



We are Colchester



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City Council

We Are Colchester Board Meeting

28 November 2024, 1130

Microsoft Teams

Agenda

1. **Welcome, Apologies and Declarations of Interest - Simon Blaxill**
2. **Project Spotlight – Heart of Greenstead Hub – Rory Doyle**
3. **Issues, Risks & Mitigations - 'You said, we did' – Matt Sterling, Matthew Brown, Glenn Crickmore, Ellen Clark-Romain**
4. **Progress Report & Engagement Update - Simon Thorp & Clare Ratcliffe**
5. **Levelling Up Programme update – Matt Sterling**
6. **Decisions and points to note - Simon Blaxill**
7. **Next meeting**



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Welcome, Apologies & Declarations of Interest

Simon Blaxill

Chair



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Project Spotlight: Heart of Greenstead

Rory Doyle, Strategic Director

Heart of Greenstead Hub – Phase 1

Action	Lead	Update
A detailed delivery timeline with costs, risk management and details of any additional secured Integrated Care Board funding to be presented.	Rory Doyle	<p>Updated programme for the scheme. Shared with colleagues and Heart of Greenstead board members.</p> <p>ICB (Health) additional funding business case progressing, approval decision expected next month. Commencement of works on the GP provision at St Edmund House in January 2025, if funding approved.</p> <p>Work on the financial modelling, site due diligence (Structural & Legal survey's), stakeholder engagement & future system knitting and governance continuing.</p> <p>Rent and lease structure review ongoing with CCC & ECC Estates.</p>

Heart of Greenstead

Liveable Neighbourhood

Action	Lead	Update
<p>A timeline update to be shared for delivery of the School Street pilot.</p> <p>An update on building connections between Colchester Institute and Essex Pedal Power to be provided.</p>	Julian Sanchez	Preparing for School Street works in February 2025 (half term).

Heart of Greenstead Programme Highlights:

The Heart of Greenstead program has been updated, please see the below highlights:

- Planning Permission Approval: July 2025
- Contractor Procurement Exercise: Late April - Middle October 2025 (*Contractually Committed*)
- Pre-Commencement Works - Late October 2025
- Commencement of Works - Start December 2025
- Completion - December 2026

Heart of Greenstead Phase 1 - Risk & Mitigations Highlights

Heart of Greenstead overall RAG status **AMBER**. Risk status agreed by the Heart of Greenstead Board.
Risk & Mitigation Highlights:

Delivery:

- Revised designs shared that are in budget and meet required outcomes, designs shared with planning, positive feedback received.
- Future campus operating model and lead delivery vehicle requires confirmation and agreement with stakeholders. Additional technical support sought, conversations ongoing to ascertain how this will be delivered and governed.
- Discussions ongoing with ECC & CCC estates teams to review rent and lease plans for campus site. Contingency plans being discussed.

Time:

- Phase 1 to be contractually committed by October 2025 to meet the MHCLG deadline of 31/03/2026.
- Stakeholder engagement took place in October. Positive feedback received, designs continue to be amended to meet service delivery requirements of stakeholders.

Cost:

- Proposed additional ICB funding decision in December 2024. Contingency plans in place, if funding is not approved.
- Current designs in budget, cost plan to be updated in early 2025, once additional ICB funding position is known. QS to be procured to assist with cost plan. Financial viability of campus currently being investigated, further technical support to be sought.



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Issues, Risks & Mitigations – you said, we did

Recap on decisions to be actioned from 22 August 2024 meeting

Holy Trinity Church

Action	Lead	Update
A detailed delivery timeline and update on risk management to be provided on the Heritage Fund bid and tenancy arrangements.	Matt Sterling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listed Building Consent application submitted 22 November 2024.• New Managing Operator Partner being selected – decision and outcome December 2024• First phase of repairs (funded with remaining £400k of Town Deal) to commence March 2025, ends August/Sep 2025.• Delivery Stage application to TNLHF preparation Dec 24- March 25, submission May 25.• Main / final stage of conversion works (funded by TNLHF and Historic England) Jan 26 to Dec 2026.• Opening Dec 26/Jan 27.

Holy Trinity Church

(DELIVERED BY COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL)

2 Key Updates:

Tender for new operator partner closed on 1 November, 5 applications received. Additional funds from Historic England have enabled works to tower and roof.

Listed Buildings Consent will be submitted to the local planning authority in November. Heritage Fund Delivery Stage (final) application to be submitted May 2025.

