

Milton Keynes 2023 Year in Review



**Milton
Keynes.**
Better by design

Review of 2023

As the year draws to a close, we're sharing just a few of the business news stories, events and achievements we've been involved with through 2023.

It's been another busy year for Milton Keynes.

The city's global reputation as a centre for innovation grew with the world's first ever global AI Safety Summit at Bletchley Park, by hosting the European Robotics League, and new technology trials.

We marvelled at another successful IF: Milton Keynes International Festival, cheered as Leah Williamson received Freedom of the City and as Oracle Red Bull Racing picked up more trophies, and we welcomed His Majesty The King to formally mark Milton Keynes' newly conferred city status.

Business updates

centre:mk new openings

- **Pho**, the Vietnamese street food group
- **Mango**, the womenswear brand
- **Reiss**, premium fashion brand
- **Phase Eight**, womenswear brand opened a flagship concept store

Co-Space, flexible workspace operator signed a profit share lease for its third UK site at Elder House

Da Vinci Cafe, a new independent café opened on Queensway, Bletchley

Huel, nutritionally complete food brand agreed a lease on 71,000 sq ft manufacturing and distribution facility

Kutchenhaus, German kitchen retail franchise opened a new store on Aylesbury Street in Fenny Stratford

Lambert Smith Hampton (LSH), a national commercial property consultancy, moved into new office space at CEG's Witan Studios

Metal Work UK a global leader in industrial automation components acquired new premises in Wolverton Mill

Policy Expert, home insurance company, opened its new Home Insurance headquarters in Exchange House

Business updates

Red-Button, cyber-security company opened their UK office in central Milton Keynes

Renewi, the leading international waste-to-product company, officially opened its flagship new headquarters in Wavendon

Santander, moved into their newly built flagship UK technology hub known as Unity Place

SHOCAL, a new local entrepreneur hub opened on Aylesbury Street in Fenny Stratford. The hub operates as a shop and workshop space, housing 27 small businesses from the local area

Tenpin, one of the largest ten-pin bowling brands, opened a centre in the former Staples unit

Tesla, electric car maker has taken a lease on one of the modern sites at Merton Drive

Economic Recovery Plan

This £3.5 million award winning programme of investment was set up to intensively support the MK economy from 2020 to 2024.

To date we have:

- Supported more than **6,000 Milton Keynes residents**
- **Invested £456,683** into schemes benefitting Milton Keynes organisations



Economic Recovery Plan

2023 highlights

Supported **300+ businesses** and **2000+ residents**

15 new schemes established

50+ businesses benefitted from a NetZero-Scheme with Partners at Ngage Solutions, providing carbon foot-printing advice and green infrastructure support

1,400 students were invited to Santander Unity Place for **MK Innovates** by Women Leaders, showcasing the city's STEM-based organisations, sponsored by the city council



Economic Recovery Plan

2023 highlights

228 people received diversity and inclusion training

130 women trained in IT, CV and recruitment

£112,000 invested directly into the MK start-up community

77 founders placed in a pitching network with Angel Investors (highest successful pitch £125k)

MK Investor Group rated as UK #1 with a **50% success rate** (national average is 11%)

Launch of the **MK-Tech Fund** where five businesses will receive £7,000 each to grow



January/February

His Majesty The King received a warm welcome as he visited to formally mark Milton Keynes' **city status**.

Lionesses Captain Leah Williamson became the first recipient of Freedom of the City of Milton Keynes.

City council secures funding for Advanced Very Rapid Transit, a new concept in mass transit using automated vehicles on dedicated pathways

March/April

New Invest MK website launched at www.investmiltonkeynes.co.uk

The city council provided funding to protospace, an established community led initiative to support, connect and grow the tech ecosystem. Details of workshops, events and a bi-monthly newsletter are at [Technology in Milton Keynes - Protospace](#)



Milton Keynes was named the top city for job opportunities by ciphr, a HR software provider, comparing factors such as average earnings, salary growth, employment rate and SME density. Read more [here](#)

A demo day was set up by the city council to demonstrate live trials from eight South Korean innovative SMEs. A first of its kind and an opportunity to explore how solutions could be applied to UK challenges.

May/June

The city council was a proud sponsor of All Flows - a new two day creative, design and tech festival - which brought an international line-up of inspirational speakers and delegates to Milton Keynes.

“I’ve spent a brilliant creative couple of days at the first All Flows conference in Milton Keynes.”

“It’s not often you go to a two-day conference and see all the speakers deliver amazing presentations..”



We hosted a delegation from Chandigarh, India to learn about MK's Smart City approach and its innovative approach to sustainable travel.

