

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	EXECUTIVE	Item 10	Page 1 of 6
Report Originator	Alex Jelley Economic Regeneration Manager	<i>Fwd Plan Ref No:</i> A15/031	
Wards Affected	All	17 th February 2016	
Title	DELIVERING OUR TOWN CENTRES		

Portfolio Holders: Cllr Derek Zanger and Cllr Mark Dearing

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To provide an update on recent successes at the Museum and Gallery
- To highlight forthcoming junction improvement works being carried out by Northamptonshire Highways
- To showcase some innovative approaches being adopted to help Small and Medium Sized Enterprises in Kettering Borough.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Kettering Borough lies within the South East Midlands, which is predominantly a growth area, and is expected to facilitate growth of some 13,100 homes and 16,200 new jobs by 2021.
- 2.2 Members have made their priorities for infrastructure and jobs-led growth clear – these are the prerequisites of growth. Members have indicated they wish to use the growth agenda to leverage three key and interrelated ambitions for the borough; namely:-
- ◆ A better offer for our town centres
 - ◆ A better education and training offer
 - ◆ A better employment offer – high grade, higher density jobs
- 2.3 The mutually supportive role of these three aspirations cannot be over-stated. The town centres and the skills base will be persuasive to inward investors. Similarly, high grade employment supports vibrant town centres.
- 2.4 The Council has a vision to create town centres that are **Characterful, Distinctive, and Fun**. This vision has been externally validated by an independent planning inspector, and now sits firmly within our planning policy for Kettering Town Centre.

3 Northampton Road – Sheep Street – Station Road – Bowling Green Road

- 3.1 Following on from the recent improvements made to the Northampton Road/Northfield Avenue and Rothwell Road junctions, Northamptonshire

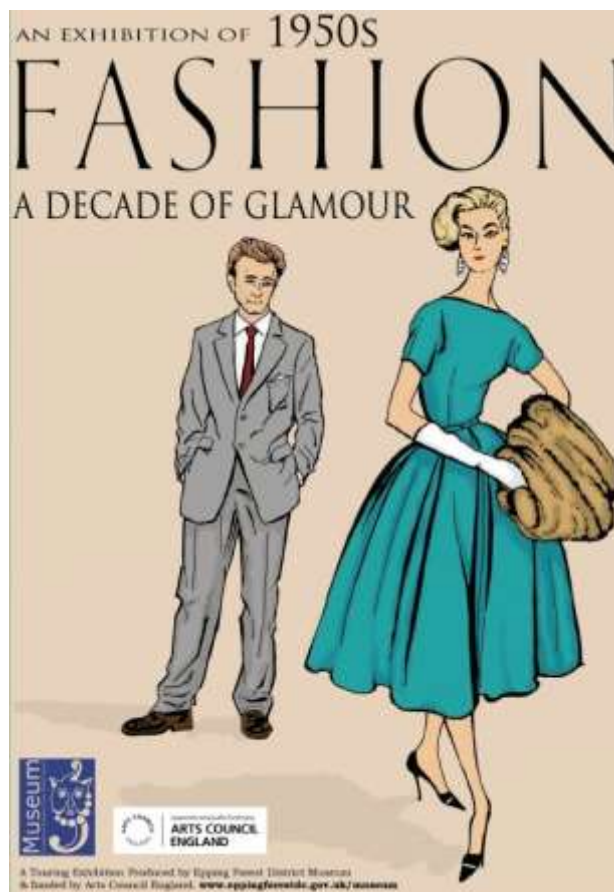
BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	EXECUTIVE	Item 10	Page 2 of 6
-----------	------------------	------------	----------------

