



Telford & Wrekin
Co-operative Council

Protect, care and invest
to create a better borough



INVEST
TELFORD

Our strategy for fair & inclusive economic growth

2024-2032

FOREWORD

Recent years have seen exceptional rates of growth and investment in our Borough that has delivered for our businesses, our residents and our high streets. It has created jobs, raised aspiration and generated revenue that has been invested directly into front line services. We are proud of our Borough's achievements and the support, commitment and investment being made by our businesses – large and small – that underlies this success.

However, we recognise that there are many new challenges facing all economies and we are determined to tackle these with an ambitious and robust approach to driving economic growth. We are also aware of the rising cost of living and of doing business at this time and the continued inequalities in accessing all the benefits of growth across our communities.

This document sets out a high level strategy for economic growth, developed by a collaboration of businesses, public sector organisations and others who share our pride and ambition for our town. We thank these partners for dedicating their time and commitment and look forward to working together to develop the detail and delivery of the strategy through a new and meaningful partnership.

This strategy supports Telford's 2032 vision aspiring to a robust economy with growth in new sectors that delivers well paid jobs, many of which are linked to a zero-carbon economy. It reflects our ambition to create clear pathways through education and ultimately into local employment, driven by new education infrastructure.

Above all, our strategy aims to be fair and inclusive in its reach deeply aligned with the Council's broader goals of creating a thriving community with inspiring opportunities for all.

We look forward to working with our Partners to achieve this vision.



Cllr Shaun Davies
Leader of Telford & Wrekin Council



Cllr Lee Carter
Cabinet Member for Place
Telford & Wrekin Council



Cllr Eileen Callear
Cabinet Member for Education,
Employment & Visitor Economy
Telford & Wrekin Council

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Economic development is the engine that impacts, drives and delivers across every aspect of our local community. If delivered successfully, economic development can be at the heart of a virtuous circle of growth that lifts everyone in Telford and Wrekin.

Telford and Wrekin is a proven, connected and thriving location. With over 200 foreign-owned companies, it is a cosmopolitan business hub that thrives on collaboration and has an important role to play in the wider Midlands region with many strong linkages across key sectors and in particular manufacturing. Driven by a relentless focus from the Council and partners to be **'business-winning and business-supporting'** the Borough has seen significant economic growth since the last strategy was adopted, including a 14.49% increase in businesses, 4,368 new jobs, and £110 million in grant funding.

Since the last economic development strategy was published **the world is a very different place.** We face a myriad of challenges from changes to our international economic relationships; global conflicts; the march of new technologies; and most perilously, the growing climate emergency. Our residents are also facing increases in cost of living with ongoing inequality in accessing opportunities from growth within and



between communities. This strategy aligns with Telford's Vision 2032 to create a carbon-neutral, inclusive economy with vibrant communities.

This strategy places a strong emphasis on sustainability, viewing environmental responsibility as key to economic prosperity. **Telford aims to be a leader in climate action**, already achieving significant reductions in carbon emissions and high rankings in environmental indices. The strategy outlines multifaceted approaches to sustainable growth, touching on infrastructure improvements for energy efficiency and green mobility, educational programmes for green jobs, and business incentives for eco-friendly practices.

PROMOTING OUR PLACE

Telford and Wrekin is actively leveraging its strengths through place marketing. Through **Invest Telford and Visit Telford**, the Council is engaging with target audiences locally, nationally and globally. Future plans include an **"Invest Telford Ambassadors"** programme; deepening collaborations with regional and national partners; and ensuring that messaging is aligned and based on strong and unique selling points.

SUPPORTING OUR BUSINESSES

Supporting businesses, whether start-ups, scale-ups or strategic employers; home-grown and international, is a fundamental pillar of this strategy. **Invest Telford, Thrive Telford and Hello Telford** are all aimed at supporting businesses and strengthening local supply-chains and, will continue alongside new initiatives such as the **Telford Sustainability & Energy Cluster**. The development of business incubation facilities in the heart of the Town benefitting from the support of first class local skills providers including Telford College and Harper Adams University will transform provision for start-up's. The Council will continue to attract inward investors and support strategic employers in Telford and Wrekin through an account management approach that will develop close relationships with businesses.



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Supporting businesses, whether start-ups, scale-ups or strategic employers; home-grown and international, is a fundamental pillar of this strategy.

TALENT PIPELINE

The strategy recognises the importance of skills development in key areas like digital tech and environmental innovation Initiatives like the **Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)** aim to address skill shortages and attract new talent into the workforce. Through strategic partnerships with educational institutions and new projects around twinning schools and businesses, we're rethinking how we engage with the workforce of tomorrow to keep Telford growing and thriving.

INNOVATION CULTURE

Telford aims to be a hub of innovation, building on its rich history from the industrial revolution to modern-day advances in agri-tech and digital technologies. Ni.PARK and the University of Wolverhampton Telford Innovation Campus provide strong foundations. From 2024, the new Digital Skills and Enterprise Hub at Station Quarter will become a centrepiece for fostering entrepreneurship and business-academic collaboration. Our goal is to make Telford and Wrekin a resilient, future-proof community that thrives on change and innovation.

IMPROVING INFRASTRUCTURE

Telford is investing in modern infrastructure recognising its importance for attracting businesses. A comprehensive **Infrastructure Delivery Plan to 2031** includes investing £50 million in road and footpath upgrades and green initiatives such as electric vehicle charging stations and cycle-paths. High-speed digital connectivity is a priority, aiming to expand ultra-fast fibre services to more homes and public buildings. Future plans include realising the potential of 'Gigabit Telford' to spur investment and growth and continuing to lobby for better rail connectivity, especially to London.

OUTSTANDING QUALITY OF LIFE

Telford places a high priority on offering an outstanding quality of life to attract and retain talent, investment, business and visitors. Blending heritage, culture, green spaces and natural landscapes and a modern, vibrant retail and leisure sector **the Borough has something for all**. Sitting alongside this is an annual events programme drawing regional and national visitors and a thriving business tourism sector generated by Telford International Centre. Future plans include enriching lifestyle opportunities through new residential developments, a high-quality hotel and improved connectivity with new walking and cycling routes.



SITES AND PREMISES

Through its **strategic relationship with Homes England** the Council has invested in infrastructure and de-risking public land for both residential and commercial development attracting £440m of inward investment since 2015. Notable projects include Station Quarter, backed by significant public and private investment driving a step change in skills provision and Town Centre living.



This strategy has been shaped by local stakeholders, including employers, educational institutions, and business support organisations. But this is only the start - the creation of the a **forum of business leaders** from across the Borough will provide both a sounding board and an independent voice to continually review the strategy, identifying the new challenges, opportunities and solutions that will be needed to maintain Telford's attractiveness to business. It will involve senior leaders from the private, public, and third sectors who are equally committed to delivering sustainable growth and prosperity.

This strategy will be **fair and inclusive in its reach**, whether this is delivering digital access for all, inspiring educational opportunities or better paid job opportunities. It is aligned with the Council's broader goals of creating a thriving community with happier, healthier residents.

WHY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

Economic development is the engine that drives and delivers across every aspect of our local communities.

It will be **fair and inclusive in its reach** and celebrate and support the diversity of people across Telford and Wrekin.



