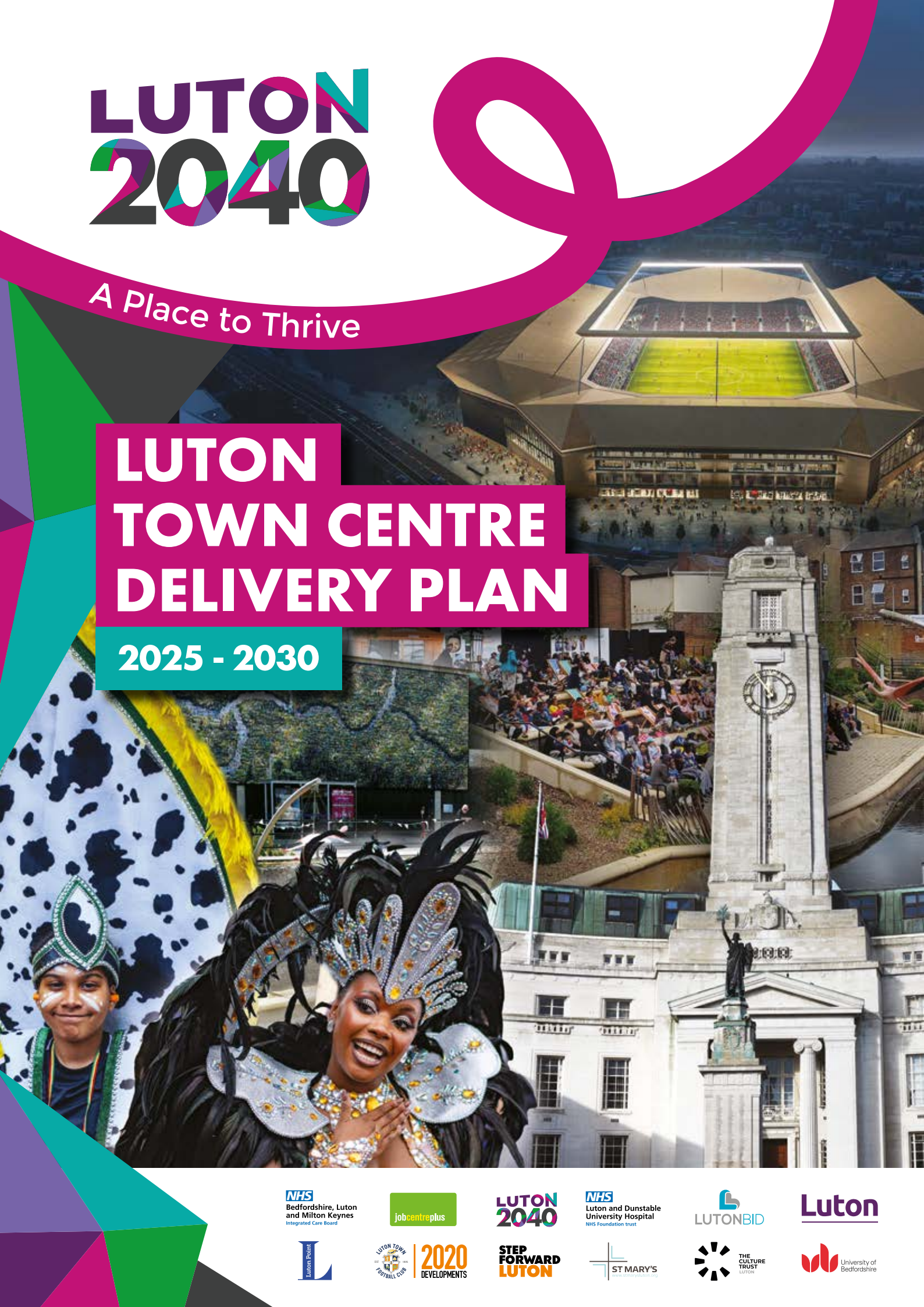


LUTON 2040

A Place to Thrive

LUTON TOWN CENTRE DELIVERY PLAN

2025 - 2030



NHS
Bedfordshire, Luton
and Milton Keynes
Integrated Care Board

jobcentreplus

**LUTON
2040**

NHS
Luton and Dunstable
University Hospital
NHS Foundation Trust

LUTONBID

Luton

L
Luton Point

**LUTON TOWN
FOOTBALL CLUB**
**2020
DEVELOPMENTS**

**STEP
FORWARD
LUTON**

ST MARY'S

**THE
CULTURE
TRUST
LUTON**

**University of
Bedfordshire**

The Hat District

A vibrant part of Luton town centre that will be a key part of the Town Centre Plan



Foreword



I am delighted to present the Town Centre Delivery Plan for Luton. This action plan sets out how we will create a vibrant, sustainable and welcoming town centre where residents and visitors alike can feel proud to live, work, study and play. The plan will help to ensure that all Luton residents and visitors benefit from the £1.7 billion of planned investment in the town centre, in line with the Luton 2040 vision that everyone can thrive, and no one has to live in poverty.

During Radio One Big Weekend in 2024 we saw what was possible, when thousands of people of all ages were welcomed to the town centre and enjoyed a safe and wonderful experience here. Luton Town FC's stadium moving into Power Court will spark a revitalisation that we will ensure the whole town centre capitalises on. Other planned developments such as The Stage will also support town centre-wide regeneration. With the expansion of the airport, Universal Studios theme park and an increased focus on the visitor and nighttime economy, the town centre will become a destination.

In 2021, the Luton Town Centre Masterplan was published with the aim to make the town centre more welcoming and safer, including establishing better connections throughout the centre, restitching the centre into the surrounding area, bringing more economic diversity, creating new green space and bringing back the River Lea.

