



# Building a better Bishop Auckland for everyone

issue

3

# A busy market town bursting with opportunity.



**It's been another busy few months here in Bishop Auckland with lots more beginning to take shape throughout the town.**

We would like to thank everyone who attended last month's public meeting, hosted by the town council. Over 100 of you came to hear updates on a range of developments such as STACK and the projects taking advantage of the **Future High Street Fund** and **Stronger Towns Fund** – some of which are featured in this magazine.

These projects include Bishop Auckland College's **Springboard into Employment** scheme. Work has now started to transform the iconic 25 Newgate Street building into a digital training and enterprise hub.

We appreciate you taking the time to tell us your views and there will be more opportunities for you to let us know what is important to you as we drive forward our exciting regeneration plans.

And, as spring starts to blossom, we can look forward to another year of fantastic events, including the renowned **Bishop Auckland Food Festival** in April. You can find out more about the famous names you can expect to see this year on page 3.

**We look forward to seeing you all there.**



## 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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# Bishop Auckland Food Festival is back!

**If there's one thing that shows Bishop Auckland at its best, it's when we play host to great events.**

Just the sight of the Market Place and surrounding streets bustling with visitors gives you a real glimpse of our town's huge potential.



And they don't come any better than the hugely popular Bishop Auckland Food Festival, which returns to the town **on Saturday 22 and Sunday 23 April**.

As always, a big weekend of family fun is in store.

Think big name celebrity guests, hands-on workshops, and mouth-watering treats from the best of the region's food and drink producers – all in one place.

There'll be live cookery demonstrations from some famous faces, including:

- **This Morning's resident chef, presenter, and bestselling author, Phil Vickery**
- **TV chef and celebrated teacher at Ireland's world-famous Ballymaloe Cookery School, Rachel Allen**
- **TV chef, author, and national treasure, Rosemary Shrager**
- **Great British Bake Off 2022 star, Janusz Domagala**
- **MasterChef champion 2018, Kenny Tutt**
- **Great British Bake Off 2022 runner-up, Sandro Farmhouse**

Your host throughout will be TV presenter, cook book author and all-round crowd favourite, Chris Bavin.

And, of course, there'll be a jam-packed programme of entertainment across the two days including street art, live music and performances too.

So, loads to look forward to. See you there!



For all the latest news, visit [www.bishopaucklandfoodfestival.co.uk](http://www.bishopaucklandfoodfestival.co.uk).  
Make sure you sign-up for the newsletter and follow the Festival's social media channels too.

# Iconic building to get new lease of life

“McIntyre’s is a brand synonymous with Bishop Auckland.”

An iconic footwear and leather shop which served Bishop Auckland for nearly 150 years is to get a new lease of life as a digital training and enterprise hub after a £1.3m investment.

The Grade II listed **McIntyre’s building** on Newgate Street is to be transformed with the creation of a café and restaurant, with a training kitchen, exhibition and retail space, open access digital suite, job matching service, and workspaces for emerging SMEs.

Work is well underway on the refurbishment after Bishop Auckland College secured a ten-year lease on the well-known premises. The new facility will create seven full-time jobs and will offer work placement opportunities for the college’s catering and digital students, including adults looking to upskill.

The main grant for Springboard to Employment was secured from the Stronger Towns Fund. This was submitted by the Stronger Towns Board (STB) as part of the Town Investment Plan. Additional funding from the Conservation Area Grant Scheme will be spent on restoring the historic shop frontage.

David Land, chair of the STB, said: “It’s pleasing to see the money that was awarded through the Stronger Towns Fund is now being used across a range of projects. The STB were keen to ensure some of the funding was used to help develop and train students in a range of subjects and activities. The planned growth through increased visitor numbers must be matched by high standards of service and support and the board are confident that the college will deliver against that agenda.”

Natalie Davison-Terranova, principal and chief executive of Bishop Auckland College and skills lead on the STB, said: “McIntyre’s is a brand synonymous with Bishop Auckland. It is very fitting that this iconic premises, which has been at the heart of the community for more than 150 years, is to get a new lease of life developing the digital and visitor economy skills the local economy needs and supporting entrepreneurs to set up new businesses.”



A historic building report commissioned by Historic England has revealed a fascinating history behind the doors of 25 Newgate Street. Believed to have been built in the early 19th century, the building’s first known resident was Robert Longstaff, a boot and shoemaker. Leather merchants and shoemakers James McIntyre and Son followed sometime between 1891 and 1894, giving the shop its iconic name and shopfront.