4 Museum and Gallery Update

- 4.1 Visitor numbers for the museum and gallery have been particularly positive in the last year – with January 2016 figures for the museum 981 up on last year and the gallery up 36 on last year. This has largely been down to the differing exhibitions being held at both facilities. Interestingly, there has also been an increase in the number of phone, email and post enquiries – suggesting that our heritage assets are definitely cementing themselves as must-see attractions.
- 4.2 The Museum boasts a fantastic array of exhibitions, workshops and seminars throughout 2016. The following provides a snapshot of what we have to look forward to:
- 4.3 *1950s Fashion: A Decade of Glamour* (16th January – 12th March). From the dazzling dresses of the Paris Couture houses to the ready-to-wear designs of Marks & Spencer, *1950s Fashion: A Decade of Glamour* showcases the unique and influential fashions from this era. There is something for everyone in this exhibition, which features vintage outfits and fun interactivities. This is accompanied by *'Fabulous 50s!'* – children's activities during half term (16th February – 19th February) – an exciting week of craft activities inspired by the decade when space flight and rock'n'roll was invented!

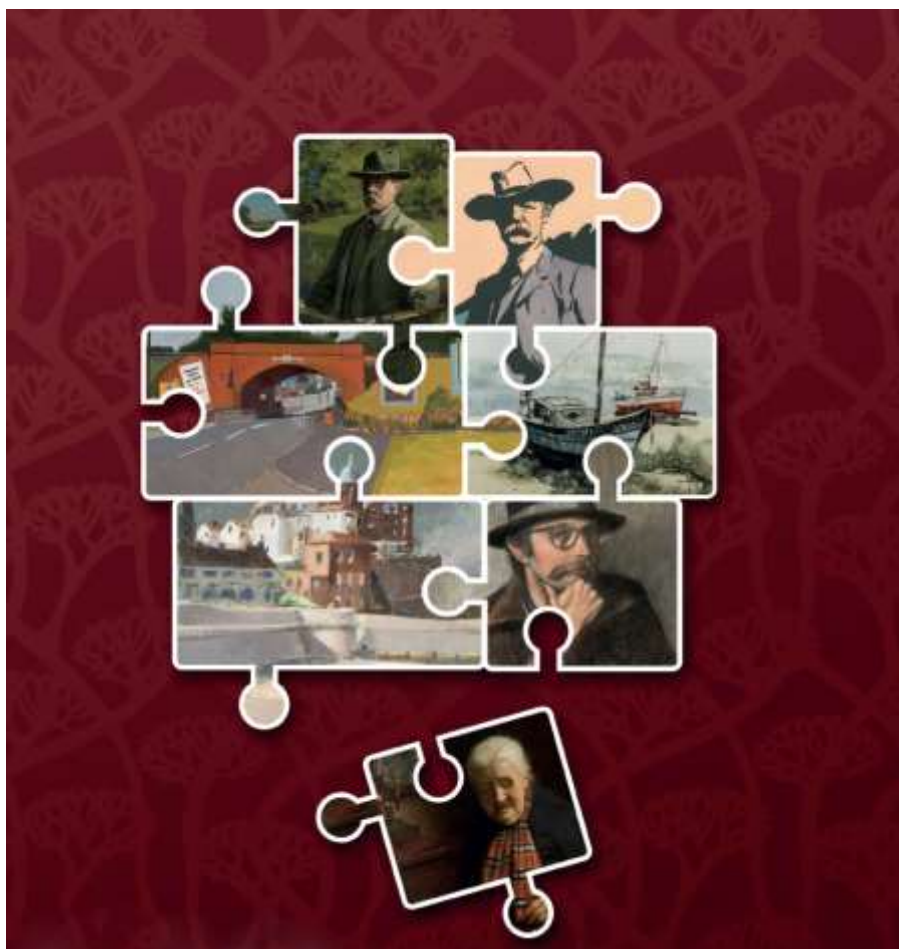
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BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	EXECUTIVE	Item 10	Page 3 of 6
-----------	------------------	------------	----------------