The South Central Institute of Technology opened its refurbished headquarters in Bletchley, providing high quality learning environments for digital pioneers.

July/August

There was a phenomenal lineup at this year's IF: Milton Keynes International Festival, attended by 56,000 people with 180,000 more experiencing public performances.

The Fast Growth Cities group, of which Milton Keynes is a member, launched 'The case for support and investment report' which shows how the group could help the UK become a Science Superpower.



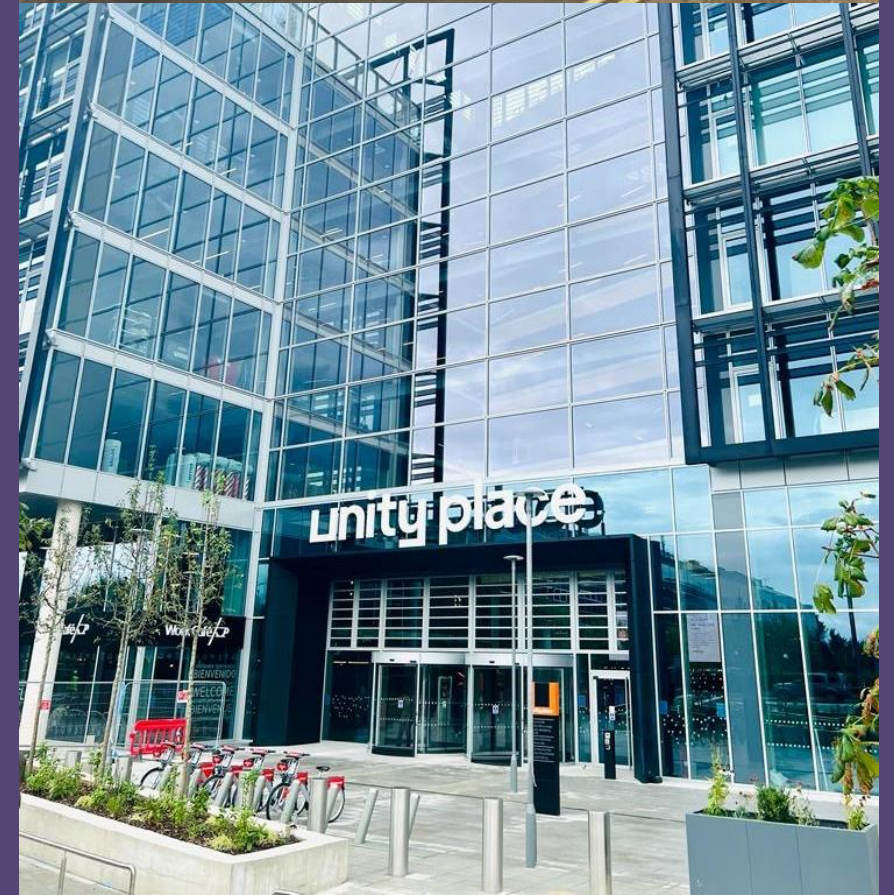
MK was named the nation's most competitive city in the UK Competitive Index for 2023 which measures places for their attractiveness to investors and businesses.

September/October

The European Robotics League competition returned to Milton Keynes in September, at centre:MK. The city council hosted a reception for competitors and a Smart City Robotics Panel discussion at Unity Place.

Milton Keynes was chosen to trial self-driving shuttles in the largest trial of its kind.

Santander opened its UK headquarters a flagship UK technology hub in September. The impressive property will provide accommodation for 7,000+ workers, including some co-working spaces.



November/December

Bletchley Park made history once again when world leaders and leading tech minds came together for the world's first global AI Safety Summit, creating The Bletchley Declaration; a shared understanding of the opportunities and risks posed by frontier AI and the need for governments to work together.

Oracle Red Bull Racing secured the 2023 Formula 1 Constructors' Championships title for the sixth time, since they entered the series in 2005 having dominated the 2023 championship.

'It's been the most amazing race for us and most amazing year. It's a testament to these guys – all the men and women back in the factory at Milton Keynes.'

Team Principal Christian Horner

THE BLETCHLEY DECLARATION

WORLD FIRST AGREEMENT ON SAFE
AND RESPONSIBLE DEVELOPMENT OF
FRONTIER AI

- 28 COUNTRIES FROM ACROSS THE
GLOBE, AND THE EU
- IDENTIFYING AI OPPORTUNITIES AND
RISKS
- BUILDING A SHARED UNDERSTANDING
OF THESE RISKS
- INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION ON
SCIENCE AND RESEARCH



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