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**N E W S R E L E A S E**

**Waterside North car park marks the first scheme to benefit from**

**Growing Places Fund**

[Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership](http://www.buckstvlep.co.uk/) **(BTVLEP) is pleased to announce the completion of its first Growing Places Fund (GPF) scheme, with the opening of a new car park in Exchange Street, which is part of the Waterside North Masterplan, in addition to key development schemes coming to completion in Wycombe Town Centre.**

Town centre renewal is an important priority for BTVLEP, to increase the economic viability of town centre businesses, increase their attractiveness as inward investment locations and enhance Buckinghamshire’s visitor economy offer.

To this end a number of schemes are underway, in part funded through Growing Places funding and in partnership with The District and County Councils, these include; Aylesbury Town Centre – this scheme includes the completion of the regeneration of the South of Exchange Street and regenerating the North of Exchange Street; and in High Wycombe the Hughenden Quarter Link Road; Upper Access Road; and High Wycombe Town Centre.

Regeneration of Aylesbury town centre is needed to meet changing expectations and help Aylesbury fulfil its potential as a major centre for housing and employment growth. The development of Waterside North, to the north of Exchange Street, is a phased development which will provide a mix of attractions, including a major new shopping centre, restaurants and housing.

**more…**

**Waterside North car park marks the first scheme to benefit from Growing Places Fund: 2**

Richard Harrington, Managing Director of Buckinghamshire Advantage, said: “We are delighted with the **opening of a new car park in Exchange Street which marks the completion of our first GPF scheme,** but it also facilitates the next phase of the regeneration of this part of Aylesbury."

Richard added: “GPF is essential to the development of Aylesbury and Wycombe towns centres to facilitate the development of these key areas of land, resulting in job creation and regeneration, along with road improvement schemes to significantly reduce congestion, improve journey times and journey reliability in these areas.”

The delivery arm of BTVLEP, Buckinghamshire Advantage (formerly Aylesbury Vale Advantage) acquired the former Aylesbury police station which has been vacant since 2008. The Building is situated in a prominent location at the junction of Exchange Street and Walton Street and is an important part of the phased delivery of the proposed Waterside North retail led development and was supported by GPF funding of **£**2m.

In parallel BTVLEP, are supporting the redevelopment of High Wycombe Town Centre to strengthen the role of the town centre as the focus for employment, shopping and leisure activities in the District. Growing Places Funding is supporting a number of projects including: the Handy Cross Hub (£2m); Hughenden Quarter (£1.3m); andthe Westbourne Link road (£2m), with all projects progressing well.

In particular, the Westbourne Street Link road is now half-way through the first phase of the new route through High Wycombe. The £2 million Westbourne Link, part of High Wycombe's Masterplan, is phase one of a scheme to give traffic an alternative route through the town centre from the A40 (Oxford Road) to Marlow Hill. As part of the link road, a roundabout will be constructed at the northern end of Westbourne Street to tie in with Oxford Road.

**more…**

**Waterside North car park marks the first scheme to benefit from Growing Places Fund: 3**

Growing Places funding supports projects that offer the greatest return for Bucks in terms of quickly delivering jobs, enabling business critical infrastructure, and providing growth for the county, revolving as much of the funding as possible to enable reinvestment in further projects. This rolling commitment to investment also contributes to our skills board funding, our growth hub, and broadband investment.

In particular, as part of the establishment of our Skills Hub - facilitating the bridge between employers and training providers - BTVLEP secured funding for two enterprise advisors; broadband investment connected 40,000 new properties in the county to superfast broadband services, taking connection rates in the county to in excess of 90%; and our Buckinghamshire Business First Growth Hub, with an active membership of over 7,000 Bucks businesses, funding of £7.8m in grants was secured for local businesses.

**Ends**

**Note to editors**

The [**Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership**](http://buckstvlep.co.uk/) (BTVLEP) is a business-led ‘partnership of equals’ between local government and the private sector, building the conditions for sustainable economic growth in the County.

[**Buckinghamshire Business First**](http://www.bbf.uk.com/) (BBF), is the Growth Hub for Buckinghamshire and is backed by Buckinghamshire based entrepreneurs, thousands of SMEs and Local Authorities.  BBF provides the link between public policy and the business community in Buckinghamshire and works with partners to create a dynamic business environment in the Entrepreneurial Heart of Britain.

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