



**Building a better  
Bishop Auckland  
for everyone**

issue

**4**

# A busy market town bursting with opportunity.



## It's exciting times in Bishop Auckland!

Some fantastic progress has been made in the town since the last edition of the newsletter, with a wide range of projects beginning to take off.

Councillors have given STACK Bishop Auckland the green light and, on page 3, we give you a sneak peek at how the venue will look on the high street.

Now that the scheme has been granted planning approval, work will begin on demolishing the former WH Smith and Mothercare units so that construction can begin.

Further down the street, at 47 Newgate, the news has been announced that a well-loved Bishop Auckland business, Caps Off, will be opening a new venue on the ground floor (see page 5), helped by our Conservation Area Grant Scheme. It is great that local businesses are taking advantage of the funding opportunities available to them.

Throughout summer, we hope you find the time to visit the town centre. Why not pop down on the last Friday night of every month and visit the new Street Food Market (see page 7). Each month delicious dishes are on offer, as well as family activities and late-night entertainment.

We're also looking forward to the return of Kynren later in the summer and welcoming visitors from across the region to the town.

**There really is a lot to look forward to in Bishop Auckland over the coming months.**



### Our partners

Bishop Auckland Heritage Action Zone  
The Auckland Project  
Eleven Arches  
The Zurbaran Trust  
Bishop Auckland Town Council  
Bishop Auckland College

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Published by Durham County Council





# Sneak peek at STACK



## Developers have given a first glimpse of how an exciting new leisure operation will look once it is completed.

Earlier this year, councillors gave the green light to STACK Bishop Auckland, a purpose-built two storey building with a roof terrace at Newgate Street.

The mixed-use building will house local independent food traders and bars, as well as having a space which will be used for a wide variety of live entertainment.

Now that the scheme has been given planning approval, work will begin on demolishing the former WH Smith and Mothercare units so that construction can begin.

The bright and modern building will include all the elements that have become part of STACK's signature brand, with the belief that it will help boost the local economy as a whole.

Neill Winch, CEO of STACK, is delighted to be able to showcase how the finished outlet will look.

**"We know a lot of people are very curious about how STACK Bishop Auckland will fit into the area and hopefully these images give a real flavour of what they can expect,"** he said.

**"We are very excited about what this will mean for Bishop Auckland and we have already had an incredibly positive response to the development.**

**"We are looking forward to getting started and bringing this plan to fruition."**

Work is due to begin in the near future, with a view to STACK Bishop Auckland opening its doors in spring 2024.

Cllr Elizabeth Scott, Durham County Council's Cabinet member for

economy and partnerships, said:

**"We are very pleased with the first glimpse of how STACK Bishop Auckland is going to look on Newgate Street.**

**"Unlike other STACK venues, Bishop Auckland's will be built within an existing development, but it will still be very much recognisable as a STACK venue.**

**"We are really looking forward to seeing STACK on the high street as part of our ambitious plans to regenerate the town. The new leisure offer will serve as a vibrant attraction, highlighting the town as a lively destination, bringing in visitors from all over County Durham and beyond."**

The project is being supported by the Future High Streets Fund.



# Your questions answered

**We appreciate the time and commitment given by everyone who attends our various public meetings and consultation events. It's great to be able to show progress updates with residents and businesses and the feedback we receive is always helpful in guiding our work.**

**Here are some of your frequently asked questions - answered.**

**Q – What are plans for areas such as Vinovium House?**

A – Many of the buildings around the town are being looked at as part of the town centre diversification scheme. We know that there are some buildings that need to be repurposed and, over the past 18 months, Durham County Council has been working with developers to look at how these sites can be used to bring jobs and opportunities to the town. These conversations are ongoing.

**Q – How can we make public spaces in the town greener?**

A – One of the areas we have had to take into consideration when applying for funding has been how we will contribute to Net Zero ambitions, so the issue has been given some significant thought. There are a number of schemes to improve public realm areas within the town and lacing of trees and greenery is a major are part of this work.

**Q – Are the 100 jobs proposed at STACK being sourced locally?**

A – Yes STACK is working alongside Durham County Council to ensure that local people can fill the vacancies.

**Q – The number of retail businesses in the town is decreasing, why is this?**

A – The decline of retail premises is a general trend on high streets across the country, including in Bishop Auckland. Changing customer habits, such as an increase in online shopping, particularly following the pandemic, mean that high streets are having to change and adapt. But the future cannot be based on hospitality alone, retail outlets will still have a place in our towns and we will see more leisure facilities as well as units providing access to services.

