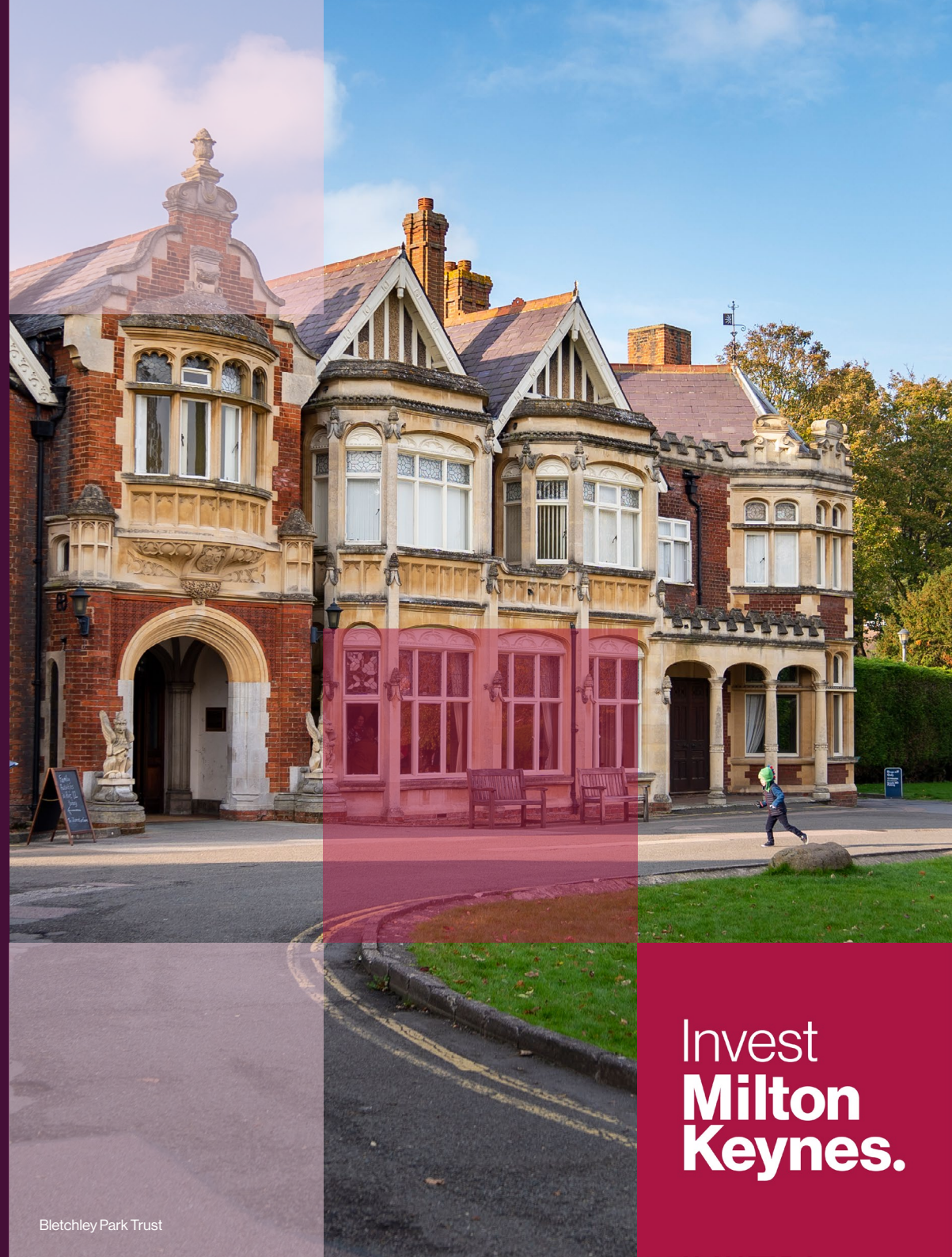


2024

Bletchley and Fenny Stratford's Business Narrative



Bletchley Park Trust

Invest
**Milton
Keynes.**

Welcome to Bletchley and Fenny Stratford.

We're part of Milton Keynes... but a bit different. Long before Milton Keynes was a twinkle in a town planner's eye **(1)**, we were attracting the inventors who changed the world. And that pioneering spirit is as strong today as it's always been.

It's no surprise that today, technology sector businesses continue to thrive here **(2)**, or that the South Central Institute of Technology **(3)**, which produces world-class talent, is here in Bletchley. And it's no wonder that the world came to our patch to debate the future of Artificial Intelligence and sign the Bletchley Declaration **(4)**. Because of course, this is where modern computing was born.