Linkages to:

- * Vision 2023
- * Skills Strategy
- * Local Plan
- * Local Transport Plan
- * Digital Strategy
- * Carbon Neutral Action Plan
- * Health & Wellbeing Strategy
- * Telford Towns Fund
- * UKSPF Investment Plan
- * Visit Telford Destination Strategy

PROVEN. CONNECTED. THRIVING.

Telford and Wrekin is a place that has always been at the forefront of economic change, powered by inward investment from all over the world.

Located in the heart of the UK, **Telford is a town of innovators**, where local start-ups and scale-ups thrive alongside the international businesses that have chosen to locate and grow here. More than 200 foreign-owned companies from 25 countries have already invested creating a truly international and cosmopolitan business community with strong links and relationships with the wider Midlands region.

Major inward investors who have chosen to locate, expand and thrive in Telford include: **Craemer** (Germany); **Denso** (Japan); **Ricoh** (Japan); **Makita** (Japan); **Polytec** (Austria); **Magna** (Canada); **Müller** (Germany); **Rheinmetall BAE Systems Land** (Germany); **Schneider Electric** (France); **Protolabs** (US); **Lyreco** (France); **TAFE** (India) and **Capgemini** (France). Telford is consistently ranked in the top 10 UK locations for share of FDI jobs per capita.

Global brands are firmly embedded in the local business community and regularly collaborate with our home-grown companies to create innovative solutions and a growing business network. From start-ups; scale-ups; SMEs;

to non-profit and voluntary organisations; on our High Streets and business parks, Telford is a place built on genuine collaboration and support.

With an established reputation for advanced manufacturing we have strengths in many diverse industries such as automotive; **aerospace**; **defence**; **digital and creative**; **business services**; **logistics**; **food production** and **agri-tech**. Across all sectors we have strengths in the development and deployment of net zero technologies. We offer a competitive location for all types of business functions, whether **advanced manufacturing**; **office-based**; **retail** or **distribution**.

As a dynamic and agile location, we won't be prescriptive in our approach to sectors. We will target and support innovative businesses that align with our clean, green vision.

Telford is a proven place for makers and movers, shakers and creators.



BUILDING ON SUCCESS

The Council's existing Economic Development Strategy is built around a commitment to be **'business winning and business supporting'** and a pledge to provide a service to all investors and businesses that is **'fast, responsive and deal-focused'**. This commitment remains a central

principle of our approach, now underpinned by a strong focus on ensuring that Telford's future growth is sustainable and inclusive.

The success of the current Economic Development Strategy is captured in a range of performance outputs achieved since publication of our first strategy in 2016:

EXCEPTIONAL GROWTH AND INVESTMENT RATES, WITH A



14.49%

INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF
BUSINESSES COMPARED TO

8.79%

IN THE WEST MIDLANDS

700

INVESTMENT ENQUIRIES
MANAGED

£23,000

BUSINESS SUPPORT
ENQUIRIES

163,871 M²

OF COMMERCIAL SPACE CREATED
THROUGH THE TELFORD LAND DEAL

£110

MILLION SECURED
IN GRANT
FUNDING FOR
BUSINESSES

4,368

JOBS
CREATED
AS A
RESULT

The international nature of Telford's business base demands an understanding and ability to adapt to external challenges and global opportunities. Since the last Economic Development Strategy was published the world is a very different place. **We face a myriad of challenges** from changes to our international economic relationships; global conflicts; the march of new technologies; and most perilously, the growing climate emergency. Business confidence locally and nationally is fragile and it is even more important to be focussing on economic growth and resilience and on building strong regional relationships.

Telford needs to draw on its natural strengths as a pioneering place to reinvigorate its economic development priorities to deliver a safer, more sustainable and more prosperous future for local people.

Crucially, it is not just the external geopolitical outlook which has changed, but the shift in the motivations and drivers of business expansion and inward investment. New models of corporate decision-making are increasingly focussed both on site and premises selection and the availability of the skills and talent investors need. This requires a more refined approach to deliver jobs and investment in Telford.

This new strategy will provide a **roadmap for economic growth** into the next decade, embedding Telford's Vision for 2032 of an inclusive borough where everyone can fulfil their potential in a thriving economy.



UNIQUELY TELFORD

Telford and Wrekin is a special place, with unique selling points and this strategy recognises that the future prosperity, health and life opportunities of local people requires that these USP's are constantly reinforced, enhanced and celebrated:

Running through all elements of Telford's proposition, is a commitment to our inclusive ambitions to create:

- ✱ A carbon neutral economy
- ✱ Vibrant, safe and clean sustainable communities
- ✱ Healthy, independent lives

TELFORD IS PROVEN

- ... as a place to start-up and scale-up
- ... as a home for global businesses
- ... as a centre for advanced manufacturing
- ... as a future technology hub

TELFORD IS CONNECTED

- ... to regional and national supply-chains
- ... to the motorway and rail network
- ... to next generation digital infrastructure
- ... to future business opportunities

TELFORD IS THRIVING

- ... with exceptional growth rates
- ... with talent from great schools, colleges and universities
- ... with housing, retail and leisure opportunities
- ... with outstanding quality of life



“ TELFORD IS THRIVING WITH OUTSTANDING QUALITY OF LIFE



A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

Economic development can only be successful when partners work collaboratively with shared values and ambitions and where there is commitment to action.

Our vision of a clean, green, resilient Telford powered by technological innovation and sustainable growth to create inclusive prosperity for local people, is an ambition shared across our diverse range of local partners.

The Council has undertaken a series of consultations and workshops in the development of this strategy with:

- * Local employers
- * Schools, colleges and universities
- * Business support organisations
- * Local and regional stakeholders

Their contributions have been integral in shaping the direction of this strategy and the themes contained within it. This strategy can only be fully realised with the ongoing support and delivery of our partners.

The work has also built on stakeholder engagement undertaken to develop the Telford 2032 Vision which had direct input from around 3000 local people.



ONGOING GOVERNANCE AND REVIEW

Conceived and informed by a wide range of local stakeholders, responsibility for the successful delivery of the goals and ambitions in this strategy will rest on many shoulders. If this strategy is to be successful, it must be reviewed regularly to ensure its relevance and to reflect new opportunities and challenges. For this reason, it will be **important to view the economic development strategy as a living document.**

To support the delivery of the strategy, we will create alongside it **a forum of business leaders from across Telford and Wrekin.** This will be a dynamic network of senior leaders, business owners and engaged individuals representing private, public and third-sector organisations, covering many of the town's key industries.

They will be the 'owners' of the strategy and will act as an independent voice and sounding board for ideas, shaping investment, bringing expertise, supporting innovation and acting as ambassadors for Telford. They will also play a key role supporting the Council as Government transfers responsibilities formerly delivered by Local Enterprise Partnerships to Local Authorities to drive.

“Magna has two large production facilities employing over 700 people in Telford. We believe the Invest Telford Strategy provides a clear and compelling vision for the future of the area and demonstrates innovative thinking and strong relationships between key stakeholders which will ensure the strategy is a success. We are delighted to be involved.