We are proud of the progress we have made over the last four years since the Masterplan was published, but there is more to do. Through this plan we are checking in on the status of the Masterplan's recommendations, and capturing new plans that have arisen, so that partners across the town centre ecosystem can support one another in improving the town centre.

I want to thank all our partners for their time and efforts in putting this plan together and in their commitment to the actions that will underpin the future success of Luton town centre. It's an incredibly exciting time to be part of Luton's story, and I look forward to seeing what comes next.

Cllr James Taylor
Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Inclusive Growth
for Luton Council and Chair of the Town Centre Strategic Board

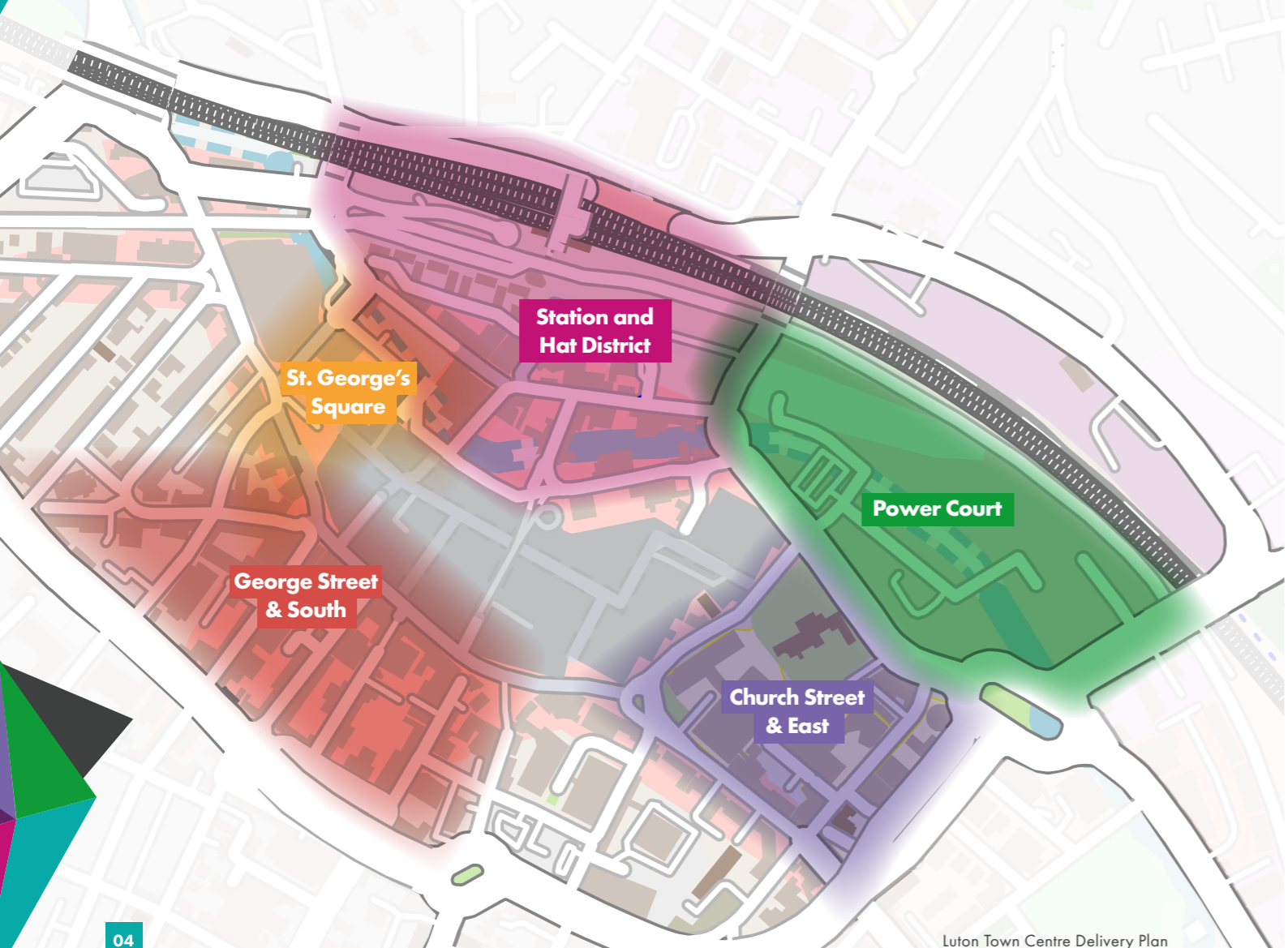


Introduction

The Town Centre Delivery Plan sets out how partners from across the town centre are delivering against the Luton Town Centre Masterplan. As well as tracking progress so far, it also captures work still to be done during the next year, five years and further out.

In 2021, the Masterplan was published with the aim to make the town centre more welcoming and safer, including establishing better connections throughout, and into the surrounding area, creating new green and blue spaces and bringing more economic diversity.

The Masterplan set out five 'key moves', that continue to be the guiding principles in the Delivery Plan:



Luton Town Centre Delivery Plan

1 Upcycling what already exists

Recognising the importance of heritage assets.

2 Re-stitching the centre

Joining up areas of the town centre that have been disconnected.

3 Knit the centre back into the town

Stop the ring road from being a blocker preventing people from getting into the town centre.

4 Introduce a greater range of activities

Expanding from just retail into business and employment, leisure and entertainment, culture, community and health.

5 Open up the River Lea

In addition to Hat Gardens, there will be other sites where de-culverting the River Lea will have a transformational impact to the public realm.

The area covered by the Delivery Plan is contained inside the ring road and features the four quarters identified in the Masterplan: Station and Hat District, Church Street and East, George Street and South and St. George's Square (see map).

