

# Milton Keynes 2022 Year in Review



## INTRODUCTION

As 2022 draws to a close – the year in which Milton Keynes gained ‘City Status’ – we wanted to share some of the business news stories, events and key achievements we have seen throughout the year.

All of these key events have helped to support, shape, and strengthen the Milton Keynes economy, after what has been an unprecedented and challenging couple of years, impacted by COVID-19 restrictions and the recent cost-of-living crisis.

## BUSINESS UPDATES

**Bizerba UK**, an existing Milton Keynes business, who provide weighing, slicing machinery and label printing production for food industries, officially opened its new UK HQ in Milton Keynes.

**Zoho Corporation**, the global software organisation, recently opened its first UK office in Bletchley in June 2022. Creating a new UK team covering roles in sales, pre-sales, account management and marketing, Zoho plans to double the size of its UK team by the end of 2023.

Sachin Agrawal, Managing Director of Zoho UK said: *“We are making significant investments in the UK. It continues to be a strategic market for us and our second largest market after the US, as a country. With these investments we aim to better support our 40,000 customers in the UK in their digital transformation journeys and also strengthen our market leadership. We are happy to be in Bletchley, home of the codebreakers.”*



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**John Lewis** expanded its footprint opening its new 613,000 sq ft warehouse in Fenny Lock. The new site will create 500 new jobs during peak trading times.

Andrew Murphy, the Executive Director of Operations for the John Lewis Partnership, said the warehouse represented “*a fantastic opportunity to power the continued growth of johnlewis.com, ensuring that we can keep pace with customer demand – both for our products and for our wide range of fulfilment and delivery options*”.

**Allianz**, the multi-national financial services company, moved into Witan Gate House in Central Milton Keynes.

**Sekel Tech**, Indian Software company, expanded into the UK and EMEA market by opening an office in Milton Keynes in February 2022. Sekel has set aside £3 million for significant expansion in the UK and EMEA regions.

**Tutti Bambini**, a family-owned nursery furniture company founded over 30 years ago, expanded its operations by acquiring 77,000 sq ft distribution warehouse at Baytree MK in Fenny Lock.

**MK:U Innovation Hub**, run by Cranfield University, opened its doors to the business community on 21 March 2022. The new facility provides support to local businesses and fosters innovation. The space includes a podcasting studio, professional photography studio, flexible workspaces and a design lab with 3D printing facilities.

**SkillsHub**, opened its doors to the business community. The centre is operated in partnership with the South Central Institute for Technology, MK Chamber, the South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership (SEMLEP) and Milton Keynes City Council, along with the city-wide artificial intelligence group, MKAI, Biztech, the city’s technology forum, the Open University and Cranfield University/MK:U.

**Aldi**, the German retailer, opened a new 24,000 sq ft store in Kingston, creating approximately 35 new jobs and making it the tenth new Aldi store to be opened in the region this year.



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**Caljan**, a Danish logistics automotive technology provider, continued its growth within Milton Keynes by opening a new national HQ in Rooksley.

**Ideal Bathrooms**, an existing business within Milton Keynes, acquired a brand new 108,000 sq ft distribution warehouse at Baytree MK in Fenny Lock.

**Sungrow Power**, Chinese global leading inverter and energy storage solution supplier for renewables, has moved from serviced offices in Central Milton Keynes to a permanent base at Moorgate House, where it has taken 3,821 sq ft of space.

**V Group**, market leader in the supply of finished products for cars and vans, moved from Stacey Bushes into its new headquarters in Kiln Farm. The 40,000 sq ft facility will manufacture and despatch more than 1,000 orders a day.

**Cosy Club**, opened its first Milton Keynes site in CMK, a new 6,000 sq ft restaurant spanning two floors '*bringing opulence and decadence to the City Centre*'.

**Leon**, 'naturally fast-food provider', continued its growth by opening a restaurant in Midsummer Place, creating 20 new jobs.



