



'5PM-K': Celebrating MK After 5PM'

page 3

MK Accessibilty Guide launched

page 4

Summer events success

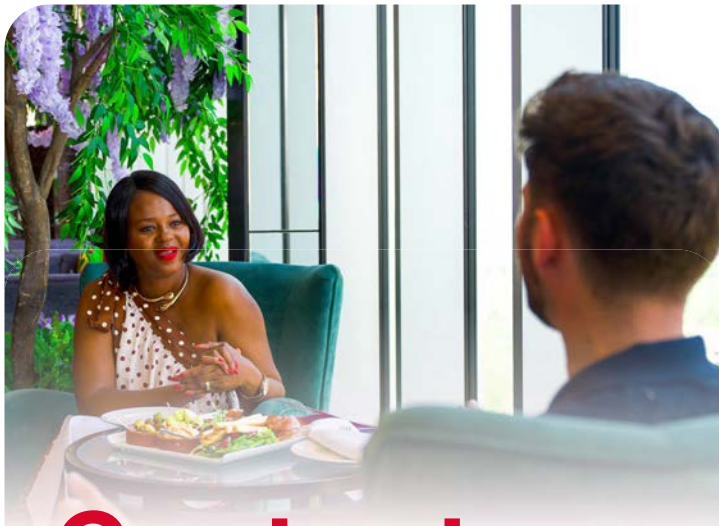
page 14

**Autumn
2025**

BID Bobbies: A Year of Success

Page 10





Contents.

From MyMK

5PM-K campaign launches	3
MK Accessibility Guide	4
Christmas in MK	6
My-MK Gift Card update	7
My-MK Awards successes	8
BID Bobbies: A year of success	10
My-MK BID radios update	11
My-MK Social media	12
From Wheelbarrow to City Pride, Rob's story	13
Supporting city centre events	14

BID Business Focus

Meet The Manager: James Johnson	16
Updates from City Centre businesses	17-19
New City Openings	20-21
Shopping Centre updates	22-23
More updates from businesses	24-26

Public Sector News

Public art in station square	27
City Centre Policing update	28
Other updates	29

Third Sector Focus

31



From MyMK

Since our last edition in June, the city centre has been buzzing with activity and achievement, and this edition celebrates just some of the highlights. We launched 5PMK to showcase the evening economy, celebrated the MK Pride Festival and welcomed the return of the IF: Festival.

Businesses have continued to thrive, with Co-Space marking two years, Freeths opening new offices and Unity Place winning awards. We're looking ahead to Christmas and the reopening of the MK Casino, with new owners Merkur. Milton Keynes really is a place to be proud of!

Jill Farnsworth, CEO





5PM-K: Because there is SO much to do in MK after 5PM!

This July, My-MK unveiled 5PM-K, a campaign dedicated to showcasing all there is to do in Milton Keynes City Centre after 5pm.

The campaign launched with a hero video capturing the breadth of experiences available across the city centre, from competitive socialising and eating out, to shopping, beauty, and cultural highlights.

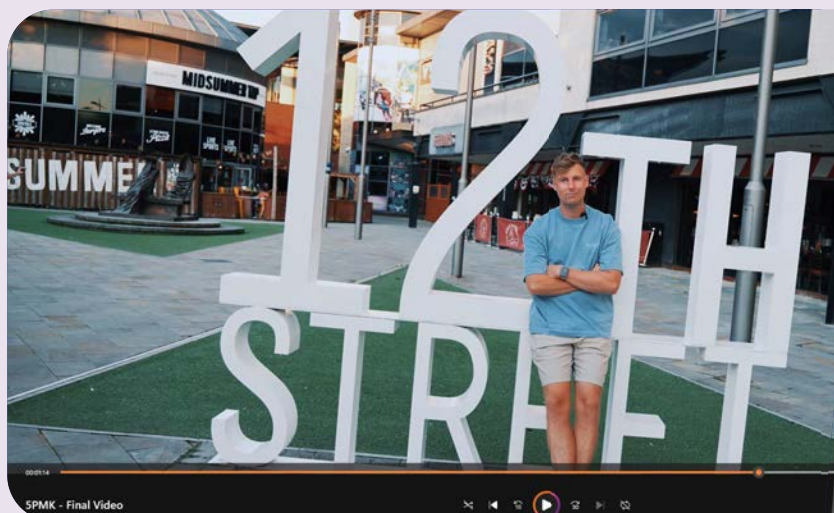


Supporting this, a tailored digital content strategy rolled out across social media, complemented by a dedicated landing page on the My-MK City Centre website featuring curated guides, special offers, events and recommendations for post-5pm activities.

The early results have been encouraging. Across Instagram and Facebook, the video attracted more than 116,000 views, while TikTok generated over 21,000 and LinkedIn reached 5,500 with an impressive 9.6% engagement rate. The campaign also caught the attention of both local and national press, significantly amplifying its visibility.

Importantly, 5PM-K content has been carefully designed to speak to multiple audiences, from commuters encouraged to stay and explore the city after work, to residents seeking cultural, leisure, and dining options closer to home.

Looking ahead, My-MK plans to build on the platform's momentum. Future activity will expand video and social content to highlight seasonal events and new openings and strengthen partnerships with local businesses.



Our Purple City: MK Digital Accessibility Guide Launched

‘Our Purple City’ is an award-winning initiative, delivered by the BID and City Centre partners, which aspires to make Milton Keynes one of the UK’s most inclusive and accessible cities.

This July, My-MK launched a City Centre-wide Digital Accessibility Guide on the AccessAble website, which is used by over six million disabled people and their carers a year, to plan visits with confidence.

The Guide covers seven key areas within Milton Keynes City Centre, including 12th Street, Unity Place, Xscape, The Hub, centre:mk, and Midsummer Place. It highlights essential accessibility features like toilets, step-free access, accessible parking, and pedestrian-friendly crossings.

The MK City Centre Accessibility Guide can be found here:



Accessibility Grant Launched

MyMiltonKeynes is offering grants covering 50% of the cost of a Detailed Access Guide (up to £1,000) to help BID businesses promote themselves to disabled customers on the AccesAble website.



Get your own Detailed Access Guides

Now My-MK BID is encouraging its businesses, particularly those open to the public, to commission their own individual Detailed Access Guides, which can sit under the MK City Centre Guides on the AccessAble website, to provide even greater detail to those looking to plan their visits to MK.

What is a Detailed Access Guide?

- They are an in-depth description of a place or space. Created by AccessAble's team of trained surveyors using their unique assessment tool, a Guide describes each part of the visitor journey. It includes the facts, figures and photos disabled people need to plan their visit and covers everything from parking and step-free access to toilets and assistive listening.

Why get a Detailed Access Guide?

- **Reach More Customers:** there are 16.8 million people in the UK living with a disability. The Purple pound is estimated to be worth £274 billion. Making your venue accessible is good for business!
- **Improve Visibility:** 95% of disabled people check accessibility in advance of going to a new place. Your business will appear on AccessAble's website and app, used by over 6 million disabled people each year.
- **Showcase Your Facilities:** A Guide helps highlight what you already have — from step-free access to quiet spaces.
- **Support Inclusion:** Be part of the Our Purple City initiative, which is a commitment to accessibility.

What does it cost?

- A Detailed Access Guide typically costs between £150 to £1000, depending on the size of your venue.

What if my business isn't perfectly accessible?

- It doesn't matter. The guides are about transparency, not perfection. Customers want to know what to expect.

