



INVEST IN IPSWICH

AN INWARD INVESTMENT STRATEGY





What is Inward Investment?

Inward investment is the process of attracting new businesses and investors into a place and growing an existing business base with the aim of bringing new and better jobs into the local economy.

It is closely linked to place-making where local authorities and partners in the public and private sector take a structured approach to planning, designing, and managing public spaces, investing in physical assets to create better safer and more attractive spaces.

Inward investment is primarily about generating confidence and enthusiasm about Ipswich – creating a buzz. This includes establishing our narrative about the type of place Ipswich is, or aspires to be, as well as ensuring that our narrative is heard by the right people.

The strategic approach as set out here is part of a longer term and system wide plan for economic prosperity, growth, and inclusion in Ipswich. This document sets out the strategic approach to inward investment and 3-year action plan that will drive interest in investing in Ipswich.

Inward investment can only be delivered through collaborative approaches developed with the private and public sectors. Ipswich Borough Council (IBC) is committed to work in partnership to deliver investment and growth.

How will we attract more businesses and grow our own in Ipswich?

We want new businesses to come here and existing ones to grow. To do that we will use our power, funding, and influence to create places that businesses, residents, and visitors choose to be.

We will attract new businesses, grow our existing business base, and increase and improve the quality of jobs in Ipswich by:

1. Effective place-making
2. Understand and celebrate what makes Ipswich unique
3. Actively promote Ipswich as a place open to and for business
4. Use partners and existing businesses as ambassadors for Ipswich
5. Directly engage with prospective incoming businesses around locating and growing in Ipswich
6. Offer a single point of contact concierge service to incoming businesses
7. Support existing business growth through business support and Ipswich Business Partnership newsletter
8. Ensure that the skills offer meets local need now and, in the future
9. Supporting our evening & night-time economy
10. Develop networks to help our businesses help themselves



Effective place-making

Ensuring the conditions for economic growth by creating the place that is clean, green, and open for business by:

- Delivering Towns Fund
- Diversifying uses in the town centre
- Ensuring Ipswich is clean and green
- Responding to the climate emergency
- Developing a strong place-based narrative or masterplan lite for Ipswich
- Ensuring high-speed digital connectivity
- Delivering new homes, employment space, and infrastructure to meet growth needs
- Protecting and enhancing our historic and natural heritage



Understand and celebrate what makes Ipswich unique

Ipswich is not like any other place - it is as different from Bury St Edmunds and Norwich as it is from the Outer Hebrides. With partners we will:

- Identify what makes us unique and ensure it is encoded into our shared narrative and vocabulary about Ipswich
- Focus on what will make the right change for our specific circumstances



Actively promote Ipswich as a place open to and for business

We will develop a campaign that promotes Ipswich inside the borough, across the region, nationally and internationally including:

- Creating, maintaining, and driving interest in the "Invest in Ipswich" website
- Engaging with land agents, partners and specific businesses generating interest in current and future opportunities
- Use the Towns Fund Regeneration Fund to activate space and demonstrate the re-energised new open for business approach



Use partners and existing businesses as ambassadors for Ipswich

The council is not alone in wanting the best for Ipswich. We will use partners and stakeholders to communicate key messages about the borough including:

- Sharing regular information with partners and stakeholders about what is happening in Ipswich through an Invest in Ipswich network
- Using existing sector groups to promote key growth sectors



Directly engage with prospective incoming businesses around locating and growing in Ipswich

Once we understand what is unique about Ipswich and have a strong narrative and digital presence, we can share this with the key sectors, businesses, and operators that we would like to invest in Ipswich. We will:

- Deliver a programme of group open days and familiarisation visits for prospective investors including an investor tour with partners
- Contact specific prospective occupiers in retail, commercial and leisure categories about opportunities in Ipswich
- Engage with our current key businesses regularly removing barriers to, and supporting their growth and sustainability



Offer a single point of contact concierge service to incoming businesses

When businesses are locating to a new area a single point of contact in the local authority can be really useful to ease transition. We will:

- Ensure there is a named point of contact for new or growing businesses – this person will take responsibility for helping businesses navigate Ipswich
- Make links to stakeholders and partners including skills providers and recruiters
- Deliver jobs fairs to support recruitment



Support existing business growth through business support and Ipswich Business Partnership newsletter

Supporting our existing business base to grow, prosper and innovate is as important as attracting new investment. We will:

- Fund business support activities ensuring that local business have access to signposting and high-quality business and innovation advice and support
- Keep business informed about what is happening in Ipswich and the support available to them through a business newsletter
- Work with partners to deliver business breakfasts, forums, and events to promote good growth and networking



8.

