Ideopolis: Knowledge City Region

Brighton Case Study

the work foundation

"Brighton has become sexy again"

Anthony Seldon, Observer, May 2003

"Brighton brings the quirky into the mainstream"

Ideopolis Interviewee, January 2006

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Cover photograph courtesy of 'Visit Brighton'

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Executive Summary

Brighton punches above its weight in the knowledge economy, with the city's renaissance being aided by an abundance of creativity. Like other cities, the key challenges that Brighton faces relate to labour market polarisation, coping with the 'overheating' consequences of success (congestion and house prices), and political tensions that inhibit leadership around a knowledge city vision.

Ideopolis driver analysis: strengths, challenges and opportunities

- **Physical knowledge city:** Brighton is landlocked by the sea to the south and the downs to the north. Creating the physical knowledge city demands boldness in building on what is there.
- **Diverse specialisation:** Brighton has a diverse economic base with some niche specialisms, particularly within the creative and cultural industries. A potential weakness is the over reliance on small businesses, with only a handful of large private sector employers.
- **High skill organisations:** Brighton has a skilled labour market, but there is a concern about the lack of graduate jobs to retain talent in the city and also the low-wage element to the economy.
- **Vibrant education sector:** Brighton has two universities and there is scope to improve the link between the universities and business.
- **Distinctive knowledge city offer:** Brighton has a distinctive "quirky" offer, most notably in the substantial arts and cultural offering (especially Brighton Festival, the largest arts festival in England). Any future planning decisions need to be mindful of retaining Brighton's distinctive identity.
- **Leveraging strong connectivity:** The city is well connected and uses proximity to London to its advantage. The main challenge is related to planning for and managing growth.
- **Leadership around a knowledge city vision:** Brighton needs better political cooperation to back the strong vision for the city.
- **Investing in communities:** Like other cities, Brighton has not seen the 'trickle down' effect of increased prosperity improving the quality of life for all residents.

Policy recommendations

- **Addressing over-skilling** and creating 'good work' at the bottom end of the labour market;
- Making **strong links between social and economic policy** for the city.

Lessons for other cities

- Developing strong **creative and cultural industries**, and a distinctive arts and cultural offering.
- Using **proximity to London** to own advantage.

Ideopolis: Knowledge City Region

Brighton Case Study

1. Introduction

Brighton has transformed itself since the early 1980s recession from which other coastal towns and cities have never fully recovered. Tourism and media have been at the heart of Brighton's re-development. The latter has brought hundreds of companies to the region in recent years, whilst more than eight million people visit the city every year for holidays, business trips or day trips. The city's two higher education institutions play an important role in economic development, however the focus of commercialisation and spin out companies appears to be national and European as opposed to local.

Despite Brighton's renaissance, significant inequalities exist in Brighton, illustrated by a polarised labour market. The inequality has a spatial dimension, with postcode still perhaps one of the biggest indicators as to quality of life. It is at the local level that Brighton faces its biggest challenge; the city is not dissimilar to other parts of the South East in facing increasing shortages of affordable housing. A further strategic challenge is internal transportation and avoiding gridlock, despite excellent links to and from the city.

The city's renaissance has unquestionably been aided by an abundance of creativity as well as the city's reputation for being tolerant and diverse, not unconnected to Brighton's crowning as the UK's 'gay capital'. The combination of these factors has indeed made Brighton sexy again.

Defining 'Ideopolis' and 'Secondary Ideopolis'

The Ideopolis is the vision of a sustainable knowledge intensive city that drives growth in the wider city-region. It gives cities a framework for developing knowledge-intensive industries that will be economically successful and improve quality of life.

Some cities are not the main drivers of growth in their city-region, and so cannot become Ideopolises. They can, however, use the Ideopolis framework to become Secondary Ideopolises' or "Knowledge Cities" that link closely with an Ideopolis.

