



Bletchley & Fenny Stratford

Town Deal Annual Highlight Report
December 2023



Introduction from John Cove, Chair of the Town Deal Board

Welcome to this report that highlights the progress that has been made over the last year with the work overseen by the Town Deal Board. The Town Deal programme will help enable Bletchley and Fenny Stratford to be a thriving, healthy, affordable, and attractive place, where its diverse communities are celebrated and connected to opportunities to live, work and play. It will be a centre for innovation, benefiting from excellent strategic rail connections to London, Oxford and Cambridge and taking forward the pioneering and enduring legacy of Bletchley Park to provide a bright future for all.

Over the next 24 months you will begin to see physical signs of this investment proceeded with a range of engagement activities aimed at ensuring that our plans reflect the demands of the local community. Please make sure that you take advantage of those opportunities to have your say!

The next two years will prove exciting because, as well as the Town Deal work, there are other major initiatives underway - including a car park consultation and an NHS / MK City Council Pathfinder project – all aimed at making your Bletchley a better place to live, play and work.

The Board joins me in thanking you for your interest and support thus far and wish you and yours a very Happy New Year!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Cove". The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line underneath the name.



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A busy year for Bletchley & Fenny Stratford.



Figure 1. Community Event on Queensway (Summer 2023)

Before we delve into the ongoing regeneration of Bletchley & Fenny Stratford through the Town Deal programme, we must highlight and celebrate the wider achievements that the area can reflect on.

Firstly, we must celebrate the role that Bletchley Park has played in the successful hosting of the first global summit on artificial intelligence in November. This summit was attended by 27 countries, who pledged enhanced cooperation on the production of AI to promote inclusive economic growth, sustainable development and innovation and to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

This is the second time that Bletchley Park has been at the forefront of revolutionary technology and the success of this event will forever be enshrined in the Bletchley declaration and a commitment for further global collaboration going forward.

In July, the South-Central Institute of Technology (SCIoT) opened its doors, providing students with state-of-the-art AI, VR and AR technology. This building will help capitalise on the growing demand for employment within the tech industries and boast state of the art equipment, confined within an architecturally impressive and innovative building.

And continuing with the theme of technology, Milton Keynes City Council and partners have announced the artists shortlisted to create a new public art commission as a tribute to Alan Turing. Alan's role as the father of modern computer science will continue to be enshrined in Bletchley and these projects are all part of his ongoing legacy.

2023 also saw a major step forward in the regeneration plans for Bletchley. Milton Keynes City Council have approved plans for the transformation at Serpentine Court which forms part of the wider regeneration of the Lakes Estate. This project will see the demolition of the 1960s housing estate and its replacement with nearly 200 new homes and community infrastructure. Through this project, the local community will benefit from better living standards and all the opportunities that come with it.

We look forward to continuing working with stakeholders to help regenerate Bletchley & Fenny Stratford.



Figure 2. Blue Lagoon (summer 2023)

Town Deal Programme

Following approval of the remaining business cases early in 2023, the programme team, Town Deal Board and delivery partners have all mobilised to bring the aspirations of the Town Investment Plan to life.

The Town Deal Board and stakeholders continue to provide invaluable guidance on the delivery of this programme and we are grateful for all members time devoted to ensuring the correct scrutiny and opportunities that this programme can deliver. We also created a Town Deal Advisory Group, formed by representatives of the local community who will be predominantly involved in 2024 as we undertake community engagement and consultation on emerging schemes.

In June, the Town Deal programme was the subject of a 'Deep Dive' by Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). Following submission of all relevant documentation DLUHC confirmed the Bletchley Town Deal passed all their checks and provided useful information to help continue the successful delivery of this programme.