What if I share a building with others?

- AccessAble can assess your specific unit and include shared facilities.

Will the Guide make my venue look bad?

- Detailed Access Guides don't rate or judge – they just show what's available with clear facts, measurements and photos. They're a great way to show you care about your disabled visitor's experience.

Full information on getting your own Detailed Access Guide and how to access the BID's grant funding can be found in the Business Toolkit



Don't forget: Purple 365 Training

All BID members have access to Purple 365 Training for free. This is a program designed to help businesses and organisations become more inclusive and accessible, particularly for individuals with disabilities. Upcoming webinars are on:

Supporting employees with dyslexia.

Tuesday 21st October, 12.30-1.30pm

This webinar will focus on the unique challenges faced by employees with dyslexia and how organisations can create an inclusive and supportive environment. We will discuss the nature of dyslexia, how it affects day-to-day tasks, and the strengths that dyslexic employees can bring to the workplace.

How to make your work more accessible

Tuesday 4th November, 12.30-1.30pm

In this webinar, learn how to ensure that the content you create—whether written, visual, or digital—is accessible to all audiences, including people with disabilities. We will guide you through best practices for making your content work accessible, from using inclusive language and providing alternative text for images to designing for screen readers and colour contrast.

To access this free training and the back catalogue of webinars, please contact the BID office for log-in details:
Info@mymiltonkeynes.co.uk

Christmas Switch-On

The countdown to Christmas in Milton Keynes will officially begin on Saturday 22nd November, when My-MK once again hosts the city's spectacular Christmas Lights Switch-on event.

Following the huge success of last year, which drew more than 7,000 people, the celebrations will return to The Point car park, with the BID team delivering the event fully in-house for a second year. The formula will remain the same —big stage entertainment with local community performers, and a fantastic fireworks display —although this year's line-up and schedule are still to be confirmed.

More Lights, More Magic

Building on last year's improvements, My-MK has invested in additional festive lighting along Midsummer Boulevard, this time extending the sparkle as far as MK Theatre.

These new installations replicate the stunning effect delivered on the opposite side of the boulevard in 2024, creating an even brighter and more festive welcome. While extending the lighting all the way to Unity Place remains a challenge due to lack of power supply, the BID is already working on a solution for 2026!



Festive Events: Highlights

Christmas in MK is a city-wide celebration:

- **Santa Parade at centre:mk** – On Friday 21st November, centre:mk launches its Peter Rabbit-themed Christmas extravaganza outside John Lewis with a Santa Parade that's set to delight families.
- **Christmas Tree Festival at Midsummer Place** – A stunning showcase of beautifully decorated trees, bringing festive cheer to shoppers and visitors.
- **Goldilocks & The Three Bears at MK Theatre** – This year's panto promises laughs, magic, and festive fun, starring TV and stage favourite Brian Conley.
- **Festive Dining & Shopping Offers** – From seasonal menus and special treats to exclusive retail promotions, city centre businesses will be adding to the magic of Christmas in MK.



All festive events, offers, and dining options will be brought together on the **official City Centre Christmas Guide**, available on mymk.cc – making it the go-to place for everything happening in Milton Keynes this festive season.



My-MK City Centre Gift Card: Smarter and Ready for Christmas

The My-MK City Centre Gift Card has gone from strength to strength, and is now accepted at **over 130 shops, restaurants, bars, and leisure venues** across Milton Keynes City Centre. From high street favourites like Primark, TK Maxx, and H Beauty to experiences such as iFLY, Milton Keynes Theatre, and Fourteen at Hotel La Tour, the card is the perfect way to enjoy what our city has to offer.

Now Even Easier to Use

A key development this year is that the Gift Card can now be digitised, meaning it can be redeemed even if a till doesn't have a swipe function. This makes it easier than ever for businesses to accept the card and for customers to spend it seamlessly.

Gift Card Advertising

As we head into the busy festive season, My-MK will be backing the Gift Card with a targeted marketing campaign to drive up sales.

Don't Miss Out

If you're a BID levy-paying business and haven't yet joined the scheme, there's still time to sign up — completely free of charge. Simply email info@mymiltonkeynes.co.uk to get started. Every transaction goes through your till as a Mastercard payment, making it quick and easy to process.

Celebrate your staff this Christmas

The MK City Centre Gift Card is the perfect choice for businesses wanting to recognise their staff, while reinvesting back into the local economy. Simply visit mymk.cc/pages/gift-card to place your order online. Payments can be made via credit card or BACS, and the MyMK team will hand-deliver your order once it's ready. Be sure to select 'I am a Business Customer' so that you receive an invoice and the order is processed by the My-MK team.



my — mk
city centre



Marketing and Branding Scheme

AND THE WINNER IS...

MY MILTON



My-MK Wins National Town & City Industry Award...

MyMiltonKeynes is delighted to have won the prestigious **Best Marketing & Branding Scheme** category at the 2025 Town & City Industry Awards. The award recognises the BID's ambitious transformation of its marketing and communications strategy, including a bold dual-brand approach, the launch of a dedicated consumer website for Milton Keynes City Centre, and a repositioning of the organisation's identity.

Jill Farnsworth, Chief Executive of MyMiltonKeynes, said: **"This award recognises not just a rebrand, but a complete rethink of how we position the City Centre and ourselves. Our new consumer website, vibrant brand identity, and joined-up digital strategy have already made a real**

difference. We're proud to lead the way with a place-based marketing model that's tailored to Milton Keynes and its unique character."

The project impressed the judges for its clarity, innovation, and impact. Ojay McDonald, Chief Executive of ATCM, commented: **"This was an exceptional example of place marketing done right. My-MK identified a real gap in how Milton Keynes City Centre was being presented and responded with a solution that was not only strategic and tech-forward, but genuinely innovative. Their work sets a new benchmark for how BIDs can lead in positioning town and city centres for future growth."**



...And a Gold International CSR Award for 'Our Purple City'

The My-MK team are delighted to have been recognised in the 'Partnership' category, in centre:mk's recent Gold Award win at the International CSR Excellence Awards for 'Our Purple City'. This was an initiative launched by the BID, with City Marketing Steering group partners, last November to focus on accessibility and inclusivity in Milton Keynes.

My-MK Signs Milton Keynes Neurodiversity Charter

My-MK is proud to have signed the Milton Keynes Neurodiversity Charter — a city-wide pledge to celebrate differences and create accessible, welcoming spaces for everyone.

The Charter, which can be adopted by individuals, schools, organisations, and businesses, sets out a shared ambition to educate, advocate, and celebrate the value of neurodiversity.

It builds on ongoing work across the city to promote awareness and understanding, ensuring Milton Keynes is a place where all people feel seen, supported, and included.

Earlier this year, My-MK supported the installation of the Milton Keynes Umbrella Project in Midsummer Place, a colourful and creative celebration of neurodiversity that drew attention from thousands of visitors.

To find out more or to sign up your business please visit: <https://mkumbrellaproject.org/charter/>



This July, My-MK welcomed city centre businesses to the very first BID Summer Social, held at the Moxy Hotel. The informal gathering offered a chance for levy payers to connect, share ideas, and hear the latest updates from the BID team.

Guests enjoyed an exclusive first look at the new 5PM-K video, which showcases the Milton Keynes' evening offer, along with insights into the MK Accessibility Guide, the BID's Accessibility Grant, and opportunities for businesses to commission their own Detailed Access Guides. The relaxed atmosphere proved the perfect backdrop for networking, with businesses getting to know each other while learning more about how the BID is supporting the city centre. With the success of the Summer Social, the BID has confirmed this will be the first in a series of regular events.