These areas are all unique, each with their own characteristics. Each quarter will benefit from a beacon site development as well as a number of other innovations that support the transformation of the area. A big part of the plan is to work on how we connect these distinct areas to each other, so that people move around town easily and comfortably.

In order to action the Masterplan successfully, a broad, multi-angle approach is essential, so we have six overarching themes that ensure the breadth of the challenge is taken into account.

The document is divided into two. Firstly, it sets out the six themes, which ensure the town centre is considered holistically. Secondly, it provides a list of actions by town centre area, and those that are cross-cutting across the town centre. Power Court is presented separately given how important it is as a development.

The actions either result directly from the Masterplan or have been generated in over 20 dedicated partner meetings and area-based workshops, so that key town centre partners have joined together to co-author this Delivery Plan.

The document sets out when actions will be delivered, the relevant themes that they relate to, and what level of progress each one is at currently. The map toward the end sets everything out visually across the town centre.

Successes since the Masterplan

Since the Masterplan was published in 2021, we, together with our partners, have made significant progress and started seeing several visible changes in Luton town centre. Town centre transformation is well underway, with millions of pounds of inward investment secured. This includes the stunning Hat Works, Luton's oldest hat factory, which has been regenerated and has become a flexible and affordable workspace for emerging creative and digital entrepreneurs.

We secured government grant funding to deliver the Town Centre Partnerships for People and Place, which included the formation of the Town Centre Strategic Board and funded a public health research study into street begging, which led to several recommendations. Back in 2023, we opened the award-winning pocket park Hat Gardens which hosts several wonderful events and provides a quiet waterside haven every day.

Luton was one of the first places in the country to secure the levelling up of funding, and work is underway on our flagship mixed-use development, The Stage. In 2024, Power Court also received planning approval, which will see a 25,000-capacity football stadium completely transform our town centre.

Elsewhere, there has been significant investment in Luton Point, with many new high street brand stores opening up this year and attracting shoppers back to town.

We have been fortunate to have four stunning public art pieces installed, including the Covid memorial 'Our River' and 'Rough Gemstones' both situated on Silver Street. More recently, we unveiled the new public art installation on the former ABC cinema site and then finally 'A river runs under your feet' which is located on the junction of Guildford Street and Church Street. These stunning public art pieces have transformed ordinary spaces into vibrant and engaging environments, inspiring and enriching the lives of our residents and visitors.

In September 2024, a Taskforce was set up, working with partners to deal with difficult issues in the town centre that are negatively impacting people's views of Luton. The Taskforce is making significant progress in tackling complex issues, including begging, street drinking, and shoplifting. Given the taskforce's success, this much-needed group has continued with an enhanced and targeted summer programme.

Six Themes



Economic diversity and diversity of spaces

Greater town centre resilience is achieved by accommodating a wider mix of uses, and enhancing the range of businesses, amid the growing resident population.

The town centre needs to have spaces for all sections of all communities, reflecting Luton's demographic, social, ethnic and economic diversity. The town centre will reinstate itself as a focal point for community and commercial life in the town, celebrating its rich heritage.

With new residents moving into the town centre and a new economy growing and becoming more central to the character of the town, it will become a place to live, work, study and play. With a better visitor offer and provision of health services, the resilience of the centre will be enhanced through additional footfall and opportunities to spend.



Place activation and sense of place

Arts, culture and heritage are reimagined and transformed with family activities and large events. An enhanced nighttime economy begins to grow with something for everyone.

An improved evening economy and cultural offer will attract new visitors and shift perceptions of the town, creating a welcoming environment for all, with the town's heritage being celebrated. Established places, such as our major arts venue The Hat Factory will work in harmony with new entertainment spaces in The Stage and at Power Court, bringing a refreshed and renewed experience.

New residents in the town centre will bring more demand for entertainment and evening activities; and with the new football stadium, the airport expansion and Universal Studios on the horizon, Luton will become a visitor destination. With our established entertainment and food and beverage businesses, plus new venues to come - a good night out in Luton will become an exciting option.

In 2024, Luton put on a great show when Radio 1 Big Weekend came to town. More than 100,000 people enjoyed Luton's hospitality and beautiful scenery, generating around £7 million for the local economy. More events in the future will bring visitors and provide opportunities for our residents and businesses. And alongside new adventures, Luton International Carnival will continue to bring music, joy and its vibrant mix of fun, traditions, and friendly faces, to Luton every year.



Cleaner, greener and more beautiful public realm

Net Zero ambitions are supported by the creation of clean and beautiful green and blue spaces in the town centre, providing safe and pleasant routes for walking and cycling.

It is vital for people's health and happiness that they can access good quality green and blue spaces close to home and in their town centres. The town centre will become greener, the River Lea further opened up and inviting public spaces created which are enjoyable to spend time in.

Through a reprioritisation of transport movements and the creation of new green spaces, coupled with a softening of the public realm and the introduction of new planting, the town centre will be a much more inviting place to visit. Open spaces will introduce opportunities to play and experience nature, whilst also improving air quality and biodiversity.

Walkers and cyclists will enjoy greener space along St. Mary's Road, Church Road and Library Road, and safer, more convenient routes into and around the town centre. More pedestrianised areas will enhance the look and feel of the town centre.



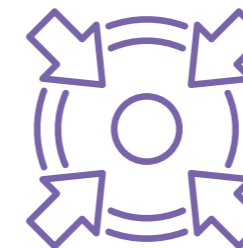
Safer town centre for all

Partnership working with enforcement and support agencies is timely and targeted. Luton's town centre is safe and welcoming for everyone who works, socialises or lives there. Young people are supported and inspired and find opportunity and possibility.

