

# Milton Keynes

Application for City Status  
Platinum Jubilee  
Civic Honours Competition



# The New City of Milton Keynes

In 1967, when Government dedicated 34 square miles of land to what it intended would become the New City of Milton Keynes, around 40,000 people lived in its small towns and rural villages. Even though they shared a rich heritage dating from medieval times, these communities did not make up a city. Much work was needed to deliver the promise.

We have done this work. Our civic leaders, our businesses, our voluntary organisations and our citizens have collaborated to make Milton Keynes what it is today.

By any objective measure, Milton Keynes feels like a city. Our diverse population of nearly 300,000 people is noted for their willingness to serve and volunteer. We are a home of innovation, teaching the world's cities how to be sustainable. Our green space is unrivalled, a 'city in a forest' bringing joy and health. Where other cities build their cathedrals from stone, ours is grown from trees.

More than this, we are a mosaic of communities united by a love of where we live.

The award of city status would be a recognition of our commitment and an inspiration for further cooperation.

We humbly submit this application to Her Majesty The Queen in celebration of Her Platinum Jubilee and request that the honour of city status be granted to Milton Keynes.



# Why Milton Keynes deserves city status

## A planned city created to thrive during Her Majesty's reign

Always intended to be a city, Milton Keynes represents the pinnacle of the post-war planning movement rebuilding the nation and accommodating its growing population.

In 1967, an Act of Parliament fired the starting gun for Milton Keynes to become a New City for 250,000 people at the centre of the UK, a powerful 'counter-magnet' to London. Government had envisaged it would grow to become a city, and the statutory order designating some 22,000 acres - an area far larger than most other British cities - was its promise for this.

Milton Keynes is the culmination of national achievement, standing out as the pinnacle of the national post-war planning movement which sought to rebuild the country after World War II, accommodating a growing population against the background of bombed cities.

The Government had the foresight to cleverly weave together 34 square miles of historic towns, ancient villages, and hamlets with connected, green corridors. Chronological and thematic layers of history, archaeology, and culture helped to create interesting places for people to thrive.

From the start, it was and is a mosaic of communities, built by people for people. 'MK', as residents affectionately call it, has been a constant thread for much of the reign of Her Majesty, who with the Royal Family has supported its growth, people and communities over many decades and many visits.

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## Inspiring unity through diversity

Disproportionately influential for its size, Milton Keynes is home to great diversity, which in turn has created a strong and sustainable community.

Migration has always been writ large. Pioneering citizens built their communities from the ground up when moving to the New City in the 1970s; days when new households were gifted a tree by the Development Corporation.

Today, 140 languages are spoken in Milton Keynes' schools including those of every Commonwealth nation, and 30 religions are observed.

People of faith connect with each another, bridging religions. Temples, mosques, churches, and synagogues rejoice in a variety of expressions of faith. There are more than 90 designated places of worship, some of which date back to Domesday. The first Peace Pagoda in the Western Hemisphere was opened in 1980. Christ the Cornerstone Church (dedicated by Her Majesty) was the first purpose-built ecumenical church in the UK and provides a space in which five Christian denominations work together and worship, sharing a commitment to serve citizens.

A welcome is extended to an ever-increasing number of people of different faiths and places from across the Commonwealth and globe, enriching the spiritual and cultural life of the area immeasurably, with successive groups quickly able to offer their own distinctive contributions.

Annual Interfaith Week events organised by the Milton Keynes Islamic Arts and Culture (MKIAC) group have been recognised with a Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. Projects and events are also organised through the local Council of Faiths, encouraging groups to work alongside one another in solidarity - evidenced in the high level of support for the initiatives such as foodbanks and the support offered to Afghan and other refugees.

The award of city status would be a recognition of the commitment behind this unity and would undoubtedly inspire further dedication and engagement.

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## **A warm heart for inclusivity and volunteering**

The citizens of Milton Keynes have a notable reputation for their willingness to volunteer, their charitable giving, and their care for others. Awardees of the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service and the British Empire Medal set a precedent among generous communities.

An estimated 84,500 citizens are volunteers, higher per head than in any UK city.

The Community Foundation, CommunityAction:MK and Young Minds help lead the way in the third sector, and national charities include the Spinal Injury Association (patron HRH The Princess Royal), World Vision UK, Headway, and the world's first interactive education village, Hazard Alley. Many charities are long established, for instance MK Act has been protecting people from fear and abuse for more than 45 years.

Since 2013, Milton Keynes has celebrated 'ability' rather than 'disability' with a dedicated awareness day to showcase the unique talents and achievements of local people living with disability and the charities that support them. Charities including MK SNAP (Milton Keynes Special Needs Advancement Project) and the MK CIL (Milton Keynes Centre for Integrated Living) provide opportunities and support to people with disabilities, complex needs and neurodiversity. MacIntyre, the national charity empowering people with learning disabilities is based in MK.

Organisations listen to the lived experiences of people with learning disabilities, championing and promoting their views to shape services. Institutions provide inspiring cultural experiences for visitors with specific needs and aspirations. For instance, StadiumMK was one of the first stadiums in the UK to be fully wheelchair accessible and has a 360° concourse and unusually, Milton Keynes Gallery has innovations including a double sized lift for two wheelchair users to ride side by side.

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## **Opportunities for the young to form new traditions**

Milton Keynes has a younger age profile than the UK average (27% of residents are 19 or under) and its young citizens have an important voice in shaping the future of their home.

Milton Keynes is the only fully-parished urban borough in England. Work between the local authority and the 48 independent parish and town councils is helping society move closer to where and how decisions are made.

It is at the forefront of devolution, actively passing down assets, service and power to communities. Hectare for hectare, more Neighbourhood Plans have been made by parishes in Milton Keynes than almost anywhere else in the nation.

Strong links with original citizens are also being forged with younger generations born here, which is reflected in a high level of public participation in democracy. The elected Youth Cabinet (YCAB) gives young people a powerful, democratic voice and engages 14,000 young people.

Many schools, including primary and special schools have vibrant youth councils.

Over a third of Milton Keynes Council councillors are aged 40 or under, reflecting the political engagement of the younger generation.

Interaction with communities is part of life for young people, inspired by a wealth of open spaces and leisure facilities, and a strong network of groups across army, sea and air cadet attachments, Scout and Girlguiding and beyond. The Council is providing its former registry offices to the South East's Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association to use as a Joint Cadet Centre. Schools and organisations including the Parks Trust run activities from tree planting to 'environmental heroes' sessions. Projects such as 'Crack It' connect children with communities to refresh public spaces. Fresh Youth MK offers mentoring and community engagement opportunities for BAME young people.

There are also many opportunities for young people to express and develop their skills in the arts and drama. For instance, since 1970, The Stables has provided affordable residential music experiences through its National Youth Music Camps which bring together young people from all walks of life, providing a formative part of their musical development. MOTUS Dance welcomes hundreds of young dancers through its Jump Start scheme.

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## The richness of its heritage

The significance of Milton Keynes' heritage with its frequent Royal connections, and the variety of its historic market towns and ancient villages provide its greatest surprise.

There are thousands of artefacts evidencing the ancient strategic location of Milton Keynes, from Neolithic sites to Bronze Age gold; the largest UK Iron Age Roundhouse at Blue Bridge to a rare 'La Tène' dagger votive offering in Newport Pagnell; a Roman Patera from Olney to the oldest UK gold coin c200BC at Fenny Stratford.

In 1066, when William I held both England and Milton Keynes Village, the historic towns and villages that remain a thriving part of modern Milton Keynes had already formed. These important communities each have their own distinct identity and contribution. In Milton Keynes you can find the world's first planned railway town – home of the Royal Train; coaching inns that inspired the phrase A Cock and Bull Story; the last parchment works in the country and still providing the vellum for Royal Declarations; the world's oldest Shrove Tuesday pancake race dating back to 1445, and many more gems.