About the Ideopolis project

The Work Foundation conducted a year-long research project looking at the concept of the Ideopolis – a sustainable knowledge city that drives growth in the wider city-region. Based on literature reviews, data analysis and UK and international case studies, the research highlights nine drivers of an Ideopolis. This case study forms part of the evidence base for the project. It uses the Ideopolis framework and nine drivers to assess to what extent the city is an Ideopolis and what challenges the city faces in the future if it is to be economically successful and sustainable in a knowledge economy.

Ideopolis: Knowledge City Region

Brighton Case Study

About this case study

Presenting findings from interviews with a range of stakeholders as well as literature review work, this case study analyses Brighton using the Ideopolis framework to assess where the city is on the 'Ideopolis trajectory'. It is organised into the following sections:

- Brief history of Brighton
- Brighton now
- Brighton: knowledge city?
- Ideopolis driver analysis: strengths, challenges & opportunities
- Conclusions
- Policy recommendations
- Lessons learned from Brighton

2. Brief History of Brighton

"We were never a merchant city…we don't have the kind of warehousing or architecture that led to canal street"[1]

Brighton was, according to many accounts, built on 'pleasure' and its success is closely linked to the rise, fall and rise of the middle classes. As one interviewee commented, Brighton has always been "*a repository for disposable income*"[2]. It was never a medieval city, did not go through an industrial revolution and in fact only 'became' a city in 2001. As a small fishing village in the early 19th century, Brighton experienced growth when the London middle classes, created by the Industrial Revolution, followed the Prince Regent's example and spent their leisure time in Brighton, newly accessible by railway. Much later, the post-war middle classes of the 1960s created a new demand for universities, and Brighton benefited significantly when Sussex University opened in 1962.

Whilst the 1960s saw cheap package travel drawing holidaymakers away from Britain's bucket and spade resorts to Spain, Brighton did not follow the path of decline of its South Coast neighbours such as Folkestone, nor its northern counterpart, Blackpool. This was attributed to the university, which *"saved us from genteel decline that other resorts went through"*[3].

In 1997 a new unitary council (Brighton and Hove) was formed to govern the conurbation of Brighton, Hove and Portslade, and this was granted city status in 2001. The individual towns were well established, however the amalgamation into a single city provided opportunities to build new structures and adapt to the changes of local government brought in under the new Labour government: *"The creation of Brighton and Hove as a unitary authority with a distinct identity provided a spur to growth"*[4].

To summarise, whilst Brighton had "a dismal twentieth century"[5], the city is now seen as "a key location for economic growth in the south east region, and particularly in Sussex"[6]. The next section of this report will explore where Brighton is now, the drivers it has used to get there and the challenges and opportunities the city is facing.

[1] Interviewee comment
[2] Interviewee comment
[3] Interviewee comment
[4] Interviewee comment
[5] Seldon, Anthony, http://observer.guardian.co.uk/brighton/story/0,,950979,00.html
[6] Whitehead, Christine, Brighton and Hove Economic Partnership, p.9 at http://www.brightonbusiness.co.uk/documents/whitehead.pdf

3. Brighton Now

'Since the mid-1990s Brighton & Hove has emerged as a key driver of the South east coastal economy…It has become a fashionable place to live and work'.[7]

The statistics support the claim above. As well as above national and regional growth in GVA per capita, Brighton has also seen growth in its business stock (tables 1 & 2 below). According to the Sub Regional Economic Strategy, the start up rates reflect "the fluidity of the city and its economic catch up in the 1990s"[8]. Brighton has also seen a growth in the number of self-employed people in recent years: 7% compared to 1% nationally, and this is put down to a "local entrepreneurial culture".[9]

Table 1 – GVA per head: 2000/2002

	2000	2002	Change
UK	£13,677	£15,273	+ 11.7%
South East	£15,126	£16,758	+ 10.7%
Brighton & Hove	£12,599	£14,679	+ 16.5%

Source: ONS, cited in Brighton and Hove Economic Strategy 2005-2008

Table 2 – Stock of VAT registered businesses 1994 - 2004

	1994	2004	Change
UK	1,629,120	1,810,460	+ 11.1%
South East	244,015	285,775	+ 17.1%
Brighton & Hove	6,805	8,360	+ 22.9%

Source: Small Business Service, cited in Brighton and Hove Economic Strategy

Brighton's economy has performed strongly since the mid 1990s: it has grown by over £500 million since 1997, bringing significant increases in employment and a corresponding reduction in unemployment. There has been an increase in the working age population since the early 1990s, widening the area's labour pool.