First phase of capital works to commence May 2025, and second phase April 2026. All works to be completed by December 2026.

1 Overview:

The project will repair and adapt this disused church building into a heritage, community and cultural hub to be operated by a local charity or consortia.



3

Timeline and Finance:

KEY DATES	Onsite Start Date: May-25		Expected Completion: Dec-26	
	Total Cost = £2.8M		Budget = £2.8M	Contingency = 15%
PROJECT FINANCES				

Holy Trinity Square

Action	Lead	Update
A timeline update to be provided.	Matt Sterling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tender for construction to be launched Dec 24• Price to be finalised on selection of firm in Spring 26• Start on site targeted to follow the completion of the external church works in Sep 25• Completion Dec 25 – Jan 26

Holy Trinity Square

(DELIVERED BY COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL)

2

Key Updates:

Construction tender due to go out in December 2024, with a view to appointing a contractor in the new year.

This will finalise costs.

We are aiming to start work onsite in September 2025 (re-timed to avoid disruption from the Church renovation).

1

Overview:

The project will introduce a light-touch improvement to the churchyard to allow it to be accessibly opened to the public.



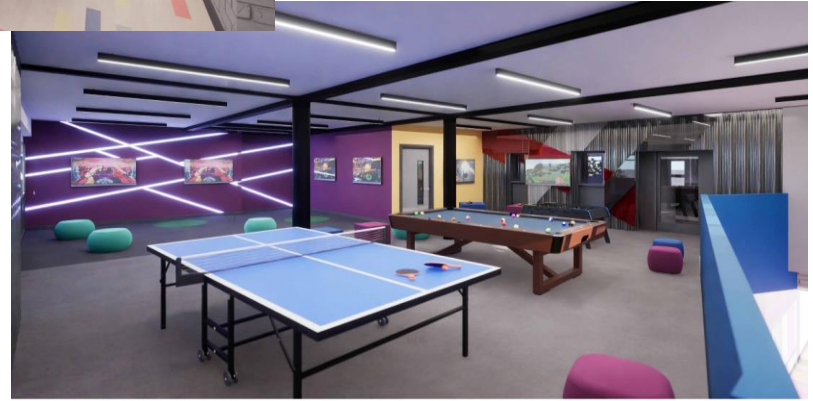
3

Timeline and Finance:

KEY DATES	Onsite Start Date: Sep-25		Expected Completion: Dec-25	
	Total Cost = £600K		Budget = £600K	Contingency = £44K
PROJECT FINANCES	Total Cost = £600K		Budget = £600K	Contingency = £44K
	Total Cost = £600K		Budget = £600K	Contingency = £44K

Transformed youth facilities

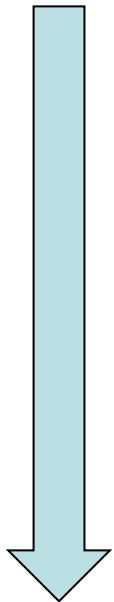
Action	Lead	Update
A detailed delivery timeline to be provided and update on progress with investigation of funding opportunities to support out of scope features for the Townhouse Youth Centre.	Glenn Crickmore	Townhouse works being re-tendered with contractor appointment January 2025 and completion of works by May/June 2025.



Timeline and Finances

Townhouse Youth Centre	KEY DATES	Onsite Start Date: Mar-25	Expected Completion Date: Sep-25
	PROJECT FINANCES	Total Cost = £1M	Budget = £1M
Stanway Youth Centre	KEY DATES	Onsite Start Date: Jul-24	Expected Completion Date: Aug-24
	PROJECT FINANCES	Total Cost = £170K	Budget = £170K
Highwoods Youth Centre	KEY DATES	Onsite Start Date: Mar-24	Expected Completion Date: May-24
	PROJECT FINANCES	Total Cost = £150K	Budget = £150K

Townhouse Youth Centre – revised timeline



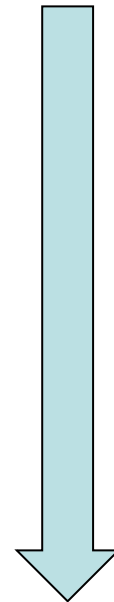
November 2024 – tender review

December 2024 – contractor appointment

January 2025 – on site start

April 2025 – fit out

May 2025 - completion



St Nicholas Square

Action	Lead	Update
A complete picture on progress and project completion be presented, including lessons learned to date.	Matt Sterling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Christmas break currently underway• Work resumes in Jan 25• Work completes in Mar 25

St Nicholas Square

(DELIVERED BY COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL)

Key Updates:

2

Much of the of public realm works now complete, including paving to Lion Yard and area behind St Nicholas Hotel.