To keep up to date with the Town Deal and latest news visit [Home | Groundbreaking Bletchley and Fenny Town Deal](https://groundbreakingbletchleyandfenny.co.uk/) (https://groundbreakingbletchleyandfenny.co.uk/)



Figure 3. West side of Queenway, facing the Brunel Centre (Summer 2023)

Town Deal Projects

1. Innovation Hub

Unfortunately, market testing by Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP) has identified that the Innovation Hub project is no longer viable to be delivered due to the on going revenue implications and the ability for this to be a project that could be sustained in the medium term. Whilst this is unfortunate, it has provided an opportunity to reallocate funding from this project and allow us to increase the scope of other Town Deal projects, including the public realm improvements. Following approval on a preferred approach from the Town Deal Board, the programme team are currently producing a project adjustment request, seeking to reallocate the funding within the programme. Approval is being sought from government, with a decision expected in the new year.

2. Revolving Development Fund

In February 2023, the Revolving Development Fund was used to purchase the former Sainsbury's site. This alongside the already acquired Brunel Centre, will enable the delivery of a high-quality mixed-use development, providing new housing (including affordable units), employment space and leisure use. The programme team are currently consulting on the Brunel Centre redevelopment brief and demolition of the Sainsbury's site is expected in the new year.



Figure 4. Sainsbury's supermarket - acquired by Milton Keynes Development Partnership in February 2023

3. Transport Hub

The Transport Hub scheme continues to explore options for remodelling Saxon Street and creating an ambitious gateway into Bletchley. In addition, conversations are ongoing with Network Rail to identify additional opportunities that this development may bring, including the long held ambition of delivering an eastern entrance to the train station. Whilst there are no firm agreements in place, we will continue to work with partner organisations to deliver a scheme that helps capitalise on the opportunities East-west Rail provides and act as a catalyst for the wider regeneration of Bletchley.



Figure 5. Bletchley View Housing Development, located near Saxon Street.

4. Public Realm Improvements

The project team are continuing to explore options to positively transform Queensway and Aylesbury Streets. Through internal and external consultation with key partners, a longlist of project interventions is being identified. In 2024, we will host several public engagement events as we seek input from the public on what this project can deliver. It is worth reminding everyone that this project has considerable public backing and is designed to positively transform the public realm and enhance the economic viability of both streets.



Figure 6. Costa Coffee located on Queensway

5. Redway

In November 2023, we achieved practical completion of section four of the Redways project. Whilst further snagging works and landscaping activities will happen into Spring 2024, the route is now open to the public and will provide enhanced connection to the town and help promote active travel options for residents, benefitting from the fantastic Blue Lagoon. Further work continues on sections one and two, and we are looking at options to provide further connections to the Town Centre (section 5).

