

PORTAS REVIEW PILOTS APPLICATION FORM

Please ensure you fill in ALL sections of this form.

Guidance on completing this form can be found at

www.communities.gov.uk/publications/regeneration/portaspilotsprospectus

SECTION ONE Organisational details		
The Department will only consider applications from either local partnerships or a consortium with a single lead bidder. This is to ensure clear lines of accountability and communication.		
1.1 Organisation name (in whose name the application is being made – if a partnership/consortium/BID, state the lead)	SANDBACH TOWN COUNCIL	
1.2 Contact name and main role	Sam Corcoran	Councillor
1.3 Address	Sandbach Literary Institution, Hightown, Sandbach, CW11 1AE	
1.4 Telephone number (a) organisation (b) contact	(a) 01270 600 800	(b) 01270 753038
1.5 Email address of contact	sam@ncla.co.uk	
1.6 Website address (if any)	http://www.sandbach.gov.uk	

SECTION TWO Town Team/Partnership		
2.1 Who will lead the pilot? Cllr Sam Corcoran, Sandbach Town Council		
2.2 Who will be the Accountable Body (Please attach a confirmation letter)? Sandbach Town Council		
2.3 Please indicate the other partners involved in your application. Please add further rows if required		
Organisation name	Organisation address and contact details	Main activities and role
STAR – Sandbach Traders And Retailers	Larry Sharps larry.sharps@gmail.com	Liaison with shopkeepers
Sandbach Partnership	Dot Flint DotFlint@aol.com	Liaison with community groups.
Cheshire East Council	David McGifford David.McGifford@cheshireeast.gov.uk	Economic development
Sandbach Woodland & Wildlife Group	Dick Macaulay d.macaulay@talk21.com	Enhancing woodland & wildlife areas and promoting Sustainable Sandbach
2.4 Please explain how you will ensure information about the use of the grant, decisions made, and outcome of the projects, is made publicly available (maximum 300 words).		
<p>Sandbach Town Council (STC) produces a regular newsletter which is circulated to all homes in Sandbach. Articles on the projects will be included in this newsletter. This will ensure information about the projects is circulated to all Sandbach residents.</p> <p>In addition, reports will be made on the progress of the projects to STC members at public meetings and the minutes of meetings of STC will be made available on the STC website. This will ensure public accountability for use of the grant and decisions made.</p> <p>There will also be regular press releases and meetings with local press.</p>		
2.5 Please explain how you will monitor and evaluate the impact of the grant (maximum 300 words).		
The project will be monitored by a new town centre manager employed by STC. Town Centre Manager work will also be overseen by the Lead Town Council member.		

Key indicators will include

1. the number of stalls used in the Town Hall indoor market
2. the number of days the indoor market is open
3. the number of business moving on from an indoor market stall to a more permanent facility in Sandbach
4. the number of stalls on Thursday Market
5. feedback from Sandbach residents
6. market town benchmarking with the February 2011 report being used as a baseline

SECTION THREE

Criterion One: Mix

Please tick all boxes relevant to your application

TOWN/AREA NAME:

Local Authority (name): Sandbach Town Council

Location Type

X	Market Town
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	New Town
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	Rural Town
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	Coastal Town
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	Village
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	Large Town
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	Suburban
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	Parade
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	Other
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Where the following information is easily accessible:

Income (detail can be found on ONS website:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/search/index.html?newquery=employed+earnings>)

X	High employed earnings
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	Low employed earnings
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SECTION FOUR

Criterion Two: Strong Leadership

4.1 Please detail your vision for your high street, and describe how you have begun to secure local support and how you will build on this to make it a reality (maximum 300 words).

At the bottom of the High Street is Arclid Brook. A wildlife corridor runs alongside the brook and this is being preserved and enhanced by the Sandbach Woodland & Wildlife Group. Our vision includes encouraging people to visit the town centre on foot and enjoying the local woodland and wildlife.

Moving further up the High Street we find the recently renovated grade 1 listed Old Hall Hotel. There is evidence that The Old Hall attracts visitors from a wide area surrounding Sandbach. Building conservation and heritage is a key factor to the future vibrancy and economy of the town and also to promoting the visitor economy.

There is already a high occupancy rate on the High Street with a good mix of shops.

The Sandbach Town Hall complex occupies a prominent position on the High Street. The indoor market is currently only open 2 days a week and is significantly underused. Our vision is to promote the use of the indoor market for new retail ideas.

The traditional Thursday market will move to the Market Square & High Street to free up car parking spaces and integrate the market and High Street.

In June 2011 a questionnaire was distributed to Sandbach residents and businesses. It aimed to find out how our community should develop over the next 5 to 10 years and beyond. Over 700 people responded and the results are available at

http://www.sandbach.gov.uk/pdf/Town_Plan_Bar_Chart_Results.pdf

This demonstrated support for the Vision of Sandbach Town Council
<http://sandbach.gov.uk/Vision.htm>

Groups including local councillors, volunteers and business people have formed to take forward each area identified in the survey. Sandbach Town Council has increased its precept by 64% in 2012/13 to fund the plans for the town centre, town hall and market.

SECTION FIVE

Criterion Three: Commitment

5.1 Please attach any supporting letters (from those organisations and individuals who make up your pilot), detail of proposed match funding, and any other relevant information, including detail of the percentage of landlords and businesses signed up to the pilot (maximum 300 words).