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## RECOGNITIONS

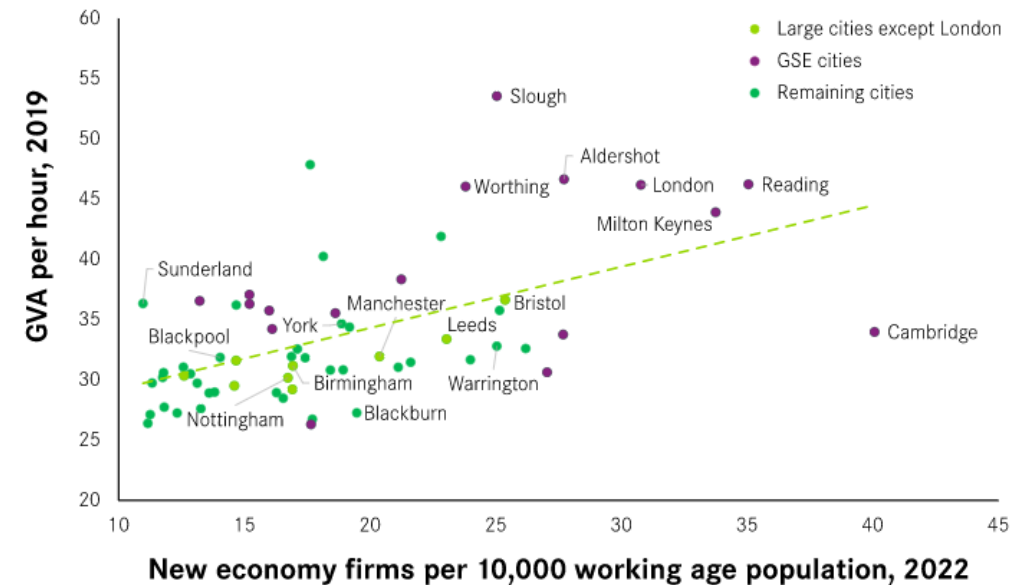
The [UK Powerhouse Study](#), produced by Irwin Mitchell and the Centre for Economics & Business Research (Cebr), analyses 50 of the largest local economies by employment and GVA growth. In the latest report, Milton Keynes was predicted to see year-on-year GVA growth of 2.6% in Q4 2023, the highest predicted growth of any UK city.

The [Whitecap Tech Report](#) found the estimated tech GVA of MK is £3.4bn and that 30% of the total workforce in MK works in the tech sector.

Milton Keynes is leading the way in the UK's new economy. In the December 2022 report, '[At the frontier: The geography of the UK's new economy](#)', the Centre for Cities calculated that Milton Keynes had one of the highest productivities out of all UK cities, with only Reading and Cambridge having more 'new economy businesses' per 10,000 population in 2022

## Figure 10: Cities with more new economy businesses tend to have higher productivity

The relationship between new economy businesses and productivity



Source: The Data City; ONS; Centre for Cities' own calculations.

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## ECONOMIC RECOVERY PROGRAMME

During 2022 we directly supported 300 businesses and 1,350 Milton Keynes residents with our [Economic Recovery Programme](#).

The Economic Recovery Programme funded 27 schemes in 2022. Nine of these schemes are some of our newest partnerships and includes local organisations such as Ngage Solutions, the Connected Places Catapult, Cranfield University, Milton Keynes Melting Pot and Protospace.

Our schemes have included providing [Net Zero MK](#) knowledge and sustainability support to 180 local organisations through our £100,000 partnership with Ngage Solutions. We have also facilitated retail business growth with the Love Local Hub's female entrepreneurs, generating £521,167 back into the local economy after an initial investment of only £83,000.

We supported 100 female start-up owners with £43,000 of funding and partnered with [Incubation Nation](#) who provided an 8-week Business Bootcamp including business reviews, concept validation, cash flow forecast, social media training and business planning.

Additionally, 1,200 MK residents have received intensive up-skilling support through Milton Keynes College.

Many of our partners have been recognised for their achievements both locally and nationally. Bridgman & Bridgman, a local green roofing specialist company, won the BALI National Landscape Award, two RCI National Pitched Roofing Awards and an Environmental Sustainability award from Milton Keynes Business Achievement Awards in 2022. Notably the CEO, Chris Bridgman, was awarded an MBE for Services to the Community.



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## AWARDS

**FSB Awards – Milton Keynes City Council** won the South Central Federation of Small Businesses Local Government Award for the support provided through its Economic Recovery Programme to small businesses.

**LGC Awards – Milton Keynes City Council** were also finalists for the Economic Support category at the LGC awards, one of seven shortlisted nationally.

The Economic Recovery Plan's Women into Work scheme was also profiled by the Local Government Association on International Womens' Day for the support it provided to women in COVID-19 recovery.