Table 3 (on the next page) presents some topline statistics on Brighton and Hove's labour market. Brighton and Hove's working age population are highly skilled: almost 40% are educated to degree level or above, compared to just a quarter of the total working age population in Britain. This skill mix is also reflected in the proportion of those working in managerial, professional and associate professional occupations: more than half of those of working age in the city work in these occupations, 10% more than the British average.

[7] Brighton and Hove Economy Strategy
[8] Sub Regional Economic Strategy for Brighton and Hove, Brighton Business, page 1.
[9] Brighton and Hove Community Strategy, 'Creating the City of Opportunity', November 2005, p.15.

Table 3 – Brighton & Hove's labour market (all statistics from NOMIS)

	Brighton	South East	GB
General (Source: Midyear Population Estimates, 2004 and Annual population survey, April 2004 - March 2005)			
Population	251,900	8,110,200	58,124,600
Working age population	167,100	4,979,700	36,037,300
Economically active	80.6%	82.1%	78.3%
Economically inactive (all)	19.4%	17.9%	21.7%
Economically inactive (wanting a job)	5.5%	4.7%	5.2%
Skills (Source: Local Area Labour Force Survey (March 2003 - February 2004)			
NVQ4 and above	38.6%	28.5%	25.2%
NVQ3 and above	55.9%	46.9%	43.1%
NVQ2 and above	70.5%	66.0%	61.5%
NVQ1 and above	80.9%	81.1%	76.0%
Other qualifications	9.9%	8.0%	8.8%
No qualifications	9.2%	10.8%	15.1%
Occupations (Annual population survey, April 2004 - March 2005)			
Manager and senior officials	19.8%	16.8%	14.9%
Professional	17.5%	13.9%	12.6%
Associate professional and technical	15.2%	14.9%	14.0%
Admin and secretarial	10.7%	13.0%	12.6%
Skilled trades	9.9%	10.8%	11.2%
Personal services	7.4%	7.9%	7.7%
Sales and customer service	8.8%	7.2%	7.8%
Process plant and machine	3.0	5.3%	7.5%
Elementary	7.7%	9.8%	11.5%

There are slightly more jobs in the city than people currently filling them. This reflects commuter flows, with Brighton being a net exporter of commuters: 33,500 residents travel out of the city and 28,000 travel in. Out-commuters travel north towards higher wage areas (such as London) and in-commuters are likely to come in from lower wage areas along the Sussex coast. Around 10% of city residents work outside Sussex.

4. Brighton: Knowledge City?

"Brighton has all the ingredients for the new knowledge economy"[10]

Table 4 (below) shows that Brighton's economy is more knowledge intensive than other medium-sized UK cities. On all measures, including employment in knowledge industries (A) and proportion of knowledge based business (B), Brighton is outperforming other cities. Brighton punches above its weight in the knowledge economy.

Table 4 – Knowledge intensity in small cities[11]

City	A Employment in Knowledge Industry (2001) %	B Knowledge Industries (2001) %	C Knowledge Occupations in Knowledge Industry (2001) %	D Employment in Knowledge Occupations (2001) %
Brighton & Hove	**48**	**40**	**33**	**48**
Nottingham	47	31	22	35
Swansea	47	28	24	37
Leicester	44	26	18	30
Southampton	43	31	23	35
Plymouth	42	27	21	32
Salford	40	28	20	34
Stockport	38	33	27	43
Milton Keynes	38	39	26	41
Wolverhampton	38	24	17	31

Source: Annual Business Inquiry, 2001 Census

Method: The Work Foundation Definition Knowledge Intensity, District/Unitary Local Authority units

[10] Interviewee comment.
[11] Local authorities with populations between 200,000 and 300,000

Knowledge driving growth

Of the case study areas, Brighton and Hove saw the second largest growth in knowledge-based businesses between 1998 and 2004 (table 5). On this measure, the city is second only to Cambridge in 'knowledge intensity' among the case study cities. In terms of knowledge occupations within knowledge businesses, Brighton does well, coming third to Cambridge and Edinburgh.