Every market town, historic village and new grid square is also Milton Keynes, at the same time ancient and modern, urban, and rural, village and city.

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## Where green and blue spaces combine

A unique 'City in a Forest' with 40% green space and more biodiversity in the modern city than was found in the agricultural land it replaced.

Thanks to enlightened city planning from the outset, the environment is integrated into every part of life. It was the fundamental driver for why the urban area looks as it does today, since a goal for the new estates was that everyone would live within a short walk of a green space, park or play area.

The green network is essential for travelling by bike, on foot, or by scooter, and residents never need cross a grid road to walk across the urban area. The network is now being used extensively by our

much-loved fleet of Starship delivery robots, showing it is infinitely adaptable for future demands. Rural activities in the city centre include hay making and cattle and sheep grazing within linear parks, where cricket bat willows are harvested and replanted every year. Ancient woodlands and agricultural hedges run through the New City, and an army of volunteers are engaged in conservation tasks from habitat creation to biodiversity surveys. The Ride High charity transforms the lives of children by giving them the opportunity to ride and care for horses.

Part of the New City's unique character comes from the integration of green spaces with its blue counterpart of rivers, waterways, lakes, and canal. This green and blue network continues to contribute to the city's resilience, including how flood risks are managed. It increases biodiversity and benefits the mental and physical health and quality of life of its citizens, the importance of which cannot be overstated. The innovative Parks Trust model is fundamental in achieving this, with excellent stewardship, commitment to environmental education, and a self-funding mechanism that does not rely on public money.

Green spaces are regularly used for the unique festivals and events of MK's diverse communities, for example India Day, the African Diaspora Festival, Playday and MK Pride. The Tree Cathedral, one of only three in the UK, offers space for quiet contemplation, compared to the MK Bowl, a space for very noisy celebrations. Hundreds of additional trees will be planted in the coming year as part of The Queen's Green Canopy.

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## Teaching the world how to be a smart and sustainable city

Milton Keynes is a city of firsts and innovation, and a living laboratory for sustainable smart city projects, giving others a glimpse into the future.

Long before the modern creation of the New City, Milton Keynes has broken boundaries as a place of innovators and pioneers. Luxury vehicles were created at Salmons Coachworks, later Aston Martin, from 1830. Wolverton became the world's first planned railway town in 1837.

More recently, it has been a trailblazer in sustainable housing design with renowned exhibitions including Homeworld and Energy World. Milton Keynes was the first place to introduce kerbside recycling, and the UK's first advanced waste treatment facility, now producing renewable energy for thousands of homes and businesses. It has hosted trials of autonomous vehicles that could change the way we travel in years to come. Robot delivery vehicles are a common sight, as is the nation's largest network of electric vehicle charge points.

While climate change wasn't a concern in 1967 when the New City was designated, the sustainability goal enshrined in the original Plan for Milton Keynes to use resources efficiently and imaginatively has set it in good stead for today and the future.

Local ambitions are to be carbon neutral and carbon negative by 2030 and 2050 respectively by decarbonising transport, producing more energy from renewable sources and waste, and pushing the boundaries on sustainable construction.

## Planned for opportunity

Admired on the international stage, a steady stream of people visit every year to learn lessons from a planned New City, which would become Buckinghamshire's first city.

Emerge from the central railway station which HRH Prince Charles opened in 1982 and you could not be anywhere else in the UK. Show someone an aerial view and they will only have one answer to 'which place is this?'

Six goals have been guiding principles for Milton Keynes' development: opportunity and freedom of choice; easy movement and access; balance and variety, the creation of an attractive city; public awareness and participation; and efficient and imaginative use of resources.

The huge urban expansion was held together by an unrivalled green framework. Neighbourhood housing is based around schools and local centres. Characteristic grid roads run between urban districts, with a revolutionary 200 mile-long system of independent and safe cycle and pedestrian paths, alongside intensive tree planting, lakes and parkland.

Milton Keynes would become Buckinghamshire's first city. The award would be a recognition of the huge project of New Towns in which two million people live across the UK.

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## Designed for business growth

One of the nation's most productive places and home to more than 14,000 businesses including 700 internationally owned, with exceptional growth potential within the Oxford-MK-Cambridge Arc.

Milton Keynes generated £15.7 billion GDP in 2018, which makes it one of the UK's most productive and largest economies. A thriving and expansive business community covers digital technology, high performance engineering, financial, legal services, retail, logistics and hospitality, and delivers productivity that's 27% above national levels.

Frequently named one of the most entrepreneurial locations in the UK with a high start-up rate and strong year on year economic (2.1%) and jobs growth (1.3%).

Businesses based in Milton Keynes include Red Bull Racing, Mercedes-Benz, John Lewis (national distribution centre), four-time Queen's Awards for Enterprise winner Niftylift, and Santander, currently investing £150m into a state-of-the-art flagship technology hub.

Her Majesty's Government Communications Centre is based at Hanslope Park, the base for hundreds of talented civil servants who are also residents of Milton Keynes.

The innovative Milton Keynes Family Drug and Alcohol Court was the first of its kind outside London. Milton Keynes Council is working with partners to establish a new MK Justice Centre that can house a Crown Court.

## Innovation through education

Institutions are strategically aligned to deliver business-relevant learning, focusing on innovation and digital skills.

With a growing reputation for working with business and an emphasis on non-traditional methods, there is a unique educational ecosystem evolving in Milton Keynes that is fair, inclusive, and collaborative - a model for the UK.

The internationally renowned Open University (OU) is the world's first degree-awarding distance learning institution, established in MK by Royal Charter in 1969. It pioneered innovative, low-energy housing developments in the 1970s, which led to higher building standards and improvement in calculating energy demand across the UK. More recent work includes the development of low-carbon systems for domestic and transport use building on the work of MK:Smart, a project with local public and private sector partners to develop a model 'smart city'.

Conceived and supported by business with a curriculum focused on digital technology, data science, cyber security and management skills, MK:U is a new model university for the 21st century being developed by Cranfield University and Milton Keynes Council.

Milton Keynes College leads on the South-Central Institute of Technology, which has secured funding to deliver a state-of-the-art, artificial intelligence skills centre, serving as a hub for companies and educators to use digital skills and artificial intelligence concepts.

The Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust has established the nation's first independent medical school, helping it attract, train, and retain the best clinical talent. Its state-of-the-art facility opened in 2017 and is fast-growing, with a new Cancer Centre recently added.

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## A regional destination for culture and leisure

Proudly hosting major sporting and cultural events, award-winning venues, and a myriad of opportunities for citizens to participate and engage.

A regional destination for the 18 million people who live within 60 minutes' travel, with an award-winning gallery, theatre, numerous live music venues including The Stables (one of the most popular venues in the country, founded by Sir John Dankworth and Dame Cleo Laine) a resident orchestra, 270 pieces of public art, and a diverse selection of museums and heritage attractions, most famously Bletchley Park which celebrates the incredible achievements of Britain's World War II codebreakers.

Milton Keynes is the home of Badminton England, and the National Badminton Centre provides world-class courts and gym facilities used by Olympic athletes. StadiumMK and the adjacent Marshall Arena host national and international sporting events as well as concerts.