The transport sector also continues to build on our area's rich history of invention. The automotive industry remains one of our most significant employers **(5)**, the world's most successful F1 Team sits on our doorstep **(6)** and driverless taxis run around our football stadium **(7)**. Bletchley is also a key UK rail hub, where the West Coast Mainline meets East West Rail **(8)**, while the M1 runs past our front door **(9)**. Punching above our weight? Perhaps. But then again, this is where the world's first heavy oil fuels were invented **(10)**.





Here in Bletchley and Fenny Stratford, start-ups, independent businesses and entrepreneurship remain the cornerstone of our economic prosperity and our future **(11)**. Every type of business can find their ideal spot from suburban high streets to leafy neighbourhoods, from large retail parks **(12)** to parades of independent shops, from cutting edge distribution centres to manufacturing and industrial estates **(13)**.

Just as the newly-built Milton Keynes drew pioneers who wanted to live life differently, Bletchley and Fenny Stratford continues to welcome those who want to start new chapters. Our diverse community **(14)** is a melting pot of culture and a constant source of innovation and hard work.

Our excellent further and higher education resources **(15)** reflect the coming needs of a population that's younger than the English average for the under 16s **(16)**.

With productivity rates exceeding the England average **(17)**, great broadband and 5G connectivity **(18)**, and superb road and rail links to every part of the UK, there's every reason to bring your business here **(19)**.

Ready to find out what Bletchley and Fenny Stratford can do for your business?

Because this is where it starts.

01

While settlements in what is today Bletchley and Fenny Stratford go back to Roman times (with Watling Street running through the area), the earliest reference of the two towns we know today go back to the 12th and 13th century manorial rolls respectively. Fenny Stratford was granted its market charter, formally denoting it a town in its own right, by King James 1 in 1608. And the Grand Union Canal makes its course through Bletchley, speaking to our history in the Industrial Revolution.

02

115 companies specialising in IT make their home in Bletchley and Fenny Stratford making it one of our most significant economic sectors for employment. Our industry share of employment in the manufacturing of electronic equipment is more than 5 times the national average, manufacture of computer and electronic products is more than 3 times the national average, and Telecommunications almost double. These shares are also higher than for Milton Keynes overall. Globally famous brands like Marshalls (Amplifiers) make their home in Bletchley.



03

South Central Institute of Technology (SCIoT) – one of a number of Institutes of Technology (IoTs) across the country based on collaborations between existing further education colleges, universities and business. The main SCIoT Hub is at Bletchley (with satellite campuses at Oxford and Reading). There are circa 500 students with planned new building investment ensuring Bletchley will be the SCIoTs flagship site.

It provides higher level technical education and training across a range of STEM occupations and industries. The IoT is a hybrid further education/higher education level of offer and will support delivery of the Technology Park Bletchley Town Fund project.



04

The first Global AI Safety Summit was held at Bletchley Park between 1-2 November 2023. With an agenda to agree a worldwide approach to the safety and regulation of Artificial Intelligence, the resulting Bletchley Declaration was an international call to action to examine and address the potential impact of Artificial Intelligence and the need to address key issues like the protection of human rights, fairness, transparency, regulation, human oversight, accountability, ethics, privacy and data protection.

05

Businesses operating in the Motor Trade and in the Manufacture of Motor Vehicles both have location quotients in Bletchley and Fenny Stratford that are double the national average and higher than Milton Keynes overall.

06

Red Bull Racing has been based in Milton Keynes since 2005.



07

MK Dons stadium lies at the heart of the MK One area of Bletchley, and generates £31m in additional local revenue annually.

08

The East West Rail programme of rail network connectivity improvements including the construction of new sections of railway line will directly serve Bletchley linking the area to both Oxford and Cambridge as well as locations such as Bicester, Bedford and Aylesbury. The current aim of East West Rail is to have trains running between Oxford and Milton Keynes by 2025.





10

Patented in 1890, Herbert Ackroyd Stuart (1864 – 1927) invented the first operational heavy-oil engine in Fenny Stratford.

11

Bletchley and Fenny Stratford has an enterprising local economy represented by some 1,835 Enterprises and 2,225 Local Units (individual sites that belong to an Enterprise) located within and immediately adjacent to the area in a wide range of business sectors.

09

Bletchley and Fenny Stratford are characterised by good quality transport infrastructure including rail and road accessibility that offers easy connectivity to surrounding areas and also to regional and national urban centres including London Euston in 37 minutes, Birmingham New Street in 1 hour 8 minutes and Manchester in 1 hour 56 mins. Bletchley railway station has some 1.14m passenger entries and exits and 99,000 trip interchanges in 2019 / 20 (the year prior to the pandemic impacts on travel patterns).