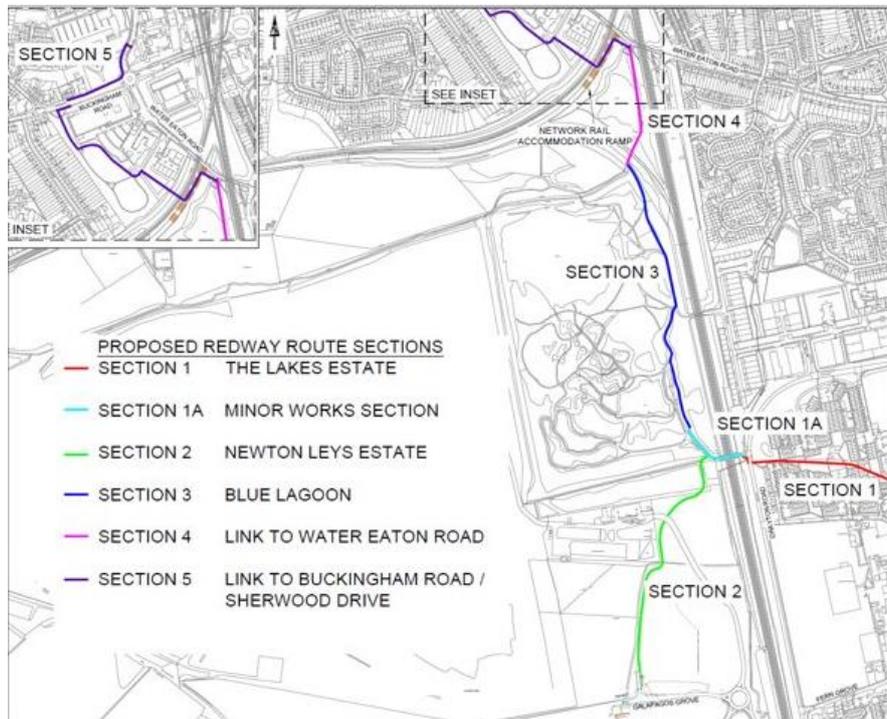


Figure 7. Redways plan showing sections 1 to 5.

6. Tech Park

Capitalising on the incredible Institute of Technology, the Tech Park project continues to deliver a high quality and transformative equipment investment that will help educate and upskill the residents of Bletchley. Students are already benefiting from this investment, and we look forward to MK College hosting an official launch event in 2024.



Figure 8. The South Central Institute of Technology at MK College.

7. Transformation at Bletchley Park

In October 2023, Bletchley Park Trust held an official launch event to show us the newly renovated transformation of Block E. This project has positively regenerated this space, providing new educational facilities and an incredible auditorium which will be used to help upskill students.



Figure 9. Regeneration of Bletchley Park Block E, including auditorium.

8. Fibre Connectivity

The Fibre Connectivity project has remained paused whilst we await news from the Government led Project Gigabit, which seeks to extend fibre connectivity across the country. We have been informed that for the homes that would have been connected through this project will now be covered under a commercial rollout which will help deliver this project. We will now work on reallocating the fund to other Town Deal projects.

9. Marketing Bletchley (Active Marketing of Vacant Sites)

Our project to market Bletchley as a great place to invest and do business has been in full flow, engaging with businesses across the area. Throughout the year we held four business networking events and engaged with over 100 businesses. This feedback is helping to inform emerging designs for the programme, particularly around the Public Realm Improvements scheme. In 2024, we will be hosting a regular programme of monthly events. Work is also underway on creating a Bletchley Business Narrative to help us sell Bletchley as an investment location.



Figure 10. Business Engagement event as part of the Active Marketing of Vacant Sites project.

What's coming in 2024

Whilst we have had a busy 2023, we are looking forward to all the incredible things that the Town Deal will deliver in 2024. Here are a few of the things to look out for:

- Getting work underway on a new community engagement strategy, outlining our communication methods, identifying new audiences, and mapping out our consultation for 2024.
- Approval from DLUHC for our project adjustment request which will provide approximately £3.6 million for the benefit of the Revolving Development Fund, Public Realm Improvements and Redway's project.
- Full completion of the Redways project (sections 1 to 4), including an official opening event and design and part construction of section 5.
- A comprehensive public consultation to be held on the Public Realm Improvements and Transport Hub schemes.
- We will be buying in footfall monitoring data to understand footfall levels in Queensway and Aylesbury Street and help the ongoing monitoring & evaluation of the programme
- Continued working with the Town Deal Advisory Group to help engage and obtain feedback on the programme from the Bletchley community.
- A programme of events to be held for local businesses to help with networking, upskilling, feedback and promotion of Bletchley.
- Explore options to deliver a business grant scheme that will help with upskilling, growth and advertisement of local businesses.
- An improved Ground Breaking Bletchley & Fenny Stratford website, which will include regular updates and a commercial property search tool

Thank you to all involved!

This wonderful transformative work could not complete without the dedication, expertise and enthusiasm that you all provide to this programme. We look forward to working with you all in 2024 and continuing the regeneration of Bletchley & Fenny Stratford.

You can contact the Town Deal team at
info@groundbreakingbletchleyandfenny.co.uk

Our customer service team are available 9.00am to 5.15pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and 10.00am to 5.15pm on Wednesday
Contact number: 01908 691691

The Town Deal website is always available at:
[Home | Groundbreaking Bletchley and Fenny Town Deal](https://groundbreakingbletchleyandfenny.co.uk/)
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