Onsite works were paused on 8 November for Highways Christmas Embargo. Remaining surfacing will be completed between January and March 2025.

Cost is being reassessed due to extra pressure from Christmas break.

1 Overview:

The project will transform this 'back' space into a coherent and attractive public square.



3

Timeline and Finance:

KEY DATES	Onsite Start Date: Feb-24		Expected Completion: Mar-25	
	Total Cost = £1.6M Being reassessed		Budget = £1.6M	Contingency = Used

Jumbo & Balkerne Gate

Action	Lead	Update
An update on work to identify alternative nesting locations for the peregrine falcons.	Matt Sterling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alternative sites being investigated now• Ecological study forms part of Planning application

Jumbo and Balkerne Gate Phase 2

(DELIVERED BY NORTH ESSEX HERITAGE)

2 Key Updates:

Application for round 2 of Heritage Lottery Funding was submitted in August 2024.

A funding decision is expected in late 2024. If funds are obtained, work onsite could start as early as summer 2025.

Work to identify alternative nesting location for peregrine falcons is underway.

1 Overview:

A Town Deal contribution is supporting the project aimed at completing repairs to the tower and to support a bid to the NHLF to allow this much-loved landmark to come back into use as a community facility. They will also improve the public realm between the tower and Mercury Theatre.



3

Timeline and Finance

KEY DATES	Onsite Start Date: Aug-25		Expected Completion: Sep-26	
	Total Town Deal Cost = £1.781M		Total Town Deal Budget = £1.781M	
PROJECT FINANCES	Overall contingency = TBC			

Walking and Cycling route

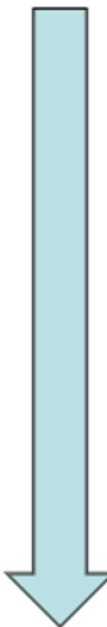
Action	Lead	Update
Full timeline and risk mitigations to be presented, with East Hill design visuals.	Ellen Clark-Romain	Re-procurement of route sections 1-3 (East Hill) in progress, on site by June 2025 with quality to be maintained. Route sections 4-7 (off road through the Moors) subject to Safer Streets funding or value engineering with highway adoption by ECC and permitted development. Route section 8 (Colne Causeway) completed.

LCWIP Route 4

Connecting Colchester City Centre with the University and Greenstead



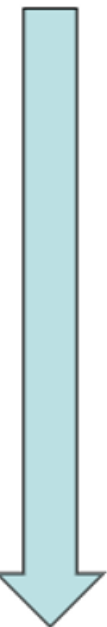
LCWIP4 timeline



January 2025 – re-procurement of route sections 1-3 (East Hill).
New TRO may not be required.

June 2025 – East Hill on site works commence (quality
commitment maintained).

Summer-Winter 2025 – route sections 4-7 (off road, The Moors)
highway adoption and permitted development. Safer Streets
funding (currently unsecured) mitigates risk of value engineering.



March 2026 – completion of all sections.

- **Top 5 Risks**

- 1) **Redesign still subject to RSA and further stakeholder engagement** – Revised design is subject to a repeat RSA process, the Project Team are currently reviewing. New design will be shared with key stakeholders, and they may raise concerns.
- 2) **Political Appetite** – Cabinet Member and We are Colchester Board is supportive and has requested new design to be briefed with Local Members to ensure continued, wider political support.
- 3) **Cost** – The additional costs of the redesign and consequent delay will impact negatively on the project which already has funding challenges. New scheme will also require re-tendering with risk to Tender price as a result of inflation.
- 4) **Procurement risk** – Programme assumes procurement via Pagabo in January 25. Risk that Tender returns are not within budget. Delays to completion of detailed design may impede on Tender issue.
- 5) **Programme** – Risk that further delays could mean extension of timescales beyond funding period. Risk of TRO readvertisement being required.

PHYSICAL CONNECTIVITY

(DELIVERED BY ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL)

This project will create a new or, in parts, upgraded 2.96kms walking and cycling route between the City Centre towards the University and Greenstead with improved facilities, including lighting and cycle parking.