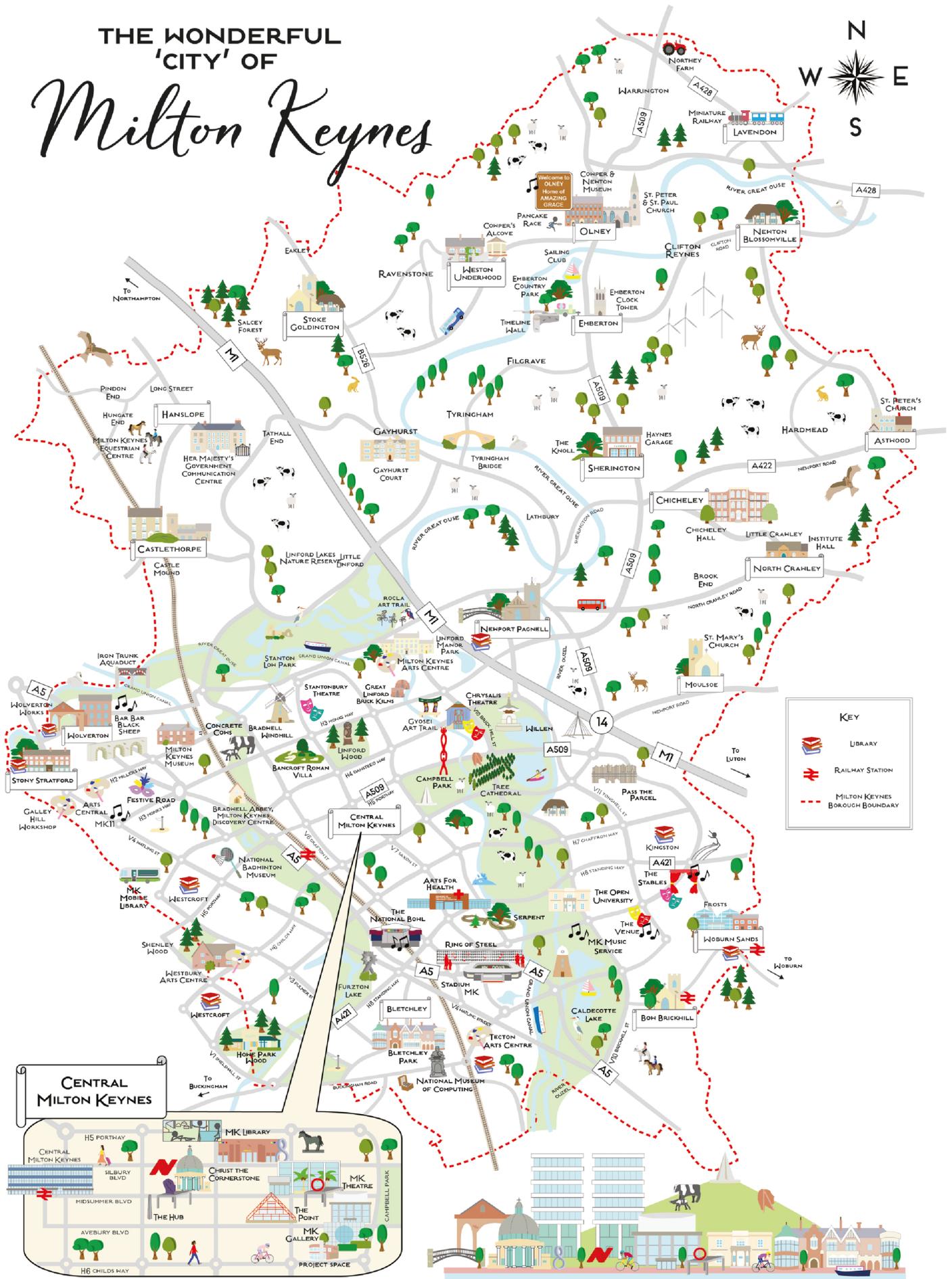
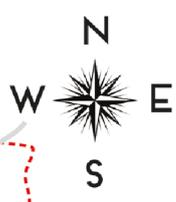
There are plentiful opportunities for citizens to contribute through groups, arts workshops, and festivals such as those organised by the by Milton Keynes Islamic Arts and Culture (MKIAC) group, the Filipino Society of Milton Keynes, IF - the biennial International Festival organised by The Stables, PRIDE, Art in the Park and MK Innovate.

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# Profile: Milton Keynes at a glance

<p><b>Area</b></p>	<p>89 km2 (34 sq. mi) including four market towns and 14 historic villages, all with distinct identities</p>	
<p><b>Population</b></p>	<p>269,457 (2019 ONS Estimate).</p> <p>Milton Keynes is a positive success story for building new communities and celebrating multiple cultures. Its ethnic demography was 26% in 2011 and is now estimated to be closer to 35% (by comparison: 20% in England as a whole). There are residents from more than 55 countries in all corners of the Commonwealth and beyond.</p> <p>The population is younger than the national average, 27% of residents are aged 19 or under.</p>	
<p><b>Governance</b></p>	<p>Two parliamentary constituencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Milton Keynes North (19th largest constituency by electorate)</li> <li>▪ Milton Keynes South (4th largest constituency by electorate)</li> </ul> <p>Unitary authority: Milton Keynes Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The only fully-parished urban area in England (48 parishes)</li> <li>▪ 21 Neighbourhood Plans have been developed by parishes</li> <li>▪ Youth Cabinet with 36 members voted for by 14,000 local young people</li> </ul> <p>Lieutenancy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Countess Howe, Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire</li> </ul> <p>Since 1283, 90 out of 777 High Sheriffs have come from the Milton Keynes area</p>	

# THE WONDERFUL 'CITY' OF Milton Keynes



KEY	
	LIBRARY
	RAILWAY STATION
	MILTON KEYNES BOROUGH BOUNDARY



## Main bus routes servicing leisure spaces

Bus number	Route	Frequency from
1	Whitehouse - CMK - Newport Pagnell	30 mins
2/2A	Grange Farm - CMK - Newport Pagnell	30 mins
3/3A	Snelshall West - Westcroft - CMK - Kingston- Magna Park	20 mins
4	Bletchley - CMK - Wolverton	15 mins
5/6	Lakes Est - Bletchley - CMK - Stony Stratford (6) - Wolverton	10 mins
7	Wolverton - Stantonbury - CMK	15 mins
8	Oxley Park - Westcroft - CMK - Kingston - Walnut Tree	20 mins
11	CMK - Open University - Caldecotte	30 mins
21	CMK - Newport Pagnell - Olney	60 mins
33/33A	CMK - Wolverton - Hanslope - Northampton	90 mins
34	Amphill - Magna Park	60 mins
41	Northampton - Olney - Bedford	60 mins
99	Luton Airport - Luton - CMK	60 mins
100	Aylesbury - Wing - CMK	60 mins
150	Aylesbury - Leighton Buzzard - CMK	60 mins
C1/C10/C11/CX	CMK - Cranfield - Bedford	30 mins
F70/F77	Luton - Leighton Buzzard - Bletchley - CMK	30 mins
X5	Oxford - Buckingham - CMK - Bedford	30 mins
X6	Northampton - Roade - CMK	60 mins
X60	Aylesbury - Buckingham - CMK	60 mins



# Profile: Timeline of Milton Keynes

## Ancient Milton Keynes

150M BC	An Ichthyosaur swims in Milton Keynes (discovered 1982 at Caldecotte Lake).
c43 AD	Magiovinium, a Roman camp, is established to build Watling Street from London.
100-400 AD	Roman villas are established on eight large estates around Milton Keynes.
1086	The ownership of Milton Keynes Village comes under William I (the Conqueror).
1194	Stony Stratford is given its Market Charter, one of the first in the UK.
c1250	Two of the earliest windmills in Britain are recorded at Gt Linford and Tattenhoe.
1290	Queen Eleanor's body rests at Stony Stratford.
1445	The Olney Pancake Race begins - and still takes place today.
1483	Edward V is captured at Stony Stratford, one of the 'Princes in the Tower'
1605	Gunpowder Plot conspirators meet at Sir Everard Digby's Manor House in Gayhurst.
1643	Parliamentary Army captures Newport Pagnell from the Crown in English Civil War.
1658	The first London-Chester stagecoach stops at Fenny and Stony Stratford.
1772	William Cowper and John Newton write the Olney Hymns including 'Amazing Grace'.
1792	The plan for the new Grand Junction Canal is discussed at Stony Stratford.
1810	Tickford Iron Bridge opens - now the oldest used iron road bridge in the country.
1833	Work begins on the London-Birmingham Railway with Wolverton as halfway point.
1838	The Railway Works is established at Wolverton; a new planned town emerges.
1843	The Royal Train is made at Wolverton and serviced there for the next 141 years.
1855	William Smith's pioneering Steam Plough is patented at Little Woolstone.
1887	The world's largest steam tram operates between Wolverton and Stony Stratford.
1890	Bletchley's Herbert Ackroyd Stuart patents the oil engine before Rudolph Diesel.
1915	368 carriages are converted at the Works to become Ambulance Trains for WW1.
1939	Government Code and Cypher School Codebreakers start work at Bletchley Park.
1940	The first German Enigma-enciphered messages are broken at Bletchley Park.
1944	Colossus, the world's first large scale electronic computer installed at Bletchley Park.
1959	M1 Motorway opened. Newport Pagnell has the UK's first motorway Service Station.