Matthew Hawkin
Managing Director
Cosma UK

“DeterTech UK have been based in Telford for nearly 30 years and the Invest Telford Strategy is a huge step forward which will be of enormous benefit to the town and community. At DeterTech UK, we are delighted to have been invited to be a part of this initiative. Telford has a history of innovation, as an innovative business with rapid growth, the business support we receive from Telford is vital, we are immensely proud to be part of this strategy and look forward to the future.

Richard Harris
Director of Technical Services
DeterTech



PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

This strategy aligns with our Council Plan to protect, care and invest in order to create a better borough and happier, healthier residents. At the heart of that Plan is our commitment to ensure:

- * Every child, young person and adult lives well in their community
- * Everyone benefits from a thriving economy
- * All neighbourhoods are great places to live
- * Our natural environment is protected, and the Council takes a leading role in tackling the climate emergency
- * A community-focussed, innovative council providing efficient, effective and quality services.

A successful local economy has a direct and positive impact on all of these things.



Central to our vision is the need to tackle the continued inequalities within and between our communities and address resilience and prosperity. We want to ensure that everyone in the borough has the same life chances, irrespective of their background.

As a Co-operative Council, we recognise that residents and businesses are best placed to understand the issues that they face, the priorities for their area and to lead the development of solutions to these issues.

CLEAN, GREEN, RESILIENT

This strategy is built on the understanding that environmental responsibility and economic prosperity are not only compatible, they are mutually dependent.

Telford's commitment to the environment is a consistent thread running through all aspects of the strategy, recognising that:

- * Without clean, green neighbourhoods, people won't choose to live here
- * Without access to sustainable, resilient energy, businesses won't invest here
- * Without a holistic approach, sustainable growth won't be possible

Mitigating the global impact of climate change starts with local action.

Telford and Wrekin is already ranked as a leading location at the forefront of tackling climate change and is committed to putting sustainability and environmental considerations at the heart of economic development.

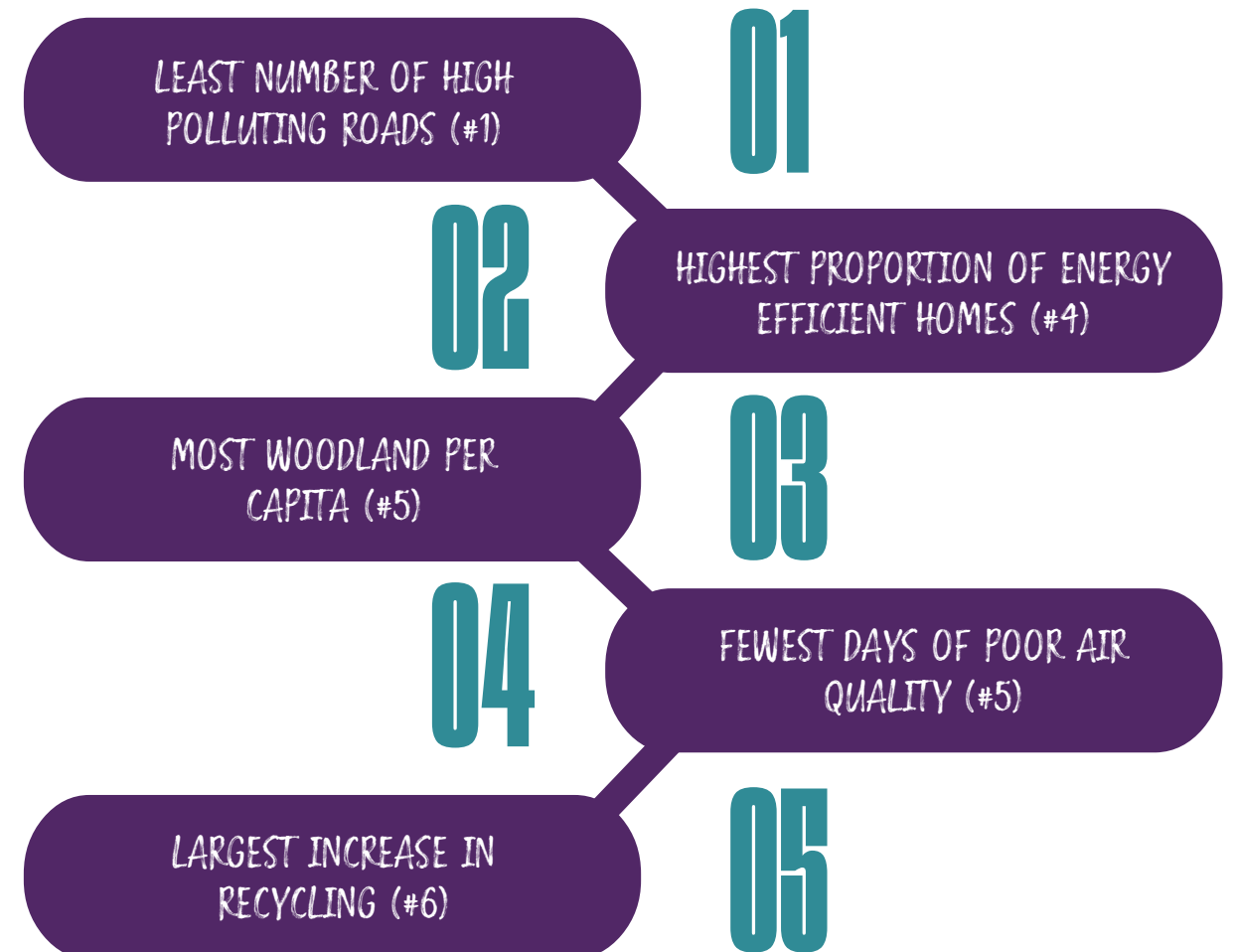
Telford & Wrekin Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and subsequently announced a vision to reach net zero by 2030.

The local authority has since reduced its operational carbon emissions by 57% and in 2022 was ranked in the top 3% of UK councils for tackling climate change by Climate Emergency UK.



The ENDS Green Cities Index 2023 placed Telford in the top 10 of 55 urban areas in England, scoring highly across the index's five categories of air quality, climate, water quality, public realm, and green behaviour.

The Council's commitment to sustainable growth and renewable energy is clearly set out in its **Carbon Neutral Action Plan** and is supported by the **Telford & Wrekin Climate Change Partnership** - a cross section of more than 30 local organisations including businesses, educational establishments, community groups, town and parish councils and other public sector organisations.