This project, to deliver the route known as LCWIP 4, is expected to encourage additional cycle trips of 190 per day in 2026, 700 by 2033, and 1,324 by 2041.

The project is part-funded by Town Deal (£2.8M), with other contribution from S106 (£263K), Active Travel Fund 3 (£1.3M), and ECC ATF3 Design Work (£116k).



Key Updates

Concerns surrounding road safety audit (RSA) for East Hill section have now been resolved and key stakeholder engagement continues to be sensitively managed.

Elements of the East Hill scheme have had to be redesigned to address the Road Safety Audit concerns, and the delay has created the need to re-tender for the construction contract.

Work is due to start on East Hill by June 2025, with a detailed delivery plan being developed.

Timeline and Finances

KEY DATES	Overall Start Date: Jun-25	Expected Completion Date: May-26	
PROJECT FINANCES	Total Cost = £2.88M	Budget = £2.88M	Contingency = 17.5% (East Hill Section Only)

5G

Action	Lead	Update
An updated timeline to be provided.	Matthew Brown	On site started September 2024, estimated completion April 2025 for the build phase. Completion date for the experience phase to follow.

Digital Forum

Action	Lead	Update
A timeline and update on concession arrangements to be provided.	Matthew Brown	Concession agreement to be completed and entered end of December 2024. Completion and fit-out of building and onboarding of tenants Jan-May 2025. Opening and launch May/June 2025.

DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

This theme includes three projects to help Colchester capitalise on the opportunities presented by the growth of the digital economy.

This includes:

- **The new Digital Forum at 43 Queen Street**
(DELIVERED BY COLCHESTER CITY COUNCIL)
- **The creation of a Digital Skills Hub at the Wilson Marriage Centre** (DELIVERED BY ECC ADULT COMMUNITY LEARNING)
- **Two 5G mobile pilots to act as a catalyst for further private sector investment** (DELIVERED BY COLCHESTER AMPHORA TRADING)



Key Updates

Queen Street Digital Forum

- Good progress is still being made onsite.
- Windows are being installed in the West Elevation (Queen Street side), with the roof also expected to be completed.

Digital Skills Hub (Project Completed)

- This saw the refurbishment of a disused gym into a training suite for digital skills including ICT and virtual reality.
- The project was led by ECC through Adult Community Learning and funded by Town Deal, with an additional £100K of match-funding from ECC..

- This project pilots two true-5G sites in the City Centre, the first deployment of its type in Colchester to stimulate full roll-out. 5G technology opens new business opportunities such as virtual reality tourism.
- The project is being managed by Amphora Ltd. Research has confirmed the best, current real-life use application of 5G in Colchester is virtual reality tourism.
- The deployment of the enabling 5G network is now underway (physical build).
- The development of the VR/AR enabled experience (via headsets and/or mobile phones) will commence shortly.

Timeline and Finances

Digital Forum	KEY DATES	Onsite Start Date: Jan-24	Expected Completion Date: May-25	
	PROJECT FINANCES	Total Cost = £6.25M	Budget = £6.3M	Contingency = £170K
Digital Skills Hub	KEY DATES	Onsite Start Date: Mar-23	Completed: Aug-23	
	PROJECT FINANCES	Total Cost = £879K	Budget = £879K	Contingency = N/A
5G	KEY DATES	Onsite Start Date: Sep-24	Expected Completion Date: April-25	
	PROJECT FINANCES	Total Cost = £977K	Budget = £977K	Contingency = 10%



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Progress Report & Engagement Update

Simon Thorp

Programme and Performance Manager

Clare Ratcliffe

Engagement Officer

Headlines

- 3 x completed projects (Digital Skills Hub, Balcerne Gate phase 1, Essex Pedal Power)
- Good progress across the programme – with time and cost issues being managed.
- Heart of Greenstead – current design option meets the cost envelope.
- St Nics Square - the need for unforeseen archaeology work has necessitated a Christmas break and pushed the completion back into 2025.
- Jumbo - HLF bid outcome expected Dec 24 (with relocation of peregrine falcon nesting platform being investigated as high risk to project).
- MHCLG ongoing funding secure with Monitoring Return submitted.

Progress highlights

Overall programme RAG - **Amber**

- Essex Pedal Power bike handout continues.
- Stanway and Highwoods Youth Centres completed – Townhouse re-tendering means delayed completion - May 25.
- Walking and Cycling route - expected to be delivered to time and budget, with potential value engineering for off road route sections. Re-tender creates cost risks alongside potential need for new TRO. Safer Streets funding may help avoid value engineering off-road route sections.
- 5G site visit has taken place with first phases of infrastructure build now underway. Work is also now commencing on developing the VR/AR experience element of the scheme.