Table 5 – Growth in percentage of businesses that are knowledge based for the case study cities

	1998 Businesses that are Knowledge Based *(Workplace Based)* %	2004 Businesses that are Knowledge Based *(Workplace Based)* %	Growth 1998 - 2004 %
UK Average	*30*	*33*	*9*
Birmingham	28	32	13
Brighton and Hove	**36**	**42**	**15**
Bristol	35	39	12
Cambridge	42	46	10
Edinburgh, City of	37	40	8
Glasgow City	31	34	10
Manchester	33	38	13
Newcastle-upon-Tyne	32	35	11
Sheffield	26	31	20
Watford	34	34	0

Source: Annual Business Inquiry,

Method: The Work Foundation Definition Knowledge Intensity, District/Unitary Local Authority units

Overall, Brighton is performing well on measures of knowledge intensity, especially given the city's size and its close proximity to the London city-region.

5. Ideopolis driver analysis: strengths, challenges and opportunities

Ideopolis drivers

This next section of this case study will analyse Brighton according to the nine drivers of the Ideopolis[12] which have been identified through our literature review, data modelling and case study research. It will consider the following questions: what are the factors that have supported Brighton's success? And what are the remaining challenges that the city faces, as well as the opportunities that will support Brighton in realising and sustaining the vision of the secondary Ideopolis?

5.1 Physical Knowledge City

Brighton is landlocked by the sea to the south and by an Area of Outstanding Development to the north. As a city without an industrial past, unlike Manchester, Brighton does not have the derelict land or empty warehouses in which to build its knowledge city. Development – especially spreading out – is constrained meaning that Brighton has had to approach regeneration and redevelopment projects differently from other UK cities.

Being a seaside town, Brighton has, to varying degrees of success, made the most of this position. The sea has got cleaner, and the Marina has provided a new site for recreation and shopping, and has the largest non-industrial lock in Europe[13]. A current challenge – or opportunity – is deciding what to do with the West Pier. One interviewee commented that the pier has been controlled by *"conservationists and pier enthusiasts, whereas it ought to be torn down and replaced with something new, exciting and innovative that would bring business partners in"*[14].

Whilst there has been some discussion about building upwards rather than on new land, politically this is a sensitive area which presents a challenge to Brighton's future social and economic offering. Brighton needs to get the physical knowledge city right in the short, medium and long term, overcoming the political tensions: *"Brighton suffers from a lack of nerve about improving the built environment"*[15].

5.2 Building on what's there

'For 200 years or more Brighton and Hove has attracted people who want to enjoy the energy, style and internationalism of a big city on a small scale: a place for unconventional ideas, to try new things before they are widely accepted: a place for experiment and refreshment. This is the place to rediscover and reinvent city living'.

As the quote above shows, Brighton has not really deviated from the foundations of its first wave of success. The city is building well on existing strengths and developing new ones For example, it still provides opportunities for South East residents to spend their disposable income, but has also become a prime location for e-learning and for digital media.

12 For a full account of the Ideopolis drivers, please read the full report which can be downloaded from www.theworkfoundation.com.

13 See http://www.brightonmarina.co.uk/

14 Interviewee comment

15 Interviewee comment

16 Brighton and Hove Creative Industries Report

5.3 Diverse specialisation

Box A below details Brighton and Hove's sectoral mix, showing diversity in the economic base.