We will celebrate and promote Telford's leadership in tackling climate change and we will put clean, green, resilient growth at the core of our economic development strategy through:

BUSINESS SUPPORT AND INVESTMENT

- ✱ Engaging with potential **inward investors** with solutions to mitigating the climate emergency
- ✱ Continuing to develop the **circular economy** model and waste management excellence
- ✱ Supporting **business energy saving and innovation projects** through effective use of government funding programmes
- ✱ Developing **energy resilience plans** to reassure investors and businesses
- ✱ Supporting groups of businesses to **collaborate and connect**

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

- ✱ Working with schools, colleges, universities and businesses to create **courses for green jobs** and promoting careers in the environmental sector



INFRASTRUCTURE

- ✱ Ensuring **greater energy efficiency** in new residential and commercial buildings and using the new Local Plan to encourage innovative materials and sustainable construction
- ✱ Supporting **retrofitting, refurbishment and re-purposing** in older residential and commercial buildings
- ✱ Promoting **clean energy adoption** for mobility solutions with green infrastructure
- ✱ Encouraging **greater investment** in innovation around smart grids and resilience
- ✱ Seeking to attract investment into appropriate renewable energy and innovative eco-solutions
- ✱ Exploring **energy resilience** via Distributed Energy, Energy Storage, Smart Grid, and systems to manage demand
- ✱ Enhancing the **protection** of green spaces and support biodiversity
- ✱ Lobbying for efficient and effective **access to the National Grid**

LEADERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

- ✱ Continuing to **reduce emissions** in Council owned buildings and vehicles
- ✱ Collaborating with **external investors** to co-fund green projects and initiatives
- ✱ Partnering with institutions to promote research and development in **green technologies**
- ✱ Adopting a **regional and national profile** as a key advocate for clean, green and resilient growth

Being clean, green and resilient isn't a marketing strapline nor is it just a sector opportunity, it goes to the very heart of what makes Telford a thriving place to live, work, invest and visit.

PILLAR 1 PROMOTING OUR PLACE

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Place promotion is a powerful tool for stimulating economic development. With every town and city promoting their strengths, it is an increasingly competitive environment. Corporate decisions on where to locate and expand a business are subject to constant targeting and marketing as are individual choices on where people live; work; study and visit.

Telford needs to **communicate its strengths** clearly, enlisting the support of the many businesses and other organisations and partners to act as ambassadors for the town and using social platforms to make connections and deliver compelling messages.





WHAT IS TELFORD DOING?

At the heart of our place promotion strategy is a **'Pledge' to business**. The Pledge offered to any business, whether expanding or looking to land in the borough, is a **bespoke package of support** tailored to need including access to finance, land and premises, recruitment and skills and supply chain connections. We have created a more competitive investment environment than regional and national destinations, including those designated as Enterprise or Investment Zones.

In 2023, the Council rebranded and reinvigorated its economic development offer as **Invest Telford**. A new website (<https://www.investtelford.co.uk>) promotes the town's strengths and opportunities with case studies from local success stories. Promoted across multiple social channels there are calls to action for businesses, investors and residents.

Telford and Wrekin's many and varied attractions are being promoted through **Visit Telford** (<https://www.visitelford.co.uk>).

Our offer is diverse from the UNESCO World Heritage Site in the Ironbridge Gorge to market towns packed with history; hundreds of miles of cycling and walking trails and routes through heritage woodlands and magical forests; and seventeen Nature Reserves.

Telford's high quality of life, attractions and outstanding areas of natural beauty play an increasingly important role in complementing our investment promotion and talent attraction and retention.

Telford and Wrekin's **market towns and high streets** are a vital part of Telford's story, creating a varied and historic offer to complement the 'young town' image. The Council's **Pride in Our High Street** initiative has offered innovative grant initiatives to support new high street start up's, has invested in improving the look and vitality of our high streets and has promoted 'shop local' as a message across the borough. As a result our high streets are busy and vibrant with levels of empty shop units well below national averages.

WHAT ELSE WILL WE DO?

The promotion of Telford will be centred on the key themes of **'Proven. Connected. Thriving.'** Each of these themes has several unique selling points underpinned by specific facts and evidence such as the number of inward investment successes; growth in start-up activity and Telford's strengths in manufacturing and technology. Working with stakeholders from across the community the Invest Telford team will develop and promote Telford's USPs and use channels that support all of the elements of this economic development strategy.

We will develop an **Invest Telford Ambassadors** programme to leverage wider support for the Invest Telford message and amplify the USPs across different target markets and sectors. Ambassadors will create a sense of pride in Telford and proactively promote the town as a destination for investment, growth and quality of life.

Ambassadors will come from across **all business sectors and public organisations** and will be individuals with strong connections and networks with a common commitment to the town and a recognition that success for Telford means success for their own enterprise or organisation.

Ambassadors will be involved in creating Invest Telford marketing content providing testimonials, creating videos, or participating in interviews. Ambassadors will be provided with a marketing 'toolkit' to enable them to promote Telford through their own channels and social media.

Collaboration with regional and national partners such as the Department for Business & Trade, Midlands Engine, The Catapult Network (world leading technology and innovation centres powered by Innovate UK), Department of Work and Pensions and business networks such as Make UK will have an increased focus as important channels through which Telford's USP's can be promoted. Inward trade missions to the region, sector specific networking opportunities such as manufacturing collaborations through Make UK or Agri Tech promotional events will all be targeted. This will include presenting Telford's offer on the national stage including UKREiif which is growing in importance as a UK Real Estate and Investment event.

We will continue to position Telford and Wrekin through our social media channels as a pioneering place that is driving the **clean energy solutions of the future**. We understand that commitment to sustainability and clean energy are key to potential investors, but they are also important motivators to attract and retain high quality and skilled labour in our town. We will **celebrate innovation and entrepreneurial success stories**, supported by our business leaders and Ambassadors.

Our commitment to **strong, healthy and happy communities** is another USP for Telford that needs to be celebrated and is an important contributor to Telford's quality of life offer. In particular, we will celebrate businesses that make a valuable contribution to our communities, through higher wages; corporate social responsibility; and the creation of happy and healthy workplaces. Utilising tools such as Hello Telford (www.hellotelford.co.uk) to encourage collaboration, we will work with our business leaders to create a progressive approach to procurement that creates social value, supports local supply chains and more ethical procurement.

PILLAR 2

SUPPORTING OUR BUSINESSES

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Supporting businesses, of all sectors and sizes, home grown or international is a fundamental pillar of this strategy. Our businesses ultimately drive job creation and new opportunities; fostering innovation; enhancing economic inclusion; attracting new investment; bolstering supply-chains; and enriching the region's skills base. Encouraging and nurturing these elements is essential.

WHAT IS TELFORD DOING?

Invest Telford works to make Telford and Wrekin the place to start a business, to grow a business and to locate a business. This includes a constant focus on the key ingredients of a successful business ecosystem with our **red carpet welcome** and pledge to businesses expanding and relocating to Telford proving extremely successful. The team collaborates and works with key partners and intermediaries to connect and provide the tailored support needed across businesses of all sizes and sectors.

Collaboration between businesses is enabled through '**Hello Telford**', a free B2B tool providing a one-stop, digital platform which gives businesses the chance to collaborate and to buy and sell from each other, whilst reducing their carbon footprint. It strengthens local supply-chains and ensures that more money circulates around local companies.

The **Skills for Growth Programme** recognises that tackling the skills shortage and staff retention are key for business. The Programme offers advice, guidance and signposting to the right skills support,

working collaboratively with partners it acts as a first point of contact for businesses when recruiting, retaining or navigating redundancies. The **Invest HR Forum** is a best practice forum which serves as a consultation network, and also for B2B connections to minimise the impact of redundancies.

Since 2016, the Council has successfully secured more than £110m in grant funding for businesses. Telford & Wrekin Council continues to be proactive in securing new investment from central government attracting £5.8 million from the **UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)**. The focus of this funding is on supporting local businesses, investment in people and skills and in community and place – connecting young people to economic opportunity.