Progress highlights

Town Centre & Gateways

- Holy Trinity Church May 25 National Lottery Heritage Fund bid submission target. Listed Building Consent submitted 18 Nov 24, managing operator partner to be appointed December 2024, remaining £400k town deal funding to be deployed around March 2025
- Trinity Square out to tender – Nov.
- Timings are being updated for both schemes together to reflect also the adjacent Colchester Library refurbishment and minimise disruption.
- Lexden Gardens contractors on site and on target, planning We Are Colchester Board/Officer site visit.

Transformed Youth Facilities

- Stanway and Highwoods completed, delay to Townhouse but on track for all sites to be completed by May 25.

Walking and Cycling

- Road Safety Audit and re-design resolved (East Hill).

Progress highlights

Heart of Greenstead

- Hub – detailed delivery timetable with costs and details of additional secured Integrated Care Board funding to be presented.
- Liveable Neighbourhood/School Street on site works due Feb 25.

Digital Connectivity

- Digital Forum (Queen St) concession agreement now agreed informally between Colbea and CCC, final additions and amendments are now being made, for target completion December 2024. Walls and other structural elements continue to take shape, target is for roof to be completed by end of December.
- Digital Skills Hub benefits realisation ongoing with shared reflections and lessons learned across the programme.

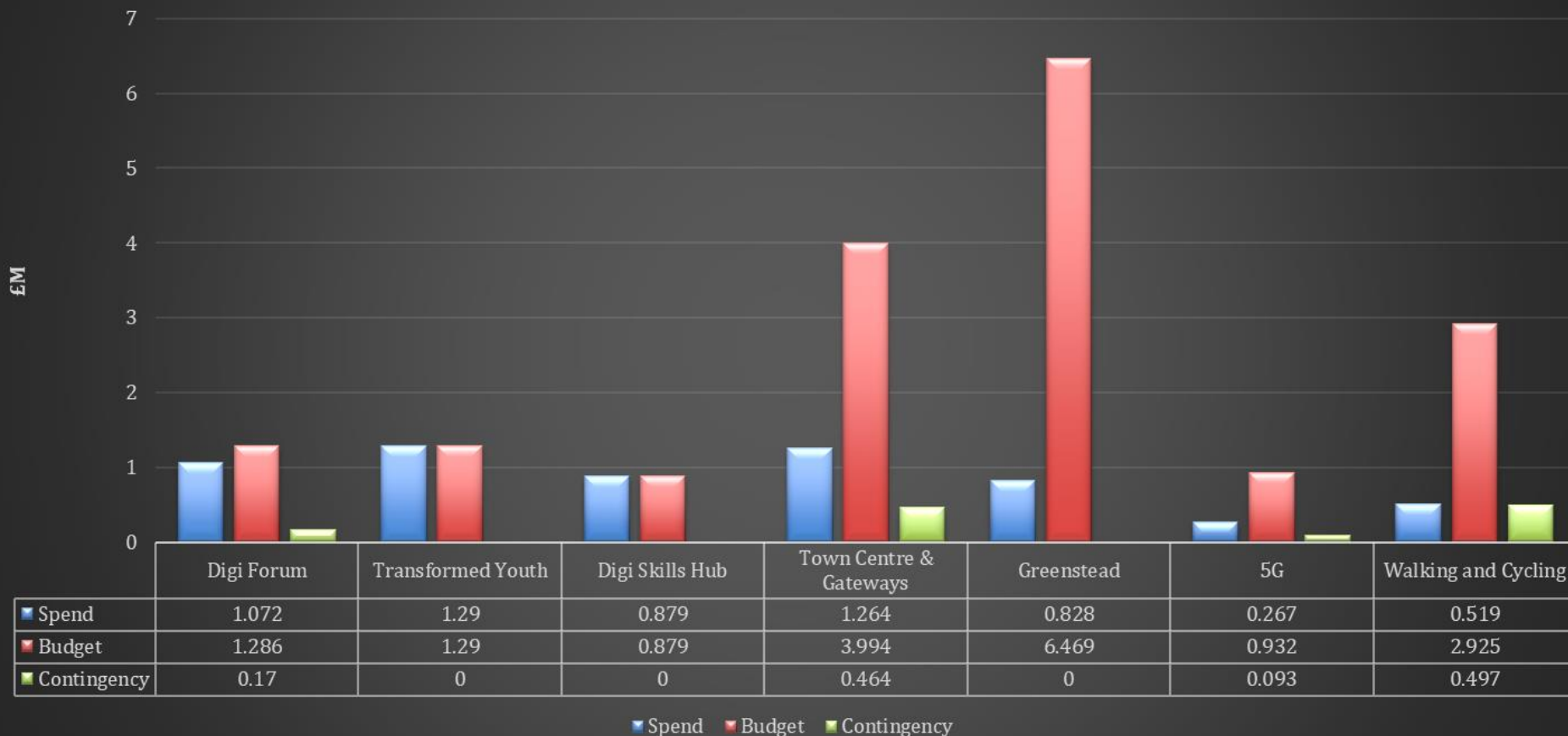
Delivery plan

Project	2024-25 Q2	2024-25 Q3	2024-25 Q4	2025-26 Q1	2025-26 Q2	2025-26 Q3	2025-26 Q4
St Nicholas Square							
Essex County Hospital							
Trinity Church							
Trinity Square							
Jumbo							
Balkerne 2							
Heart of Greenstead							
Liv Neigh							
Transformed Youth Facilities							
5G							
Digital Working Hub/Forum							
Walking and Cycling							
Engagement							
Monitoring							

3 of 15 project have been completed – Digital Skills Hub, Balkerne Gate phase 1 and Essex Pedal Power.