Box A: Brighton & Hove's Sectoral Mix

Public Sector: 29% of employees work in public administration, education & health	**Service Economy:** 21% of employees work within the service economy, predominantly in hospitality and tourism sectors
Financial Services: 22% of jobs are in banking, finance and insurance, reflecting the presence of Brighton's top three private sector employers - American Express, Legal & General and Lloyds TSB	**Knowledge Economy:** the proportion of jobs within the knowledge economy varies from 20% to over 40% depending on the definition. Knowledge occupations will cut across the public sector (including the university) and also financial services. It is estimated that around 7% of all employees are creative industry workers.

Brighton: Creative City

If you took a map of Brighton town centre and blanked out creative or cultural buildings, you would be left with multi storey car parks[17]

For some time Brighton has been working to position itself as a creative city, using the creative and cultural industries to contribute to social, economic and environmental regeneration, to retain a skilled workforce and to attract visitors from the UK and beyond. The key features of Brighton's creative and cultural industries are detailed below:

The intensity of the creative and cultural sector, as measured by the number of creative businesses, is large and growing. Nearly one in five local businesses are part of the creative economy

Some businesses are medium-sized, however this sector as a whole is characterised by micro-businesses and includes thousands of freelancers (musicians, actors, writers, designers, film and media technicians).

The city has a dynamic new media cluster. A study for the Government Office for the South East identified Brighton and Hove as having one of the two media clusters in the region, the other being in Oxford. There are 130 New Media companies in Brighton and Hove, and a further 170 companies in the east and west of Sussex. New media pays well: those working in media earn 1.5 times the Brighton and Hove average[18].

Whilst Brighton is undoubtedly a creative city (with 7% of all employees working in creative

[17] Interviewee comment
[18] However median earnings were lower, suggesting that there are a small group of higher earners pushing up the average.

and cultural industries), there needs to be more of an effort to support creative business start-ups to enable them to expand and generate growth. The primary route to this would be via specialised and appropriate business support services. The needs of creative and cultural businesses at a start-up phase are different to those of other industries, and business support services need to reflect this. As one interviewee commented, *"there is not enough energy going into places for artists to work – if Brighton could make a good push on that, they would be able to capitalise on all the benefits of having a creative workforce"*[19].

The other 'key player' is tourism and conference visits. More than 8 million people visit the city each year for holidays, business or day trips[20]. The City Council notes that the Brighton conference centre has been a key economic driver and has brought up to £200 million to the city. However it requires a significant update, and is now less competitive than newer venues. The council intends to secure the city's conference economy by redeveloping it[21].

Brighton's entrepreneurial club culture[22], based around the sea front, has been a major draw for visitors, particularly from London. One interviewee described 'Big Beach Boutique' as *"Brighton's version of the Manchester warehouse"*[23]. However being a 'place for pleasure' also has its downsides: the rise of hen and stag parties, British binge drinking culture and 'studentification' of some areas exist alongside Brighton's other cultures. This is not something new for Brighton, however the challenge is the ongoing management of existing tensions and cultural differences to preserve Brighton's reputation as somewhere tolerant, diverse and 'sexy'.

5.4 High skill organisations

Brighton thus has a diverse economic base and some unique specialisms that contribute to the city being a secondary Ideopolis, that is a city driven by knowledge intensity. Future threats are related to business size: there are only a few large private sectors in Brighton and a plethora of sole trader and SME operations (reflecting the creative and cultural industries). Whilst this may not hinder future growth, it potentially threatens sustainability and may thwart strategies to create new jobs, thus increasing employment and/or retaining graduates.

There is also a concern in Brighton about over-skilling - *high level of graduates writing film scripts but serving cappuccinos*[24] – and about the lack of graduate jobs in Brighton to retain talent in the city. There is anecdotal evidence that young people who grew up in Brighton do opt to study in the city will usually have to move away to start their careers but may return later. One interviewee commented, *"Retaining and nurturing young talent is a missed opportunity"*[25].