# Profile: Timeline of Milton Keynes

## The coming of a new town

1967	Milton Keynes Development Corporation is created for the designated new city.
1969	The world's first Open University opens in Walton and teaching starts worldwide; over two million have studied there since.
1972	UK's first solar-heated house is built at Bradville.
1979	The National Bowl opens, Elfield Park; Shopping Building opens, now Grade II Listed.
1980	The West's first (Buddhist) Peace Pagoda opens at Willen Lake.
1981	The UK's first Housing Innovation Expo opens at Homeworld, Bradwell Common.
1984	Lord Campbell (Chairman MKDC) opens the UK's first urban park in 50 years.
1985	The UK's first 'multiplex' 10-screen cinema, The Point, opens in Central Milton Keynes.
1986	'Energy World' at Knowlhill inspires the creation of the National Efficiency Index.
1991	The Grand Union Canal Aqueduct across Grafton Street is Britain's first for 50 years.
1992	Christ the Cornerstone - first UK ecumenical church - is dedicated by Her Majesty.
1995	The 50,000th new house for MK since 1970 is built.
1997	MK Council becomes a Unitary Authority for 150,000 people in the new Borough.
1999	MK Theatre and Gallery open; The National Badminton Centre opens.
2000	Xscape opens, the first indoor snowdome in the UK.
2007	Her Majesty opens Stadium: MK and The Hub in MK's 40th year.
2010	The first Milton Keynes International Festival biennial is held.
2015	Central Library in MK becomes one of the few in the nation to be Grade II Listed.
2017	HRH Duke of Cambridge unveils the Pioneers Pillar at Milton Keynes Rose as part of MK's 50th birthday celebrations. The UK's first Electric Vehicle Multi-Brand Showroom opens.
2018	Starship Robots arrive making MK the first place in world with a robot delivery service.
2020	Designated as European City of Sport.
2021	MK's population has grown seven-fold since 1967. Its Strategy for 2050 is adopted.

# Profile: A tour of Milton Keynes

Stony Stratford on Watling Street was a market town as early as 1194. It hosted Queen Eleanor of Castile's funeral cortege in 1290, saw the capture of Edward V (one of the 'Princes in the Tower') in 1483, and the phrase A Cock and Bull Story originated from rival coaching inns The Cock and The Bull.

Nearby Wolverton was chosen in 1837 as the world's first planned railway town as the midpoint for the London to Birmingham Railway. Wolverton Works has housed and maintained the Royal Train for 141 years. McCorquodale's Printers were set up to ensure employment for women; and the Radcliffe Trust ensured social and cultural activities for workers and their families. Today, Wolverton is a vibrant community with solid brick-built railway houses still standing. Here we have multi-cultural traditions, venues, shops and events with Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Indian families - some of the earliest new town pioneers - and popular community projects such as the Community Orchard and Secret Garden.

Great Linford is a remarkable historic village with manor house, ancient church and formal parkland recently restored by the Parks Trust, supported by the Heritage Fund. The manor's Grade II Listed outbuildings is home to the MK Arts Centre.

Newport Pagnell, famously home to Aston Martin with a proposed new international Aston Martin Museum planned for 2022. Its transport history dates back 200 years, celebrated by regular events over the 1810 Tickford Iron Bridge, second oldest in the world. Fiercely Royalist in the Civil War until captured in 1643, musket shots can still be found on walls.

Newport Pagnell also houses the last parchment works in the country, WG Cowley, who still provide the vellum for Royal Declarations and the official Parliamentary Archives.

The Georgian town of Olney has fine buildings, the Cowper & Newton Museum and a Market Place from where Shrove Tuesday Pancake Races start. The race dates to 1445 and visitors come from around the world to see the event and attend the Shrivings Service held at St Peter & St Paul Church. This is where the Amazing Grace sermon was preached by John Newton in 1773. It is just one well-known hymn from the Olney Hymns, 'Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken', 'How sweet the name of Jesus sounds' and 'God Moves in a Mysterious Way' being others, written with his friend, renowned poet, William Cowper. 'Amazing Grace' is globally famous and held with particular affection amongst African and Caribbean communities. The Museum, Olney and Milton Keynes will celebrate this important international 250th anniversary in 2022/23.

Through Milton Keynes East Growth Area and south down the Ouzel Valley Linear Park lie more historic villages: Willen with its 1680 church designed by Robert Hooke who aided Christopher Wren rebuilding London; Milton Keynes Village which proudly gave its name to the New Town; and Walton, home since 1969 to the Open University, the largest distance-learning university in the world. Continuing south lie Woburn Sands and Wavendon where The Stables, set up by Dame Cleo Laine and the late Sir John Dankworth welcomes people to a world-class learning and entertainment music venue.

To Bletchley and Fenny Stratford where Watling Street, Grand Union Canal and Railway meet. Bletchley is now most famous as the once secret location of Bletchley Park, 'Home of the Codebreakers'. This site of huge international significance is now a renowned museum and is playing an important part in the Bletchley Town Deal which will support local regeneration and growth. Bletchley is also home to Marshall Amplification whose amplifiers continue to revolutionise live music globally, and to Stadium MK our top-UEFA-rated stadium and home of MK Dons professional football team, to MK College and to MK Islamic Arts Heritage and Culture bringing creative activities based on Islamic culture to Milton Keynes.

Finally, Central Milton Keynes, at the forefront of new technology and development, is recognised by Historic England as having nationally important modernist heritage. Its buildings, tree-lined boulevards, parks and public realm were overlaid on the area's highest point for its green views.

Campbell Park is the nation's largest park outside London. Designed as a sculpture park with 46 hectares of public artwork, parkland, streams, pools and grazing sheep, it is also a place of commemoration with the Milton Keynes Rose from renowned artist Gordon Young featuring granite pillars etched with local and nationally important dates. HRH William, Duke of Cambridge unveiled the 'Pioneers' pillar dedicated to all those who had built Milton Keynes in its 50th year.

A Grade II Listed shopping building on Midsummer Boulevard with its Queen's Court named in honour of Her Majesty is national draw for visitors and stretches for one mile as an indoor High Street with natural light, advanced disabled access, and a significant public art collection. Its modernist steel and glass design like many central buildings reflects the greenery and so blends into the landscape. This juxtaposition continues through the city centre and beyond into the surrounding housing grids.

Milton Keynes is unified through its sharing of cultural heritages and identities.

This composite identity is the 'real' Milton Keynes, loved by its residents who are fiercely proud of it.