Letters of support have been obtained from the following organisations:

Sandbach Traders and Retailers (STAR) aims to improve the town's economy by helping shop owners, retailers and anyone who works in Sandbach, find help and information, including:

- Money saving ideas;
- Hints and tips on bringing trade to Sandbach;
- Promoting the town;
- Events to bring in visitors.

STAR represents over 50 local traders.

Sandbach Partnership aims to promote for public benefit, the improvement of economic, social, environmental and cultural health of the Sandbach area.

Cheshire East Council aims to support strategic economic development and delivery, on a Borough-wide and individual town basis. Cheshire East Council is the landlord of the Sandbach Enterprise Centre and is currently responsible for running the Town Hall and markets.

Waitrose is the largest retailer in Sandbach. The store is situated in the town centre close to the High Street.

Match funding is provided by Sandbach Town Council which has raised over £140,000 through a 64% increase in the town council precept to run the town hall, markets and town centre management. Sandbach Town Council will take over the running of the Town Hall and markets in 2012.

Fiona Bruce MP has also provided a letter of support.

SECTION SIX

Criterion Four: Potential for improvement

We will be awarding funding on a value for money basis. It is important, therefore, that your bid can demonstrate the potential for improvement in your area.

6.1 Please set out what you consider to be the key challenges facing your high street (including current vacancy rates) and why your high street has the potential to improve (maximum 300 words).

In many ways Sandbach is already a successful, thriving market town. There is a low vacancy rate in town centre shops, unemployment and crime are low and there is a good mix of retail offerings on the High Street with a high proportion of independent local shops.

However, the Town Hall and indoor market is underused. There has been a steady increase in the number of fast food outlets on the High Street and the number of charity shops in areas around the town centre. There is no room for complacency. What is most worrying is the decline over the last decade of the historic Sandbach Thursday market, which used to attract bus loads of visitors from surrounding towns, but now no longer fills the Scotch Common where it is currently situated.

The town centre has all the attributes required for improvement, with an affluent population, good local shops, good bus routes, a good local park and an underused indoor market which will be fully under the control of the town council and which can be used to attract new traders. Sandbach also enjoys a high number of active community groups, with a strong volunteer base, and which are supported by the Town Council via grant applications. These community groups organise regular well attended events including Sandbach Transport Festival, Halloween event, Christmas Lights switch on, Day Of Dance, Santa Grotto on the Cobbled square, monthly Farmers Market and has an active Sandbach Clean Team.

SECTION SEVEN

Criterion Five: Innovation

7.1 Please set out how you will test the Town Team approach, what your priorities are likely to be, and whether there are particular recommendations in the Portas Review you want to test. We are particularly looking for innovative ideas (maximum 300 words).

We wish to test the Portas Review idea of encouraging would be retailers to put a toe in the water and then to progress on to a more permanent business.

Sandbach has the facilities to test this idea. Sandbach Town Council is about to take over the running of the Town Hall and both the internal and external markets. This will enable us to offer easily accessible space for would be retailers to try out their offering in the indoor market. Those whose ideas succeed can then move onto a permanent market stall or a small retail unit within the indoor market hall. Further progression could be to a regular Thursday market stall or via meanwhile use to a High Street shop.

The Sandbach Town Team would engage with landlords with a view to them allowing entrepreneurs to use empty shop units, on short-term leases to test retail ideas, concepts and business models, in a live environment – rent free, or on a reduced rent basis – a ‘pop up’ shop basis.

The recent successful introduction via STAR of the Love Life Card in Sandbach, which aimed to increase footfall/consumer spend in shops, demonstrates the ability of the local groups to test and implement new ideas.

Waitrose as the largest retailer in Sandbach could support and mentor new retailers.

Links with the Sandbach Enterprise Centre (landlord Cheshire East Council) provide an opportunity for any office related businesses to progress from an indoor market stall to hiring a small office at competitive rates in a central location in the town.

It is envisaged that the recently formed Sandbach Economy Group will morph into a new Town Team, with increased membership.

SECTION EIGHT

Expenditure

8.1 Please set out how you much you are bidding for, (maximum £100,000), and how you propose to use it. Please explain how the pilot will be innovative and deliver additional impact. Please also provide detail of other Government funding your partnership currently receives (maximum 300 words).

STC has increased its precept to raise money for its plans to invigorate the traditional Thursday market and the Town Hall complex. For Sandbach, the main gain from becoming a pilot project would be to raise the profile of the community’s plans and to gain technical assistance with plans to rebuild the market and encourage new entrants to retailing in the town. Therefore STC is only bidding for £45,000. This money will be used to improve the stalls within the indoor market and to cover the costs of moving the historic charter Thursday market to the Market Square and the High Street.

The pilot will be innovative in setting up a clear progression track for new businesses to go from an ad hoc stall in the indoor market through to a fully fledged business in Sandbach. Businesses could move on from a temporary stall in the indoor market to a permanent lock-up stall within the indoor market

and then to an office in the Sandbach Enterprise Centre or to a regular stall on the Thursday market or via a meanwhile use shop to a permanent shop on the High Street.

Sandbach Town Council receives no government funding.

VIDEO SUBMISSION

Please upload your video to YouTube (www.youtube.com).

If you do not already have an account you will need to go to the website and use the "Create Account" option.

Please include the URL (link) below. You should not include the video itself with your application.

Video link: <http://youtu.be/9iqkqCMzKBo>