



To whom it may concern  
c/o Mr Phil Merrick  
Joint head of Economy and Environment  
Wychavon District Council  
Civic Centre  
Queen Elizabeth Drive  
Pershore WR10 1PT

8 March 2019

**Future High Streets Fund**

On behalf of Vale of Evesham Civic Society, I write to offer our wholehearted support to Wychavon District Council's bid to the Future High Streets Fund which will focus on improving and enhancing Evesham's town centre.

In 2015 the Civic Society, in conjunction with local residents and with the support of Wychavon District Council (WDC) embarked on an ambitious project to try and shape Evesham for the better. Months of consultation with residents and stakeholders resulted in the Evesham Town Plan 'a strategy for the future' which forms the basis of the bid to the Future High Streets Fund.

Since then, we have worked in partnership with WDC and other local stakeholders to deliver on some of these priorities. These include the Enlighten Project – Phase 1 and the site clearance work within the Abbey grounds. However, there is a great deal still left to do. The vision and the collaborative approach that stakeholders have taken has resulted in a clear strategy of what we need to do to improve and enhance Evesham and we are committed to working together to achieve this.

The Future High Street Fund presents the opportunity to deliver on much of what was highlighted in the Town Plan. The Civic Society is particularly interested in securing improvements to the public realm, a high quality heritage offering involving improvements to historic buildings and the Conservation Area as a whole, a reduction in traffic and air pollution, an arts and cinema complex in the town centre and the redevelopment of the Riverside Shopping Centre.

Evesham is a fine market town with a rich heritage but it has taken the brunt of the downturn on its High Street. It has a higher than average retail unit vacancy rate, low stability of occupation in terms of businesses opening and closing within a year. Our joint vision, combined with funding from the Future High Streets programme, can help turn this around. Accordingly, we fully endorse WDC's bid on behalf of Evesham town centre to the fund.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Gillian Pawson'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Gillian Pawson, Honorary Secretary