Budget overview

Town Deal spend v budget at 2024-25 Half-Year



Risk management

- No new risks identified.
- Transformed Youth Facilities - Confirm contractor and revised delivery plan.
- LCWIP4 - prioritise sections 1-3 (on site spring 2025), value engineer other sections or ECC confirm additional funding (Safer Streets).
- Holy Trinity Church - resolve tenancy issues.
- Heart of Greenstead - confirm detailed viable option for multi-use hub (time/budget/extra ICB funding - committed spend deadline March 2026).
- St Nicholas Square - ensure phase 2 permissions and revised timetable are confirmed to avoid pinch points with other works, also closely managing comms.
- Digital Forum - confirm tenancy agreement.

RAG headlines - Programme

Month	Year	Overall RAG ^①	Cost RAG ^①	Timescales RAG ^①
October	2024	Amber	Amber	Amber

- Time and Cost issues continue to be managed for some projects.
- Heart of Greenstead final hub costs still to be confirmed.
- LCWIP4 costs are uncertain until re-tender for East Hill, associated TRO and Safer Streets bid to increase off road sections budget are confirmed.
- Town Centre & Gateways cost issues have affected various projects.
- Heart of Greenstead continues to pose the greatest risk to on time delivery of the programme, with St Nicholas Square delays remaining an issue.

RAG overview – October 2024

Current Project : Town Deal - Physical Connections (Gateway : Development)

Month	Year	Overall RAG ⓘ	Cost RAG ⓘ	Timescales RAG ⓘ
October	2024	Green	Red	Green

Current Project : Town Deal - Transformed Youth Facilities (Gateway : Development)

Month	Year	Overall RAG ⓘ	Cost RAG ⓘ	Timescales RAG ⓘ
October	2024	Amber	Green	Amber

Current Project : Town Deal - Digital Connections (Gateway : Development)

Month	Year	Overall RAG ⓘ	Cost RAG ⓘ	Timescales RAG ⓘ
October	2024	Amber	Green	Green

Current Project : Town Deal - Town Centre and Gateways (Gateway : Development)

Month	Year	Overall RAG ⓘ	Cost RAG ⓘ	Timescales RAG ⓘ
September	2024	Amber	Amber	Red

