



Team Colchester Levelling Up Programme Update 10 September 2026

Simon Thorp MAPM
Programme Manager
Colchester City Council

Headlines

- Overall Programme RAG Amber - Iran conflict a Red financial risk on the Programme Risk Register.
- Pinch points between highways projects St Botolphs Circus and East Hill LCWIP 4 being closely monitored.
- St Botolphs Circus – on site construction underway - July 2026 to October 2027.
- Bike Hub – tender underway. September/October 2026 start targeted with completion by end-2026.
- St Botolphs Quarter - tender to be issued by end-2026 and let by March 2027, with construction thereafter. Budget capped at £8.393m.
- Shopfront Grants – completion expected by November 2026 – BID to present update at 10 September 2026 Team Colchester meeting including quality control measures.
- MHCLG hard deadline for spending all budget March 2028, with performance update meeting with MHCLG completed August 2026 – assurance given to government that underspend v forecast was unlikely to continue for ‘big ticket’ projects, with on site construction started for St Botolphs Circus and a procurement strategy confirmed for St Botolphs Quarter.

Key upcoming milestones

* indicates time slippage

2026		
St Botolphs Circus	PO issued to ECC. Contractor delivery plan/key milestones/cost plan to be shared.	Jan 2026, now Sept 2026
St Botolphs Quarter	Current Timeline including overlaps with St Botolphs Circus project from Major Projects team to give certainty (LGR 1 April 2028 vesting day).	Jan/Feb 2026, now September 2026
Shopfront improvement	Confirm final BID allocation of outstanding grants timetable for completion of works and quality control.	Mar 2026, now September 2026
Team Colchester	Board Meeting.	10 September 2026
Team Colchester	Board Meeting.	19 November 2026
Bike Hub	Works completed.	Spring 2026, now December 2026
St Botolphs Quarter	Tender issued by Major Projects team.	End 2026
2027		
St Botolphs Quarter	Contract let.	March 2027
Shopfront improvement	Works completed.	March 2027
St Botolphs Circus	Construction completed.	October 2027
St Botolphs Quarter	Construction completed.	To be confirmed.
2028		
Local Regeneration Fund	Hard deadline for spend of all remaining funds	March 2028
Programme closure	Prepare for programme closure, reflections, lessons learned and looking forward	Spring 2028

Finance overview

Local Regeneration Fund (LUF projects) Active Projects – Budget/Forecast/Variance								
Projects	Budgets		Forecast remaining spend					Forecast outturn
Project Name	Total Budget	Town Deal Budget contribution	Total CCC Capital Programme 2026/31	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	Total	Variance
ECC St Botolphs Circus	10,166,000		8,567,248	6,740,555	1,826,693	-	8,567,248	(0)
St Botolphs Quarter	8,393,000		7,768,123	2,293,046	5,325,077	150,000	7,768,123	(0)
Shopfront Grants	121,000				-	-		(0)

Programme RAG status



Overall programme RAG – AMBER

Iran conflict - cost and supply chain volatility.

ECC St Botolphs Circus - ECC time and cost pressures.

St Botolphs Quarter - delivery plan, contract, permissions



Cost RAG - AMBER

ECC St Botolphs Circus cost pressures.

St Botolphs Quarter cost pressures (managed by Major Projects team, cannot exceed CCC budget).

Bike Hub cost pressures.



Time RAG – AMBER

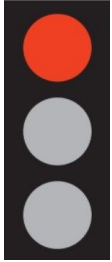
ECC St Botolphs Circus completion has slipped to October 2027.

St Botolphs Quarter planning conditions and BAPA to be resolved with rail stakeholders; car park construction and land ownership issues to be concluded.

Bike Hub completion delayed to December 2026.

Shopfront improvements to be fully completed.

Risk Register and Mitigations



Materials Cost Volatility - Iran conflict (2026)

Iran conflict (2026) causing sustained or sudden increases in material costs and shipping delays. Industry insight suggests this could worsen in the next 3 months. Mitigation plan to be implemented.