All Lutonians and visitors should be able to enjoy the town centre, so it needs to be a safe place where families and friends want to spend time with places to meet, eat, drink and socialise. At the same time, we need to ensure vulnerable people who are caught in addiction, homelessness or with health problems are supported into more fulfilling lives.

Services across the Council need to be aligned and committed to the Masterplan's strategy. Everything needs to be considered, from community safety through to environmental health core service provision and ways to design out crime in our works and projects. We should be focussed on creating wider benefits for the town centre and, in turn, residents. Going one step further, in response to the recommendation in the Masterplan, a Town Centre Taskforce was formed in 2024 that brings together all organisations that are either based in or play a key role in the town centre, from enforcement to support for homeless people. We have moved from a 'one council' approach to a 'one town centre' approach, with the partner ecosystem being critical to the town centre's success.

Through a clear sense of purpose and more active uses throughout the town centre, people will also be (and feel) much safer and more welcomed.



Inclusion and accessibility

Routes into the town centre are improved so that visiting is easier and more convenient for everyone. Services and facilities are provided to improve wellbeing for all.

Physically, the town centre will benefit from much better accessibility. High quality pedestrian and cycle connections will welcome residents from neighbouring areas into the centre and help people move around the town centre safely by foot and by bicycle, whatever their mobility needs.

The railway station is in a decrepit state. It should be fully accessible and usable for users and visitors irrespective of their needs. Luton and the four million people that use the station every year deserve better, and a campaign has been recently launched for a new station to be built. With developments coming soon close to the station, and with visitor numbers expected to increase with the airport expansion, it is imperative Luton can showcase itself as a destination, and an improved station will be a much more fitting gateway for visitors.



Promotion and inward investment

Luton is seen as a viable prospect by businesses looking to open and expand. Young people are supported and inspired and find opportunity and possibility here.

The Stage and other developments will contribute to Luton's ambition to be an attractive commercial centre, attracting businesses looking to set up or expand their headquarters. Premises here, and elsewhere in the town, will also attract entrepreneurs from within Luton. New supported spaces will be set up for Luton's start-up community and for scaling-up more established new businesses, adding to the thriving creative industries that have made the Hat District their home.

Creativity and local young talent will be nurtured and given a platform to shape the character of the town centre. Stronger partnerships between the university and local organisations will support a new generation of Luton-made businesses to start, grow and thrive, empowering Luton's entrepreneurs, delivering genuine jobs and opportunities and helping towards a sustainable economic future for the town. Inward investment and retaining Luton's young talent are key priority areas in Luton's upcoming Economic Growth Strategy.



The Stage

An artist's impression of the new development on Bute Street

Station and Hat District

A Gateway Reimagined

The Station and Hat District is Luton's historic heart, with a future full of creative energy and opportunity. Here, beautifully aged streets and architectural gems from the town's industrial heyday are meeting a new wave of cultural expression and enterprise. Once the epicentre of Luton's iconic hat industry, the area is being transformed into a vibrant cultural quarter, where heritage meets innovation.

Anchored by the work of the Culture Trust, and infused with independent spirit, this district is fast becoming a magnet for artists, makers, and entrepreneurs.

Nature and history intertwine here with the River Lea, once hidden, now proudly resurfaced and flowing through the newly created Hat Gardens pocket park. The river is not just a feature —

it's a lifeline, helping to shape a green, walkable neighbourhood where people can pause, relax, and connect with nature in the heart of town.

The Stage development will bring even more to the transformation of this area. This regenerative project offers an exciting mix of homes and commercial space, including a performance venue, offices (including a new business HQ), dining spots and retail.

Strategically located beside the central train station, this district will soon be a dynamic hub, linking commuters, creatives, and communities via safe and attractive walking and cycling routes — between the transformed station, the town centre, and Power Court beyond.

ACTIONS

Station and Hat District



Action	Theme	Progress/Phase	Lead and Partners	When	Dependencies & Next Steps
1 Upgrade Luton train station with a new bridge and lifts to make access easier for everyone.		Scheduled for delivery	Network Rail	FY 25/26	
2 Improvements to the entrance to Luton Point from Bute Street.		Underway	Luton Point	FY 25/26	
3 Three areas of the River Lea to be deculverted: an extension to the opening in front of the Galaxy Centre, an opening by the Central Library (as covered in the actions for St. George's Square), and one on Silver Street.		Concept - Luton Council working on OBC	Luton Council, Environment Agency	1-5 years	Funding bid being submitted to the Environment Agency.
4 Hat District Plus - adaptive re-use of heritage buildings in the Hat District. Two parts to this: (a) feasibility studies about specific buildings (b) preparing funding bids to bring under-used buildings back into good use. Also within the Hat District, additional creative workspace will be provided to encourage more artistic endeavour.		(a) Scheduled for delivery (b) Concept phase, (being informed by feasibility studies)	Culture Trust	FY 25/26 (a) & 1-5 years (b)	This will require building availability and affordability. The first building feasibility study is already underway. Funding has been secured for this via the Architectural Heritage Fund.
5 Guildford Street improvements - a cross-partnership focussed effort on how to improve Guildford Street from a public realm, highways, signage, shopfront and building use perspective, recognising the street as a heritage asset and connection to Power Court.		Concept phase	Luton Council, Culture Trust, BID and University of Bedfordshire	FY 25 / 26 (partnership formation and quick wins) & 1-5 years (delivery)	A strong partnership and funding will be needed to work with landowners and landlords.
6 A complete station overhaul with a new station entrance and a new ticket office to the west.		Concept phase	Network Rail Luton Rising (contributing partner)	1-5 years	Network Rail funding is required for this. Luton Council has launched a public petition asking for a complete station redevelopment.
7 The Stage Development The Bute Street shopper's car park will be transformed into a landmark mixed-use development, including commercial and community uses at ground floor and high quality housing, with improved public realm. A new space will offer a new venue for performances. Station Gateway - open space at Bute Street and improvements to connect to Power Court ready for when the stadium opens.		Scheduled for delivery	Luton Council	1-5 years	Work needs to be done to prepare for an inward investment campaign to attract a HQ or government department to base here. Work will also be done to scope out the performance and food & beverage elements that could provide opportunities for investment.
8 More support in the Local Plan for the Plaiter's Lea Conservation Area, so investors in the Hat District are clear on what is needed from a heritage standpoint.		Concept phase	Luton Council	1-5 years	The Local Plan is currently being worked on, and will be available in 2028.
9 Pedestrianisation of Bute Street.		Concept phase	Luton Council	1-5 years	This will be subject to an OBC to draw down capital funding. Design work to commence later in 2025.
10 Two small developments (housing with retail) at Bute Street and Cheapside.		Designed	Foxhall Homes	1-5 years	Planning approval - awaiting decision.