**"Milton Keynes is a welcome home to a wide range of nationalities, religion and communities, all of whom contribute to the uniqueness of this new city. By having city status, it will cement Milton Keynes' place on the world map, as a place people can come to live, work and play, continuing to help Milton Keynes be a successful place here in the United Kingdom."**

**Iain Stewart MP**

**"During Her Majesty The Queen's 70 year reign Milton Keynes was born from historic and important market towns and villages and has flourished into the thriving place it is today. We have grown throughout The Queen's reign and it would be fitting to celebrate her 70 years on the throne by making the 'new city' of Milton Keynes, the official city of Milton Keynes."**

**Ben Everitt MP**

# Profile: Green spaces for all

More than 40% of Milton Keynes is green space, with one of the highest amounts of green space per citizen in the UK. Whereas cathedrals in other cities are built from stone, Milton Keynes has a Cathedral of Trees. Milton Keynes' high quality urban open spaces cover around 3,600 hectares. Its 'city centre' Campbell Park is the nation's largest park outside London and has recently been designated as a Registered Park and Garden heritage asset.

A range of interconnected, multifunctional 'linear parks' (parklands, green corridors, wetlands and lakes) incorporate and protect historic hedgerows and woodlands and form a city-wide sustainable drainage network. Through their design, layout, and relationship with the major grid road network, a continuous area of green open space runs throughout the entire city, meaning residents never need cross a grid road to walk it in its entirety. Alongside this are 280km of 'Redways', cycling and walking trails linking up the city's cultural assets.

Milton Keynes' Parks Trust is an internationally studied model for managing green infrastructure and for actively addressing climate change, ecology, and biodiversity. The Trust manages 6,000 acres and delivers a popular public engagement programme. Each year it hosts hundreds of inclusive cultural events organised by our many diverse communities.

## Popular public green spaces

- City-centre Campbell Park is a mix of parkland, formal gardens and water features. The Park has an outdoor Amphitheatre with covered stage, a large events area, an off-road cycle trail and a country standard cricket pitch and pavilion.

## Open spaces in numbers

- 15m<sup>2</sup> of green space per citizen
  - 191 parks and 565 play areas
  - Two Sites of Special Scientific Interest
  - 22 million trees, plants and bulbs originally planted
  - 776 public rights of way including 356km of public footpaths and 192km of public bridleways and horse-riding trails
  - 280 km of dedicated walking and cycling Redways
  - 250 hectares of accessible woodland
  - 80km of rivers, streams, canal and towpath
- Willen Lake, MK's most visited park with over 800,000 visitors each year. It features a Peace Pagoda built by the monks and nuns of the Nipponzan Myohoji, and 1,000 cherry trees commemorating the victims of war.
  - The city-centre Secklow Mound, a reconstruction of a Saxon meeting space and shortly to become a community orchard for The Queen's Green Canopy.
  - Caldecotte Lake with leisure facilities including a windmill, light railway, a rowing, sailing and canoeing club, and outdoor education centre.
  - Emberton Country Park, 200 acres of parkland and camping facilities on a former gravel works.
  - Fred Roche Gardens, a split-level city-centre park with formal features including public art located next to the Church of Christ the Cornerstone.
  - Many smaller parks with interesting features such as Rectory Gardens' garden for the blind, and the formerly disused Wolverton Secret Garden which the local community has transformed into a public garden and space for free concerts.

## Profile: An active voluntary sector

Milton Keynes has more than 1,300 charities and support organisations, and since 1986 the Community Foundation has shared £33m of grants and rent subsidies with local groups.

Milton Keynes Council recently set aside £1m to help the local Food Bank and other charities and groups, providing 13,000 sq ft of premises as a permanent hub and covering other costs. This allows volunteers to establish firmer footings and reach more people with practical support. During the pandemic the Council and the charity created Food Bank Xtra to cope with additional demand, providing funding, additional staff (including volunteers from the Council itself) and the loan of emergency warehouse space.

Since then, the Foodbank has helped more than 4,000 households, distributing 39,600 parcels with over 831,000 food items valued

£663,000. It has received more than a million donations of food and £520,000 from individuals, groups and businesses.

### Celebrating recent winners of The Queens Award for Voluntary Services

2021	Dreamsai and Milton Keynes Centre for Integrated Living
2020	Bosom Pals MK, Cowper and Newton Museum Volunteers, Marshall MK Athletic Club, MK SNAP, Olney Rugby Football Club and the Brooklands Centre
2019	The Stables Volunteers, Milton Keynes Museum Volunteers, Wolverton Old Bath House and Community Centre
2018	Milton Keynes Islamic Art and Culture
2017	Milton Keynes Foodbank

## Profile: Economic success

**14,000 businesses of which 700 are internationally owned**

**£15.7 billion GDP (2018)**

**Productivity 27% above the national average**

**70% of businesses are local start-ups**

**182,000 employees and working age population of 169,000 (2018)**

**Employment rate well above national average at 86% (2019/20)**

**Open University has £2.77bn impact on UK economy with 175,000 students (2018/19)**

**40 million visitors annually to centre:mk shops**

**Visitor economy worth over £1bn annually**

# Profile: Culture, leisure and heritage

## Attracting millions of visitors

In less than two square miles, visitors can experience one of the busiest theatres in the south east; a 16-screen cinema; one million square feet of retail and hospitality outlets; an award-winning gallery, open air cinema and theatre; a bustling market; and a green flag accredited open space holding innovative events.

IF: Milton Keynes International Festival biennial attracts a global audience and is critically acclaimed both for its amazing programme and inclusive community participation. Since the first biennial in 2010, over one million people have engaged with the Festival, which is produced by leading music venue The Stables, and supported by Milton Keynes Council as well as Arts Council England.

One hundred citizens representing the diversity of Milton Keynes, carrying 50 MK Mandala silk flags, will form a central part in the 'Thank You' dance honouring key workers in the final section of the Platinum Jubilee Parade on 5 June in front of Her Majesty The Queen.

## Celebrating a collective heritage

Popular heritage attractions include Bletchley Park, the Cowper and Newton Museum, Milton Keynes Museum, and Bradwell Abbey and Windmill. Many sites are expanding significantly in the coming years.

The Milton Keynes Museum is working with communities on a New Town Gallery, as well as opening a large Ancient Gallery in 2023.

## Culture, leisure and heritage in numbers

- Citizens make 4 million visits to sports and leisure facilities each year
- 27 conservation areas, 50 scheduled monuments and 1,100 listed buildings
- 270 pieces of public art
- 30,000 all seater stadium, home of MK Dons
- 400 play parks
- 230 grass football pitches used by 500 community teams plus 10 3G artificial grass pitches
- 3 astroturf pitches for hockey
- 26 cricket pitches
- 8 public leisure centres and 4 public pools
- 3 18-hole golf courses

A new city-centre MK Archive explains how to build a city, where the Council, City Discovery Centre and Living Archive MK will combine archives, images, oral history and personal stories from 50 years of collecting with local communities.

A Medieval Interpretation Centre will open in 2022 showcasing new twelfth century finds with strong royal connections to Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine.

Milton Keynes Council is gifting land to the Aston Martin Heritage Trust to build a proposed world class Aston Martin Heritage and Education Centre profiling the iconic vehicles designed and created in Milton Keynes.

Bletchley Park was the home of World War II codebreaking where technological innovation and human endeavour came together to help shape the world we live in today. Now a self-funding attraction with more than 250,000 visitors each year, additional buildings continue to be restored and opened to the public.