**Q – As there any plans to develop the old Beales site?**

A – This redevelopment of the site is part of our plans. However, investment will be required in order to do this. We have had discussions with a number of potential developers and hope that other investment in the town, such as that from STACK and other ventures, will act as catalyst for the redevelopment of the former Beales store.

**Q – Are there any plans to provide an alternative route to stop wagons and Heavy Goods Vehicles travelling through the Market Place?**

A – There are currently no such plans. However, the improved infrastructure provided by the Eastern Access Corridor alongside better traffic management at Tindale should reduce the number of such vehicles through the town centre.



# Caps Off is coming back to town

**Bishop Auckland company Caps Off has announced it will soon be returning to the town centre with an exciting new venture that will also mean the creation of 15 new jobs.**

As part of the vast redevelopment of 47 Newgate Street, **Caps Off** will be opening a bar and restaurant on the ground floor of the building. Work is already underway on the other two floors to convert the old Burton menswear store into luxury apartments.

The 47 Newgate Street project has been supported through the Property Reuse Fund with the restoration work being funded by Historic England and Durham County Council through the Conservation Area Grant Scheme, particularly to restore the shop front and historic façade of what will now be the new Caps Off venue.

As well as selling a selection of locally produced craft beer, cider and spirits, the new venue will be open all day serving morning coffees and brunch as well as dinner and evening cocktails.

The kitchen will be offering tasty dishes inspired from across the world. It is hoped an open flame grill will bring something new to the food offer in the town with an Argentinian, Middle Eastern and Mediterranean influenced menu.

The Caps Off brewing company was started around four years ago by childhood friends David Garnett and Ali Wild, who both grew up in Bishop Auckland.

The pair pride themselves on creating relaxed and informal spaces which are family friendly – including four-legged family members, as dogs are welcome in all of their venues.

The business has a small team who currently operate out of the taproom at Unit 4, Century Court. Here they



Ali Wild and Rhys Smith, who has just recently been employed as head brewer.

hold a range of events from Lairy Laughs Comedy Night to live music and DJs. Something which will also be on offer in the new venue.

Once the work on the new site is complete, the current taproom will remain open but with a smaller capacity for events. This will allow for more tanks in the taproom to growing demand.

The new venture will provide an opportunity to expand the team, creating at least 15 jobs in the town.

Ali Wild told us: **“As a Bishop Auckland business, it’s fantastic to know we are coming back into the town centre. High streets are changing to become less retail and more leisure focused in every town and city – and we want to be part of that.**

**“We hope our new venue will bring a relaxed informal social space, where people can enjoy some good food and the best local produce.”**

If you would like to host your next event in the taproom, you can book space online at [www.capsoff.co.uk](http://www.capsoff.co.uk) or you can contact the team direct by email at [brewery@capsoff.co.uk](mailto:brewery@capsoff.co.uk)



# Project updates



## New walking and cycling routes

We are set to develop new walking and cycling routes along a 19-kilometre stretch of the former Stockton and Darlington Railway, which includes Bishop Auckland. We are investing £7 million in the creation of the routes from the government's Levelling Up Fund. The new routes will be in place ahead of celebrations marking the 200th anniversary of the Stockton and Darlington line in 2025.

The routes will involve the creation of walking and cycling paths between Witton Park and the council's boundary with Darlington Borough, south of Newton Aycliffe. Work will begin in the summer and the aim is for it to be complete by March 2024.

## Junction improvements

Work is underway to consider potential improvements to the roundabouts at Kingsway/Princes Street junction, Coundongate roundabout and junctions near to the Auckland Retail Park. These improvements will take into consideration the needs of all road users while ensuring the roads are ready for the predicted increase in visitors to the town.