Keep an eye on the BID website or sign up to the CEO's monthly e-updates by emailing info@mymiltonkeynes.co.uk to make sure you don't miss out.



BID Bobbies: A Year of Success for MK City Centre

Since they started in July 2024, My-MK's private security team — the BID Bobbies — has gone from strength to strength, playing an increasingly vital role in keeping the city centre safe, secure, and welcoming for all.

Working hand-in-hand with Thames Valley Police and local partners, the officers have not only provided reassurance through their visible presence but have also delivered real results in tackling crime and antisocial behaviour.



From Arrests to Partnership Working

The impact of these enhanced powers has already been felt. In one high-profile incident, Sam and Tariq spotted a man drinking near The Place Leisure Park. After engaging with him, CCTV controllers confirmed he was banned from entering the city centre and had breached bail conditions the previous night.

When police arrived, the man attempted to flee towards the Old Bus Station, but thanks to the quick response of the BID Bobbies, he was safely detained and handed over to Thames Valley Police. Their actions not only supported law enforcement but also prevented the man from causing harm to himself or others.

In addition, the BID Bobbies have been central to a three-month Thames Valley Police initiative launched in July to tackle retail crime and antisocial behaviour in the city centre. By working side-by-side with police officers and shopping centre security teams, Sam and Tariq are helping deliver greater visibility, faster responses, and stronger reassurance for everyone who visits, works, and shops in Milton Keynes.



Welcoming Tariq to the Team

In June, we welcomed Tariq to the team. His approachable style and dedication to community safety have been praised by both businesses and visitors alike. Together, Sam and Tariq now form a highly effective duo, building stronger relationships across the city while providing support to those who need it most.

Using PSPO Powers to Tackle Street Drinking

This year also marked a significant step forward in enforcement. The My-MK Bobbies are now formally authorised under Milton Keynes City Council's Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO), giving them the power to challenge individuals drinking alcohol in restricted areas. Where necessary, they can also issue fixed penalty notices to those who refuse to comply.



“MyMiltonKeynes officers are trained to respond proportionately, prioritising support and referrals for those who genuinely want help,” explains City Centre Safety Lead, Sam Bradley. “But when behaviour escalates, having these powers ensures they can act quickly and effectively to protect businesses, visitors, and the wider community.”

60 City Centre Radios in operation

Since its launch in October, the My-MK BID Radio Scheme has established itself as a vital tool in keeping the city centre safe and connected. Designed to improve communication between businesses, security teams and the Police, the scheme has grown rapidly, with 60 radios now in operation across Milton Keynes city centre.

The system enables instant information sharing on incidents ranging from shoplifting to antisocial behaviour and is a vital tool for emergency preparedness. By linking retailers, hospitality venues, and security providers directly with the BID's Bobbies and TVP, the scheme helps create a more joined-up and responsive approach to safety.

Feedback from businesses has been overwhelmingly positive, with many praising the added reassurance of being connected to a wider network. For the BID, the growth of the scheme highlights the value of partnership working and the impact of investing in practical, everyday solutions that make a difference on the ground.

Joining the scheme

The radio scheme costs £360 per year and is open to BID levy payers and voluntary members businesses. Contact the My-MK team on info@mymiltonkeynes.co.uk or by calling 01908 395099.

Who's got a radio?

- 12th Street Security
- American Golf
- Apricot
- Blossom Room
- Boots
- British Transport Police
- Casino MK
- centre:mk Security
- Dune London
- Ellis Bringham
- Fat Face
- Flannels
- Flying Tiger
- Footasylum
- Garudaa Gentlemans Club
- Harrods Beauty
- HMV
- Hobbs Ltd
- JD Sports
- John Lewis
- Love Local Hub
- Marks & Spencer
- Midsummer Place Security
- Midsummer Tap
- Milano Couture
- MK Gallery
- Moon Under Water
- My-MK
- Next
- Popworld
- Poundland
- Primark
- Revolucion De Cuba
- River Island
- Rumble Rooms
- Santander Security
- Space NK
- Sports Direct
- Superdrug
- Tempur
- The Entertainer
- The Perfume Shop
- The Pinnacle Building Security
- Thomas Sabo
- Thames Valley Police neighbourhood team
- Thames Valley Police CCTV room
- Witan Gate House Security
- Watch & Clock Shop
- Wetherspoons
- Xscape Security



A Year of Success for @mkcitycentre

It's been a year since My-MK transformed its social media presence, changing from @mymiltonkeynes on Instagram, TikTok and Facebook to the more consumer-friendly @mkcitycentre — and the results have been very positive.

The refreshed strategy marked a major shift towards high-quality, engaging content that showcases the best of Milton Keynes City Centre. Video storytelling has been at the heart of this approach, bringing to life the energy, vibrancy, and variety of experiences on offer — from shopping and dining to events, culture, and public spaces.

The goal was clear:

- **To celebrate the city centre** as a place that residents and workers can be proud of.
- **To attract visitors** from further afield by showcasing the unique MK experience.
- **To challenge outdated perceptions** and dispel the myth that there is “nothing to do” in Milton Keynes.

Over the past 12 months, this new direction has paid off. Engagement has grown, audiences have expanded, and feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

TikTok

September 2024 - 2025

1.2M views

46K likes

20K shares

2,912 comments

12K profile views

2408 new followers

Highest performing video:
Lane7 opening, with 322K views, 13K likes, 161 comments, 8.1k shares and 2.3K favouriting it.



Facebook

September 2024 - 2025

3.3M views

35K interactions (+185%)

1,057,523 reach (+186.8%)

5K link clicks (+9.8%)

60K visits (+131.2%)

4806 new followers (154.3%)

Highest performing video:
Brickz museum opening, with 645.8K views, 4.3K interactions, 685 shares, 428 saves.



Instagram

September 2024 - 2025

936K views

27K interactions (+100%)

614K reach (+749.4%)

525 link clicks (+130.3%)

16K visits (+77.8%)

2814 new followers

Highest performing video:
Brickz museum opening, with 391.7K views, 14.1K interactions, 138 shares, 2.8K saves.



From Wheelbarrow to City Pride

Meet Rob Boiling, the Public Realm and Operations Manager at My-MK. From a single wheelbarrow to leading city centre operations, Rob's story is one of resilience, passion, and community spirit.

How it started: a wheelbarrow and some basic tools

When Rob joined My-MK on 30th July 2019, his "depot" was little more than a small shed in Fred Roche Gardens, a wheelbarrow, a few basic tools, and an electric hedge cutter. His first assignment - the Market Project - involved cutting back shrubbery, clearing weeds and ivy, and painting railings.

It was humble, hands-on work, but it sparked something in Rob: a passion for transforming the city's public spaces into places people could be proud of.

That passion quickly grew. His early projects included tackling the Saxon Gate and Midsummer Boulevard underpasses, clearing = debris, reshaping shrubs, and restoring neglected spaces to something resembling a well-maintained garden. It was here that Rob's vision for Central Milton Keynes began to take shape.

Lockdown Challenges and New Beginnings

Like many, Rob's work was put on hold during the March 2020 lockdown. Restless, he volunteered at Willen Hospice, helping to maintain their grounds — an outlet that kept his skills sharp and his love for

landscaping alive. By July, he was back with the BID and soon working from a new depot on North Row, after the original shed had been vandalised.

