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ABINGDON

Investment and Regeneration Information

A strategic overview of Abingdon's rapid transformation, infrastructure growth, housing expansion and future investment opportunities across Abingdon



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Abingdon

Abingdon-on-Thames is undergoing a carefully managed program of regeneration and economic development designed to strengthen its role as one of Oxfordshire's most attractive market towns. Guided by the Central Abingdon Regeneration Framework (CARF), the Abingdon-on-Thames Neighbourhood Plan and wider Oxfordshire growth initiatives, the town is benefiting from investment in public spaces, business infrastructure, active travel networks and town centre renewal. Positioned within the Oxfordshire Knowledge Corridor and located close to major employment centres including Culham Campus, Milton Park and Oxford, Abingdon offers a compelling combination of economic opportunity, historic character and high quality of life. The long-term vision focuses on creating a vibrant, sustainable and prosperous town while preserving the heritage and environmental assets that make Abingdon unique.

Housing and Employment Allocations

Future housing and employment allocations for Abingdon are guided by the Vale of White Horse District Council Local Plan 2031 and the evolving Joint Local Plan, which outlines future development targets. Because Abingdon's housing pipeline is largely full with existing permissions, future residential expansion is heavily concentrated at a single large strategic site, while employment growth is geared towards the surrounding Science Vale area.

Dalton Barracks: Located in Shippon, this former military site is being transformed into a major "Garden Village" extension. Following the MoD vacating the site, plans detail up to 2,750 homes, with dedicated schools, green spaces, and local shops.

North of Abingdon: Master-planned urban extensions (such as Radley Reach) are already underway to deliver hundreds of homes alongside community and road infrastructure upgrades.

Town Centre Regeneration: The Central Abingdon Regeneration Framework focuses on bringing new residential and mixed-use spaces into the town center, particularly by revitalizing areas like The Charter and the old Upper Reaches hotel.

Abingdon itself is a major service hub, but the bulk of targeted employment growth is directly linked to the adjacent "Science Vale" economic corridor.

Science Vale: Future planning policies focus on supporting the area's massive technology, engineering, and bioscience sectors. This involves tailoring housing and local transport links (such as the A34 Lodge Hill junction improvements) to sustain major local employers.

Business Parks & Tech: Ongoing development around the Milton Park and Culham Science Centre clusters will serve as the primary drivers for new job opportunities.

Town Centre Employment: The Abingdon-on-Thames Neighbourhood Plan includes policies ensuring town-center buildings offer flexibility to accommodate flexible workspace, retail, and commercial uses.

Major Leisure and Tourism Investments

Major leisure and tourism investments in Abingdon are focused on restoring historic heritage sites, modernizing sports facilities, and regenerating the town's riverfront to drive visitor numbers.

Abingdon Abbey Buildings Enhancement Project: Supported by a massive £4 million National Lottery Heritage Fund grant and an additional £100,000 local council loan, a major multi-million-pound restoration of these medieval buildings begins in 2026. The project introduces level access and lifts to make the cultural spaces fully accessible for year-round events, ensuring it remains the town's premier heritage tourist draw.

The Upper Reaches & Riverfront Redevelopment: Long considered a missed tourism opportunity, the prime riverside site of the old Upper Reaches hotel is a core focus of the Central Abingdon Regeneration Framework. The framework drives development to reconnect the town center to the River Thames, introducing improved tourist recreation and leisure links alongside the river.

Town Centre and Infrastructure Revamp

Bury Street Precinct Piazza: Fresh improvement plans focus on transforming the open piazza at the end of the Bury Street precinct into a social "community lingering space". The design includes adding a new café with external seating, public artwork, lighting, and green spaces.

River Rapids Tourist Transit Investment: To better connect tourists between Oxford, Abingdon, and Reading, Thames Travel executed a £3 million investment in a new fleet of ultra-low-emission high-capacity vehicles. This enhanced the popular River Rapids X40 route, boosting visitor accessibility with faster timetables and weekend night services.

Bicester 5 Year Investment Plan

Investment Sector	Key Strategic Projects	Funding Type	Financial Scope	Target Outcomes
Housing & Community	Dalton Barracks Garden Village - Phase 1	Master Developer Financed	£12M+	Initial phase - 2, 750 homes and additional infrastructure
Leisure & Tourism	Abingdon Abbey Buildings Enhancement Project	National Lottery	£400M+	Multi-million pound regeneration and modernisation
Town Centre & Transport	Bury Street Precinct Piazza & The Charter Regeneration	Section 106/ CIL Developer Contributions	£4.5M +	Transforming public areas into a social courtyard, introducing outdoor dining etc

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