St. Mary's Church

With major development work continuing around the church, plans are in place to protect and enhance this beautiful green space in Luton town centre

Church Street and East

Luton's Green Cultural Core

This is Luton's next frontier—where history, education, and urban renewal collide to shape a truly transformative part of town. This area is poised to undergo the most radical change in the town centre, creating a bold new chapter for Luton's identity.

Home to the University of Bedfordshire, the historic Grade I-listed St Mary's Church, and the emerging Power Court development, this area will be completely reintegrated with the town centre through innovative design and strategic investment. It will deliver a vibrant, mixed-use neighbourhood, centred around town centre living, leisure, and cultural experiences.

The River Lea threads through the area, bringing opportunities for linked green spaces, walkable landscapes, and beautiful, biodiverse public realms. This connection between nature and city life will make the area greener, calmer, and more desirable for residents, students, and visitors alike.

Amidst this transformation is the university, placing higher education at the centre of town life, and unlocking new potential for collaboration, innovation and urban vitality. Thoughtful development here will echo and complement the grandeur of St Mary's Church, blending the old and new in a seamless, human-scale environment.



Luton Town Centre Delivery Plan

ACTIONS

Church Street and East



Action	Theme	Progress/Phase	Lead and Partners	When	Dependencies & Next Steps
1 The church is developing plans so that the churchyard, a beautiful green space at the heart of the new development, will be safe when thousands are attending games at Power Court. It will remain a lovely space for locals to enjoy, and better serve the church.		Concept phase	St Mary's Church, Luton Council (responsible for maintaining the church grounds)	FY 25/26	Engagement with Historic England.
2 St Mary's Church has regular opening times so it becomes a visitor destination, with climbing the tower being a prestige tourist attraction for Luton.		Concept phase	St Mary's Church	FY 25/26	Traffic plans for match days to allow for wedding parties.
3 Explore the feasibility for creating start-up and scale-up supported space .		Concept phase	University of Bedfordshire and Luton Council	FY 25/26	Explore if there is demand and business case. e.g. helping graduates starting a business. Note Local Plan policy LLP3. Explore as part of Economic Growth Strategy.
4 Come together across the health ecosystem to wrap prevention services around potential diagnostic services being provided in the town centre (for both primary and secondary care).		Concept phase	Luton Council, L&D Hospital and NHS ICB	FY 25/26	Funding is being sought by the Luton & Dunstable Hospital for the diagnostic component. Work needs to be done to build the business case for doing this in advance of potential funding so we are prepared as an ecosystem. (Note Local Plan policies LLP3 and LLP11).
5 Explore the feasibility of bringing a social sports offer to Luton town centre.		Concept phase	Town centre partners	FY 25/26	A site is needed, which could form part of the UoB masterplan or be a meanwhile space as part of a local development. This will require partner collaboration to fund it. Look at feasibility of sites and commercial model. (Need to consider Local Plan policy LLP3).
6 St. Mary's Road transformed to a pedestrian/cycle friendly street with generous green infrastructure along a green corridor into the town centre.		Concept phase	Luton Council	FY 25/26 or FY 26/27 (feasibility and design work) 1-5 years (highway works)	This will require transport modelling to be carried out to understand impacts on the road network. This is expected to be funded partly through developer contributions. The scheme will need to be designed in conjunction with key stakeholders.
7 Redevelopment of the Church Hall, in line with the changing context of the area around the Church. Work inside the 900 year old church will better equip it both for church use and for local people.		Concept phase	St Mary's Church	1-5 years	St Mary's Church will consider this work as development of the area progresses. (Need to consider LLP3 and LLP30 policies relating to heritage and St Mary's Church).
8 Consider how to provide more co-located health and care services in the town centre to cater for new town centre residents and local visitors.		Concept phase	NHS ICB	1-5 years	Consider potential forms of funding for this and/or planning rules about uses in new developments. (Need to take into account LLP3 and LLP11 local policies about uses in different areas of the town centre).

Luton Town Centre Delivery Plan

Power Court

Luton's Game-Changer

Power Court is the pulse of Luton's future—a transformational development set to redefine the town centre and unlock new potential for growth, culture, and community. With the new Luton Town Football Club stadium at its core, Power Court is much more than a regeneration project—it's a statement of ambition.

This once-hidden part of the town will become a bold new district, animated by riverside living, hospitality, entertainment, and green infrastructure. Anchored by the iconic new stadium, this area will buzz with life and activity, becoming a destination in its own right. Around the stadium, striking riverside living and leisure opportunities will emerge as the River Lea is dramatically reimaged, with beautiful new sections deculverted to create green, accessible waterside spaces.