The Council has also created **innovative grant funds** to tackle other significant business challenges. The **Climate Change Fund** has supported businesses to make important green investments and environmental improvements whilst the Council's **Pride in Our High Street** initiative has supported start-up grants that has resulted in a fall in empty high street properties to below national averages.

WHAT ELSE WILL WE DO?

As well as being a renowned for international inward investment, Telford is gaining a reputation for its start-up scene, its cluster of fast-growing scale-up companies and for the growth of new sectors such as agri-tech. We will focus our funding and support infrastructure to build on this reputation, maintaining diversity in our economy and addressing the skills challenges faced by businesses across all sectors. We will encourage investment in high value jobs, but will continue to foster those businesses creating high volume but lower value jobs so that the needs of all of our residents are met.

Thrive Telford provides professional advice backed by financial investment from start up to high growth including an innovative start up programme linked to potential investors. Fully funded expert business advice is also available in key areas like environmental sustainability; financial planning; and digital marketing.

Through Thrive Telford we will position Telford as a success story with exemplar case studies, putting us in a strong position to secure further investment.



To attract high quality start-up businesses the town needs attractive and affordable **business incubation facilities** providing a soft landing and wrap around support. Demand is strong with a focus on provision that links to transport hubs and access to University research and development facilities.

2024 will see the opening of the **Station Quarter Town Centre business incubator**, managed by Invest Telford within the new Digital Skills & Enterprise Hub. The incubator will sit as part of a new academic campus being delivered in partnership with **Telford College and Harper Adams University**. The incubator will provide wrap around business support benefitting from links with Harper Adams University based on site and collaboration with other regional universities.

Recognising the opportunities of sustainability, automation, robotics and digitisation we will **link businesses and academic bodies** including Harper Adams University, Wolverhampton University and regionally the Manufacturing Technology Centre, Keele University and Warwick Manufacturing Group.

We will build the talent pipeline for businesses working with Telford College and their established links with these Universities future proofing growth through strong pathways for young people from school to HE and raising aspirations in the community.

The team will also leverage programmes like **Made Smarter** which unites companies with the digital tools, innovation and skills to make an everyday difference. We will enable collaboration, driving innovation in science, technology and engineering and support the development of the brightest ideas and talent to shape our future.

We will work with businesses to tackle **climate change and sustainability** and we will continue to promote Telford as a leader in this field.

We will support a strong collaborative approach to the climate change challenge, bringing together the Council, education institutions, major global investors and home-grown businesses in networks including the **Telford Sustainability & Energy Cluster (TSEC)** to help shape the future of sustainable and clean growth.

We will continually refresh our **Skills for Growth** programme actively promoting careers in Telford, encouraging early engagement between schools and employers through a project based approach that will encourage long term business and school relationships. This will include projects to encourage an enterprise culture in Telford, to boost start up activity.

The Invest Telford team will continue to attract inward investors and support strategic employers in Telford through an **account management** approach that develops close relationships with businesses. Investment outcomes will be strengthened through the **Telford Ambassador Programme**.

We will take a targeted approach to inward investment based on corporate research, data and intelligence, with a specific focus on the UK market. International relationships will be strengthened with the Department for Business & Trade in markets where Telford has major investors (US, Canada, Germany, France and Japan). Important regional relationships that reflect our shared reliance on key sectors will be enhanced including with West Midlands Combined Authority and the Midlands Engine.





“ OUR BUSINESSES PLAY A PIVOTAL ROLE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Supported by the team from the start with a combination of practical help and access to grants Bridge Cheese continues to thrive in Telford as it satisfies a growing appetite for its products.

“ From the moment the team were engaged it was clear that this was the area that was best suited to meet the requirements. The eagerness they showed was incredible even though at that stage the aim was to bring 15 new jobs. They wanted to make sure this was the right location and then followed it up with action, constantly staying in touch. Telford really stood out for that compared with other Councils. Invest Telford weave this web of connections and then act as facilitator to help businesses work together. People talk about small businesses being the backbone of the economy and Telford demonstrate they really believe that.

- Michael Harte, Managing Director Bridge Cheese

PILLAR 3

TELFORD'S TALENT PIPELINE



WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Businesses are increasingly talent-led and inward investors will locate where they can hire the right people. Businesses are increasingly talent-led and inward investors will locate where they can hire the right people. Increased mobility and post-Covid hybrid working patterns brings challenges and opportunities as companies rethink their location strategies.

Telford prioritises the skills our businesses need and that create the best jobs for our residents. **Telford's diverse economy** means that there are opportunities for all and we are focussed on ensuring all our residents are equipped with the skills to access those opportunities.

Telford recognises that it is the places that take a holistic approach to growing, attracting and retaining talented people which are the most successful.

This pillar is central to Telford's attractiveness as a place where people want to live, where there are outstanding economic opportunities; great schools, FE and HE offers; outstanding quality of life; and value-for-money housing.

Our Town offers a rich skills provision that supports employability skills through to technical specialisms providing choice and opportunity. Our **anchor FE institution**, Telford College, is the largest further education centre in Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire. It is recognised as a major skills hub delivering provision spanning A levels, T-Levels, apprenticeships, degree-level higher education programmes, blended and virtual learning and sector-specific specialist training hubs to help plug skills gaps. A twin campus provides academic and technical centres with specialisms in engineering, construction, retrofit and health. The college engages with around 2,000 young people, plus more than 500 apprentices and over 4,000 adult learners, and has links with 700 employers.

WHAT IS TELFORD DOING?

Equipped, able and ready to work - Telford and Wrekin has a **350,000-strong skilled workforce** within a 30-minute radius of the town, with a bigger proportion of people employed in manufacturing than anywhere else in the West Midlands.

With a wide range of training and education providers, businesses in Telford have access to a steady supply of skilled workers allowing them to grow and expand. This is against a background of considerable investment by the Council in **education infrastructure** to ensure that every child in the borough has access to good facilities and in initiatives that are supporting residents and equipping them to access the jobs available.

The **pathway to further and higher education** in Telford is strong, anchored by **Telford College** and **Harper Adams University** whose specialisms in agriculture and agri-tech cross over into the wider engineering, manufacturing and tech sectors and the **University of Wolverhampton Telford Campus**. Telford employers can also draw on a large pool of graduates from the region's nine universities, many of which have specialisms relevant to Telford's strong manufacturing and

engineering base and specialisms in digital and tech skills relevant to business and professional services sectors.

Our approach to skills is inclusive and we have invested in:

- * The Council's **Job box programme** through which we are providing access to information, advice, guidance and support for all residents to explore local opportunities for learning and work.
- * Working with Telford College to provide **tailored employment programmes** linked with Job Box with 22 employment programmes offered in the last year.
- * **Learn Telford** which exists to provide high quality learning opportunities including retired individuals, people already in employment and those who are not yet ready or able to seek work.
- * **Our targeted Work Local programme** with employment fairs and apprenticeship shows delivered in community venues providing opportunities for businesses to engage with residents and to recruit people living on their doorstep. This is reducing the cost of travel and has a beneficial impact on the environment.

WHAT ELSE WILL WE DO?