The transformation of McIntyre’s forms part of the Bishop Auckland Heritage Action Zone, a five-year partnership programme between Historic England and Durham County Council, aimed at revitalising the historic market town.

Jules Brown, Historic England’s historic places adviser for the North East and Yorkshire, said: “We are delighted to be able to support Bishop Auckland College and partners in the reuse of this beautiful former shoe shop with such an exciting new facility for the town. It’s a great step forward in revitalising Newgate Street, introducing new uses to the high street, transforming a cherished listed building and bringing new people to the town centre.”

Cllr Elizabeth Scott, Durham County Council’s Cabinet member for economy and partnerships, added: “We are thrilled that work is underway to develop the new business workspace and prepare for the launch of the Springboard to Employment scheme. The project will support local people to access fantastic job opportunities in the town and create a space that can be enjoyed for years to come.”

If you have any memories or photographs of this building throughout the decades, please submit them to the Historic England website [historicengland.org.uk](https://historicengland.org.uk) by searching for 25 Newgate Street.

Jules Brown from Historic England, Natalie Davison-Terranova from Bishop Auckland College, and Kathryn Watson and Bryan Harris from Durham County Council.



# Big changes at 47 Newgate Street



There will soon be even more activity on the high street with builders set to start work on the redevelopment of 47 Newgate Street.

Plans were approved last year to convert all three stories of the old Burton's menswear store and the vacant Post Office building, which are on the corner of Newgate Street and Victoria Avenue. The Post Office is now operating out of a new premises just down the road at 40 Newgate Street.

The site will undergo a major revamp, which will see it converted into 10 luxury apartments and an exciting new retail venue. The development will also include restoration of the historical façade and a new extension to the rear of the property.



Graham Thomas, director of BEK Developments Ltd, which is responsible for the project, said: "As a resident of Bishop Auckland, this is a really important project for me and one we wouldn't be able to do without the Future High Streets Fund to help us. We are pleased to be using a local contractor for the construction work and can now announce we have a local business taking on the corner commercial unit, previously Burton's, which will be open by the summer.

"This development will utilise the town centre as a place to visit for food, drinks and a place to stay for both locals and tourists to bring back the vibrancy of the town. Tourists will use the accommodation as a central point to not only to explore what Bishop Auckland has to offer but the rest of County Durham and the North East as well.

"We are pleased to play a small part in helping regenerate Bishop Auckland."

Architect Michael Chou, director of Cellar Door Architecture, added: "Our design includes the reworking of the rear of the building to create a sophisticated contemporary extension that maximises the available footprint of the site. Patinated architectural metalwork frames the rear balconies which provide outdoor connected living spaces which are bathed in natural light."



Graham Thomas and Michael Chou.

Part of the restoration work will be funded by Historic England and Durham County Council through the Conservation Area Grant Scheme. The development is yet another to benefit from Durham County Council's Property Reuse Fund. By reducing vacancy rates and bringing buildings back into use with a more diverse and modern retail, hospitality and accommodation offer, the grants are helping to bring significant economic benefits to the town – 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).

## Bishop What's On

**Friday 10 March**

### A Celebration of Father Ted with Joe Rooney

Bishop Auckland Town Hall

Joe Rooney promises a night of all things Father Ted during this celebration of one of the greatest sitcoms ever made. Joe will host a screening of a special episode, take a look behind the scenes of the show and set a Craggy Island quiz – then prepare yourself for an all-inclusive 'Lovely Girls Competition'.

[bishopaucklandtownhall.org.uk](http://bishopaucklandtownhall.org.uk)

**Friday 14 April and Saturday 15 April**

### Plastic Band

Bishop Auckland Town Hall

The year is 2142. Single-use plastic has taken over Durham and surrounding areas. Join Tate and Madonna, as they explore making music out of the plastic we as a nation have built up around us.

[bishopaucklandtownhall.org.uk](http://bishopaucklandtownhall.org.uk)

**Until Sunday 1 October**

### Coal: Mining the Gemini Collection

Mining Art Gallery

Visit the renowned Gemini Collection of mining art, which includes more than 420 works by acclaimed mining artists, collected by Dr Robert McManners OBE and Gillian Wales.

The artworks document coal miners' lives above and below ground, revealing how mining artists used art as a powerful means of expression and illustrating the industry's impact on the landscape and loved ones.