## HIGH STREETS PROGRAMME

A funding allocation of £100,000 from the Economic Recovery Plan was established to support town centres across Milton Keynes in driving footfall and economic recovery. Since March 2021, work has taken place between MKCC, Town Councils and Business Associations in high streets across the borough to establish a programme of support to encourage footfall onto the high streets through promotional campaigns and events.

The highlights in 2022 include:

- **Stony Stratford** – Christmas Light Switch on 26 November 2022.
- **Bletchley and Fenny Stratford** – the first ever Bletchley Big Street Eat Festival 31 July 2022.
- **Newport Pagnell** – installed an electronic signage system in the High Street, allowing businesses along the High Street to utilise the signage to promote their events or offers.
- **Wolverton** – firework spectacular 5 November 2022.
- **Olney** – creation of the Olney Retailers Guide and series of adverts in local media encouraging visiting Olney.

## WELCOME BACK FUND

Milton Keynes City Council, using government funding, arranged more than £200,000 of cleansing and beautification works across five High Streets and Central Milton Keynes.



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## 2022 – A YEAR IN REVIEW

### JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2022

#### EXPANSION OF BRIOCHE PASQUIER UK

Food manufacturer Brioche Pasquier UK completed their construction of an 80,000 sq ft extension to their existing factory in Milton Keynes. The expansion has created 130 new jobs within the local community.

Brioche Pasquier came to the UK in 2001 with their first factory being built 14 years later in Milton Keynes.

#### SOUTH CENTRAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY GROUNDBREAKING

Construction began at the South Central Institute of Technology (SCIoT) in Bletchley.

The South Central Institute of Technology provides exceptional learning environments for people from all walks of life, the kind of training and education which the region needs to close the skills gap in tech disciplines.

More than 500 learners have already begun courses at the SCIoT.



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## 5G VISTA SHOWCASE EVENT

A live test of the UK government-backed 5G Vista project took place at Stadium MK and on completion of the trial, a final showcase of the project was held.

The event, organised by MK5G Create, highlighted the city's capabilities and the benefits of having a 5G-enabled smart city network. A broad range of companies showcased their products and applications on a 5G standalone network.

Numerous drones, robots and driverless vehicles were put to work in and around the stadium, demonstrating the potential for Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT), and the low latency and enhanced bandwidth provided by 5G connectivity, which all contributes to making the city smarter.

## OPENING OF NINJA WARRIOR PARK

Ninja Warrior UK opened its latest adventure park in Milton Keynes.

The venue includes a number of physical challenges and an inflatable course perfect for adrenaline junkies.



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**MARCH/APRIL 2022**

## **BUSINESS ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS**

Milton Keynes City Council were proud headline sponsors of the Milton Keynes Business Achievement Awards which took place on 24 March at Stadium MK.

The Awards celebrated the city's business achievements over the previous two years. There were more than 600 guests in attendance and 13 award categories. For the first time in the awards' history, the overall Business of the Year was won by two businesses, Emerging Markets Quality Trials and Naturally Tribal.

## **OPENING OF HOTEL LA TOUR**

Hotel La Tour opened its doors in April 2022.

The £39m investment includes 261 bedrooms, 14,000 sq ft of events space, ten conference rooms, a gym, and a 14th floor restaurant and sky bar, offering the highest viewpoint in the city.

The impressive mirrored steel clad property was designed by PHP Architects and constructed and fitted out by Winvic.

Hotel La Tour is dedicated to enhancing and supporting the development of the city centre, economically and environmentally, with its modern build emphasising sustainability and the creation of 180 local jobs.

## **SANTANDER'S UNITY PLACE CELEBRATES TOPPING OUT**

Unity Place, Santander's new UK headquarters, celebrated its 'topping out' – a milestone during construction when the highest point of a building's structure is completed.

Representatives from the development teams, supply chain and the Milton Keynes community came together to mark the occasion, including Santander, LOM, John Sisk & Sons, Osborne+Co, WSP, Murray & Associates, and Byrne Bros.



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**MAY/JUNE 2022**

## **MILTON KEYNES AWARDED CITY STATUS**

Milton Keynes being officially awarded 'City Status' has been the biggest achievement in 2022.

Milton Keynes was officially recognised as a city after being granted the status as part of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations.