This is more than just regeneration; it's transformation on a town-wide scale. Power Court will deliver new homes, a hotel, vibrant restaurants, and public spaces that rival the best in the region. The construction and wider regeneration project will create new employment and stimulate economic growth, with 1,000 direct jobs to be created during the course of the build; and once the whole site is built out, an increase of more than 1,000 permanent jobs.

The scheme will redefine Luton's identity and act as a magnet for further private investment and expand the town centre's reach, energising both the eastern and northern areas, while radiating benefits throughout the entire borough. It will become a symbol of ambition, pride, and potential for the people of Luton.



ACTIONS

Power Court

Action	Theme	Progress/Phase	Lead and Partners	When	Dependencies & Next Steps
1 Power Court stadium to be constructed - establishing a new destination in this part of the town centre. The new home for Luton Town Football Club will be complete and host its first matches, with matchday and other visitors being drawn into the town centre.	 	Planning has been agreed subject to the completion of a section 106 agreement. Work is progressing on this. An objection from the Local Lead Flood Authority on the matter of surface water drainage has been removed (subject to conditions).	Luton 2020	2028	Fulfilling requirements before planning permission is granted and development can commence. Work to be done with Luton Council on the elements associated with securing Planning.
2 Western end of Power Court site developed with mixed use development around new waterside square.		Outline Planning secured	Luton 2020	1-5 years & 5+ years	Relies on securing development funding for residential, hotel, restaurant and music venue.
3 Final piece of Power Court site delivered at eastern end.		Outline Planning secured	Luton 2020	1-5 years & 5+ years	Relies on securing funding for residential development.



Performance space for up to 600 people

A better connected town centre

Opening up of the River Lea

Stunning design

Game-Changer for Luton

25,000 seat stadium

£1.7 billion investment

LUTON 2040

New green spaces

1000 permanent jobs

Power Court

Waterside spaces

1000 construction jobs

A safer town centre

Town-centre wide regeneration

A more accessible train station

Public square

292 new homes

New offices

Investment opportunities

The Stage

A Timeline of Developments...

2026

- **George Street, Chapel Street & Market Hill Transformation underway**
A fresh new look with upgraded seating, elegant paving, and lush planting — transforming these key town centre streets into vibrant, welcoming spaces for everyone to enjoy.
- **New Life at Bute Street**
A smart new development underway, blending modern homes with convenient retail spaces to energise the area.
- **Alfresco Vibes in St. George's Square**
Café tables in St. George's square — bringing a lively, continental feel to the heart of Luton.

2027

- **Fresh Energy at Cheapside**
A new mixed-use development underway — combining modern homes with vibrant retail spaces to breathe new life into the town centre.
- **Luton Station: Now More Accessible Than Ever**
Network Rail will have completed major accessibility upgrades, making travel smoother, safer, and more inclusive for everyone.
- **A pleasant stroll in the Hat District**
A new pedestrianised area in Bute Street means shoppers and visitors can enjoy this space at a relaxed pace.

2028

- **£136m Stage Development Now Open**
A major milestone for the town — featuring 292 modern homes, a vibrant new public square and The Stage, Luton's newest 600-capacity venue, hosting performances.
- **Multi-Million pound Power Court construction completed**
Luton's iconic new stadium — a game-changing development for sport, community and pride is completed.
- **St. Mary's Road Gets a Green Makeover**
A full transformation turning this key route into a greener, more welcoming space with enhanced landscaping and pedestrian-friendly features.

2029

- **£25 million Library Road Multi-Modal Hub Now Open!**
A new gateway for seamless travel — connecting cars, e-bikes, and pedestrians in one smart, accessible location.
- **St. George's Square: Reimagined**
A bold redesign breathing new life into the square — creating a vibrant, modern space for gatherings, events, and everyday enjoyment.

2030

- **£15m Open Lea Phase Two Complete and Thriving**
These revitalised green spaces are now open to the public — offering fresh air, nature, and new opportunities for community enjoyment.

The Future

- Universal Studios
- London Luton Airport expansion

George Street

The historic heart of Luton town centre needs to evolve to meet the demands of modern life



George Street and South

Celebrating the Past, Embracing the Future

George Street is Luton's traditional centre — once at the heart of the town's world-famous hat industry and now a bustling high street ready for its next chapter. This area will be reimagined to breathe new life into its streets, shops and public spaces, creating a vibrant, inclusive town centre that celebrates its past while embracing its future.

The aim is clear: to make George Street and its surrounding areas a dynamic destination where culture, commerce, and community meet. Enhanced public realm, guided by a bold new design vision and enriched by public art, will transform the street into an attractive, welcoming route through the town. Historic buildings will be restored and repurposed, celebrating their character while supporting modern uses like independent shops, co-working spaces, creative hubs and new homes.

To the south, the vision continues — creating safer, greener, and more accessible walking and cycling connections from surrounding neighbourhoods into the heart of the town. Improving key junctions and reducing the barrier of the ring road will help stitch the town together. Streets like Wellington Street and Chapel Street will evolve into thriving zones for dining, nightlife and socialising, helping to attract people day and night and adding depth to the town's offer. This is regeneration rooted in local identity, driven by community benefit, and designed for lasting impact.