It was during this time that Rob's work caught the attention of Milton Keynes City Council (MKCC). Impressed by his results, MKCC invited the BID to take on the Midsummer Boulevard Revitalisation Project. With funding secured, Rob recruited three full-time landscapers, was promoted to Head of Landscaping, and led a transformation project that repainted railings, refreshed street furniture, and restored the landscaping along one of the city's most prominent thoroughfares.

Dream Projects and Tough Decisions

Perhaps Rob's proudest moment came when he was asked to lead the restoration of Grafton Park. Once overgrown and inaccessible, the waterways and pathways were cleared and brought back to life, creating a space the community could enjoy once more.

A New Chapter

But in December 2023, ill health forced Rob to step back from his role as Head of Landscaping — a bittersweet moment after years of hard work and achievement. However

he was appointed to the role of Public Realm & Operations Manager, drawing on his deep knowledge of the city and his hands-on experience. It was a role he was ready to embrace.

Nearly two years on and despite never having worked in an office before, Rob is thriving in the position. Today he oversees an impressive portfolio, including the BID Radio Scheme, Bar Watch, Tap & Donate, the MyMiltonKeynes Security Team, pest control, the BID's "Report It" service, Christmas lights and of course overseeing the ongoing care and improvement of Grafton Park, Fred Roche Gardens and the Midsummer Boulevard underpasses.

A Journey Built on Partnerships

Rob credits his success not only to hard work but also to the partnerships forged along the way. "I couldn't have made it this far without the incredible relationships with MKCC, Serco, Suez, MKDP, centre:mk, Midsummer Place, Xscape, and all the people I've met across retail, offices, bars, and restaurants -not to mention the fantastic BID team I work with," he says.

**And as he puts it,
"My journey continues."**

Restoration of Grafton Park



My-MK is committed to supporting and promoting events that will bring people to our City and in the last 3 months, there has been loads going on!

IF: Milton Keynes International Festival

18th – 27th July

Milton Keynes took centre stage this summer as the IF: Milton Keynes International Festival 2025 returned from 18–27 July, filling the city with ten days of extraordinary culture and creativity.

The biennial festival once again showcased why it is regarded as one of the UK's most distinctive cultural events, with highlights ranging from vertical choreography and live music on a 40-metre-high sculpture to 2000 paper peace doves in centre:mk's Middleton Hall, a robot spelling out a new poetry commission, and even the chance to see the planet Mars up close.

Building on the success of previous years, the festival once again attracted thousands of visitors while boosting Milton Keynes' profile nationally and internationally as a hub of culture, creativity and innovation.



Summer at MK Market 8th-10th August

Milton Keynes Market hosted 'Summer', a vibrant three-day celebration that brought together locals and visitors to enjoy a rich blend of culture, food, and community spirit.

Organised by Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP) and developed by local creative agency Pooleyville, the event featured a diverse programme of activities suitable for all ages. Attendees were treated to live music from DJs and community radio broadcasters, including Asian Community Radio (ACR), who provided live broadcasts throughout the weekend.

Visitors participated in various games such as pétanque, cornhole bean toss, chess, and backgammon, while food enthusiasts had a delightful experience with a selection of local street food vendors offering a variety of delicious options.



Lloyds Tour of Britain

4th September

The Tour of Britain is one of the UK's biggest cycling events, and Milton Keynes was the perfect stage to host the excitement of the start of the third stage. With thousands lining the streets and 12th Street buzzing with energy, the event showed just how much our city can deliver when it comes to atmosphere, community spirit, and putting Milton Keynes on the map.



MK Pride Festival

13th September

Milton Keynes came alive with colour, music, and celebration on Saturday 13 September, as thousands of people gathered for the Milton Keynes Pride Festival 2025. The much-loved event once again highlighted the city's strong commitment to diversity, inclusion, and community spirit.

Headline sponsor Santander proudly marked its fifth year of support, reflecting the company's belief that workplaces should be spaces where everyone feels free to be themselves. Other city centre businesses, including Hotel La Tour, Milton Keynes Development Partnership and centre:mk, also returned as key sponsors, demonstrating the strength of local backing for this flagship celebration.

As an official event partner, My-MK played a central role in welcoming festival-goers to the city centre. Ahead of the event, My-MK installed Pride bunting along the full stretch of Midsummer Boulevard, from the station through to Campbell Park, to greet visitors with a warm and inclusive message.





Meet the Manager: James Johnson

Meet James Johnson, Principal at Hillier Hopkins, which has been trading in Milton Keynes since 2013. James has worked for the firm since 2010 and tells us what it means to be part of the Milton Keynes City Centre business community.

What do you enjoy about working in Milton Keynes?

I have worked in Milton Keynes for 5 years the city has a unique blend of convenience, vibrancy, and great opportunities. It is incredibly well-connected to London, Oxford and Cambridge which leads to dynamic business environment, with a growing number of innovative companies.

Are there any local initiatives or organisations that have been particularly supportive or beneficial to your business?

There are a great deal of organisations and initiatives in Milton Keynes. The Milton Keynes Business Improvement District (MK BID) has contributed significantly to enhancing the city centre environment, making it a more vibrant and attractive place for businesses and clients alike. On the community side, the MK Community Foundation has been a standout organisation. Their efforts to connect businesses with impactful local initiatives are vital —such as youth programmes, mental health support, and sustainability projects.

How has the local economy evolved in recent years, and how has it impacted your business?

Increased connectivity, availability of skilled professionals, and proximity to other high-growth sectors have enabled us to expand our services and strengthen client relationships. The city's proactive approach to economic development and its support for professional services have also helped us remain competitive and forward-looking in a rapidly changing market.

What are your predictions for the business landscape in Milton Keynes over the next 5-10 years?

Milton Keynes has experienced significant economic growth in recent years, positioning itself as one of the most prosperous and dynamic local economies in the UK. Being great for start-ups and businesses relocating to the area – due in part to the travel and innovation hubs – Milton Keynes is poised for substantial transformation over the next decade, driven by ambitious growth strategies and its strategic location. Greater opportunities for collaboration and innovation, especially in tech, logistics, and green industries, which are already thriving locally.

What do people in Milton Keynes not know about your business but you wish they did?

Many in Milton Keynes don't realise the breadth of our services. Beyond audit, tax (both personal and corporate), accounting, we support businesses with outsourcing the finance function, payroll, wealth management, and specialist sector advice (VAT and direct taxes). We're not just accountants—we're long-term partners helping clients grow, adapt, and succeed locally and globally.





Freeths Invests in New City Centre Office

Leading national law firm Freeths has unveiled its new state-of-the-art Milton Keynes office at 450–500 Silbury Boulevard, marking a major investment in the city centre.

The 8,000 sq ft space has been carefully designed to support hybrid working, encourage collaboration, and create a welcoming environment for both clients and colleagues. Among its standout features are sustainable office furniture made from recycled materials, a dedicated faith and wellbeing room, and two outdoor solar-powered pods for collaborative working.

With over 50 colleagues already based in Milton Keynes, the move reflects Freeths' continued growth in the region, its commitment to sustainability, and its focus on employee wellbeing.

Jonathan Hambleton, Managing Partner of Freeths Milton Keynes, said:

"This move marks the start of an exciting new chapter for our team. Our new office reflects the way we want to work; it's a space that will support our people and our clients as we continue to grow and evolve throughout the region."



Holiday Inn Milton Keynes Retains Prestigious Green Key Award

Holiday Inn Milton Keynes City Centre is celebrating after once again achieving the internationally recognised Green Key certification, following a successful application and audit.