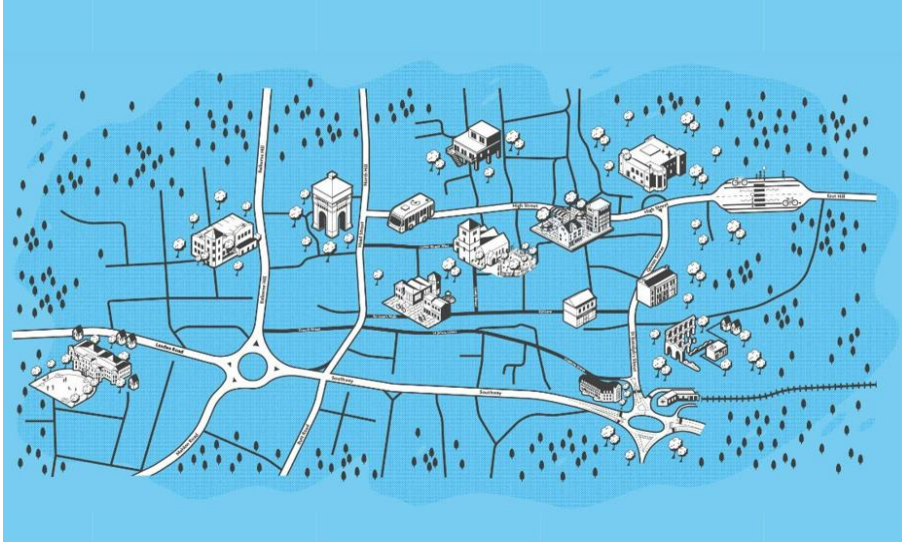
Current Project : Town Deal - Heart of Greenstead (Gateway : Development)

Month	Year	Overall RAG ⓘ	Cost RAG ⓘ	Timescales RAG ⓘ
October	2024	Amber	Amber	Amber

Risk management - programme

Date Raised	Last Updated	Status	Risk Type	Headings	RAG	Score
13/06/2024	13/06/2024	Open	Strategic	Holy Trinity Church tenancy arrangements	Amber	10
12/04/2024	09/05/2024	Open	Financial	Heart of Greenstead multi-use hub	Red	20
12/04/2024	12/04/2024	Open	Financial	LCWIP4 (walking and cycling route) - East Hill	Red	16
12/09/2023	09/05/2024	Open	Strategic	Digital Working Hub - construction and tenanc	Amber	8
30/08/2022	06/11/2023	Open	Strategic	Engagement	Green	4
24/08/2022	13/06/2024	Open	Financial	Cost inflation impact incl St Nicholas Square	Green	4

Comms & Engagement update



- Regen map helps to establish a clear connection between all City Centre projects to ensure understanding of the full scope of investment among residents, visitors, and businesses.
- Over 2.5 million trackable impressions and 350,000 trackable engagements.
- Over 400 City Centre media articles this year, with approx. 44% focusing on regeneration and private investment.
- Noticeable change in perception, from questioning if schemes will happen to giving opinions on projects.





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Levelling Up Programme update

Matt Sterling

Levelling Up programme

Action	Lead	Update
Update on Levelling Up programme progress (closely linked to Town Deal).	Matt Sterling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good progress with design work for St Botolph's Circus scheme• Build time: Jan 26 – Mar 27• Design work underway for St Botolph's Quarter work including link to railway station, public realm, enhancements at Priory gardens and new route through City Wall• Build time: Oct 25 – Oct 26• Kerbless Streets judged unaffordable to deliver and permission being sought to reallocate monies to St Botolph's schemes

Key Updates

St Botolph's Circus Junction Redesign

- Work is continuing on detailed designs, including areas of public realm.
- Onsite surveys (topographic and drainage) have been undertaken and results are currently being analysed.

St Botolph's Quarter Masterplan

- A design team has been appointed, led by LCR (development manager) and Haworth Tompkins (lead design consultant).
- Site investigations, feasibility studies and heritage surveys are all underway.

Timeline and Finances

St Botolph's Circus	KEY DATES	Onsite Start Date: Jan-26	Expected Completion Date: May-27	
	PROJECT FINANCES	Total Cost = £12.7m	Budget = £12.7m	Contingency = N/A
St Botolph's Quarter	KEY DATES	Onsite Start Date: Oct-25	Completed: Oct-26	
	PROJECT FINANCES	Total Cost = £8.1m	Budget = £8.1m	Contingency = N/A



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Decisions & Next Meeting

Simon Blaxill

Decisions

Board are invited to make decisions on the following:

1. **Greenstead Hub – confirm support for the detailed design, delivery timeline, key project milestones and costs.**

To note:

1. **Programme-wide progress and planned activities.**
2. **Key risks including cost mitigations and contingencies.**
3. **Government 2024-25 Half-Year Monitoring Return.**
4. **Current project timelines, milestones and risk management.**

Next meeting

27 February 2025

Future meetings

22 May 2025

21 August 2025

26 November 2025

25 February 2026