ACTIONS

George Street and South



Action	Theme	Progress/Phase	Lead and Partners	When	Dependencies & Next Steps
1 Marketing of Wellington Street as a restaurant destination.		Concept phase	Luton Council, BID	FY 25/26	Part of presenting the overall destination offer.
2 Works to George Street, including seating, paving and planting. This will bring improvements to vehicle, cycle and pedestrian separation.		Funded	Luton Council	FY 25/26: Design work on George Street public realm 1-5 years: George Street public realm works completed	
3 Refurbishment of underused or vacant buildings for entrepreneurial space, community use or (at upper levels) for residential use. Repurposing retail units to provide new space for leisure, community and independent retail.	 	Concept phase	Luton Council, BID, town centre partners	FY 25/26 (feasibility) & 1-5 years (lease and building activation)	Funding needs to be secured.
4 Enhanced entrance to the central core shopping centre from George Street.	 	Concept phase	Luton Point	FY 25/26 & 1-5 years	This is being scoped as part of the George Street Public Realm project.
5 The pedestrianisation of Chapel Street.		Concept phase	Luton Council	1-5 years	Funding to be confirmed via a capital bid in the next bidding window. A recent concept design is undergoing an internal review.
6 Potential further work to support shifting land uses - e.g. supporting shop front improvements, and bringing in new uses.		Concept phase	Luton Council, BID	1-5 years	Funding will be needed.





St. George's Square

ACTIONS

St. George's Square



Action	Theme	Progress/Phase	Lead and Partners	When	Dependencies & Next Steps
1		Design work underway	Luton Council	Design work will be completed in FY 25/26	Capital bid will need to be submitted.
2		Outline design and costing work underway	Luton Council	Design work and outline costings will be completed in FY 25/26	Luton Council capital programme funding via a business case. Commercial case to be made for the hub ahead of business case.
3		Concept phase - Luton Council working on OBC	Luton Council, Environment Agency	1-5 years	Funding bid being submitted to the Environment Agency. There is also a dependency on the Library Road car park going ahead - parking may need to be relocated.
4		Concept phase (design work)	Luton Council	1-5 years	Luton Council capital programme funding via a business case.

St. George's Square

Luton's Landmark Gathering Place

St. George's Square is Luton's civic heart — and its reinvention will make it the cultural and social hub the town deserves. This central public location, long underused and disconnected, will be revived as a vibrant, welcoming square for all — a space for everyday life and extraordinary events alike.

New connections will open up seamless, intuitive routes from George Street to Guildford Street and the train station, stitching the square into the wider town centre and making it a natural gathering place once again. Active frontages and improved landscaping will breathe life into the edges of the square, with cafes, independent businesses and cultural spaces spilling out into the open.

Family-friendly design, flexible event space, and inviting seating areas will ensure St. George's Square becomes the go-to place for meeting, relaxing, and celebrating. It will no longer be a space people pass through, but one they choose to spend time in — a landmark square that represents a confident, connected Luton.





PHOTO: ADITY SHAH

Our Town Centre Vision

Luton's town centre is evolving — and the Delivery Plan sets out a bold, practical vision to ensure that every part of it thrives. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, the town, like many others, has faced big challenges. But through creativity, collaboration and community spirit, Luton is rising to meet them — and this plan is proof of that ambition.

Across the town centre, change is already happening. Visitors can experience a vibrant night out, a growing food and drink scene, and a mix of shopping, events and cultural experiences — all underpinned by safety and inclusivity. Luton is proudly a Purple Flag-accredited destination, meaning it meets international standards for a well-managed, diverse, and safe nighttime economy. The town's Business Improvement District and Luton Council work hand-in-hand to keep raising the bar.

Behind the scenes, the Town Centre Taskforce brings together all the key partners — from the police and public services to local businesses and community organisations — to tackle complex issues, support positive change, and ensure the town centre works for everyone.

Building on this foundation, Luton Council is developing a new Visitor Economy Plan, due to launch in 2026. This forward-looking strategy will set out how Luton can grow its visitor economy in tandem with regional opportunities — positioning

the town as a destination of choice for both residents and visitors. A key strand of this work focuses on strengthening the night-time economy as part of Luton's core offer. In support of this, a cross-party Task and Finish Group was established in December 2024 to undertake a detailed review of Luton's night-time economy — with representation from the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, local businesses, the University of Bedfordshire, and national experts.

The group is examining several core themes — including entertainment, live music, food options, community events, safety, and transport — and is currently gathering evidence through data analysis, stakeholder engagement, and wide consultation with residents and businesses. Their final report, due in November 2025, will inform key actions within the Visitor Economy Plan, helping shape a stronger, safer, and more inclusive night-time offer for the town.

There's also a renewed focus on storytelling and celebration — through events, campaigns, art installations and a constant drumbeat of communication to make sure the people of Luton know exactly what's happening, and how they can be part of it. Whether you live, work, visit, or invest in Luton, this Delivery Plan shows that the town centre's best days are not just ahead — they're already underway.