Milton Keynes was one of 38 places across the UK and British Overseas Territories to apply, with eight of these places winning the royal honour of being crowned a city – it's an amazing achievement for Milton Keynes.

Being awarded city status provides a boost to Milton Keynes' local communities and opens up new opportunities for people who live here.

## **THE QUEENS AWARD**

Three businesses in Milton Keynes were awarded a Queen's Award for Enterprise.

These prestigious awards are designed to recognise and encourage outstanding achievements in Innovation, International Trade, Sustainable Development and Promoting Opportunity (through social mobility).

The 2022 award winners in Milton Keynes were successful in two categories:

- International Trade winners were Medical Research Network Ltd and M&M Supplies (UK) PLC.
- Innovation award was won by Dawson Group Plc based in Bletchley.



**Today we collected  
HM The Queen's  
Letters Patent that  
officially makes us the  
City of Milton Keynes**

**We'll be formally  
marking our city  
status later this year**



## MILTON KEYNES ACCELERATOR

The Milton Keynes Accelerator was a great opportunity for small businesses who could help Milton Keynes develop more sustainable transport choices and infrastructure. The companies joined a six-month business acceleration programme where they worked with global leaders and were given unparalleled access to the city as a 'living laboratory'.

The programme was designed to help ten small to medium size enterprises (SMEs) operating in the field of data analysis, 5G or artificial intelligence with a view to developing fresh ideas and technologies.

The SMEs were given the opportunity to work with a consortium of industry partners including Centre:MK, Amey and Socius Development, to provide technical and investment expertise as well as access to state-of-the-art testing facilities.

The Milton Keynes Accelerator was delivered by the Connected Places Catapult in partnership with True Altitude and supported by Milton Keynes City Council.

Deputy Leader of Milton Keynes Council, Cllr Robin Bradburn said: *"This is a significant opportunity for small businesses to learn invaluable lessons through real time testing. They'll also work with industry experts who know exactly how to generate commercial investment for projects with potential. We expect some organisations' plans will take a great leap forward as a result, which will unlock useful intelligence for our city as we work towards greener, better connected and more sustainable transport options."*



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**JULY/AUGUST 2022**

## **UEFA WOMEN'S EURO 2022**

Milton Keynes was proud to host the UEFA Women's EURO 2022 in July. Stadium MK hosted four matches including a semi-final, in what was a record-breaking tournament for women's football.

UEFA Women's EURO 2022 was the biggest women's sporting event in European history, firmly placing Milton Keynes on the international map.

With record breaking crowds in attendance at the games, the event brought economic and social returns for the city, boosting the local economy.



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KEYNES**  
STADIUM MK

FRIDAY 8 JULY, 5PM | GROUP STAGE

SPAIN  -  FINLAND

TUESDAY 12 JULY, 5PM | GROUP STAGE

DENMARK  -  FINLAND

SATURDAY 16 JULY, 8PM | GROUP STAGE

FINLAND  -  GERMANY

WEDNESDAY 27 JULY, 8PM | SEMI-FINAL

WINNER QF2  -  WINNER QF4

**SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2022**

## **MILTON KEYNES TECH ECOSYSTEM REPORT 2022**

Milton Keynes City Council supported Whitecap Consulting and other partners including the Open University, Santander, Milton Keynes College, South Central Institute of Technology, University of Buckingham, Aiimi and Protospace, in creating the MK Tech Ecosystem Report. Written in collaboration with a collection of MK's key tech partners, the report provides great insight into the city's digital and tech environment.

The [2022 Milton Keynes Tech Ecosystem report](#) offers an exciting analysis into the tech ecosystem within Milton Keynes, evaluating the current position, the scale of growth and emerging opportunities across the city.

The report confirms that Milton Keynes has a productive and resilient economy, with a GVA of approximately £14.7bn for 2022, along with a strong and thriving tech sector that demonstrates pockets of exciting innovation. Milton Keynes has an estimated tech workforce of 45,000 people, approximately 2,400 tech-related enterprises and a tech GVA valued at c.£3.4bn for 2022.

## **CELEBRATING CITY STATUS**

A free festival was held in Milton Keynes in October, culminating in a spectacular public event on 8 October to celebrate Milton Keynes becoming a city.

