-use car park and events space, mirroring aspirations in the Huddersfield and Dewsbury Blueprints, as well as introducing electric vehicle (EV) charging points and providing easier access to disabled parking spaces.

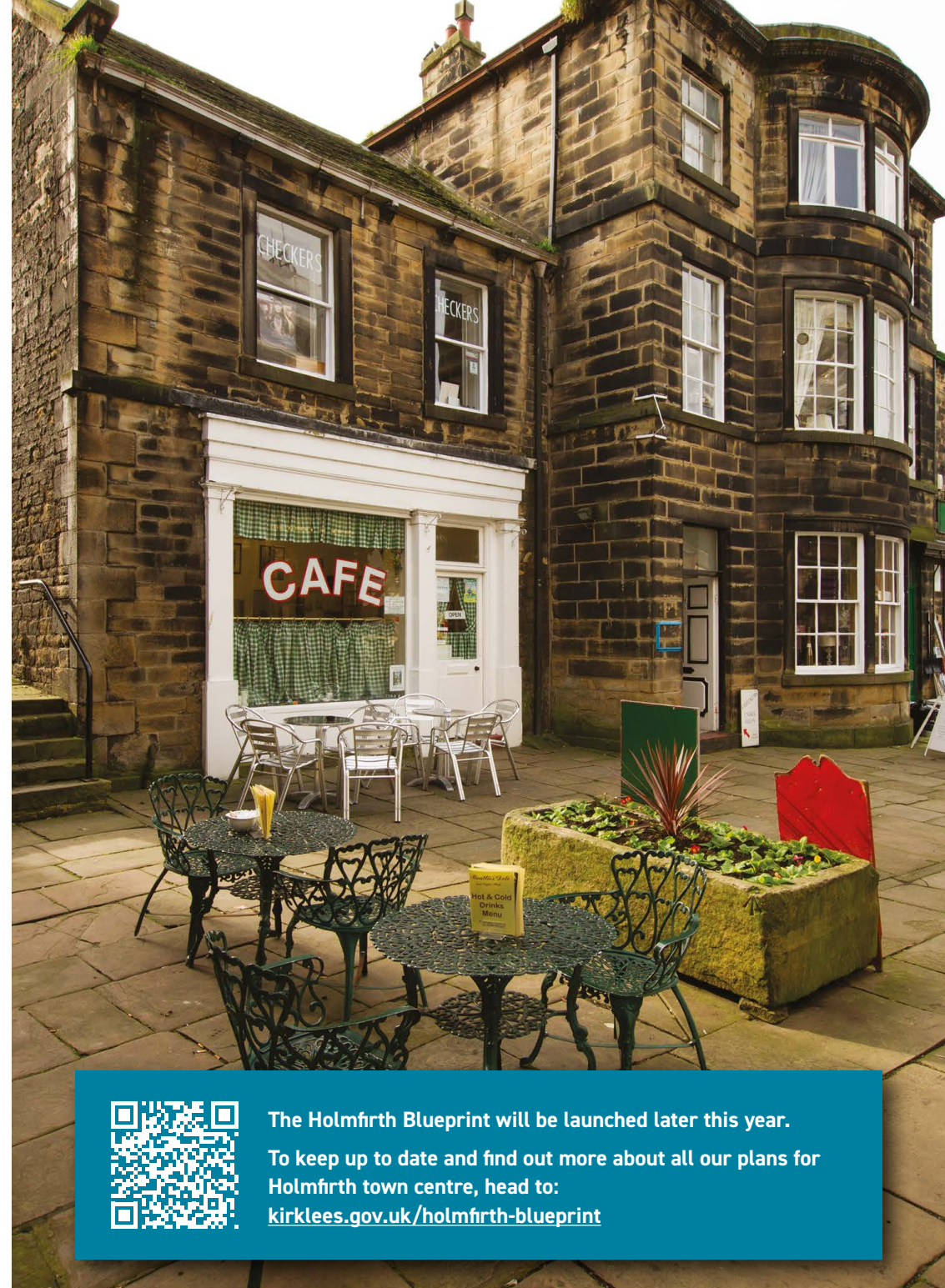
These plans will open up the town centre for more people to enjoy.

What happens next?

Consultation responses have now been collated and the findings can be found kirklees.gov.uk/holmfirth-blueprint

The West Yorkshire Combined Authority approved the business case for the Town Centre Access Plan in March 2023, and construction is expected to start in Summer, however you may see contractors on site earlier than that carrying out investigative works. From all our engagement with the local community, this is our first priority project within the Holmfirth Blueprint.

We'll develop more priority projects based on our engagement around the Holmfirth Blueprint, which will continue as plans progress. The process will involve detailed research, and discussions with an extensive range of public and private sector partners and community groups, followed by wider consultation.



The Holmfirth Blueprint will be launched later this year. To keep up to date and find out more about all our plans for Holmfirth town centre, head to: kirklees.gov.uk/holmfirth-blueprint