The Town Fund Transport Hub investment is intended to improve links between the station and town centre. Milton Keynes and Newport Pagnell, Buckingham, Leighton Buzzard and Luton and Houghton Regis are easily accessible within 30 minutes. In a 1.5 hour period, Bletchley and Fenny Stratford are accessible by road to Birmingham, London, Leicester and also Cambridge, Oxford and Peterborough (covering a population of circa 15 million people).



12

Our retail parks included significant estate investment and operational centres for brands like Ikea, John Lewis and Asda.

13

Analysis shows Bletchley and Fenny Stratford has strong concentrations of businesses in various manufacturing sectors (electronics, furniture and metal products) as well as cultural activities, sports /recreation, telecoms and motor vehicle trades. Of course we also have a rich and diverse retail sector.



14

The population of Bletchley and Fenny Stratford is more diverse than England as a whole. The Black, Black British, Caribbean or African population category is some 5.8% higher than the England figure and 0.35% higher than the Milton Keynes (Local Authority level) figure. Bletchley has 18% of the Milton Keynes population and 22% of the Black, and Black British population.



15

In addition to the South Central Institute of Technology (SCIoT), Bletchley and Fenny Stratford offers a number of other educational opportunities to young people. Milton Keynes College (MK College) provides further and higher education with two campuses, including the Bletchley campus, home to courses in sport development; creative and digital arts; and catering and hospitality services (includes a commercial hair and beauty salon, and commercial training restaurant).

The College delivers a variety of qualifications (vocational courses, apprenticeships, higher education, professional certificates) as well as community training, and works in partnership with host of employers and businesses. The Open University (OU) is a long established provider of online and distance learning courses at undergraduate and post graduate level, and is based in Milton Keynes close to Bletchley.

And Cranfield University is located circa ten miles to the north east of Bletchley. The specialist postgraduate university provides world class expertise in science, engineering (aeronautical, mechanical, manufacturing), design, technology and management with long established partnerships in industry.

MK:U is based at Bouverie House in Central Milton Keynes and is opening a new Innovation Hub to support local businesses and foster innovation. The space includes a podcasting studio, professional photography studio, flexible workspaces and a design lab with 3D printing facilities. The physical workspaces and labs can be used by companies in the area to develop their businesses, products and marketing.



16

Bletchley and Fenny Stratford boasts a younger population than the rest of England for both under 16s and the 27-44 year old age group, and a lower than average population compared to England for every age year after 44.



Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Key Facts

Milton Keynes Council
Market Research: Bletchley and Fenny Stratford



44,627 total population in 2021
27,824 people aged 16 – 64 years



21,335 jobs in 2021
1,835 business enterprises



Excellent broadband and mobile connectivity
100% 5g coverage for EE, Three and Vodafone



Local economy worth £1bn+
Gross Value Added in 2020 £76,587
Gross Domestic Product per Worker



Companies rank by sector
1. Real Estate
2. Computer Programming
3. Personal Services
4. Retail
5. Management Consultancy



Major employing sectors
Retailing, Food and Drink,
Warehousing, Education, Wholesale
Trade, and Motor Vehicles



5 mins to Milton Keynes Central
5 trains per hour
37 mins to London Euston
5 direct trains per hour
1 hr 8 mins to Birmingham New Street
1 direct train per hour



17

Overall, Milton Keynes and within it the Bletchley and Fenny Stratford area are characterised as high productivity locations compared with other benchmark towns, regional and national average. In 2020 Milton Keynes was 20th out of 343 Built Up Areas (BUASD) across England for estimated Gross Value Added per filled job at £89,210. This level of GVA per filled job is notably higher than Cambridge (circa £54,000) or Oxford (£51,000) for example. For the whole of Milton Keynes Council (the local authority area) the GVA per filled job is high (some £76,587 in 2020), the 23rd highest overall across 374 local authority areas).



18

Levels of digital connectivity are important for both residents and businesses in Bletchley and Fenny Stratford. Mobile data coverage levels for 4G services are almost universal (99.6% outdoor coverage) and there is good coverage of 5G mobile services. A similar pattern of high quality, fast connectivity is evident for broadband across the area with fibre connectivity improvements to be funded via the Town Fund. Patterns of broadband speeds show clusters of higher accessibility in areas of newer residential to the south of Bletchley and within the town centre and industrial parts of the area.

19

There is an extensive catchment and travel area to / from Bletchley and Fenny Stratford, with central London stations within a one hour travel time. Indeed, London Euston is reachable in 37 minutes and Birmingham New Street in 1 hour 8 minutes. Liverpool and Manchester city centres are approximately 2 hours by train.

Milton Keynes Central is just five minutes travel time. Some 14 - 15 million people live within a 1.5 hour drive time. Accessibility by HGV is also excellent with close access to the existing strategic road and motorway network as well as wider proximity to key logistics hubs along the M1 corridor.