Surveys and evidence from business show that skills and labour retention remains one of the most significant challenges faced by industry. The Marches Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP) has assessed future business needs in:

- * Engineering & Manufacturing including food and drink manufacture
- * Construction including environmental technology
- * Health & Social Care
- * Professional Services

This has highlighted skills shortages, the complexity of the skills landscape for businesses to navigate and the need for upskilling support to be tailored to business need in how and what is delivered. Specific issues include graduate retention; digital inclusion; career advice; and employer engagement.

Our response is based on supporting a strong, vibrant **multi provider offer that minimises duplication and is tailored to need** with targeted investment in education infrastructure and practical support to residents and businesses.

Reflecting this collaborative approach Telford College is leading work with other local providers both FE and private to expand skills provision in health, construction and retrofit and advanced manufacturing.

The driving force behind these programmes is working with employers to develop and design bespoke skills modules enabling upskilling and reskilling of the workforce, delivering efficiency and creating employment opportunities.

The development of Telford's new **Station Quarter** will see a step change in Telford's education offer. This highly accessible academic campus will provide new A Level provision delivered by Telford College in a new Telford Sixth Form Centre alongside the **Digital Skills & Enterprise Hub**. Opening in 2024, this will bring world class education and training facilities targeting critical areas of business need and future resilience. Its FE/HE offer will provide seamless pathways for young people in an accessible and aspirational setting playing an important role in attracting and retaining graduates and inspiring young people across the Borough.

The Hub will foster strategic partnerships between education institutions offering young people opportunity to study from 16 with direct connections to business. **Telford College** will provide a focus on a dynamic and employer driven packages including digital, IT and maths programmes focussed on hardware, software, data analysis, coding and cyber security skills with links to the Marches Institute of Technology. **Harper Adams** University will boost high-end skills through world class engineering, robotics and technology provision that crosses over from the University's agricultural training heritage into the wider manufacturing, and engineering sectors. More widely Harper Adams will benefit businesses across sectors through R&D and with its data science expertise, covering the collecting, processing, validating, and storing of the data.



To deliver the practical support needed by residents and businesses we need to re-think how we encourage **greater collaboration between businesses and education**. We need to challenge outdated perceptions of manufacturing and ensure that local students understand the opportunities available to them in Telford.

Working with **business leaders** we will develop new initiatives including:

- * A **school/business twinning project** to broker relationships between an individual school and a business to foster closer working and inspire tomorrow's workforce. The scheme will encourage long term engagement through work placements and hands on opportunities.
- * Close working with education institutions to **align strategies** and ensure that the common themes such as clean energy and resilience and entrepreneurialism and innovation are shared in a practical way.
- * Establish a **school/college leavers' "signing day"** – an annual celebratory event recognising those students who are joining local companies. It will be an opportunity to show links between schools, colleges and employers and will celebrate manufacturing jobs in particular.
- * Create **solutions to fill much-needed skills gaps**, to train local people in the skills required around low carbon housing needs. This will complement the investment by Telford College which through partnerships with local employers has upskilled over 150 in the workforce in less than 6 months.
- * Establish links between Telford businesses and a wide range of UK wide universities who specialise in specific sectors. Such links to include offers of **work/sandwich placements, and targeted research project**. Establishing these connections will broaden the opportunities of our young people whilst creating a path for graduates to return to the Borough.



- ✱ Develop a **talent attraction strategy** for Telford to reflect the changing dynamics of commuting and hybrid working, enabling Telford to position itself as an ideal hybrid work location.
- ✱ Taking advantage of the investment in Station Quarter, establish a **Construction Skills Hub** with the contractor, providing skills, training and employment opportunities within the wider construction sector and creating this as a legacy programme post development.
- ✱ Encourage more women into **STEM careers** running campaigns and creating case studies to promote and inspire.

A new **Skills Strategy and Market Position Statement** will be co-developed with skills providers and businesses to deliver the right provision to meet existing and future business needs, recognising the need for both core and specialist skills and emerging areas of focus for business including sustainability.



The Skills for Growth Service works collaboratively with partners and providers to support our businesses with the right advice and guidance at the right time.

“Telford College is committed to ensuring that students achieve positive outcomes aligned to high aspirations, and through collaborative engagement, supporting employers to have the required skills to develop and grow their workforce. We are incredibly excited by Station Quarter and the partnership with the Council and Harper Adams University delivering more accessible learning opportunities with a curriculum offer that reflects employer needs. This is a collaborative and innovative approach which sees the College at the heart of education and the involvement of employers. We are also excited about development plans at our Haybridge Campus working in partnership with Keele University and Warwick Manufacturing Group.

- GRAHAM GUEST, CEO AND PRINCIPAL

PILLAR 4

AN INNOVATION

CULTURE



WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Every industry and sector of the economy is undergoing disruption and reinvention. Different models of working; ever-changing supply-chains; new materials and processes in manufacturing; the revolutionary impact of Industry 4.0; developments in digital technologies, in particular artificial intelligence and its effect on service sector jobs.

As the **birthplace of the industrial revolution** at Ironbridge Valley of Invention,

to the latest advances in robotics, Telford and Wrekin has always succeeded through embracing innovation and change. Fostering an innovation culture in Telford will create resilience in the face of global changes and create unimagined opportunities.

Elements of the town's innovation culture are reflected in previous Pillars. Pillars 2 and 3 in particular address many aspects of business support and skills and recruitment provision. There are however other initiatives that will have an impact.

WHAT IS TELFORD DOING?

Ni.PARK in Newport has become a centre of excellence in the **agri-tech** sector, bringing together local, UK and global businesses all with the common goal of tackling the future development of sustainable food production. The state-of-the-art **Harper Adams University** animal diagnostics facility provides opportunities to forge new links with companies in the fast-growing agri-tech sector. Telford has been singled out by the UK Government as a 'high potential opportunity' area for precision farming - "Telford provides an ideal access point to this innovation-led opportunity".

The new Digital Skills and Enterprise Hub at **Station Quarter** will deliver a new flexible teaching and learning centre alongside business incubation space. The hub will create the perfect environment for innovative thinking and entrepreneurship and academic collaboration.

The long-established **University of Wolverhampton e-Innovation Centre** has provided support for the creation and development of innovative businesses over many years.

WHAT ELSE WILL WE DO?

Telford will build on its strong innovation credentials and continue to foster an environment of openness and collaboration. The Council will create platforms, events and spaces where people from different disciplines and sectors can interact, exchange ideas, and collaborate on innovative projects. Business leaders will play a strong role in identifying opportunities and driving engagement and the Hello Telford platform will continue to be developed as an effective communication tool.



The new **Station Quarter Hub incubator** will become the focal point for business support and Invest Telford will create a programme to drive business growth and innovation utilising UKSPF funding. Engaging regional universities with specific strengths, wrap around provision will support every aspect of a business's journey to maximise the high growth potential of our start-ups. Through the Hub, businesses will also be kept informed about government and other funding and support for innovation such as initiatives coming through DSIT.

Access to capital is a key part of any innovation economy and Telford will support the development of greater access to funding through **venture capital, engaging angel investors, and promoting crowdfunding platforms** through Hello Telford and the Hub.

There will be an inclusive focus on **entrepreneurship** across all parts of the community, with mentorship, training, and signposting of opportunities for aspiring entrepreneurs from all backgrounds and all ages. Funding will be sought to continue the **Thrive Telford** start up programme beyond UKSPF and the **Invest Telford team** will develop innovative ways to engage directly in communities.