Furthermore, there is a big low-wage element to the economy (tourism, hospitality etc), which is reinforced by the seasonal nature of this work. The rise in house prices and the housing shortages exacerbate this problem as lots of low paid people find it increasingly difficult to find affordable housing at the same time as the incomes of those working in finance, arts & culture and those who work outside the area

[19] Interviewee comment
[20] Whitehead, Christine, Brighton and Hove Economic Partnership, p.10 at http://www.brightonbusiness.co.uk/documents/whitehead.pdf.
[21] Brighton and Hove Community Strategy, 'Creating the City of Opportunity', November 2005, p.15.
[22] With Norman Cook/Fat Boy Slim as the most well-known entrepreneur
[23] Interviewee comment
[24] Interviewee comment
[25] Interviewee comment

race ahead - reinforcing income & housing inequalities.

To summarise, the economy in Brighton is heavily reliant on lower and intermediate service sector employment and this threatens future economic growth and quality of life.

5.5 Vibrant education sector

Brighton has two universities: University of Sussex and Brighton University. The presence of HEIs distinguishes Brighton from its South Coast neighbours. However, there is much that could be learnt from other secondary Ideopolises (such as Cambridge and potentially Oxford) about embedding strong links between universities and entrepreneurial activity. And this is well recognised in Brighton, as the Brighton & Hove economic strategy notes that 'there is scope to improve the links between the city's two universities and its high growth potential businesses'.[26]

The Brighton and Sussex Community Knowledge and Exchange[27] is an initiative to support and mutually fund beneficial partnerships between communities and the two universities in Brighton – Brighton and Sussex. This exchange has an emphasis on social outcomes, with aims to:

1) Tackle community problems, engaging wit socially excluded groups
2) Facilitate the exchange and growth of knowledge across sectors[28].

Furthermore, Brighton University's Centre for Research in Innovation Management (CENTRIM) aims to "deepen knowledge and understanding of the management of innovation for economic and social benefits[29]". The University of Brighton is involved in DTI sponsored 'Knowledge Transfer Partnerships', a government funded scheme designed to help businesses take advantage of the expertise resident in UK universities[30]. It is clear that the university is successfully involved in such initiatives, but not that they relate particularly to Brighton and Hove.

The city's two universities have around 32,000 students and produce 7,000 graduates every year. Brighton's population is highly skilled, reflecting student numbers as well as in-migration. 38.6% of the local workforce are educated to NVQ level four and above, whilst 70.5% have NVQ2 or above. This compares to Britain as a whole, for which the respective figures are 25% and 61.5%[31].

However, around 9% of city residents do not have any skills at all. Whilst this is better than the national average of 15%, it does mean that some skills demanded particularly by the service sector and skilled construction trades are in short supply. Whilst Brighton outperforms other cities in terms of the number of skilled people in the population, performance at school level (reflected by GCSE results) is below the national average.

5.6 Distinctive knowledge city offer

'Quirky' is a word often used to describe Brighton: *"It brings the quirky into the mainstream"*[32], and the creative environment "attracts quirky entrepreneurs"[33]. Brighton has a distinctive yet flexible self-image and external identity. The city has many 'firsts', pioneering trends of creating cultural innovations that take-

[26] Brighton and Hove Economic Strategy
[27] See http://www.brighton.ac.uk/cupp/projects/exchange.htm
[28] http://www.brighton.ac.uk/cupp/projects/exchange.htm
[29] http://centrim.mis.brighton.ac.uk/business/services.doc
[30] http://www.brighton.ac.uk/ktp/ktpfaq.htm
[30] Source: Local area Labour Force Survey, 2004
[32] Interviewee comment
[33] Interviewee comment

off and are replicated elsewhere – the boutique hotel, the original Body Shop and Stomp being just some of Brighton's exports. Those seeking to invest in Brighton *"know the city and know it is not inconceivably far from London".* [34]

Brighton has a distinctive and substantial arts and cultural offering. Brighton Festival is the leading arts festival in England (and second in size only to the Edinburgh festival in the UK). In 2004 it added £20 million to the city's economy and employed over 6,500 artists. Public sector support brought a return on investment of 17 times the initial contribution of £1.1 million. Management of the Dome and Brighton Festival has been successfully merged, and council funding has doubled over a three-year period from £600,000 to £1.2 million pa. Funding from Arts Council England South East has also increased significantly over this period. The Dome has established itself as the region's leading performance arts space with a vastly improved programme. There is also a flexible range of performance space from the Brighton Dome venues, the historic Theatre Royal, and Komedia with two small-scale theatre, music and cabaret spaces programming virtually the whole year.

