

# Economic Growth in Bedford



BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

Bulletin Number 18

Winter 2010-2011



## Major Bedford Town Centre store to be occupied

Bedford Town Centre's flagship former Woolworths store will soon be welcoming new occupiers; located in a prominent position, the 40,000 sq ft store has been empty for over 18 months since Woolworths went into administration.

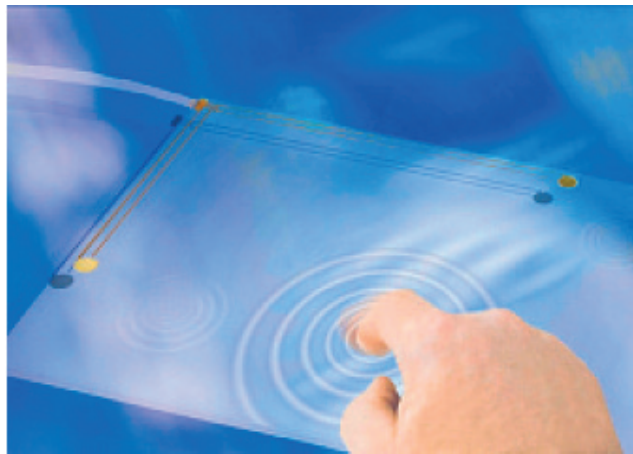
A planning application for refurbishment has been received with the new occupiers, Next and Iceland, sharing the space and a small part remaining for a kiosk. Next would use the entrance leading onto Bedford's prime retail street, Midland Road, and Iceland the entrance onto the recently refurbished Church Square, Bedford.

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## AsteelFlash Ltd Bedford Operations to Expand

AsteelFlash Ltd, a global player in the electronics manufacturing industry is to relocate to new larger premises on Cambridge Road Industrial Estate, Bedford.

Formerly MRP Electronics, they were bought by AsteelFlash in 2008 and have transformed from a local independent manufacturer to a company now offering the services of a world class supplier with leading edge manufacturing facilities and revised up-to-date management practices and culture.

AsteelFlash will increase their staff from 150 to over 200 in Bedford next year and look to build on their excellent reputation which saw them voted the 12th best Electronics Manufacturing Services Company in the world this year.

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## Movianto expand presence in Bedford

Movianto UK, a leading logistics and distribution service provider managing in excess of 1 million items each day and delivering 40% of all domestic pharmaceutical products in the UK, is to significantly expand its presence in Bedford.

Already occupying over 320,000 sq ft at Progress Park, Bedford, Movianto has taken a lease on the 130,000 sq ft Centrum Building (formerly Wells & Young's) on land South of Cambridge Road, Bedford, where neighbouring occupiers are ASDA and Lantmannen Unibake. Movianto's new facility is being set up in response to the increased demand from international companies in the pharmaceutical, biotechnology and healthcare industry.

Movianto's expanded presence in Bedford is good news for the area and will create substantial additional jobs. Their expanded presence is capitalising on Bedford's first-rate work force pool and excellent location with connectivity vastly improving due to the soon to be completed dualled A421 giving sub 10 minute access to both the M1 and A1.

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## Marston Vale Innovation Park Masterplan Complete

20 acres of council owned land, adjacent to the soon to be completed dualled A421 just south of Bedford have taken a step closer to becoming a prestigious gateway business park to the envisaged Bedford A421 Innovation Corridor with the completion of a masterplan for the site and plans for advanced landscaping in hand.

The indicative masterplan and structural landscaping plan for what will become Marston Vale Innovation Park detail a premier commercial location with the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park and a Sustrans National Cycle Network Route passing through it. A high-quality, innovation-focused, environmentally sound, business community is the intent.

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## LEP

On the 28th October Business Secretary Vince Cable announced that 24 combinations of local authorities and private companies had successfully bid over the summer to form Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs), which will replace RDAs when they are abolished in April 2012. Bedford will be part of the South East Midlands LEP which will also cover Milton Keynes, Luton and other districts in Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire. The SEM LEP will be a partnership of local authorities and business organisations with a key initial task, beyond the basic setting up agenda, of accessing the government's new £1.4 bn Regional Growth Fund.

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In this 18th issue of Economic Growth in Bedford it is encouraging to be able to continue to report on a range of solid economic progress. If you would like any further information about the bulletin and its contents in general (see above for item-specific contacts) please contact Patrick Lyons on +44 (1234) 227296 or patrick.lyons@bedford.gov.uk. To receive copies of the publication electronically (and see back copies) visit [www.investinbedford.com](http://www.investinbedford.com)