Fundamental to the drive to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship will be early engagement with young people at school or college. A **teaching model** will be developed to support teachers who have a responsibility for teaching business within schools. This will be supplemented by **mentors from the business community** and by engaging students in projects that encourage entrepreneurial thinking and skills.

Working with business leaders, we will develop new **collaborative initiatives** built on driving innovation. A priority will be initiatives that address the **climate challenge** and raise Telford's profile as a leader in this field. For example, establishing Telford as a front-runner in the development of circular economies with its diverse business base and its high-growth waste management sector which is already innovating in the field of large appliance e-waste.

Invest Telford will recognise and **celebrate local innovation and entrepreneurial success** stories and highlight the achievements of innovators and companies, showcasing Telford as a place that nurtures and supports innovation.



From fields exclusively farmed by robots and technology that removes the need for physical fencing to manufacturers getting the royal seal of approval our businesses lead the way.

“ It is a great privilege for us to be recognised by Her Majesty. We take enormous pride in being at the forefront of innovation, helping thousands of companies to bring exciting new products to market in record-breaking time in a reliable fashion, and at a quality that customers expect in line with our brand promise. So it is a huge privilege to have this recognised in such an honourable way.

- BJOERN KLAAS, VICE PRESIDENT AND MANAGING DIRECTOR OF PROTO LABS EUROP

PILLAR 5

IMPROVING INFRASTRUCTURE

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Connectivity is a key driver of inward investment. Telford and Wrekin offers the benefits of a central location in the heart of the country, supported by efficient road and rail links to the national transport network. The availability of safe walking and cycling routes between residential, commercial, retail and leisure areas is an important element of the town's green credentials.

Increasingly, **future-proof energy provision and digital infrastructure**, will be critical factors in the decision to locate or remain in the area, both for businesses and individuals. Telford's clean, green, resilient ambitions must be underpinned by investment and innovation in infrastructure.

WHAT IS TELFORD DOING?

The Council's **Infrastructure Delivery Plan** sets out the strategic requirements that the Council and other service providers will have to plan for arising from committed and planned development within the borough up until 2031.

In 2020, the Council made a commitment to invest more than **£50 million over four years** to improve and maintain roads and footpaths. This commitment was recognised when Telford and Wrekin was voted best in the Midlands for highways and transport services.

Telford & Wrekin Council's public **Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy** outlines the commitment to the transition to EVs which supports both local and national targets of decarbonisation. Telford is working with other local councils to maximise investment including the Government's Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI)

OUR STRATEGY FOR FAIR & INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC GROWTH

Fund, alongside the transport body Midlands Connect.

Telford's cycling and walking infrastructure plan ensures that there are non-car alternatives throughout the borough. The **'active travel' agenda** aims to further improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions, supporting the goal for carbon neutrality by 2030.

Telford's gigabit speeds have put the town ahead of the West Midlands coverage. **High quality digital infrastructure** is being delivered through a partnership between Telford & Wrekin Council and Virgin Media O2 Business, boosting digital inclusion and job opportunities in the borough. This provides access to ultra-fast fibre connectivity for more than 200 public buildings, including schools, libraries and council offices. The introduction of new cabling lays the foundations for an extra 12,000 homes and businesses to have access to ultra-fast fibre services in the future.



WHAT ELSE WILL WE DO?

We will work to enable the infrastructure in the borough to realise the potential of 'gigabit Telford' to drive investment and growth, strengthen and bring resilience to the skill base and raise aspiration and achievement across all our communities. Our Digital Strategy sets out a clear, ambitious vision for delivering a consistent and reliable customer experience across all parts of the Council. We will give people the right digital access so they can do more for themselves by encouraging and supporting digital inclusion, promoting accessibility and helping people live independently for longer.

We will continue to take advantage of **advances in infrastructure design and capacity** to increase our network of physical devices and appliances that are embedded with sensors, software and network connectivity. This will allow the collection and sharing of data to improve the ways infrastructure operates, from street lighting to public transport and more.

We will deliver the ambitious mixed use Station Quarter project, an element of which turns the station into a major gateway for the Town Centre, providing a **multi modal transport hub** linking local assets and attractions.

The Council will **lobby for better direct rail** access to the capital, following the decision to end the Wellington to London service in 2022. Telford is currently one of the largest places in the country without a direct London train.

Alongside the demand from businesses seeking to develop renewable energy solutions to their energy needs the shift to electric vehicles presents a growing grid capacity issue locally and nationally. Telford will **focus on innovative solutions** alongside network partners and local businesses to ensure that there is sufficient resilience in our energy supply and continue to lobby and compete for new investment.

Through our **new Local Plan** we will identify new sites as well as supporting the retrofit and repurposing of land and premises for employment and housing development. Planning policies will support climate ready development.

Investing in infrastructure includes £5.6m that enabled over 9000 premises to access faster broadband, benefitting businesses and expanding out the network to make it more commercially viable for other operators to invest in Telford.

“ Slow broadband with low download speeds that weren't enough for simple things like downloading data files were frustrating. The new broadband connection has made a huge difference, we have already installed a new system and with the improved speeds the business will grow, it will make the operation a little more slick, communications between us and our suppliers and customers will be far better than it was before.

- MARK ROBINSON, MANAGING DIRECTOR WES



PILLAR 6

OUTSTANDING QUALITY OF LIFE

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Quality of life matters more than ever for economic development. An ever-more mobile workforce and the rise of hybrid working means that the quality of place plays an increasingly important role in attracting and retaining both companies and talent. Telford and Wrekin's many attractions in terms of heritage, built, green and natural landscapes also create significant economic value by acting as a magnet for visitors.

Telford and Wrekin's high quality of life continues to be recognised in rankings and surveys **as one of the best in the UK**. The town is renowned as a place which has great schools; wide choice of housing options from urban to rural, modern to traditional;

first-class leisure amenities and one of the region's best shopping offers. All this is set within one of the country's cleanest, greenest urban areas with the best air quality of any city. Telford and Wrekin has a wealth of Local Nature Reserves, parks, woodland and informal spaces, surrounded by beautiful countryside and a protected green network.

The town is a place packed full of adventure, culture and fun for all; its attractiveness as a visitor destination is driven by a great mix of assets from the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Ironbridge Gorge; museums, parklands and adventure attractions to the increased business tourism linked to Telford International Centre.

WHAT IS TELFORD DOING?

The success of **Southwater** has attracted new shopping, dining and entertainment venues to Telford and a proactive programme to bring larger music acts and festivals to the Town Park generates an estimated £20 million spend in the local economy each year.

The Council supports this programme of **free to access events** which attracts an audience of around 100,000 per year, including an annual balloon festival and high street celebration events. The Council continues to innovate and seek new and inspiring events such as the Christmas drone show.

We believe that when times are tough, cultural activities are needed more than ever - bringing people into our towns and High Streets, building community pride, and most importantly creating a feelgood factor. Our aim is to **make culture as accessible as**

possible, for example through our free events programme, community grant schemes, and 'kindness tickets', which enable families on low incomes to come to Telford Theatre.