Green Key is the leading standard of excellence in environmental responsibility and sustainable operation within tourism. It provides hotels and hospitality businesses with a robust framework to reduce their environmental impact, with standards upheld through rigorous documentation and on-site audits.

By retaining this certification, Holiday Inn Milton Keynes continues to demonstrate its commitment to sustainability, ensuring guests can enjoy their stay knowing the hotel is actively working to minimise its impact on the environment.



Grand Sultan 12th Street

Under new ownership, Sultans Restaurant on 12th Street has reopened with a fresh new look, enhanced dining experience and new name: Grand Sultan.

The restaurant serves Turkish and Arabian-inspired dishes, blending authentic flavours with a welcoming atmosphere.

Mark Schertle, chief operating officer for MERKUR Casino UK



MK Casino to Reopen under new Ownership

The Casino MK is set to reopen in the coming months, following its acquisition by Milton Keynes City Centre based company, MERKUR Casino UK.

MERKUR, who's head office is in Matrix House on North Fourth Street, is one of the nation's leading high street bingo and adult gaming centre operators. This acquisition marks MERKUR's second casino venue in the UK following the successful launch of its Aberdeen Casino in 2023.

In a move that reflects the company's dedication to supporting the local workforce, MERKUR aim to create local jobs for both new, and former employees.

Mark Schertle, chief operating officer for MERKUR Casino UK, said:

"We are pleased to have the opportunity to bring The Casino MK into the MERKUR family. This venue has played a significant role in the local leisure and entertainment market. Our aim is to get the casino open again as quickly and smoothly as possible, and we are, of course, particularly proud to be bringing more jobs to Milton Keynes, which is also the home of our headquarters."

The Milton Keynes venue will undergo enhancements in line with MERKUR's brand standards, offering guests a world-class selection of table games including blackjack, poker, roulette, and the latest slot machine games.

The acquisition forms part of its broader UK growth strategy and reflects its confidence in the long-term future of land-based gaming in the region, consequently building on high quality entertainment.

Mark added, **"We see real potential for casino growth across the UK. Our experience in Aberdeen has shown there is a strong appetite for the kind of experience we deliver – a blend of premium gaming, hospitality, and entertainment. We look forward to bringing that same approach to Milton Keynes."**

Dan Murphy, Centre Director at Xscape Milton Keynes, said:

"The Casino MK has always been a landmark part of Xscape's entertainment offering, and we're delighted to see it returning under new ownership. MERKUR's significant investment will not only restore the venue but transform it into a modern and dynamic destination, strengthening the mix of leisure experiences we offer our visitors. We're very much looking forward to welcoming guests into the new casino when the doors open."





Milton Keynes Welcomes New Landmark Aparthotel

Serviced apartment & aparthotel provider, Your Apartment is opening its largest collection of tech-driven serviced apartments in the UK to date this month (October).

Co-founders of Your Apartment, Charlie & Toby Guest have been working closely with the owners and their developers converting the newly adapted 65 apartments into design-forward short-term rental apartments for leisure and business minded travellers alike looking for a sophisticated stay in Milton Keynes. The property is expected to welcome its first guests in the October 2025.

Director & Co-founder of Your Apartment, Toby Guest has commented:

“Milton Keynes is the UK’s newest city and therefore has reams of potential due to its corporate appeal. With a buzzy weekday demand for serviced apartments in Milton Keynes, it only seemed like a great opportunity to bring our aparthotel concept to the neighbourhood on a scale which we are yet to elsewhere.”

Just a few moments’ walk from Milton Keynes Central, this new venture on North Second Street comprises of

65 new serviced apartments. This includes 11 studios with kitchenettes & ensuite bathrooms, 41 one-bedroom apartments with open plan living, sleeping & dining space, and 13 one-bedroom apartments with separate bedrooms and separate open plan living and kitchen areas.

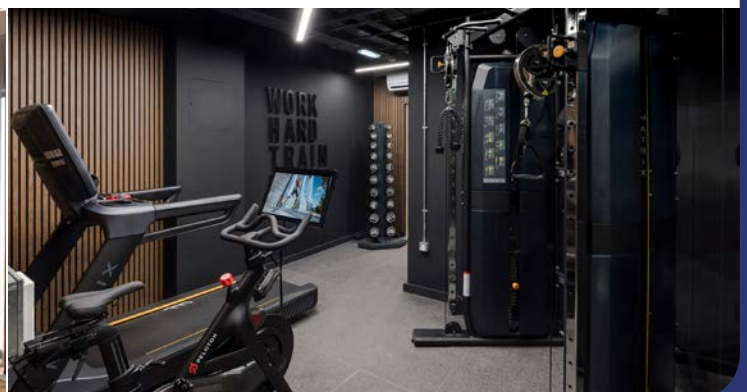
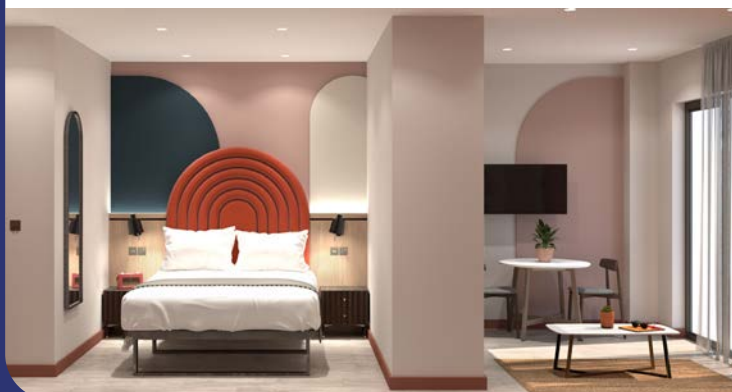
Your Apartment worked with emerging British designers on fresh and vibrant designs as well as teaming up with some of the industry’s leading tech companies to supercharge the new project. This will include offering high spec digital keys and Chromecast TVs — teamed with their signature splash of colour, personality, and eclectic style.

Each apartment will benefit from having a fully integrated kitchen or kitchenette, en-suite bathroom, king-bed/twin bed, space to dine & relax, and super-fast Wi-Fi. There are also 10 onsite private parking spaces—three with electric charging points—plus bicycle storage, a coworking space & artisan micro market.

Regarding the recent announcement, Toby added:

“With many companies having retained a large amount of home working within their workforce it comes as no surprise that landlords and property developers in emerging cities like Milton Keynes are looking for new opportunities for adaptation of their portfolios. Your Apartment is to be the largest aparthotel of its kind to launch in the city.”

The aparthotel will predominantly be a place to call ‘home’ by professionals working away for short to medium periods and on projects in the city. On the weekend, it will provide an affordable and relaxing space for families, friends and couples to stay whilst enjoying many of the activities Milton Keynes has to offer.



New Openings

Søstrene Grene

Midsummer Place Shopping Centre

Søstrene Grene has opened a large store, in the units formerly occupied by Jack Wills and Tommy Hilfiger. It offers a wide range of Scandinavian-inspired homeware, crafts, stationery, and gifts, all presented in a warm and inviting atmosphere.



Hide & Seek Café Bar

Acorn House, Midsummer Boulevard

Hide & Seek offers a fresh, vibrant space for both daytime coffee lovers and evening cocktail enthusiasts. By day, the café serves expertly brewed coffee and light bites, while by night it transforms into a chic bar with a curated cocktail menu.