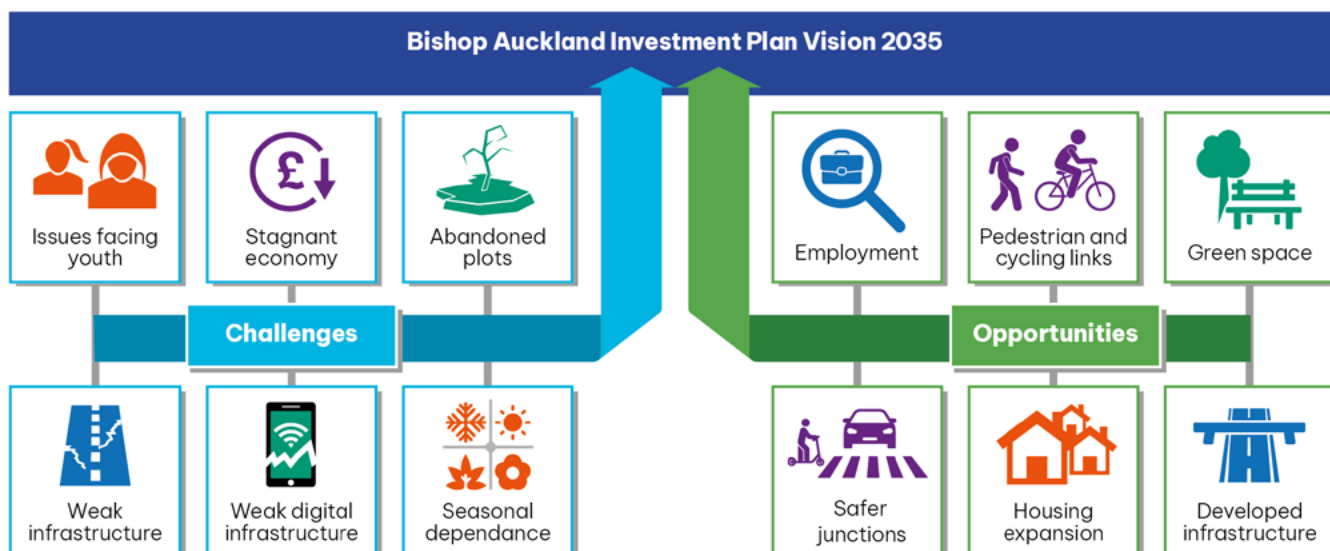
## Bus station proposals – thanks for your feedback

Earlier this year, a public consultation took place on proposals to build a new bus station and surface level car park the existing bus station site. We received a strong response, both online and at the public events we hosted. Around 200 people attended the drop-in sessions and more than 300 people completed questionnaires. Following feedback from the consultation, the original designs have been amended, where possible, to reflect the responses received and a planning application has now been submitted.

You can keep up to date with progress on all of the projects and more at [www.bishopaucklandregeneration.com](http://www.bishopaucklandregeneration.com)

## Achieving the vision

There is so much happening across Bishop Auckland. The below diagram shows how all the projects underway in the town link together to achieve the vision we have set out to achieve by 2035.





## Local organisations pull together to save street food market

**With delicious dishes on offer, family activities and late night entertainment, a new Street Food Market is creating a buzz in Bishop Auckland each month.**

Baccanalia and Bridge Creative joined forces with the Auckland Project's No. 42 to launch the events after it was confirmed that the Full Moon Street Food Markets would not be returning to the town this year.

The events, which will run until October, include pop-up food vendors dishing out flavour from Bishop Auckland Market Place on the last Friday of every month. The revamped offer also includes The Cabaret Club, an entertainment night featuring drag, musical comedy and variety, followed by live jazz until late at The Auckland Project's new events hub, Mrs M, 1 Market Place.

Visitors are invited to spend the day at No. 42's Makers Market before sampling some of the region's finest food at the open-air market. There'll be music and a family-friendly atmosphere with activities for children with an indoor bar serving delicious drinks from 4pm. The late-night entertainment at The Cabaret Club kicks off at 9pm with a different performer at each gig.

The markets, outdoor entertainment and children's activities are open access. Cabaret performances are individually ticketed and are available at [www.baccanalia.co.uk](http://www.baccanalia.co.uk).

## Bishop What's On



**Every Saturday from 29 July to 9 September  
Kynren**

Watch the epic tale of England come to life with this live action, outdoor spectacular performed in the shadow of Auckland Castle. Running every Saturday evening throughout the summer, the 90-minute show is a unique experience not available anywhere else in the UK. Tickets available from [www.11arches.com](http://www.11arches.com)

**2 July, 11 September and 12 November,  
10am -2pm**

**Photography Trains**

**Meet at Stanhope Station**

All aboard for the opportunity to photograph the natural beauty and industrial heritage along the Weardale Railway. The experience lasts approximately four hours, calling at six points of interest along the route where you can capture photographs safely. Budding and experienced photographers are welcome. Tickets cost £40 per person and booking is essential. [www.weardale-railway.org.uk](http://www.weardale-railway.org.uk)