- 4.5 *Henry Gotch Schools 1939 – 2009* is a temporary exhibition running from 19th March to 11th June. The Henry Gotch Council School officially opened on the 30th June 1939. The school was brand new and was unique in the United Kingdom for having a subway under the road (Windmill Avenue).
- 4.6 The Henry Gotch Secondary Modern School opened in 1953. This exhibition has a wealth of photographs, memories and memorabilia about the schools. Part of the celebration of all things Henry Gotch is a series of School Reunions in the Manor House Museum. So if you attended during the following years, get in touch to find out more:
- Years attended: 1939-1950s (Saturday 2 April, 2pm - 4pm)
 - Years attended: 1960s-1970s (Saturday 30 April, 2pm - 4pm)
 - Years attended: 1980s-2009 (Saturday 14 May, 2pm - 4pm)
- 4.7 The Gallery will, throughout the first half of February, be displaying our popular '*Collection Connections....The story so far...*' – The exhibition will continue to run until 13th February 2016 at the Alfred East Art Gallery.



BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	EXECUTIVE	Item 10	Page 4 of 6
-----------	------------------	------------	----------------

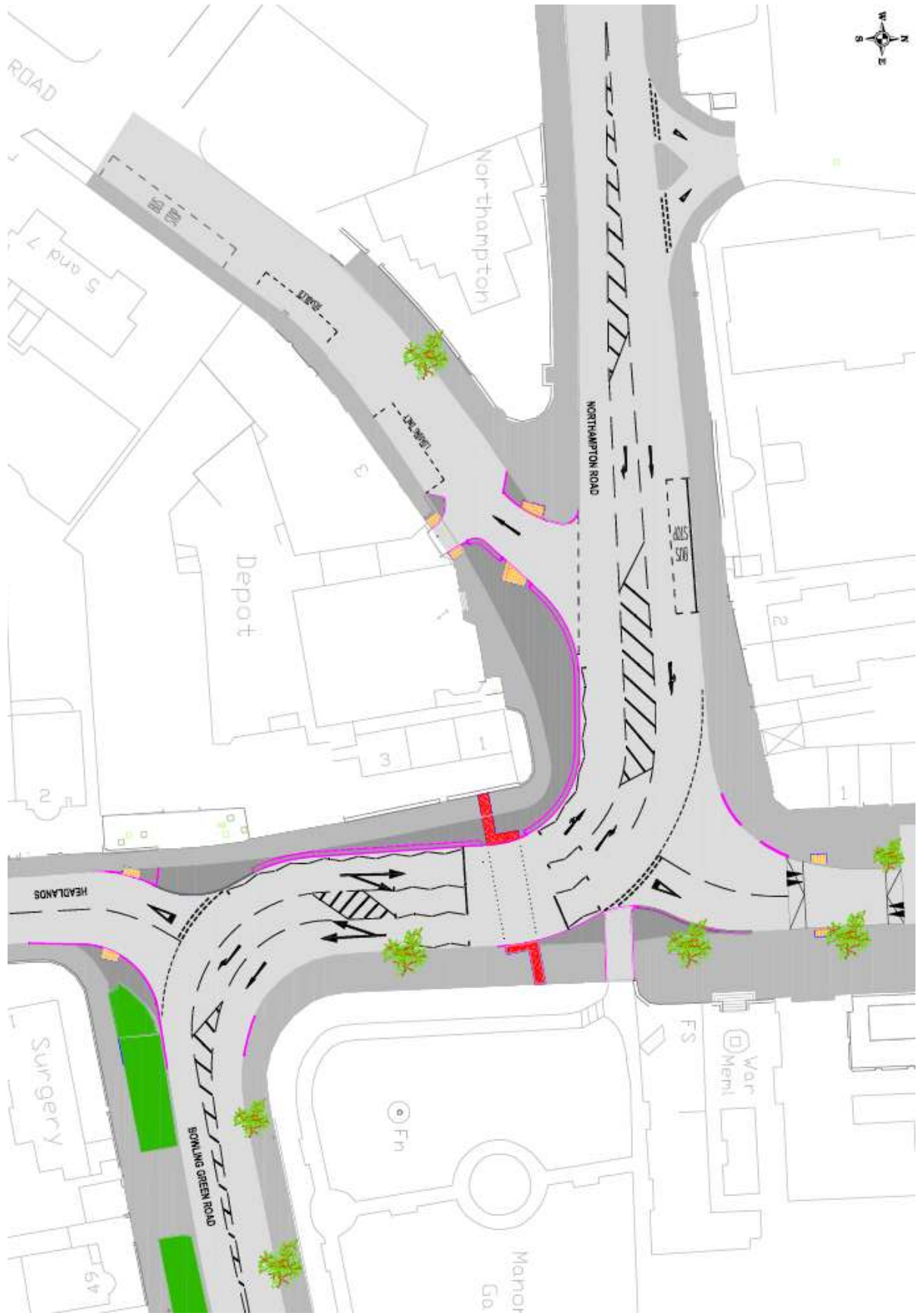
- 4.8 The Alfred East Art Gallery will celebrate Kettering's artist history by showing pieces from the permanent collection of artists born and bred in Kettering. The exhibition will also link up the artists in the style of a family tree to see where connections lie and how some artists helped others to succeed. Visitors to the exhibition will be asked to add to the findings with their own personal stories and see if other links can be found.
- 4.9 Following this '*Landscape and Nature exhibition with works from Adrian Barron*' will be displayed in the Alfred East Art Gallery from 20 February – 2 April. German born artist Adrian Barron is a printmaker who also makes site-specific works. His practice is inspired by the garden, questioning what the real 'nature' of nature is, the role of the human, deceptions and the resulting phenomena within our wider world.
- 4.10 In this exhibition, the work of Alfred East will play an important part to form a connection to Barron's work and the Kettering-born landscape painter. The title of the exhibition denotes the commonality of thought and approaches to printmaking and nature, as well as the unsteady places occupied by both.