Milton Keynes City Council teamed up with Milton Keynes Islamic Arts and Culture (MKIAC) to present the memorable evening, featuring free live music, dazzling performances and a brilliant light display to mark Milton Keynes being named a city by Queen Elizabeth II as part of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations earlier in the year.

Undoubtedly, with Sam Ryder headlining the free spectacular event to mark this momentous occasion, it drew in the crowds.



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## MKCC ENTERS INTO THE UK'S FIRST FORMAL COUNCIL/RETAIL PARTNERSHIP

centre:mk is a key part of the city centre's offer with footfall exceeding 21 million visits each year and ranking among the top ten national retail and leisure destinations in the UK.

Milton Keynes City Council and centre:mk have entered into the UK's first formal Council/Retail partnership to create an even more welcoming and appealing city centre.

As part of the City Council's wider work to support households and businesses, and create local jobs across the whole city, it has signed an agreement called a 'Memorandum of Understanding' (MoU) with centre:mk – the first of its kind between a local authority and a major shopping centre.

The City Council and centre:mk are particularly keen to create and improve community spaces and are in early discussions about a number of areas that welcome visitors into the centre.

## CITY MARKETING

This year, Milton Keynes City Council worked with Whistlejacket London on a new city mark and brand for Milton Keynes that proudly reflects our city, our heritage, and our forward-thinking attitude.

The new brand "Milton Keynes: Better by Design" was successfully launched in October.

Businesses and organisations across all sectors are able to utilise this marketing material by creating their own mark (in line with the style guide) which can be used alongside their company logos on any literature, brochures or marketing material. The marketing assets are all completely free to use, allowing businesses and residents to celebrate and help to promote our great city.



**NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2022**

## **SOUTH KOREAN START-UPS ACCELERATOR**

Four South Korean start-up companies specialising in sustainable travel chose Milton Keynes to trial their products.

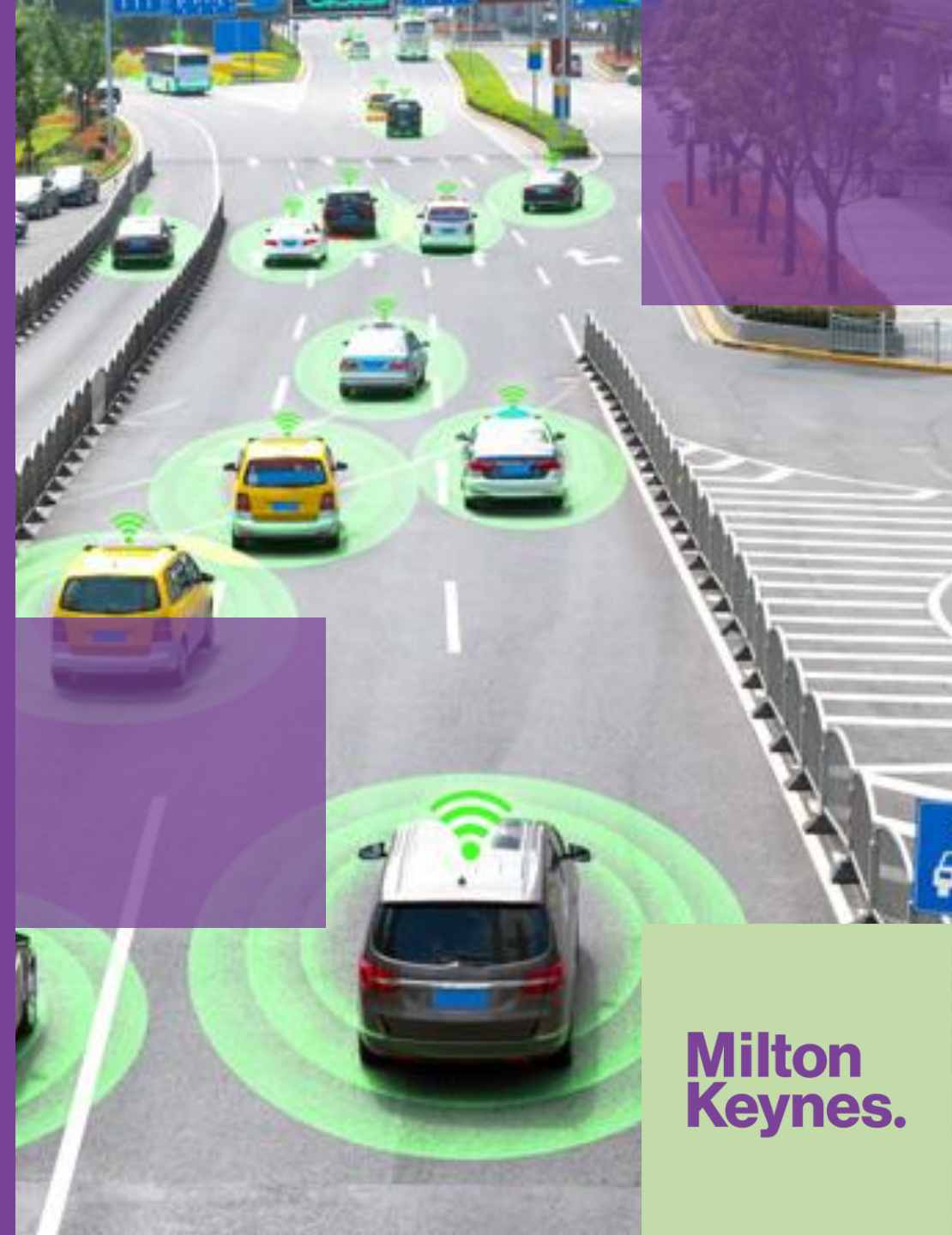
Milton Keynes City Council and the Connected Places Catapult launched a UK Testbed Initiative with the Korean International Trade Association (KITA) to oversee the work. The programme supporting investment to the UK is being run in partnership with SHIFT – London’s new testbed for innovation based in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park – and Foundry Intl, a Luxembourg-based venture builder.

