



Groundbreaking Bletchley & Fenny

Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Deal update, October 2020

Work is underway to prepare a bid to Government for a Town Deal for Bletchley and Fenny Stratford worth £25 million.

The Town Deal is a really exciting opportunity to bring funding to our area which could help to improve local transport connections; skills and training and improve the quality of the town centres, making them more attractive to businesses and residents alike.



Thank you to everyone who has made comments on the questionnaire survey – you've told us so much about the things you like in Bletchley and Fenny Stratford, as well as what could be done to improve the appearance and fortunes of the area.

What have you told us?

Some of the area's strengths include:

- its 'small town' feel – Bletchley and Fenny Stratford town centres offer something different from Central Milton Keynes; you like the independent shops, cafes and businesses and the different character of the places that make up the Town Deal area.
- its history - the connection with Bletchley Park and the codebreakers is something that people are proud of and would like to see celebrated and used to promote the area to visitors.
- Whilst there is room for improvement in public transport and walking and cycling routes within the area, people appreciate the good rail connections serving Bletchley in particular and feel that the East West Rail route will only improve this
- Access to the countryside, the canal and to the parks and green spaces across Bletchley and Fenny Stratford.



Some of the things you would like to change include:

- The quality of the environment, especially in Bletchley town centre. Better signage is needed, for example to the public toilets in Bletchley and wider direction signs to Fenny Stratford from the A5 and the canal. The empty buildings in both Bletchley and Fenny Stratford detract from the areas' attractiveness and are an underused resource which could house new businesses.
- The access between Bletchley railway station and Queensway – the shopping area in Queensway is hidden by the Brunel Centre and the lack of an eastern exit from the railway station deters visitors to the town centre.
- The range of shops in the town centres is felt to be rather limited. The recently announced closure of the Sainsburys food store in Bletchley is a concern to local people, many of whom

travel by bus to shop there. The loss of the store's car park would also be a loss to the amount of parking in the town centre, should the site be redeveloped.

- People would like to see more opportunities for people seeking jobs and training and more support for struggling businesses. The performance of local schools needs to be improved.
- Whilst the area is relatively well-served by broadband, there is an issue of 'digital poverty' with people unable to afford access to broadband and a lack of skills to make the best use of it.
- In transport terms, the area needs better access to the redway system. Fenny Stratford would benefit from a public transport hub, linked to the railway station, with digital displays announcing the next bus departure and train service.



The Town Deal bid

We've used your feedback, together with comments from local businesses and organisations involved in the area to prepare a Vision for the area and to identify potential projects that could help to improve the area. Not all of those projects can be funded through the £25 million but they will be considered when future funding opportunities become available.

Projects that are likely to be included in the Town Investment Plan for a share of the £25 million will support economic growth and improve the quality of the urban environment as well as connections across the Bletchley and Fenny Stratford area. Some of the proposals support the site opportunities identified in the Central Bletchley Prospectus and policy in the West Bletchley Neighbourhood Plan. Potential projects include:

- Redevelopment of land at and around the old fire station to create residential-led mixed-use development which could provide new space especially for new businesses;
- the acquisition and re-use of run-down and dilapidated sites;
- improvement to Bletchley railway station and its connections to the rest of the town, including by creating a new 'Eastern Station Entrance';
- improvements to the appearance, attractiveness and safety of Bletchley and Fenny Stratford town centres that build on the heritage and brand of Bletchley Park.
- Completing the redway links between the Lakes Estate/ Newton Leys and Central Bletchley;
- A new training and skills hub – 'Tech Park Bletchley', based at MK College – that will provide access to skills and career support for adults, school children and community groups.
- Creation of galleries, learning facility and a collection centre in three wartime buildings at Bletchley Park.
- Completion of the fibre roll-out in the remaining areas of Bletchley/Fenny Stratford

What next?

The Town Deal Board and Milton Keynes Council are scheduled agree the final bid and submit it to the government at the end of October. The bid will be assessed and there will be further discussions between the government and the Board/ Milton Keynes Council before the funding is approved.

There will be further updates on progress on the Milton Keynes Council website at: www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/your-council-and-elections/council-information-and-accounts/strategies-plans-and-policies/bletchley-town-deal

A new website for the area – www.groundbreakingbletchleyandfenny.co.uk - will go live shortly and will include updates on the Town Deal process and details on how to get involved in the future as the projects are designed and developed. The work to get a bid in place is only the first part of the transformation of the Bletchley and Fenny Stratford area and there will be more opportunities in the future to get involved.