5. JUNCTION IMPROVEMENTS

- 5.1 Northamptonshire Highways are planning to upgrade another set of town centre junctions over the next few months – the Northampton Road, Sheep Street, Station Road, Headlands and Bowling Green Road project is due to commence shortly. The scheme is funded from S106 contributions collected over a number of years.
- 5.2 The main features of the scheme include:
- Improved traffic flow
 - Improved and simplified crossing facilities for pedestrians and cyclists
 - The creation of a more pedestrian friendly space including the proposed removal of current guard rails at crossing points
 - The use of high quality paving materials on Sheep Street
- 5.3 Northamptonshire Highways have stated that: "*Since the introduction of the restrictions within the Town Centre the traffic wishing to gain access via Sheep Street has reduced significantly. The Public Realm enhancements recently carried out have given rise to the need to improve accessibility to and from the Station. There is still a heavy movement of traffic east-west through the Northampton Road/Bowling Green Road junction, and therefore there is a need to balance the needs of this cross-town movement with the requirement to cater for the important pedestrian movement to and from the Town Centre to the Station and Headlands.*"

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	EXECUTIVE	Item 10	Page 5 of 6
-----------	------------------	------------	----------------



BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	EXECUTIVE	Item 10	Page 6 of 6
-----------	------------------	------------	----------------

- 5.4 The proposed improvement comprises two priority junctions, Northampton Road/Sheep Street and Bowling Green Road/Headlands, with a signalised crossing in between. The purpose of the proposed layout is to minimise the delay for the movement of traffic east-west through the junction – through the removal of existing traffic lights at Bowling Green Road and opposite Sheep Street - whilst maintaining the pedestrian movement to and from the Town Centre to the Rail Station and Headlands.
- 5.5 Consultation has taken place with the businesses located in the immediate area, with the Headlands Residents Association, and with individual businesses in the vicinity. The plans have been shared with the Planning Policy Committee, and the Kettering Town Forum, as well as with this Committee at earlier meetings. Kettering Borough Council has supported Northamptonshire Highways in terms of the consultation undertaken.
- 5.6 The works are anticipated to commence on the 22nd February with a target completion date of 3rd June 2016. Access to the nearby properties will be maintained at all times. Pedestrians and cyclists will continue to have access and temporary diversions will be in place.
- 5.7 For further information, please go to www.northamptonshire.gov.uk or follow Northamptonshire Highways on twitter @nnhighways.