St Botolphs Quarter - Planning Conditions and Network Rail BAPA

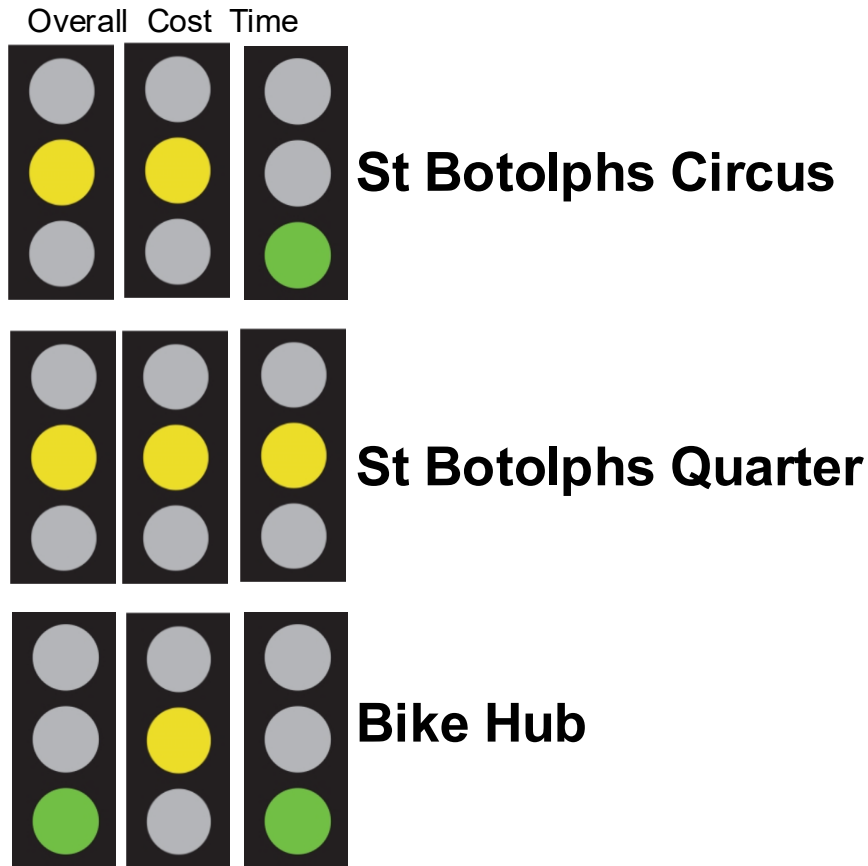
Various Planning conditions to be discharged. Basic Asset Protection Agreement (BAPA) to be agreed with Network Rail including station access. Transfer of non-registered land into CCC demise. Thick concrete below car park to be removed.



Cost Monitoring and Controls

Ensure progress reports, risk registers, cost monitoring reports and purchase orders are consistently managed through one system (eg. Power Apps) and updated by Estates Team in a timely manner. Ensure invoice claims are coded to correct projects.

RAG by theme



Based on July 2026 progress reports and other updates.

Highlights/lowlights

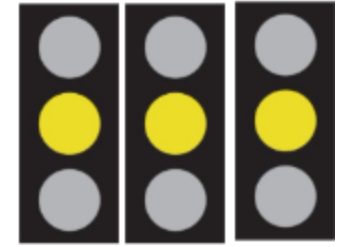


St Botolphs Circus

- Construction works underway.
- Compound arrangements confirmed and vegetation clearance completed alongside stakeholder engagement activity.
- Confidence improved following review of the latest Quantified Risk Assessment, with contingency considered robust and proportionate.
- Co-ordination with East Hill remains strong.
- Confidence in Traffic Management arrangements, with two lanes maintained throughout peak periods, and one lane closed off-peak only.

Highlights/lowlights

St Botolphs Quarter



- Full planning approval received, subject to conditions.
- Major Projects Team currently working on procurement strategy - due to launch in summer/autumn 2026.
- Working with rail industry and meeting held with Network Railway Accessibility Group in late May 2026 – station lift access not required.
- Looking at potential value engineering measure given current world affairs and likely cost increases.
- Mitigation of land ownership and car park concrete underway.
- Additional external project management support secured.
- Design team appointed for RIBA stage 4-6 works - Haworth Tompkins lead architect.
- CCC Corporate Landlord Team currently exploring a range of options for housing delivery at Britannia Yard.
- Delivery of project being led by CCC Corporate Landlord Team.
- Project Manager exploring need for and timing of preparatory works to concrete sub-base ahead of main works starting.

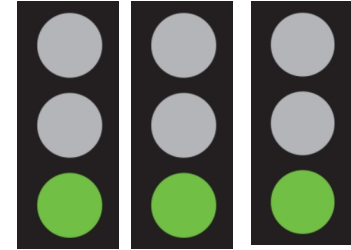
Hlighthights/lowlights



Bike Hub

- Project has now moved into delivery - tender returns received and costs/scope under review.
- Completion expected by end-2026.
- Initial submissions higher than anticipated, requiring targeted value engineering to maintain affordability while protecting key outcomes.
- Operational performance remains strong, with 24/7 access being introduced to maximise utilisation and income generation.
- Despite current cost pressures, available programme contingency provides a route to maintaining budget alignment and completion remains targeted before the end of 2026.

Highlights/lowlights



Workspaces and Shopfronts

- Update to be presented by BID including breakdown of LUF/BID money and assurance on quality control.
- Grant scheme funded through Business Improvement District (BID) and Levelling Up Fund (LUF).
- Total budget £121,000 - £96,000 allocated to businesses/properties on St Botolph's Street, Osborne Street, St Botolph's Circus, Short Wyre Street and Priory Street.
- Remaining grant/contingency budget = £11,413