Hà Nội 12th Street

A new Vietnamese restaurant has opened on 12th street in the unit formerly occupied by Robotazia and Chickaros. By day Hà Nội serves vibrant, flavour packed meals and expertly crafted cocktails. At the weekends the venue transforms into a buzzing late night destination, with live music and DJs.



Smoke & Pepper Midsummer Place

Smoke & Pepper is the latest restaurant to open in Midsummer Place shopping centre. You can expect handcrafted burgers, loaded fries, spice-rubbed chicken and home-made sauces. Located in the old Michael Kors unit, it's proving very popular with shoppers!



Popeyes Midsummer Place

Louisiana-style fried chicken shop, Popeyes has taken over the unit formerly occupied by Leon. It has indoor and outdoor seating options. Patrons can enjoy classic menu staples like chicken sandwiches, tenders, biscuits, Cajun-gravy sides, and spicy wings.

Chaiwala centre:mk

Popular street food and café brand Chaiwala has opened a new branch in centre:mk, selling a range of Indian street food, desserts, and handcrafted drinks, from all-day breakfast dishes to grab-and-go snacks.



Hollister Midsummer Place Shopping Centre

Fashion retailer Hollister has opened a brand-new store in Midsummer Place, bringing a fresh look and feel to the popular brand. Hollister previously had a presence in the centre, but the new store offers a much-improved shopping experience and reflects the brand's latest format, with a brighter layout and updated design.



Midsummer Place Celebrates 25 Years

Milton Keynes' Midsummer Place shopping centre has just celebrated its 25th anniversary — though many locals still fondly refer to it as “the new bit.”

Designed by GMW Architects of London and opened in 2000, Midsummer Place was created as an extension to the city's shopping offer, built across Midsummer Boulevard with a covered and enclosed plaza that still retains the option of being reopened in the future. At its heart was a striking oak tree, carefully incorporated into the design at a raised level, which sadly succumbed to flooding in 2008.

Since its opening, the centre has changed hands several times. Legal & General were the original owners before Intu Properties acquired it in 2013 for £250.5 million. Following Intu's administration in 2020, the site came under the ownership of property group Ellandi in 2021, who reinstated its original name, Midsummer Place.

Today, Midsummer Place remains one of the city's key retail destinations, home to high street favourites, flagship brands, and independent retailers, while continuing to evolve as part of the vibrant Milton Keynes city centre experience.

Midsummer Place Christmas Tree Festival: Can your business decorate the best tree?

Midsummer Place is laying down the challenge to local businesses to create the best dressed Christmas tree in their annual Christmas Tree festival, which runs from 15 November to 24 December 2025.

Previous participants have included Red Bull Racing, Franklins Solicitors, Hays Travel and the Redway Runners.

Participation costs just £300, with all proceeds going into a charity prize fund. Shoppers will vote for their favourites, and the three most popular trees will share the winnings: 50% for first place, 30% for second, and 20% for third.

“Kicking off on 15 November, the Christmas Tree Community Festival offers local businesses not just fantastic visibility in the mall, but the chance to really shine through creativity and community spirit,” said Kirsty McGiff, Marketing Manager at Midsummer Place.

Apply now via the [Midsummer Place website](#)





Smart City Robotics Competition Showcases the Future at centre:mk

Milton Keynes took another step towards cementing its reputation as a leading UK tech hub as centre:mk again hosted the Smart City Robotics Competition, from 23–25 September 2025.

The three-day event, part of Milton Keynes Tech Week, transformed Middleton Hall into a live showcase of cutting-edge robotics and AI, attracting visitors from across the region. Organised by Smart City Consultancy and euRobotics aisbl, the competition brought together top European universities, including Cambridge, Cranfield and King's College London, to demonstrate how robotics can tackle real-world challenges.

Audiences watched robots and drones perform tasks such as taking café orders and delivering them safely, transporting medicine and blood samples, navigating doors using handles, and assisting people with mobility needs by fetching household items.

The competition not only entertained and inspired visitors but also highlighted Milton Keynes' growing influence as a hub for innovation, technology, and education.



Topshop to Return to Milton Keynes in 2026

Fashion brand Topshop is set to return to Milton Keynes, five years after closing all of its UK stores.

From February 2026, Topshop collections will be available in 32 John Lewis stores nationwide, including the Milton Keynes branch.

Topshop disappeared from the high street in 2020 following the collapse of Sir Philip Green's Arcadia Group, which also owned Burton and Dorothy Perkins. The brand has since been acquired by ASOS and relaunched online, with this new partnership marking its first major return to physical stores.



Play New Meta Opens Gaming Hub in Milton Keynes During Tech Week

Esports and gaming venue Play New Meta has opened a new hub in Milton Keynes this September, with the launch timed to coincide with Milton Keynes Tech Week.

The company, which first opened in Islington, London, has built its reputation by offering high-spec gaming PCs, and creating a space that transforms gaming for kids aged 8-16 (SEN friendly). Designed to offer a range of skill building opportunities in gaming that develop teamwork, problem-solving and emotional regulation. As well as in game development where they learn to code, create 3d models & design their own games.

Additionally, they also offer spaces for both casual and competitive play. The venue will also host 1-on-1 training sessions, events, and birthdays making them a destination for gamers of all levels.

Play New Meta's new home is on the ground floor of Ashton House, 401 Silbury Boulevard, in Central Milton Keynes.

The opening marks Play New Meta's first venue outside London and adds a new dimension to Milton Keynes' growing leisure and digital culture offer.

Pavlo Tabachnik, owner of Play New Meta Milton Keynes said: **"We're thrilled about the prospect of creating a new base in Milton Keynes because of its central location and excellent traffic system, making our services accessible to families across the area."**

"The city's strong focus on innovation and technology, along with its growing community of young families, also makes it the perfect match for our youth academy, our primary focus in our new facility. We're excited to add to Milton Keynes' expanding leisure and digital culture by giving children and teenagers a safe, inspiring space to learn, play, and grow through gaming."



Pavlo Tabachnik, owner of Play New Meta Milton Keynes



Unity Place Celebrated with Multiple Award Wins and Nominations

Milton Keynes' landmark destination Unity Place is making waves nationally and regionally with a string of award wins and shortlists, recognising its innovation, sustainability and community impact.

The city centre hub has already scooped the Environment, Social & Governance (ESG) Award at the British Council for Offices (BCO) Midlands Awards, with judges praising how Unity Place **"fosters collaboration and community centred around an internal street with independent retail, restaurants, and a community hall."**

It now goes forward to the National BCO Awards in October, where it will compete for the top ESG accolade.

Unity Place has also been:

- Shortlisted in the Society of Facade Engineering (SFE) Awards 2025 for Innovation (UK), recognising its sustainable design and construction.
- Shortlisted in the British Construction & Infrastructure Awards (BCIA) 2025 for Social Value & Community Impact, highlighting its role in boosting wellbeing and engagement.
- Shortlisted for the 2025 Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) South Awards, placing it among the most notable architectural projects in the UK.

Unity Place's centre experience manager Nathan Kennard said:

"It's fantastic to see Unity Place receiving such well-deserved recognition. These awards highlight the ambition behind the project — to create a place where people come together to work, connect, and thrive. We're particularly proud of the BCO ESG Award win, which reinforces the positive social and environmental impact Unity Place is having right here in Milton Keynes."

With more announcements expected this autumn, Unity Place is continuing to establish itself as a leading example of sustainable, community-focused development — and a destination that's shaping the future of work and city life in Milton Keynes.