6. BUSINESS SUPPORT SUCCESS

- 6.1 The Council funded business support service 'Enterprise4kettering' have linked up with the new unique shopping area "**The Yards**" to deliver 3 **free workshops** aimed at supporting small enterprises. The Yards Exchange has been set up as an innovative retail incubator - similar in approach to Chesham House in that it offers micro space for start-ups – and we have been able to join up two strands of work in a new way.
- 6.2 In November the "Gaining Customers" workshop had ten attendees, seven of whom subsequently attended one to one enrolment sessions. Following on from this success as part of **Small Business Saturday**, Enterprise4Kettering delivered two workshops on marketing and cash flow which were well received and led to further requests for support.
- 6.3 These workshops were held as part of a more targeted outreach approach by Enterprise4kettering who are based at Chesham House Business Centre. We are currently supporting them in mapping out other innovative ways of targeting specific groups.

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	EXECUTIVE	Item 10	Page 7 of 6
-----------	------------------	------------	----------------



- 6.4 Chesham House has delivered a fantastic success story recently, as TMP Sherwins, a local business specialising in affordable housing mortgages and protection brokers, have expanded beyond the capacity of the Business Centre and are now moving into larger offices elsewhere within the Town.
- 6.5 Established in 2006, they moved to Chesham House Business Centre in 2014 as a small firm on the up. Needing somewhere flexible to give them the ability to grow, Chesham House with its twelve individual offices, was perfect for their needs. With TMP Sherwins' initial concerns about growing too quickly, they were also happy that there was also an opportunity to downscale easily, should they need it.
- 6.6 Kelly McCabe, Managing Director of TMP Sherwins, said: *“Over the two years we have been here, a lot has changed. We are now a team of 30 and have outgrown even Chesham House. Being able to increase our office space gradually has helped us massively and enabled us to take some risks that would not otherwise be viable.*

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

Committee	EXECUTIVE	Item 10	Page 8 of 6
-----------	------------------	------------	----------------

The support of the centre and the professionalism has been second to none. The staff are always incredibly helpful and understanding, always doing everything they can to accommodate us. We are really grateful to the team for all their support – they have made Chesham House a great place to be”.

- 6.7 TMP Sherwins have done extremely well to grow so quickly and their expansion brings about a fantastic opportunity for another local business to enjoy the benefits of Chesham House Business Centre. We're looking forward to hear from new enterprises looking to follow in TMP Sherwins' footsteps on the road to success
- 6.8 Chesham House is an historic grade II listed building built in the late 18th century that, in 2009, was transformed into a modern business centre housing up to 12 businesses under one roof. Located in Kettering town centre, Chesham House helps its tenants share the same benefits of networking and feeding each other's businesses.
- 6.9 Chesham House Business Centre offers both virtual and office space and with TMP Sherwins' move, four offices are now available for rent. New businesses interested in a prime town centre location, 24 hour access, onsite parking with internet, electric & water included, should contact **01536 527 420**, email **cheshamhouse@kettering.gov.uk** or go to **www.chesham-house.co.uk**

7. IMPACT ON POLICY

- 7.1 Members have made their priorities for infrastructure and jobs-led growth clear – these are the prerequisites of growth. Members have indicated they wish to use the growth agenda to leverage three key and interrelated ambitions for the borough; namely:-
- A better offer for our town centres
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8. RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive Committee:

- (i) Welcomes the increase in visitor numbers at both the Museum and Gallery, and recognises the hard work and dedication shown by the teams at both;
- (ii) Notes the junction improvement work and timetable proposed by Northamptonshire Highways; and
- (iii) Supports the innovative approaches being adopted to help Small and Medium Sized Enterprises in Kettering to thrive.