It is part of the City Council’s ambitions to find innovative and sustainable solutions to make it even easier to get around MK, building on its world-leading smart city reputation.

The South Korean start-ups visited Milton Keynes in November and were provided with a tour to see some of the smart technology currently in use in the city. They were particularly impressed with the UK’s first standalone 5G network that was used in MK to power up robots, medical devices, driverless cars and energy saving devices.

Businesses selected were Deeping Source, software that protects personal information on videos and images; Nota AI, camera-based traffic monitoring solution with real-time processing; QiSens an artificial intelligence image analysis for green and solar panels and; WiPowerOne – a wireless power charging technology for electric vehicles.

Leader of MK Council, Cllr Pete Marland said: *“We’re proud to welcome these international businesses to our city to trial their technologies which could revolutionise the way we get around. Milton Keynes is a world- renowned smart city that many other places look up to and this latest trial will help us deliver on our ambitions to make it even easier to get about here in a green and sustainable way.”*



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## SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY

We supported local independent businesses in the run up to Small Business Saturday on 3 December.

Small Business Saturday is a national campaign which encourages people to 'shop local' and to support their local economies. Milton Keynes City Council filmed a [short video](#) with three small businesses to help promote the advantages of shopping locally. Social media channels were used to showcase the small and independent businesses that call Milton Keynes their home.

Milton Keynes is home to thousands of small businesses, independents, and entrepreneurs and this was an excellent opportunity to promote small businesses and to celebrate the contribution they make to our city and our High Streets.

## MKCC SUCCESS IN DRONE TRIAL FUNDING

Milton Keynes City Council successfully secured £1m of government funding to develop and deploy drones that could speed up the delivery of vital medicines, ease road congestion and reduce carbon emissions globally.

The City Council will work with [Cranfield University's Drone Innovation Hub](#) and [Satellite Applications Catapult Westcott DronePort](#) to test and trial new drone-based services that work alongside current delivery services and autonomous vehicles.

Milton Keynes has built a strong reputation as a world leader in future technologies and this latest trial will help create more high-tech jobs for local people.



# YEARS *of* SMALL BUSINESS LOVE

SMALL BUSINESS  
SATURDAY®  
3<sup>RD</sup> DECEMBER

## RED BULL HOMERUN; 25K+ VISITORS TO THE CITY CENTRE

Two titles, 17 wins, 28 podium finishes and the largest haul of points ever scored in a single season made the 2022 Formula One campaign Oracle Red Bull Racing's most successful year ever.

The team headed home to celebrate the collective success on their very own doorstep, in Milton Keynes.

On 10 December, drivers Max Verstappen and Sergio Pérez were joined by fan favourites and professional stunt drivers to put the team's high-performance cars through their paces in Central Milton Keynes.



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Better by design