



**Building a better  
Bishop Auckland  
for everyone**

issue

**2**



# A busy market town bursting with opportunity.



## It's been a busy and exciting summer in Bishop Auckland.

The town has been bustling with visitors coming from far and wide for a wide range of events. The ever-popular **food festival** and internationally renowned **Kynren** once again drew the crowds in their thousands, while smaller events such as our **mini street festivals** have offered an extra boost to business. And our **Heritage Festival** encouraged people of all ages to take a closer look at our town and discover the often-overlooked history that is hidden in plain sight.

As we head towards **Christmas** and the festive spirit arrives in Bishop Auckland, there's lots more to look forward to, with many of our partners planning events and activities to bring people together. You will find details of some of these later in the newsletter.

We're also beginning to see real progress on the many regeneration projects taking place in the town. Premises around the town centre are now boasting new looks thanks to our **Targeted Business Improvement Grant Scheme** and we're seeing the arrival of brand new businesses all bringing their own unique offers to the town.

We're really excited to be able to announce that, in the coming months, we can look forward to the arrival of **STACK**, which offers opportunities for local and new food retailers as well and bringing a new sense of vibrancy to the town centre.

We're also now in a position to share more details as to how the money being invested in Bishop Auckland is to be spent – keep reading to find out more.

**Here's to even more exciting times ahead!**

## Join us

On **Monday, 16 January**, Bishop Auckland Town Council will host a public meeting from 6pm in the town hall. There will be representatives from a wide range of the partners working in the town and all are welcome to attend. Please register in advance at [www.bishopauckland-tc.gov.uk](http://www.bishopauckland-tc.gov.uk) or by emailing [council@bishopauckland-tc.gov.uk](mailto:council@bishopauckland-tc.gov.uk) or calling **01388 207110**.

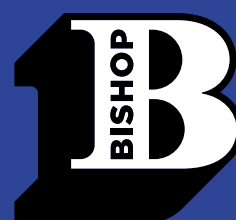


### Our partners

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

[www.bishopaucklandregeneration.com](http://www.bishopaucklandregeneration.com)  
[bishopaucklandregen@durham.gov.uk](mailto:bishopaucklandregen@durham.gov.uk)

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# Welcoming STACK to our town

**Our ambitious plans to become a world class visitor destination are now one step closer, following the news of an exciting partnership with one of the North East's leading leisure providers.**

The Danieli Group own and operate the container villages, STACK Newcastle and STACK Seaburn in Sunderland, which have welcomed millions of visitors who come to enjoy great food and drink, live music and entertainment in unique surroundings.

And that winning formula is on its way to Bishop Auckland, after the company was appointed a development partner by Durham County Council, which will see the creation of a mixed-use leisure venue at Newgate Street, in the heart of the town centre.

Although the scheme will be housed in a purpose-built building rather than shipping containers, the design will include elements of STACK's signature look.

STACK Bishop Auckland will bring together independent street food traders, special events and music at the vibrant new development, which should have the knock-on effect of boosting the local economy as a whole.

As well as creating around 120 full and part time jobs, STACK Bishop Auckland will also offer opportunities for local food traders to set up shop as well as giving the town's evening economy a much-needed boost.



Work is due to get underway in 2023, with the scheme set to be ready to open in 2024.

Neill Winch, CEO of the Danieli Group believes it will be a huge asset for the town.

**"Our intention for Bishop Auckland is the same as at STACK in Newcastle and Seaburn – to offer something for everyone,"** he said.

**"We know we can create a welcoming hub of activity and a place which everyone can enjoy – even visitors of the four-legged variety as we're pet friendly."**

**"Our mix of exciting street food and drinks and a programme of varied entertainment makes STACK attractive to everyone."**

**"However, we are much more than just**

**a food and beverage outlet. We contribute to local culture, jobs, enterprise, tourism, and communities.**

**"In particular, we support new business start ups, local producers and local music talent. We are in the business of transforming places and hope to be a catalyst for transformation in Bishop Auckland."**



# Reinventing the town centre

Businesses on Newgate Street are already seeing the rewards of the Property Reuse Fund – a vital part of our Bishop Auckland Masterplan and our plans to regenerate and bring life to the town centre.

133 Newgate Street

## Inspiral Cycles

Gary and Fiona Ewing, owners of Inspiral Cycles on Newgate Street, applied to the scheme with hopes of contributing to the accommodation offer for the up-and-coming tourism scene.

They used the money from the grant to redevelop the upstairs of their new bicycle workshop into an eco-friendly, self-contained flat, with the aim of renting it out as a holiday let for those visiting the bike trails such as Hamsterley Forest or the new tourist attractions in the town.

Work has started to entirely refit the space using energy efficient materials. It will also see solar panels installed to help make the accommodation as eco-friendly as possible.

Fiona said: **“We wanted to be able to contribute something different to the highstreet. The location of where we are with such close access to the countryside, means there is so much for visitors to discover. We have to rethink the future of the town and what it has to offer with tourism, recreation and leisure.”**

**“Without the grant it may have taken us at least five years to save up enough money to be able to carry out the work. With all the investment going into the town we really need landlords and businesses to come together and make the best of it.”**

Fiona and Gary have also used the Business Improvement Grants to improve their shopfront with repainting and new signage, helping their business to stand out on the highstreet.

By reducing vacancy rates and bringing buildings back into use with a more diverse and modern retail, hospitality and accommodation offer, the **Property Reuse Fund** will help bring significant economic benefits to the town by attracting visitors who will want to stay longer, leading to higher levels of spend during visits.

Businesses can apply for the fund by emailing [propertyreusefund@durham.gov.uk](mailto:propertyreusefund@durham.gov.uk).