**Saturday 17 June to Sunday 1 October**

**Sin: Exhibition Organised by the  
National Gallery, London, with  
The Auckland Project**

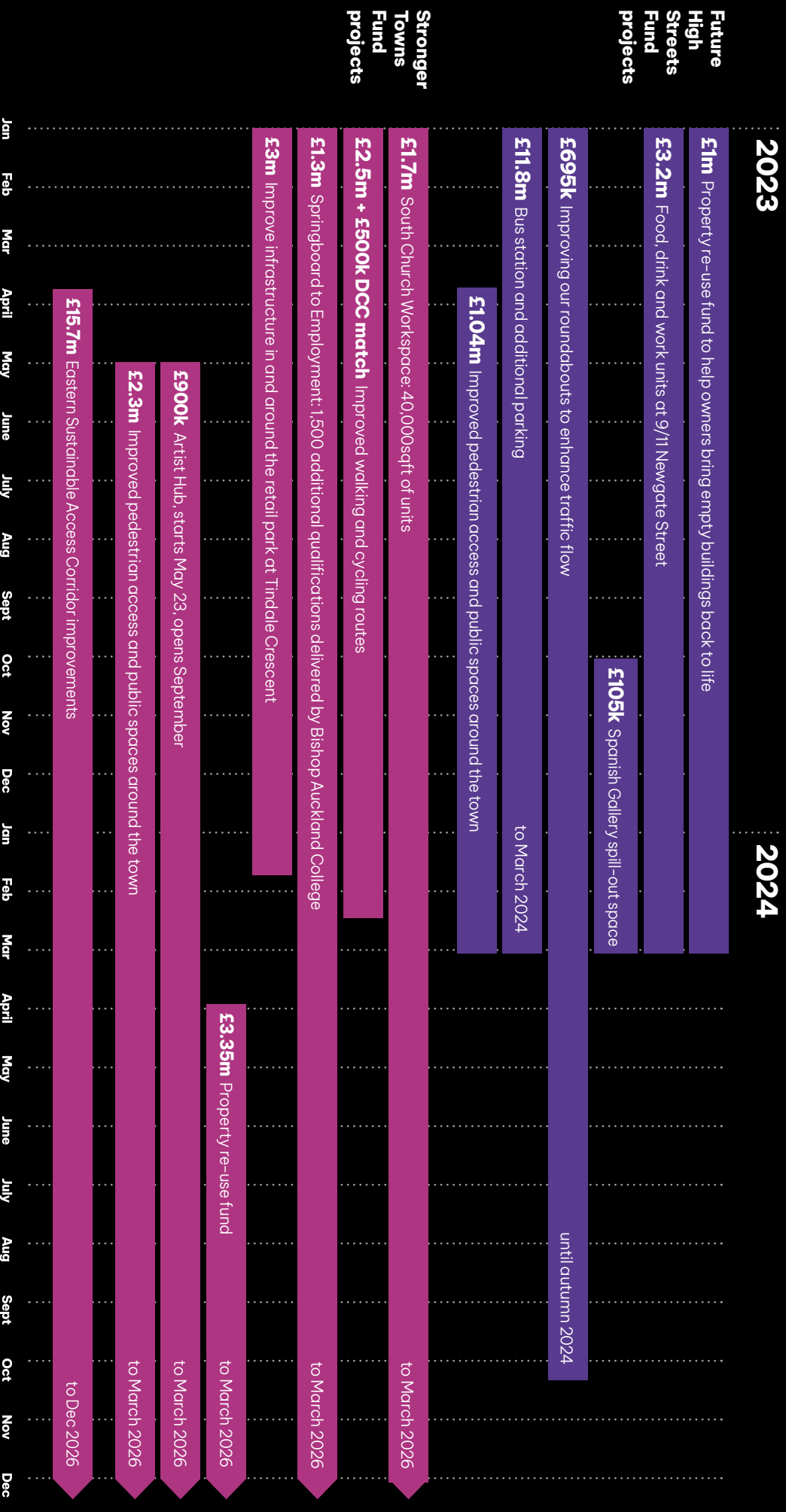
**Bishop Trevor Gallery, Auckland Castle**

Bringing together works of art that span centuries, this exhibition explores the concept of sin in art in a truly unique presentation and asks you to define your own meaning of 'sin'. The exhibition includes eight exceptional paintings from the National Gallery's collection as well as works on loan by Tracey Emin and Ron Mueck. Free with an Auckland Castle ticket, annual pass or Friends membership. [aucklandproject.org](http://aucklandproject.org)

# What's next?

**Investment is already happening in Bishop Auckland, with significant work taking place to develop initial plans, appoint contractors and prepare for work to begin on the ground.**

Some of these, like the bus station, additional parking and major road and junction improvements will take several years to complete, but you will have seen work begin on some of these during 2022 or earlier this year. The Eastern Sustainable Access Corridor will take the longest time to deliver, with a timescale of three years from start to finish, with a project end date of December 2026.



\*Public consultations during the summer.