## Facilities for a healthy and active city

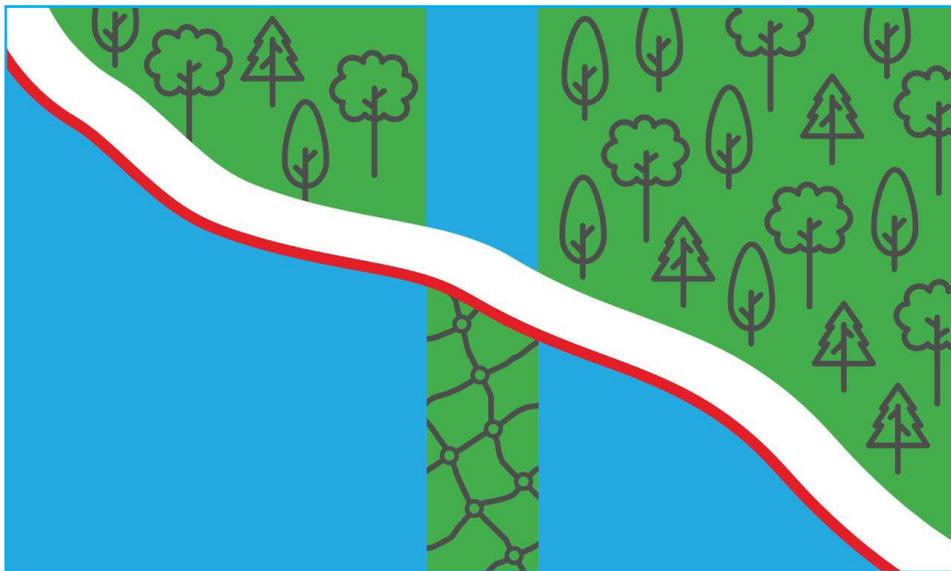
Over the last 10 years, Milton Keynes' high quality infrastructure has helped it bid and host international sporting events including the Rugby World Cup, England Under 18 and Women's Football, the UEFA Women's Euros 2022 and the Cyclo-Cross World Championship. These events create new partnerships to build exceptional grassroots facilities and deliver long-term legacies.

In addition to the wealth of green space (which hosts one of the fastest marathon routes in the UK), citizens have year-round opportunities to be active including a world class badminton centre, an athletics stadium, multiple public and private pools, indoor ski-slope, indoor sky diving centre, ice rink, multiple water-sport centres, a skateboarding park that attracts skaters from across Europe, and more than 200 community centres and sports pavilions.

This sports infrastructure is helping to produce many exceptional athletes including GB long jump Olympian Greg Rutherford MBE, GB badminton Olympian Gail Emms MBE, England and Tottenham Hotspur footballer Dele Alle, and England Lionesses and Arsenal footballer Leah Williamson.

As the local population grows, there are ambitious plans to expand the sporting infrastructure into new communities by investing funding from development projects into exceptional shared school and community facilities and cross-service community health hubs that support people living with health conditions.

Public and private sector partners work closely with Table Tennis England and Age UK to ensure that significant strides are made in providing sports opportunities for people living with Dementia, and Milton Keynes has committed to becoming an accredited Dementia Friendly City.



**'A Flag for Milton Keynes'** designed by Thea Callaghan, aged 12, from St Paul's Catholic School as part of young people's support for this application.

# Photo gallery

We thank the many citizens of Milton Keynes who submitted photographs in support of this application.

## Enviably green and blue spaces



### The blue and green landscape

Milton Keynes' blue and green spaces and its modern infrastructure complement each other. The first image looks down onto Wolverton Road and nearby Linford Lakes. In the second image, taken above Willen Lake, the distinctive city centre indoor ski slope is top right.



### **Caldecote Lake**

One of MK's primary balancing lakes and equally a home for wildlife as it is for aquatic sports. Excavations for the lake revealed MK's oldest resident, a 160m year old Ichthyosaur, now on display in the Central Library.



### **Great Linford Manor and Manor Park**

Grade II Listed Great Linford Manor and Courtyard and the surrounding Manor Park sits at the end of the historic high street. The Milton Keynes Arts Centre delivers inclusive programmes from the Courtyard.

# A rich heritage



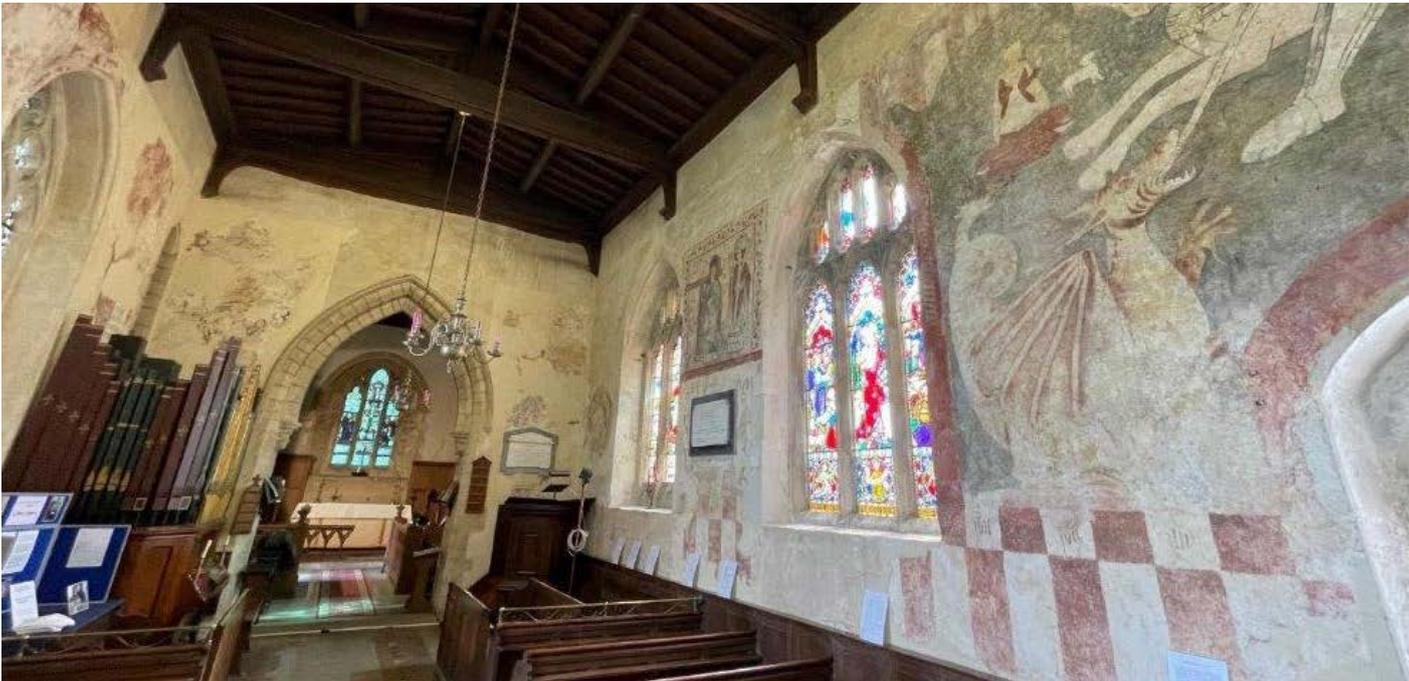
## **Bletchley Park Mansion, Bletchley**

Now a popular heritage attraction, Bletchley Park was the home of British World War II codebreaking. The Bletchley Park Trust is honoured to have HRH Duke of Kent as its Royal Patron.



## **Bradwell Windmill, Bradville**

The Grade II Listed Bradwell Windmill was built by Samuel Holman in 1805, alongside the recently opened Grand Junction Canal. It is still a working mill and visitor attraction.



**Medieval Paintings, Church of St Lawrence, Broughton**

The Grade I Church contains one of the greatest medieval treasures in the UK - stunning paintings that had been hidden behind plaster for 300 years.



**Aston Martin Heritage Works, Newport Pagnell**

The Aston Martin Heritage Works continue a 200-year-old tradition of transport design and manufacture in Newport Pagnell. Her Majesty the Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh visited in April 1966 and a silver medal was minted for every employee.