[aucklandproject.org/venues/mining-art-gallery](http://aucklandproject.org/venues/mining-art-gallery)



## Consultation timeline

There are lots of opportunities to have your say on developments in Bishop Auckland over the coming months, with a series of consultations coming up.

When	Which project	Type of consultation
February	Bus station and car park	Pre-planning and planning
	Fore Bondgate and North Bondgate link	Planning
July to September	Fore Bondgate Public Realm	Pre-planning
	Durham Dales Gateway	Pre-planning
October to December	ESAC	Planning
	North Newgate Street hotel	Pre-planning
Still to be confirmed	Kingsway redevelopment	Pre-planning and planning
	Market Place and Spanish Gallery	TRO consultation
	North Market Place hotel	Pre-planning

# 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.

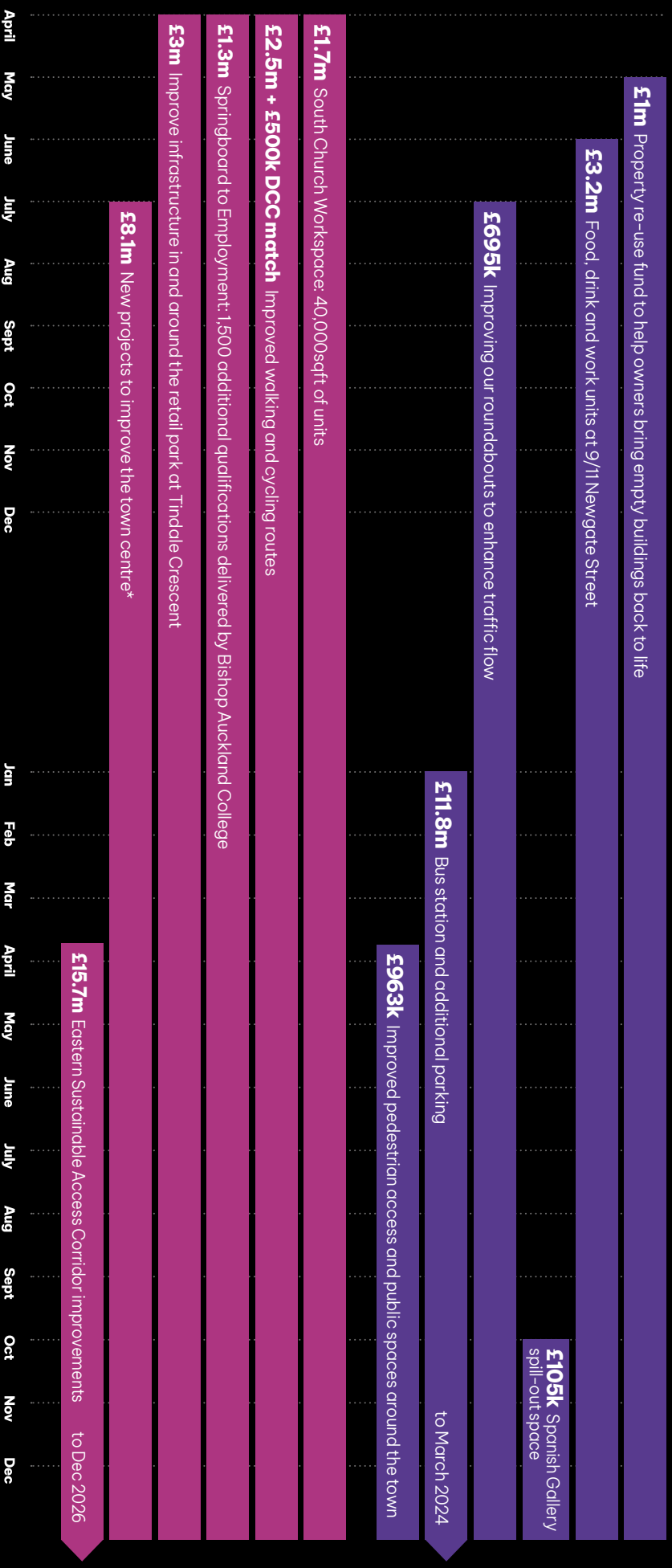
Some of these, like the bus station, additional parking and major road and junction improvements will take several years to complete, but you will have seen work begin on some of these during 2022 or earlier this year. The Eastern Sustainable Access Corridor will take the longest time to deliver, with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

2022

2023

Future  
High  
Streets  
Fund  
projects

Stronger  
Towns  
Fund  
projects



\*Public consultations during the summer.