

Underpass FAQ's

How old is the underpass?

The underpass is 30 years old; approximately halfway through its designed lifespan.

Who is responsible for maintaining the underpass?

The underpass is a National Highways asset, and they are responsible for its maintenance. This includes drainage, ceilings, lighting, railings, internal walls, external walls, side steps, side walls, and signage within the underpass. Kent County Council also have responsibility for walking and cycle paths, surfaces in the direction from town to seafront and steps from town to seafront.

Will flooding return to the Underpass?

Working with National Highways, the issue of regular flooding has already been addressed as part of the project back in November 2022, with new pumps installed and regular maintenance undertaken.

At times of heavy rain some off road water run-off persists, and we have identified this issue and are reporting any subsequent flooding issues directly to National Highways through their Control Room.

Will any structural work be undertaken as part of the project?

No structural work is being considered as part of this project; this is because National Highways have placed strict constraints on what work can be done to protect the physical integrity of the underpass. This means DDC cannot undertake work that would involve drilling into the structure or create holes to facilitate building work and no fixings to the structure where the screw or bolt exceeds 50mm in length. Any work undertaken as part of this project will be done in collaboration with National Highways and Kent County Council.

Will the lighting in the underpass be improved as part of the project?

We have received feedback from members of the public that the lighting in the underpass could be improved, and we have been consulting with National Highways about how this can be achieved. They have confirmed that they will clean and replace light diffusers and insert new LEDs where necessary.

Will floors and ceilings be improved as part of the project?

The underpass floor will be resurfaced as part of the project and the ceiling repainted. Unfortunately, no structural changes can be made.

How will the panel cover work?

The panels are designed to cover over the existing tiles in the underpass whilst respecting the physical integrity of the underpass structure. The panels will be fitted into frames and adhered to the walls so they can't be pulled off. Applying the panels in this way will enable their long-term maintenance or replacement.

How are ‘Dover Time Tunnel’ visuals progressing?

Back in November 2023 public engagement and a vote selected the ‘Dover Time Tunnel’ theme, since then designs have progressed and are approaching finalisation. New visuals designs will cover all walled areas of the underpass including reflective corner panels to improve visibility.

Will it be possible to improve CCTV coverage in the underpass?

Because of the constraints around structural work in the underpass it may not be possible to put CCTV cameras into the underpass itself. However, we are engaging with National Highways about how we can improve safety in the underpass. If possible, the Project team will enhance CCTV coverage around the entrances into the underpass and create some form of mirrored corners within the structure so people can see who may be approaching from the side stairs or ramp.

Will the signage be improved as part of the project?

The Project Team are collaborating with National Highways, Kent County Council, Sustrans, Kent Downs Organisation about the signage in and around the underpass. We are planning to install some new totem style signs at either side of the underpass to assist with wayfinding in the town. The totems will match the style of the signs that were installed as part of the recent completed Market Square project.

Will the project look at how the space in the underpass is used?

The Project Team are commissioning some work into improving how the shared space in the underpass is used by pedestrians and cyclists. This work will consider how design of the space can improve the experience of people using it. Any final improvements will have to pass several safety audits before implementation.

When will the project be completed?

Dover District Council is in the process of procuring a main contractor for the project works. It is anticipated that the underpass improvements will be completed by the end of 2025.

Will the underpass remain open and accessible to the public during project works?

During the works the underpass will remain partially open allowing access from the town centre to the waterfront. Signage and barriers will be in place explaining access points.