### **Pilgrim Chapel of St Mary, Bradwell Abbey**

The Grade I Listed 12th Century Chapel is all that is left of the Priory Church. It was built around a statue of the Virgin Mary so the monks could charge visiting pilgrims. It is decorated with nationally important medieval paintings and is part of a £2m restoration.



### **Homeworld '81 Exhibition Village Site, Bradwell Common**

This nationally significant Housing Expo put MK on the map as leader in innovative housing design, with 150,000 visitors. Developers took a plot and built energy efficient designs that could make homes cheaper to build.



### **Tickford Iron Bridge, Newport Pagnell**

The only cast iron bridge still carrying road traffic in the UK, spanning the River Ouzel and designed by Henry Provis, engineer to the Grand Junction (now Union) Canal.



### **The Iron Trunk Bridge Aqueduct, Wolverton**

The Aqueduct, renovated and restored to its original colours in 2012 by British Waterways, carries the Grand Union Canal over the Ouse..



### **The Cowper and Newton Museum and Market Place, Olney**

Home of poet William Cowper from 1768 – 86, the Cowper & Newton Museum opened in 1900 to great national acclaim, telling stories through the lives of Cowper and his friend John Newton. On Shrove Tuesday the Market Place is the start line for the world-famous Pancake Race which has run since 1445.



### **The Royal Train Shed, Wolverton**

The Grade II Listed former Royal Train Shed was built in 1899 alongside the Grand Union Canal in Wolverton, the world's first planned railway town.



### **Westbury Arts Centre, Westbury Farm, Shenley Church End**

An Elizabethan Manor House and moated site which has housed Artists' Studios for 50 years, and provides rare communal living, working and exhibition spaces.



### **The Cock and Bull Hotels, Stony Stratford**

Only forty metres apart, the Cock and Bull Hotels were rival establishments made famous in the 18th Century for travellers' tales trying to outdo each other, when the expression a 'Cock and Bull' story was born.

## 270 pieces of public art



### **Concrete Cows at Milton Keynes Museum, Wolverton**

Created by Liz Leyh in 1978, for many the Concrete Cows have become an enduring symbol for Milton Keynes.



### **Alphonso Artwork, Newton Leys**

On the site of a former brickworks, MK's newest artwork 'Alphonso' by Sarah Staton is a three-sided structure built from wood-fired brick and incorporates a hand-painted image depicting the local area, its wildlife and history.

# City centre



## Central Milton Keynes

This photo shows Central Milton Keynes' famous 'grid and green design' with the urban centre showing L-R the distinctive Xscape ski slope and leisure complex; MK Theatre and MK Gallery; construction of a new hotel and the central shopping area.



## Milton Keynes Central Railway Station

Opened in 1982 by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, the modernist Mies van der Rohe style station sits within Station Square, a major transport interchange and event space.



### **Milton Keynes Gallery and Theatre, Central Milton Keynes**

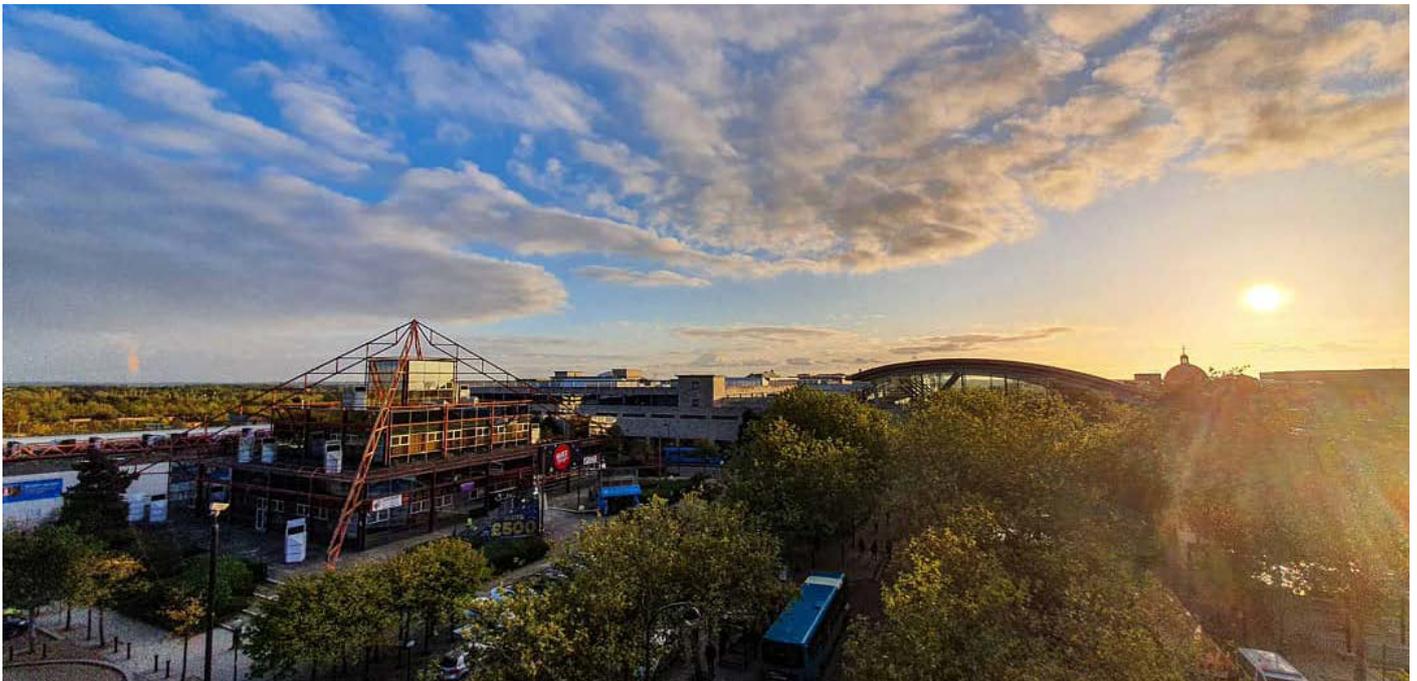
The bold and playful Gallery received a national award from the Royal Institute of British Architects in 2021 and offers world class exhibitions. The award-winning Theatre showcases a varied programme including touring West End productions.





### **Centre:MK, Central Milton Keynes**

The Grade II Listed palm tree-lined steel and glass shopping building was the first of its kind and contains the Queen's Court, named in honour of Her Majesty the Queen.



### **Midsummer Boulevard East, Central Milton Keynes**

Midsummer Boulevard East features a bus interchange, shopping centre and thriving market. There are plans to make this one of the UK's greenest boulevards prioritising pedestrians and cyclists. The Point, on the left, was the UK's first multiplex cinema.



### Central Milton Keynes grid plan

Visitors often comment on the Central Milton Keynes unique grid plan, with its tree lined boulevards. On the right is a Business Hub with offices, restaurants and hotels.



### Unity Place, Central Milton Keynes

Under construction close to the Central Railway Station is Unity Place, a new £150M base for Santander including an innovative Digital Hub for communities to collaborate. In the background is Quadrant: MK, Network Rail's impressive UK headquarters.

# Diverse places for worship and contemplation



## **The Tree Cathedral, Newlands**

The Tree Cathedral is based on Norwich Cathedral and is the only municipal tree cathedral in the UK. Different species of trees represent the Cathedral's sections, for instance hornbeam and lime for the nave, and evergreens to represent the spires. In springtime, colourful bulbs represent the sun shining through stained glass windows.



## **Christ the Cornerstone Church, Central Milton Keynes**

Dedicated by Her Majesty the Queen and the first ever ecumenical church in the UK, where five denominations work together.



### **Milton Keynes Rose, Central Milton Keynes**

A Place for celebration, commemoration and contemplation with 106 granite pillars on which significant dates are inscribed, including the Pillar for the Founding Pioneers of Milton Keynes unveiled by HRH the Duke of Cambridge.