Brighton is home to a number of national and regional arts organisations: Arts Council England South East, Brighton Festival, Photoworks, and South East Dance. The large LGBT community organises an annual Pride event, which is now the biggest free Pride in the UK.

The challenge now is to maintain Brighton's distinctiveness. For example, there have been some retail planning decisions that threaten to make Brighton a "clone town" rather than a distinctive knowledge city. An interviewee comments: *"We really need to be bold in making those choices, otherwise it will end up as Bluewater on Sea… local residents do not need a bigger high street shopping area"*[35].

5.7 Leveraging strong connectivity

"Historic relationship with London was always an asset…senior figures from the media are willing to consider Brighton and Hove as a location"[36]

Brighton's proximity to London – and the strong connections between the two cities[37] – have been used to Brighton's (and London's) advantage. Brighton is near enough to London to benefit from linkages from the capital and its wider city region (including Gatwick airport which is located half-way between the two cities) and far enough away to be a distinct city in its own right, more than just another commuter town.

The city has access to the strategic rail network with a total of 8 railway stations within its administrative boundaries (one of the highest ratios per head of population in the country outside London). There is also an award-winning local bus company that is prepared to be innovative and invest in up-to-date technology and accessible vehicles to move people around the city cheaply and quickly. This bus company and taxi operators have benefited from significant investment in priority lanes and areas. Increased provision for walking and cycling has encouraged people to take up these options. Since 2000, Brighton & Hove has seen:

- 5% increase in bus use – 35 million journeys now made each year
- 10% increase in walking
- 50% increase in cycling

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[34] Interviewee comment
[35] Interviewee comment
[36] Interviewee comment
[37] The Express to London Victoria takes 49 minutes and Gatwick Airport is just 30 minutes away

- 10% reduction in car journeys entering and leaving the city

Brighton has a strong vision around continued investment in the infrastructure and the city is seeking over £10 million from Government to provide a Rapid Transport System to get people around the city quickly (linking up existing and planned sites of employment, housing, leisure and recreation).

The city has good access to the national strategic trunk road network (A23 links to M23/M25) and A27 (links to east and west), but the local road network is based on its historical Victorian pattern. It is further constrained by the city's built environment and has a finite capacity, which if reached would compromise the city council's two corporate priorities: 'developing a prosperous sustainable economy' and 'improving quality of life'. Whilst Brighton has seen much success in its work to reduce car use in the city and to encourage people to use other forms of transport, the council's rejection of plans for a major Park & Ride site to serve the city have dented the strategy. However, the scale of connectivity within the city is relative to its size: "traffic is not a major problem – you only have to drive through Streatham to realise what a traffic problem is"[38].

5.8 Leadership around a knowledge city vision

Brighton is governed by Brighton and Hove City Council, which is currently led by Labour with a very small majority. There are substantial political challenges, despite a strong vision from the Economic Strategy and active leaders within Brighton & Hove's partnerships; this "hung environment" threatens growth. There are several examples which have already been referred to, including the West Pier where the drive to make bold decisions challenges Brighton's ability to maintain a physical knowledge city; as well as building 'upwards' and the proposed park and ride scheme. Like many other local authorities in England, political decision-making in Brighton and Hove suffers from a 'not in my back yard' mentality, and also a conservatism which hampers cooperation and co-ordination around the vision of Brighton as a knowledge city.

5.9 Investing in communities

A key challenge to Brighton's success is the ability of city planners to ensure a 'trickle down' effect. Housing is a good example. Like many other cities, Brighton has seen a huge rise in house prices and so is now struggling to accommodate the housing needs of all city residents. Housing problems are concentrated in poorer areas of Brighton and whilst the city would like to move towards mixed communities, there is currently a waiting list of people with real accommodation needs.

