

Economic Growth in Bedford



BEDFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Town Centre West Moves Forward

Bedford's £200m Town Centre West regeneration scheme has moved further forward with some major property acquisitions by the Borough Council. St Modwen is the council's development partner for this scheme, which will provide Bedford with a modern living, shopping, leisure and transport environment, expanding the town centre's offer. It will help retain existing users as well as attracting new people to the town centre to live, work and shop.

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Station Quarter Fast Tracking

Bedford's Station Quarter regeneration moves closer with imminent submission of the technical reports to support consideration of the overall outline planning application, progress towards site assembly and design of the new station under way. Construction of the new station (including new track and platforms) should begin in September 2010 and finish in September 2011 for December 2011 operation of significantly enhanced rail services.

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Bedford Western Bypass Complete

Bypassing the road that currently passes through Kempston with a single-carriageway bypass on a new alignment, the western bypass will connect the upgraded A421 at Marsh Leys Junction to the A428 just west of Great Denham. The road will have five at-grade roundabouts, two pedestrian/cycleway underpasses and a 330m-long viaduct crossing the River Great Ouse. The £20m infrastructure development is ahead of schedule and will officially be opened on 3 December 2009, significantly contributing to the general transport improvements in and around Bedford.

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Bodyflight – Expansion Approval

Bodyflight in Bedford is home to the world's largest and best indoor skydiving wind tunnel. Producing up to 4,000 HP of airflow, the size, power and air quality is unrivalled. Bodyflight has also hosted some famous faces over the years, including Daniel Craig in association with the 007 film Quantum of Solace. Since opening in September 2005, Bodyflight has expanded and now plans to include new facilities such as The Flow Rider, which is one of the most exciting interactive board sports/skill rides to emerge in the last few years. Similar to other board sports, Flow Riding mixes surfing, skateboarding and wake boarding all in one thrilling experience. Planning permission has recently been granted by Bedford Borough Council and the Flow House will be opening in May 2010, re-emphasising Bedford's credentials as an extreme sports location.

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Marston Vale Master Plan – A Special Vision

Preparation of an indicative masterplan and detailed landscape infrastructure plan for what will become Marston Vale Innovation Park will soon be under way. The 15-hectare site is mostly owned by Bedford Borough Council and located just south of Bedford between the new dualled A421 and Wootton village. This location is a key gateway to an envisaged Bedford A421 Innovation Corridor, and to Bedford as a whole, and will complement the successful Priory Business Park, which is regarded as Bedford's premier commercial location. A high-quality, innovation-focused, environmentally sound, exemplar business park is intended.

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Strategic Sites for Business Brochure

A new 'Strategic Sites for Business Prospectus' has been produced to demonstrate how Bedford can meet the accommodation and associated needs of businesses, whatever their scale, line of business or connectivity need. The prospectus explains what Bedford is about and, most importantly, gives in-depth detail of the strategic sites and premises for business that are available now, or are on the way. The prospectus can be viewed on the Invest in Bedford website (see below).

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In this 14th 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.economicgrowth.org.uk

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