### **Gurdwara Sikh Temple, Leadenhall**

The Gurdwara Baba Zorawar Singh Ji Baba Fateh Singh Ji is centrally located in Leadenhall, one of the earliest new town grid squares, and is home to the Sikh Society of Milton Keynes.

### **Willen Church, Willen**

The Grade I Listed Church was designed by Robert Hooke, a contemporary and colleague of Sir Christopher Wren.



### **The Peace Pagoda, Willen Lake North**

The first ever Peace Pagoda in the Western Hemisphere, built by the monks and nuns of the Nipponzan Myohoji as a symbol of world brotherhood.





### **Church of St Peter and St Paul with Olney Mill, Olney**

One of Olney's 149 listed buildings and structures. In 1772, the Reverend John Newton wrote the hymn 'Amazing Grace' to accompany his New Year's Day sermon. Today it is known all over the world and celebrates its 250th anniversary in 2022.

## **Modern amenities and innovative thinkers**



### **Stadium:MK, Bletchley**

Opened in 2007 by Her Majesty the Queen, Stadium: MK is a UEFA rated 30,350-seater accessible stadium and leisure complex. The onsite artwork Ring of Steel contains almost 40,000 photographs of local people.



### **Magna Park, Kingston**

Modern new logistics warehouses appealing to large companies, including John Lewis Plc, who have created their main distribution hub here.



### **A5 Trunk Road, Approach to Central Milton Keynes**

The A5 Trunk Road runs parallel to the Roman Road Watling Street, and is one of a series of major transport arteries including the M1, Grand Union Canal and North West Mainline Railway highlighting MK's strategic location.



### **Central Library, Central Milton Keynes**

The Grade II Listed Central Library with Andre Wallace sculpture 'The Whisper' in the foreground, adjacent to the Civic Offices opened by Her Majesty the Queen in 1979.



### **Ionity Rapid Charging Hub, MK Coachway, Newport Pagnell**

Just one of the many innovative electric vehicle projects in Milton Keynes, ranging from an Electric Vehicle Experience Centre in the main shopping centre to electric ride-sharing services and buses.



### **Red Bull Racing, Tilbrook**

Red Bull Racing are a major force in international motor racing with four World Constructors' Championships and through Sebastian Vettel four Drivers' Championships. They will be building their own engine powertrains on site, providing future engineering jobs and skills.



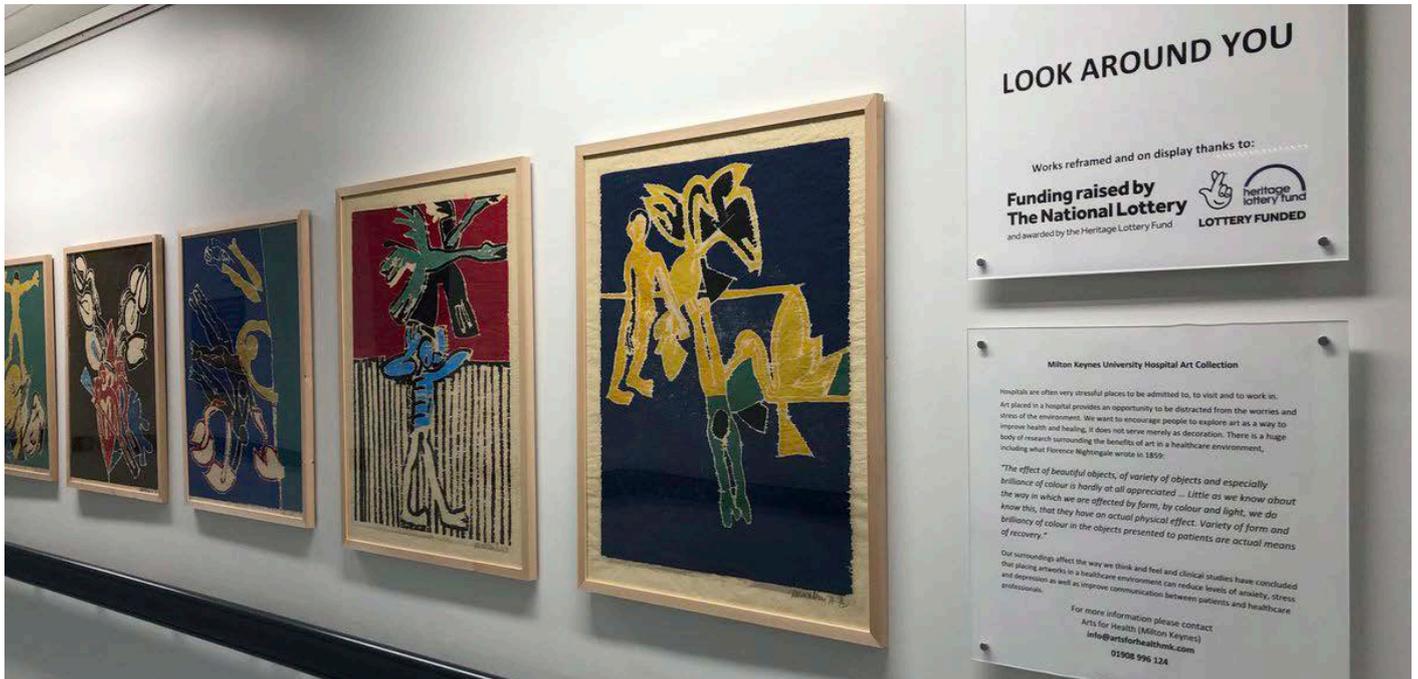
### **The Open University, Walton**

Established by Royal Charter and globally recognised, the Open University has pioneered distance learning from its 111-acre site, Walton Hall Campus.



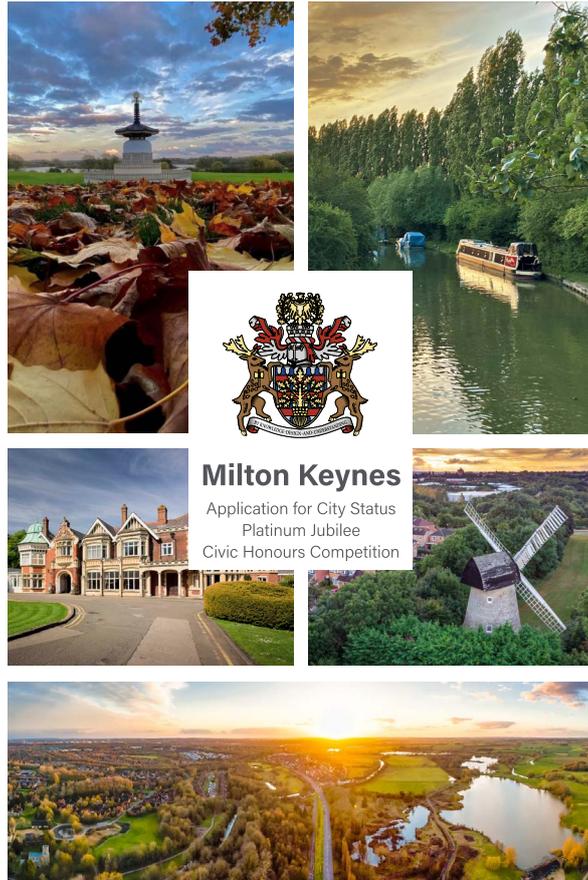
### Glebe Farm School, Wavendon

Glebe Farm School is being built to the Council’s 2030 carbon neutral targets; it will be fossil-fuel free and as such will save 40 tonnes of carbon each year.



### Milton Keynes University Hospital, Eaglestone

Milton Keynes University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust treats approximately 400,000 patients each year and is also the largest art gallery in MK with over 200 works of art providing ‘arts on prescription’.



## Milton Keynes

Application for City Status  
Platinum Jubilee  
Civic Honours Competition

Produced December 2021