Former Argos site could be redeveloped into 18-storey residential tower

Plans have been submitted to redevelop the former Argos head office site into a new residential scheme.

Galliford Try Investments has lodged a full planning application for 489–499 Avebury Boulevard, on the corner of Avebury Boulevard and Saxon Gate, seeking permission to replace the vacant office block with a new building of up to 18 storeys. The development would deliver around 350 "build-to-rent" homes in the city centre.

The existing building, once the headquarters of Argos, became surplus to requirements in 2021 following changes in working practices. It was officially closed in July 2023 and has since remained empty.



Co-Space Milton Keynes Celebrates Two Years in MK

This September marks a major milestone for Co-Space Milton Keynes, which is celebrating two successful years in the city centre.

Since opening its doors at Elder House in September 2023, Co-Space has transformed 19,800 sq. ft. into a vibrant, design-led workspace just steps from Milton Keynes Central Station. The flexible setup offers everything from co-working desks and private offices to stylish meeting rooms and secure parking - all designed to meet the evolving needs of modern businesses.

With plenty of breakout areas, wellness-focused design features such as natural plants and advanced fresh air systems, plus a calendar of daily treats and monthly themed events, members enjoy an environment that blends productivity with creativity, comfort, and collaboration.

The approach has clearly struck a chord. Members praise not only the quality of the facilities but also the warm, attentive team and the thriving network of like-minded professionals.



"It's more than just a workspace – it's a thriving community," said Lal Tawney, Director at Whitecap Consulting, who has been based at Co-Space MK since day one.



Michelle Theuma, Managing Director at Concept Onyx Recruitment, added: **"The office is modern, bright and chic, a brilliant place to bring candidates and clients. The team really go above and beyond to make it feel welcoming and professional."**



And for Emerson de Queiroz, Managing Director at Westminster Legalisation Services Ltd, the experience has been so positive that his business has already signed up for another two years: **"It's such a professional yet friendly space – the kind that's hard to find elsewhere."**

Looking ahead, Co-Space Milton Keynes is committed to continuing its support for the city's business community, providing flexible, inspiring and collaborative space where companies of all sizes can thrive.

Slug & Lettuce

The Slug & Lettuce at The Hub has officially reopened its doors following a stylish makeover. The popular bar has undergone a series of upgrades, including the installation of a brand-new bar on the upstairs level, giving visitors a fresh space to enjoy cocktails, food and socialising. The outdoor area has been given a stunning new look ahead of the autumn season, while inside has had a touch of sparkle, with fresh paintwork, updated booth covers and refreshed décor, ensuring a brighter and more welcoming atmosphere for guests.



Walk With Your Dreams: Colour and Creativity Arrive at Station Square

Milton Keynes has welcomed a major new public artwork in Station Square, as residents and visitors came together on 2 October to celebrate the unveiling of *Walk With Your Dreams* by globally acclaimed British-Nigerian artist and designer Yinka Ilori MBE.



Artist and Designer Yinka Ilori MBE. Photograph: Kane-Hulse

Commissioned by Milton Keynes Development Partnership (MKDP) and Milton Keynes City Council, the large-scale installation is integrated into the square's flooring and transforms one of the city's busiest arrival points into a vibrant and welcoming space. Inspired by Nigerian textiles and the character of Milton Keynes itself, the bold patterns also serve a practical purpose, helping to guide pedestrians towards the city centre.

The launch event brought Station Square to life with an afternoon of colour, music and performance, featuring the African Diaspora Foundation Dance Group, a special performance of *My City* by local musician Sheniah Asiamah, a new poem from poet Maureen Onwunali, and a showcase by the SLQY Collective of artists, poets and musicians. A live DJ kept the celebrations moving, making the unveiling a truly memorable community moment.

The artwork is complemented by a striking new planting scheme in the square, with species carefully chosen for their aesthetic appeal, biodiversity benefits, and sustainability.

Nicola Sawford, Chair of MKDP, said:

"We're proud to be making this substantial commitment in the city centre which will transform the experience of everyone who visits. The design gives Station Square the boost it needs to become a welcoming, vibrant and memorable space for residents, visitors and those discovering the city for the first time.

Station Square is an incredibly important space and complements our wider plans to create a modern and deserving city centre, including our proposals to create a new live entertainment and events venue at the Old Bus Station. Bringing these projects together will give local people public spaces they can be proud of and create a strong first impression to our growing city."

CLlr Shanika Mahendran, Cabinet Member for Planning and Placemaking, added:

"This is much more than a stunning piece of art, it's a real celebration of our city's creativity and diversity. Station Square is the gateway to our city and this installation welcomes everyone with colour, culture and inspiration. I'm really looking forward to the launch which will bring our communities together to celebrate something truly unique."

City Centre Policing Update

Milton Keynes LCU proudly announces the official launch of its dedicated Retail Crime Team, established in support of Operation Purchase.

This newly formed team comprises one Sergeant and six Police Constables, with a focused mission to target the most prolific shoplifters and high-impact retail locations across Milton Keynes.

This strategic investment enhances their ability to build strong partnerships within the retail community, pursue long-term interventions for repeat offenders, and support crime prevention initiatives. It also enables the development of collaborative relationships with local businesses to improve safety and reduce retail crime.

The team commenced operations on **8th September 2025**, bringing with them a wealth of experience and a shared passion for achieving the best possible outcomes.



Sergeant Tom Neilson will oversee the team's day-to-day operations, including officer deployment and case supervision. With over 23 years of service—all within Milton Keynes—and six years as a Neighbourhood Sergeant, Tom brings deep local knowledge and leadership to the role.

Supporting him are **PC Joe Swan**, **PC Nazia Hussain**, and **PC Tania Opris**, who have been instrumental in shaping the foundation of Operation Purchase since January 2025. Their proactive engagement with the business community has already made a significant impact.

Joining the team this month are **PC Finley Murden-Simpson**, **PC Samuel Emberton-Jones**, and **PC Olliver Gill-Hammond**, further strengthen their operational capacity.

Additionally, **PCSO Michelle Michel** and **PC Benjamin Warner** provide vital administrative support, including initial reviews of reported shoplifting offences and maintaining essential victim contact.

This team will specialise in addressing repeat offending through the use of anti-social behaviour legislation, including Criminal Behaviour Orders and civil injunctions, alongside targeted deterrents aimed at reducing reoffending among the most persistent offenders.

Enforcement Since the start of Sept 2025

- 21 Arrests for shoplifting offences.
- Secured 53 charges against our most prolific offenders.
- Seven offenders remanded to prison.
- Engagement activities with retailers.
- High visibility foot patrols around CMK shopping centre including OP SERVATOR and plain clothes deployments.
- Improved positive outcomes of shoplifting offences to 27% (Since April 2025)

To look out for in the coming months

- Engagement events across Milton Keynes (DISC sign up/have your say/crime prevention workshops along with inputs from officers around best evidence).
- Enhanced NHPT training for OP PURCHASE officers.
- Continued high visibility patrols working closely with the My-MK BID Bobbies, CMK and Midsummer Security teams.



Report a Crime

Emergency? Always dial 999

Non-Emergency?

Call 101 or report at

www.thamesvalley.police.uk

Licensed Venues Invited to Join Barwatch and Help Shape Safer Nights



Licensed venues across Milton Keynes are encouraged to join **Barwatch**, the monthly forum that brings the city's nightlife community together to share updates, intelligence, and ideas. The meetings take place at 10am on the first Thursday of every month at **Midsummer Tap** on 12th Street and provide a vital opportunity to stay informed about what's happening across the city centre.

