



MIDSOMER NORTON  
TOWN TRUST



SOMER VALLEY  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Edward Heritage  
Project Manager – Midsomer Norton High Street HAZ  
Regeneration & Housing  
Bath & North East Somerset Council  
Civic Centre  
Market Walk  
Keynsham  
BS31 1FS

19<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Dear Edward,

**RE: Letter of Support for the Love our High Streets WECA Full Business Case Funding Bid – Midsomer Norton Market Square Scheme**

We, the Midsomer Norton Town Council, Midsomer Norton Town Trust, Midsomer Norton Community Trust and Somer Valley Chamber of Commerce, write to you to express our full support for the Full Business Case funding bid submission to the West of England Combined Authorities' Love our High Streets fund.

We consider this submission for £895,000 essential to the delivery of the Market Square scheme at the Island, Midsomer Norton, which was designed and developed in partnership with the community through the High Street 'Heritage Action Zone' ('HAZ') Steering Group. Members of the Steering Group also supported the community consultation held for these concept designs and we note the positive response to the proposals from the community. As you know, the Steering Group have also reviewed the Full Business Case report and we are grateful for your work to progress this.

In addition to the WECA Love Our High Street scheme support, we are delighted that Midsomer Norton has now secured £1.346m in match funding to improve the High Street. Much of this funding was secured utilising the WECA investment as leverage, for example the successful funding bid to Historic England's 'High Street Heritage Action Zone' initiative undertaken in 2020. This bid was prepared by B&NES Council with support from the local community, including the key partner organisations represented in this letter, but would not have been possible without commitments from WECA. We would therefore like to note our thanks to WECA for their continued support for the improvement of Midsomer Norton town centre.

We believe that Midsomer Norton's High Street has incredible potential and could be transformed into a vibrant place with an improved user and visitor experience centred on entertainment, leisure, services and retail. However, as you know, the town centre has lacked investment for some time, particularly in public spaces, with the Conservation Area identified on Historic England's 'At Risk' register. We believe action is needed to address this decline and support the fantastic community groups, businesses, residents and stakeholders we have in our market town. The Market Square proposals are considered key to this as the investment will create a flagship civic space on the High Street and facilitate the wider regeneration of the town centre.

Additionally, we believe that the redevelopment of the Island –and the use of the new Market Square for community events, activities and markets– will support and enhance the use of the Grade II listed Town Hall, a key heritage building which has recently been taken into community ownership. The provision of upgraded public and civic space adjacent to the Town Hall will be an important catalyst for its refurbishment and returning this community asset to its former glory as a Market Hall.

As such, we, the Midsomer Norton Town Council, Midsomer Norton Town Trust, Midsomer Norton Community Trust and Somer Valley Chamber of Commerce, are pleased to formally support the Full Business Case funding bid submission to WECA and eagerly await the results of the committee decision in January 2022.

Yours sincerely,

Donna Ford – Town Clerk, Midsomer Norton Town Council

Jo Corbett – Secretary, Midsomer Norton Town Trust

Alex Davis – Trust Manager, Midsomer Norton Community Trust

Tina Veater – Chair, Somer Valley Chamber of Commerce