Like most cities in the UK, Brighton's potential suffers from the effects of inequalities between different groups within the city and the wider region.

[38] Interviewee comment

6. Conclusions

Brighton: Secondary Ideopolis

Using the Ideopolis framework we have placed Brighton as a 'secondary Ideopolis': a city that is knowledge intensive and that has many of the features of larger Ideopolises, but that is in a different place in the UK urban hierarchy. Brighton certainly impacts on the areas around it, yet it also functions as part of the London city region, meaning that Brighton cannot be a primary Ideopolis. The vision of Brighton as a secondary Ideopolis enables the city to play to its strengths and to capitalise on its proximity to London.

Future Vision for Brighton

'In the next ten years, Brighton and Hove should aim to get its name recognised world wide as a powerhouse for creativity and innovation'.[39]

The future for Brighton is, potentially bright. And based on the evidence, it is well on its way to recognition for creativity. However, one interviewee warns that the *"City could stagnate without a vision about what it will be"*[40]. Knowledge intensity – Brighton as a high performing secondary Ideopolis – should certainly part of the vision. And there was a general consensus from interviewees that *"if the city can thrive on the base of the knowledge economy this will be beneficial for everyone"* [41].

[39] Brighton and Hove Creative Industries: Report, 2000, Creative Brighton
[40] Interviewee comment
[41] Interviewee comment

7. Policy recommendations

"If the city remains ambitious and keeps the impetus there is everything to be played for" [42]

There are several areas of work that Brighton needs to focus on to fully realise it's potential and to see continued success. Relating these to the Ideopolis framework, recommendations include:

High skill organisations

- Addressing overskilling: *"at the moment we can't offer London money to graduates"*[43].
- Working with employers to create a high quality of working life in low skill jobs.

Diverse Specialisation

- Bolstering creativity by finding bigger markets with high value and building greater capacity in support: *"Expansion won't always produce vast numbers of jobs but will produce more wealth which will, in turn, produce more wealth"* [44].

Distinctiveness

- Building confidence: *"New generation of development along Brighton seafront must create capacity for a new stage of growth and confidence in the city"*[45].
- Maintaining balance between rental income and diversity: *"challenge is to keep the Lanes at a point that Costa Coffee doesn't take over"*[46].
- Considering economic and social at the same time – *"What fuels the economy is the sense that the place is interesting. This also drives quality of life"* [47].

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Leadership around a knowledge city vision

- Planning around the vision: *"Thriving cities do not happen by accident"*[48].
- Being ambitious: *"Changing the DNA of ambition in Brighton"*[49].
- Building links along the coast: shared vision of where the south coast as a whole is going. This includes working with other local authorities.

The main barriers for Brighton are:

- Politics: "Political will is a critical issue for the city. Brighton needs brave decisions to be taken in the long-term which is tough to achieve within the electoral cycle"[50].
- Social inclusion: "If top line economic issues are addressed but inclusion isn't, Brighton and hove will become as less safe place to live and experience for the casual visitor"[51].
- National policy that currently relies on "cities being post-industrial with brown field sites"[52].

8. Lessons Learned from Brighton

There is much to learn from Brighton's recent economic growth. The city has used its proximity to London to its advantage, built on what's there, adapted to new technologies and changing economic environments and survived where similar towns have floundered. Brighton stands out on the south coast, both to London commuters who live there to enjoy a high quality of life and to the millions of business and tourist visitors to the city every year. Other towns along the south coast – Bournemouth, Portsmouth and Hastings – as well as northern resorts that have not made the transition that Brighton has, such as Blackpool, can learn from the city's specialised yet diverse economic base and the continued repositioning of itself as a 'place for pleasure'.

Appendix A: Interviewees

This case study presents findings from a literature review and stakeholder interviews with the following people:

- Councillor Ken Bodfish, Brighton and Hove City Council
- Simon Fanshawe, Chair of Brighton and Hove Economic Partnership
- Felicity Harvest, South East Regional Director, Arts Council
- Paul Lovejoy, Executive Director of Strategy and Sustainability, SEEDA

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