ACTIONS

Across the Town Centre



Action	Theme	Progress/Phase	Lead and Partners	When	Dependencies & Next Steps	
1		A coordinated and planned events programme that enlivens spaces and diversifies the core town centre offer.	Delivered annually all year round	Luton Council, BID	Delivered and ongoing	Funding needs to be secured.
2		Public Health 5 Change Ideas – A number of initiatives designed to better support those engaged in street activities. These range from trauma informed training for frontline staff to embedding lived experience in support services. Also, practical help such as exploring employment and volunteering opportunities.	Various – depending on strand of work	Luton Council	Ongoing	Funding is needed.
3		Public Health are commissioning drugs and alcohol outreach patrols to deliver brief interventions and harm reduction advice to (potential) service users.	Project initiation- pilot	Luton Council	FY 25 / 26	Outreach dates will be coordinated with the police.
4		Begging communication campaign: The Luton Communication team is leading on a begging multi agency informed communication campaign to educate and discourage direct giving to individuals who are begging and instead encouraging donations through charitable channels.	Project initiation- pilot	Luton Council	FY 25 / 26	This will link with police/ ASC comms as appropriate.
5		Special Town Centre "Meet The Buyer" events will be held for local businesses to engage with developers working in the town.	Concept phase	Luton Council, Luton 2020	FY 25 / 26	This can happen once tier one contractors are in place on both major town centre schemes (Power Court and The Stage).
6		Introduce new and revolving public art across the town centre, engaging with students, local artists and community groups.	Scheduled for delivery	Luton Council and cultural partners	FY 25/26 and FY 26/27	This will be part of the town-wide Luton Arts programme.
7		A more proactive enforcement regime when premises are contravening conservation area rules.	Concept phase	Luton Council	FY 25 / 26 & 1-5 years	This will require extra resource in Luton Council's Planning and Legal teams.
8		The creation of a circular safe, green, well-lit route around Luton town centre, working title: "orange brick road", to promoting walking and break down barriers between areas.	Concept phase. In practical terms, this would consist of joining up multiple routes - some that already exist and some that are being created	Luton Council, TC partners	1-5 years & 5+ years	Funding for each element of the circular route would have to be secured.
9		A clear specific waste strategy for the town centre, based around ways to design out the issues around bins and the presence of waste on the street (including trade waste), and the increase in residential waste.	Scheduled	Luton Council	1-5 years & 5+ years	
10		Managing (via licensing policies and enforcement) and balancing the town centre so that the established and invigorated hospitality sector doesn't come into conflict with new residential areas.	Scheduled	Luton Council	1-5 years & 5+ years	

Luton Town Centre

POINTS OF INTEREST



- 1 ABC Cinema
- 2 Bus Interchange
- 3 George Street
- 4 Guildford Street artwork
- 5 Hat District
- 6 Hat Gardens
- 7 Library Road Car Park
- 8 Luton Point
- 9 Luton Train Station
- 10 Market Hill
- 11 Open Lea sites
- 12 Power Court
- 13 St. George's Square
- 14 St. Mary's Church
- 15 The Galaxy Centre
- 16 The Hat Factory
- 17 The Stage
- 18 Luton Town Hall
- 19 UK Centre for Carnival Arts
- 20 University of Bedfordshire



LUTON 2040



PHOTO: ALAN SHAW

ACTIONS

The Next 12 Months...



In the short term, Lutonians and visitors to Luton will start to see improvements all over the town centre. As works become more visible on the beacon sites at The Stage and Power Court, excitement will build as our new landscape takes shape.

Seasonal events will enhance our public spaces, with the council and partners working to bring fun and enjoyment for everyone. Public realm works will get going, bringing improvements to George Street and elsewhere.

The actions in the delivery plan will be measured and monitored quarterly by the Town Centre Strategic Board. Each of the actions will be tracked by these elements:

- **Action** – what will happen?
- **Theme** - what themes(s) does the action support?
- **Progress/phase** – whether the action is a Concept, or Designed, Funded, or Scheduled for Delivery
- **Lead and Partners** – who does the action belong to?
- **When** – whether it is scheduled to be delivered in FY 25/26, in 1-5 years or 5+ years
- **Dependencies and Next Steps**

In broader terms, progress against the plan will also be measured using the following KPIs:

KPI	Background	Theme	How is this measured?	Baseline 2025	Target 2030
1	New developments in the town centre.	The size of new landmark developments as well as smaller sites is measured.	Sqm of new developments in the town centre.	N/A	59,660
2	Engagement with culture and heritage.	Luton's diverse culture and heritage is celebrated.	Survey - number of people reporting at least 3 types of arts and culture involvement in the last 12 months (Residents Perception Survey Q.18).	Latest fig (2023): 28%	38%
3	Street cleansing in the town centre.	The town centre feels more pleasant as improvements are made to the street cleansing schedule.	% of streets to be found at Grade A or Grade B as identified by the NI195 grading system.	N/A	87.5%
4	Perception of the town centre via the annual survey.	Lutonians and visitors share their opinions of the town centre in terms of safety and variety of offer.	Survey - annual survey and perception surveys.	Latest fig (2023): 35%	47%
5	Footfall in the town centre.	The accessibility and popularity of the town centre is measured via footfall and opportunity to increase and improve this is created via improvements at Luton Station.	Footfall data from BID. Luton station upgrade progress.	Latest fig (2024): 920,572 ave monthly footfall	Footfall increase of 5%. New bridge and lifts installed. Further station works underway.
6	The creation of town centre jobs.	The number of new jobs created by landmark and other developments in the town centre is tracked.	ONS data .	Latest fig (2023): 13,300	2,000 extra jobs.

The plan is that every year the Town Centre Delivery Plan will be refreshed ahead of the upcoming fiscal year to ensure momentum is maintained and specific issues and opportunities that arise are acted on.

Glossary

BID Business Improvement District

The BID works to deliver changes and improvements to Luton that have been identified as needed by town centre businesses

EGS Economic Growth Strategy

A pivotal document that sets out how we deliver long term, sustainable economic growth in Luton

Luton Local Plan

Every area in England has an adopted local plan. A Local Plan sets out local planning policies and identifies how land is used, determining what will be built where

LLP (no.)

These numbered policies relate to the Luton Local Plan. Each one is for a different area or theme, eg:

LLP30 - Historic Environment

LLP11 - Creative Quarter

Luton 2040

Luton Council's bold and ambitious vision - a healthy, fair and sustainable town, where everyone can thrive, and no one has to live in poverty

Masterplan

The framework for Luton town centre, produced in 2021

NPPF

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied

OBC Outline Business Case

An initial project proposal for a new piece of work, including scope and finance

LUTON 2040



LUTON 2040

A Place to Thrive

Luton