Telford is continuing to buck the national trend by creating **vibrant high streets** across the borough. Figures from 2022 show that across towns in Telford and Wrekin, just 4.4% of retail units stand empty - well below the UK national average of 13.8%.

The Council helps new independent businesses to launch on the high street through its successful **Pride in Our High Street** initiative which is reviving the borough's high streets and supporting local businesses. Over the last three years the Council has invested over £10m, generating more than 60 new high street business start-ups, awarding 291 grants to local businesses and investing in high street infrastructure to transform the look and feel of high streets.

Following successful bids for government funding, the Council is **delivering transformational infrastructure projects** in its largest borough towns of Oakengates and Wellington. In **Oakengates** the redevelopment of a 1960's shopping precinct and the transformation of a 60 year old theatre building will create an exciting cultural hub that will draw local and visitor footfall to the town. In **Wellington** we are creating new retail, living and business spaces in new public realm settings. The acquisition and restoration of Wellington's historic market and the creation of a new community and cultural hub will enforce Wellington's role as a visitor attraction.

We are investing in the protection and enhancement of the **Town's 'green' infrastructure** with more than 90% of the borough made up of woodland, nature reserves, parks or sports playing fields. This includes 700 acres of heritage woodland in the Ironbridge Gorge, 5 hill summits, the River Severn and Telford Town Park, a celebrated urban parkland. We have protected over 200 publically owned sites from development through our Green Guarantee programme increasing the amount of accessible greenspaces and enabled the designation of 18 new Nature Reserves.

WHAT ELSE WILL WE DO?

Telford and Wrekin's visitor offer will be boosted by the addition of a new, high-quality hotel as part of the new Station Quarter development. The development will also include better connectivity with walking and cycle routes; and low carbon town houses and apartments that will enhance the lifestyle opportunities in the centre of Telford.

Telford Ambassadors will receive training and orientation about Telford's unique selling points including the town's culture, history, landmarks and local attractions as well as other things that make up Telford's quality of life such as local colleges, universities and the housing offer. This will be captured in an Ambassador's toolkit.

The Council's culture and destination team will use the UK-wide **'Visit Telford'** campaign to support the growth of the visitor and culture sector in Telford and beyond.

Working with partners, the team will launch a new Destination Management Plan in March 2024. This will be a shared blueprint for the growth of the visitor economy.

The culture team will continue to develop and run an annual events programme in the Town Park and across the borough creating inspirational and accessible activity that will increase participation and engagement, drive footfall to the towns and enhance Telford's standing as a vibrant and exciting place to visit, live and work.

We will continue to nurture and support the community in the delivery of local events for the borough that creates vibrancy and animation and make the place attractive to new populations and businesses.



Investing in our high street businesses and the communities they operate helps to increase footfall and revive this vital part of the local economy. This sets us apart from other areas nationally and contributes to a varied and vibrant place to live.

“ From where Music Vault all started on Wellington Market I couldn't have expected it to go quite as well as it has. It was a small business to start with but I'd always wanted to run my own shop in Wellington which is my home town. The business start-up grant helped me to set up on Crown Street and now the diversification grant is a massive boost because it means I make the move to an even bigger unit. Extra space will give me the opportunity to stock other instruments and accessories to sell, not just guitars, offer a wider music service to customers and build a store room with a packing area for online orders which is an area I really want to capitalise on.

- JAKE TAYLOR, OWNER MUSIC VAULT

PILLAR 7

SITES AND PREMISES

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

The availability of land for development has been a key factor in Telford's economic success. It has always been a major attraction for inward investors. While Telford still has a great choice of sites and premises the new Local Plan will deliver more opportunities responding to changing demands from investors.

WHAT IS TELFORD DOING?

One of the most transformative projects in the last few decades will have a huge impact on the profile, perceptions and opportunities in Telford Town Centre. **Station Quarter** is a truly transformative development supported by Towns Funding which is leveraging more than £200m of investment from the private sector. Alongside the Digital Skills and Enterprise Hub Station Quarter will create high-quality town centre living, new public spaces for residents and sustainable infrastructure connecting the main railway station with the shopping centre and the leisure offer focussed in Southwater and the Town Park.

The innovative **Telford Land Deal** between the Council and Homes England is continuing to go from strength-to-

strength - delivering new skills, jobs and homes across the region. The scheme brings forward public land for development, with upfront investment to de-risk sites making them shovel-ready for employment and residential use. Since it was launched in 2015, the programme has attracted around £440 million of inward investment, enabling around 2,250 jobs and nearly 1,535 new homes. These developments are incorporating future proof design with electric vehicle charging points and solar panels well.

One of the key successes of the Land Deal is the delivery of **Hortonwood West** – one of the area's newest employment parks which alone has enabled 339 new jobs. The 55 acre site is home to 15 starter units as well as to large global companies such as UPS, CEL Group, Rosewood Pet Products and Craemer, confirming business confidence in the Telford market.

The successful delivery of **Ni.PARK** – the new employment park to the south of Newport, is marked by its recognition as a **national High Potential Opportunity for agri-tech by the UK government**. The first phase of 24 units, was supported by funding through the Council's £79m Growth Fund building bespoke units for end users and offering full turn key solutions and ongoing property management. Further expansion of the park is underway with the recent delivery of a second phase of larger units and with Harper Adams University recently announcing their investment in a new research/education hub on site.

Telford 54 Business Park (T54) continues to thrive with job numbers and inward investment increasing - including Magna Cosma, a tier one supplier to JLR and one of the largest foreign direct investments in engineering in the UK in the last 10 years, currently starting on a second phase of investment.

WHAT ELSE WILL WE DO?

With the fast-changing market dynamics in real estate, Telford will ensure that a **pipeline of future sites and premises is brought forward with energy and connectivity infrastructure in place**. These sites will be fit for purpose and in line with what both expanding businesses and future inward investors are looking for. The draft Local Plan sets out proposals for significant growth in employment land opportunity with more than 90 Ha of new sites being made available. These will include large campus sites as well as opportunities close to centres and through the redevelopment of existing sites as business needs change.

The growth in hybrid working is likely to drive greater demand for local hubs; co-working spaces; and high quality residential broadband connection speeds. Telford will **review the needs of businesses** and the local workforce to ensure that there are no barriers to future models of working.

The continued growth in logistics units to support the expansion of ecommerce necessitates a review of how Telford views the **distribution and warehouse sector**. Future growth in logistics could provide important employment opportunities for local people.



The Telford Land Deal is a 10 year commitment to bring forward brownfield and underutilised land for redevelopment. It shows that Telford is a prime location for investors and growing companies to expand as well as delivering new infrastructure and creating new jobs and homes.

“Moving to the new site has made a huge difference to the CEL group bringing several of our operations under one roof. Here, we can improve our services and grow faster which makes it easier for our customers UK manufacturers to compete more effectively and grow too. We’re already expanding our UK assembly offer, as well as other initiatives. The Telford Land Deal has been instrumental in redeveloping these sites making it possible for businesses like ourselves to move into smart purpose-built units and expand our operations and services. We’ve come a long way over the last 20 years and we’re excited about building an even stronger future here as we continue to grow.

- SIMON CARTWRIGHT, MANAGING DIRECTOR CEL GROUP

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