8 Newgate Street

## Moss & Ivy @ The Vines

Joanne and Wayne Parnaby opened the doors to their new venture earlier in the summer and it has already proven to be very popular amongst shoppers and diners.

The grant was used to redevelop the entire three floors of the building. The ground floor is now a home accessories store, and the upper two floors boast a luxurious coffee lounge bar that pays homage to the heritage of the building.

A total of almost 70 per cent of the cost to complete the work came from the Property Reuse Fund.

Wayne said: **“Without the funding we could never have afforded to fulfil this ambition. We’re putting our own little mark on the town and there are already lots of plans and developments for Newgate on the way. I hope other businesses take advantage of the help available so we can bring the town back to life, like what it used to be.”**

**“ We wanted to be able to contribute something different to the highstreet. ”**



# Having your say on plans for a better Bishop Auckland



**We have had many great opportunities for you to let us know what is important to you as we continue to drive forward our exciting regeneration plans for Bishop Auckland.**

You have already made significant contributions to both the Town Centre Masterplan as well as the Town Investment Plan, and it is hoped you will continue to have your say on the latest exciting plans for the area.



## Improving transport links

Durham County Council is proposing to build a new, modern bus station using money from the **Future High Streets Fund**. Designed for a bustling town centre, it will be located on the existing bus station site between Clayton Street and Saddler Street.

It is also proposed to introduce a new surface-level car park next to the new bus station site which will include provision for more generously sized parking bays, EV charging, accessible parking, and wheelchair accessible parking.



The concept designs are currently being developed and it is hoped they will be available for the public to view both online and in person at locations around Bishop Auckland town centre early in the new year. The public consultation details are still to be confirmed and will be advertised in advance by Durham County Council. Your feedback on the designs would be gratefully received when the consultation opens.

## Stronger Towns

We have also just been gathering your views on a number of other proposed projects to the town as part of the £50 million government funding from the **Stronger Towns Fund** and the **Future High Street Fund**.

Current projects under development include Market Place improvements to allow for future events and new cycle hub facilities. Further property reuse funding is also being prepared to reduce the number of empty properties on streets surrounding the Market Place.

Other projects would see funding used towards redeveloping 41 and 42 Market Place into a 60-bedroom boutique hotel to offer accommodation to the town's growing tourism economy, alongside the introduction of an artists' hub and the creation of more training and employment opportunities for young people in the town centre.

Meanwhile, improvements to the road network at Tindale Crescent will help to reduce traffic delays and allow the next phase of development to move forward more quickly.

Thank you for taking the time to contribute your views, whether by completing the online survey or by coming to see us at one of the drop-in sessions that were held in early November.

Following the consultation, Durham County Council will consider the responses and feedback to the Stronger Towns Board before detailed plans and drawings are prepared.

You can view any open consultations on our website [www.bishopaucklandregeneration.com](http://www.bishopaucklandregeneration.com)

# Bishop What's On



**From Friday 18 November**

## Christmas at The Auckland Project

A traditional Christmas with a twist awaits those visiting The Auckland Project this Christmas.

The Throne Room of Auckland Castle will be festooned with a giant dried flower garland, hand-picked from the Castle's 17th-Century Walled Garden. A monumental Neapolitan Nativity scene in the Faith Gallery will also dazzle visitors.

A combined Auckland Castle Christmas Ticket provides access to the Throne Room, Faith Gallery and more, offering a unique festive day out for all the family. [www.aucklandproject.org](http://www.aucklandproject.org)

**Every weekend in December and Wednesday 21, Thursday 22 and Friday 23 December  
1pm, 3.15pm and 5.30pm**

## Christmas on the Weardale Railway

Board the Christmas train at Weardale Railway for an experience that will bring the festive spirit to life for the whole family. Meet Santa and his elves whilst enjoying a warming refreshment and leave with your very own gift. Tickets will be available to purchase on The Auckland Project website. [www.aucklandproject.org](http://www.aucklandproject.org)

**Monday 5 December**

## Annual Town Quiz

Presented by Bishop Auckland Civic Society, teams of up to six are invited to enter the annual quiz. Resident quizmaster, the enigmatic Glynn Wales, will again host a night of total quizzing and a Grand Raffle. All profits raised on the night will be donated to a local charity. [bishopaucklandtownhall.org.uk](http://bishopaucklandtownhall.org.uk)

**Wednesday 14 to Sunday 18 December**

## Dick Whittington

Join our hero Dick Whittington on an adventure to London, where the streets are paved with gold. TaleGate Theatre return with another spectacular pantomime. Packed with songs, slapstick, silliness, audience participation and all the fairytale magic of traditional pantomime. [bishopaucklandtownhall.org.uk](http://bishopaucklandtownhall.org.uk)



# 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 start to see work begin on some of these during 2022 or early 2023. 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.

2022

2023

**Future  
High  
Streets  
Fund  
projects**

**£1m** Property re-use fund to help owners bring empty buildings back to life

**£3.2m** Food, drink and work units at 9/11 Newgate Street

**£105k** Spanish Gallery spill-out space

**£695k** Improving our roundabouts to enhance traffic flow

**£11.8m** Bus station and additional parking

to March 2024

**£963k** Improved pedestrian access and public spaces around the town

**£1.7m** South Church Workspace: 40,000sqft of units

**£2.5m + £500k DCC match** Improved walking and cycling routes

**£1.3m** Springboard to Employment: 1,500 additional qualifications delivered by Bishop Auckland College

**£3m** Improve infrastructure in and around the retail park at Tindale Crescent

**£8.1m** New projects to improve the town centre\*

**£15.7m** Eastern Sustainable Access Corridor improvements to Dec 2026

April May June July Aug Sept Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb Mar April May June July Aug Sept Oct Nov Dec

\*Public consultations during the summer.