Run by My-MK and chaired by Sam Kelman (Moon Under Water's General Manager), Barwatch offers updates from Thames Valley Police, Milton Keynes City Council, licensing teams, and special guest speakers. It's the place to keep your finger on the pulse of local nightlife and to work collaboratively on keeping venues safe, welcoming, and successful.

This year also marks an important milestone with the signing of a new Information Sharing Agreement (ISA) with Thames Valley Police. As a result, Barwatch members now use the secure DISC platform to share details of banned individuals and incidents. With its dedicated Barwatch section and chat function, DISC allows venues to act quickly and avoid potentially volatile situations.

Each meeting also provides a chance to review recent incidents, spot trends, and support one another — as well as to promote upcoming events and offers from levy-paying businesses through the MyMiltonKeynes media platforms.



Fred Roche Gardens Awarded Prestigious Green Flag

Fred Roche Gardens in Milton Keynes City Centre has been awarded a Green Flag Award for the first time, recognising it as one of the UK's best-managed and most welcoming green spaces. Run by environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy, the Green Flag scheme celebrates parks and open spaces that are safe, clean, well-maintained, and that actively support biodiversity and community engagement.

Situated behind the Church of Christ the Cornerstone, Fred Roche Gardens is a peaceful city centre oasis, with split-level gardens, seating areas, public art, and architecture.

"My team is delighted that Fred Roche Gardens has achieved Green Flag status," said Cllr Jennifer Wilson-Marklew, Cabinet Member for the Public Realm at Milton Keynes City Council. **"This award recognises the hard work of council staff, volunteers, and partners. It's a testament to the value of our green spaces and the joy they bring to residents and visitors alike."**

My-MK is proud to play a key role in maintaining the gardens along with Green Gym volunteers, thanks to funding by Milton Keynes City Council.



Look Again Trail Expands Across Milton Keynes City Centre

Milton Keynes' Look Again arts and heritage trail has been extended, with eight new information boards and over 20 additional artwork plaques now on display across the city centre.

First launched in 2024, Look Again highlights Milton Keynes' distinctive art, architecture, design, and the stories of the people who shaped the city. The trail now stretches from Station Square to Campbell Park, with each sign featuring a QR code linking to www.lookagainmk.city, where users can access detailed histories of individual artworks, buildings, green spaces, and the creatives behind them.

Developed by Milton Keynes City Council with funding from local developers, the trail has been delivered in partnership with Buckinghamshire Archives, the Milton Keynes City Discovery Centre, and Living Archive Milton Keynes.

"We've got a unique story to tell here in Milton Keynes and Look Again is a brilliant way of helping people rediscover the city's design, heritage, and art," said Cllr Shanika Mahendran, Cabinet Member for Planning and Placemaking. **"The new additions make the trail even more engaging, and I encourage everyone to get involved and see the city from a fresh perspective."**



Tech Week Showcases Milton Keynes as the UK's Home of Technology

Milton Keynes has once again proven itself as the UK's home of innovation, as Tech Week 2025 brought together entrepreneurs, students, industry leaders and global businesses for a city-wide celebration of technology, robotics and artificial intelligence.

Organised by Milton Keynes City Council, the week was sponsored by city centre businesses Aiimi, headquartered at 100 Avebury Boulevard, and Santander UK, with Unity Place hosting many of the headline events.

Across the programme, attendees enjoyed inspiring speakers, hands-on demonstrations, live robotics challenges and debates on the technologies shaping our future. Highlights included:

- Red Bull Racing showcasing the engineering behind F1 innovation, the RB17 hypercar and its world-class operations.
- The official UK launch of New Meta, a new chain of high-tech gaming hubs.
- The MK Business Leaders Tech Summit, tackling the biggest opportunities and challenges facing the UK's tech economy.
- The Smart City Robotics Competition at centre:mk, where top European universities tested their robots in real-world scenarios.

With more than 2,400 tech businesses generating £3.4 billion in GVA and one in three jobs now linked to technology, Milton Keynes is one of the UK's fastest-growing and most dynamic economies.



Goodbye Umbrellas, but YES to Lasting Change

The vibrant canopy of 400 rainbow umbrellas that brightened Midsummer Place has been taken down, but the legacy of the Milton Keynes Umbrella Project lives on through the Milton Keynes Neurodiversity Charter.

This is a lasting commitment to celebrating difference and promoting inclusivity across the city. Open to individuals, groups, schools, and businesses, the charter calls on the community to embrace neurodiversity where we live, work and visit.

Signing the charter doesn't mean making huge changes overnight. Instead, it's about committing to small, meaningful steps that together make Milton Keynes a more inclusive city. Organisations who sign up receive a certificate to display proudly and can choose to have their logo featured on the Umbrella Project website. Find out how your organisation can get involved and sign the Charter today at mkumbrellaproject.org



Charities invited to apply for Franklins £50 Challenge 2026

Franklins Solicitors is calling on local charities to apply to become beneficiaries of the Franklins £50 Challenge 2026.

Now in its eighth year, the Challenge has become a much-anticipated fundraising campaign in the region, connecting businesses and charities to raise vital funds and awareness under the banner: Start Small, Grow Big. Make a Difference.

The 2026 Challenge will run from 23rd February to 29th May 2026 and will once again support twelve local charities. Charities have until Friday 3 October 2025 to submit their nominations.

The concept is simple: Franklins provides participating businesses with £50 of seed funding, which they are challenged to grow into as much money as possible for their chosen charity over a three-month period. From bake sales to skydives, the creativity and enthusiasm of the teams have made the Challenge a community favourite.

In 2025, a record-breaking 57 teams raised over £59,000 for twelve charities across Milton Keynes, Northampton, and the surrounding areas – the most successful year to date.



Charities based in Milton Keynes, Northampton, or the surrounding areas are encouraged to apply here.

Businesses, organisations and individuals can also register to take part in the challenge as a team on www.franklins50.co.uk.

About MyMK

As a Business Improvement District (BID), MyMK is a business-led, not-for-profit organisation focused on enhancing the environment, services, and opportunities within our defined BID area. With over 330 BIDs operating across the UK, we are proud to be part of this dynamic network, delivering projects and services that matter most to local businesses.

Funded by a mandatory levy on businesses with a rateable value of £50,000 or more within our BID area, we work tirelessly to ensure that Milton Keynes City Centre continues to grow as a place where businesses can thrive. For those outside the BID area, we also offer the opportunity to join as voluntary members, allowing more of our community to benefit from the initiatives we champion.

Your BID Team

Chief Executive

Jill Farnsworth

Jill@mymiltonkeynes.co.uk

Marketing Director

Charlotte Pearson

Charlotte@mymiltonkeynes.co.uk

Finance & Office Manager

Cassy Staal

Cassy@mymiltonkeynes.co.uk

Public Realms & Operations Manager

Rob Boiling

Robert@mymiltonkeynes.co.uk

Marketing & Business
Engagement Manager

Joanne McClaren

Joanne@mymiltonkeynes.co.uk

City Centre Safety & Operations Lead

Sam Bradley

sam@mymiltonkeynes.co.uk

Contact

01908 395 099

info@mymiltonkeynes.co.uk

report@mymiltonkeynes.co.uk

—milton
keynes

BUSINESS
IMPROVEMENT
DISTRICT



*This Magazine
has been produced
on recycled paper.
Please recycle
after use.*