Ensuring that our residents have the right skills for now and for our future economy is essential

Ensure that the skills offer meets local need now and in the future

Most businesses say the one thing that significantly influences investment and growth decisions is access to a skilled and reliable pool of labour. Ensuring that our residents have the right skills for now and for our future economy is therefore essential. We will:

- Work with partners through the Suffolk Careers Hub, the Local Skills Improvement Partnership and through county deal skills opportunities to ensure that skills providers are aware of economic changes, sector requirements and skill-gaps
- Commission and support the development of skills programmes that meet the needs of both employers and residents
- Work in partnership with University of Suffolk, Suffolk New College, and other providers to develop new approaches and facilities for skills.



Supporting our evening & night-time economy

Having a vibrant evening and night-time offer is important to businesses looking to invest. We will:

- Create a new evening & night-time economy partnership group to develop a 6-late approach for Ipswich including operators from the creative world – theatres and music venues as much as pubs, restaurants, and bars
- With partners create an evening & night-time (6 'til Late) strategy and action plan
- Support operators to work together to create operational approaches that increase footfall and therefore sustainability of the sector
- Investing in activity in the early evening to maintain and grow footfall in the 6-9 slot



Develop networks to help our businesses help themselves

Peer support and development is often cited by business owners as one of the most valuable approaches to support sustainability & growth. We will:

- Continue to support the creative sector through We are Ipswich and the emerging evening & night-time economy group
- Supporting the Financial, Insurance & Professional Services Group to grow and flourish and develop their skills leadership role
- Support the Greater Ipswich Manufacturing Group develop shared problem solving and learning solutions
- Support the Ipswich & Suffolk Tech Network to create a strong sector support networks and to develop the skills agenda around digital.

Inward Investment Action Plan 2024 – 2026

What	Who	When
1. Place Making		
Deliver the Towns Fund Programme – investing in improvements in the town centre and shopping parades <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Ipswich – Ipswich Borough Council (IBC) and Ipswich Central • Shopping Parades – IBC and Suffolk County Council (SCC) • Public Realm – IBC and SCC • Greening Ipswich – IBC and SCC • Regeneration Fund – IBC, agents, developers, and landowners • Pauls Silo – IBC and SCC • Pedestrian Bridge - IBC, SCC, and Associated British Ports (ABP) • Yacht Building Academy – IBC, University of Suffolk (UoS), Suffolk New College (SNC), Spirit Yachts 	IBC & Ipswich Central IBC & SCC IBC & SCC IBC & SCC IBC and private sector partners IBC, SCC, private sector partners IBC, SCC and ABP IBC, UoS, SNC, Spirit Yachts	By March 2026
Clean & Green - Keeping parks and open spaces and the town centre looking attractive to investors	IBC Parks and Waste	Ongoing
Climate emergency – support our businesses through the Net Zero programme funded by UKSPF	IBC Economic Development, SCC, provider	March 25
Climate emergency – deliver net zero capital packages on council estate with the aim of reach net neutral by 2030	IBC	2030
Developing the Island Site - Creating a mixed-use housing and marina site that is accessible to pedestrians and cyclists	IBC Place, ABP, private sector	2030-2036
Improving the mix of uses in the town centre Engage land agents through regular meetings Encourage a range of leisure uses inc. through the evening & night-time economy group Use our planning powers – maintain strong approach to the town centre in the local plan and any supplementary documentation Use the Regeneration Fund to activate vacant units Ensuring public transport and parking infrastructure and cost meets changing needs Use arts and culture as a catalyst for investment and interest in Ipswich	IBC Place, private sector Economic Development Economic Development & Licencing, private sector IBC Planning IBC Place, private sector IBC Place & Operations IBC Place & cultural sector	From Nov 23 From Nov 23 Ongoing By March 26 Ongoing Ongoing

Identify funding for master-plan lite approach for the borough or free up officer time to create a site level narrative about future Ipswich	IBC Place – Economic Development and Planning	By Summer 24
Act as a catalyst to investment in commercial space, infrastructure – including travel, housing, and energy - and digital connectivity. Work with partners to ensure investment keeps pace with demands and needs.	IBC Place – Economic Development, Property and Planning	Ongoing
2. Understand and celebrate what makes Ipswich unique		
Commission benchmarking report identifying where we are	IBC Economic Development	November 23
Launch campaign for residents and traders to identify what is unique about Ipswich	IBC Economic Development, stakeholders	January 24
Refine narrative based on campaign	IBC Economic Development	March 24
Secure property database to actively Market specific sites with developers landowners	IBC Economic Development, Property, Planning	November 24
3. Actively promote Ipswich as a place open to and for business		
Using and developing existing material create Invest in Ipswich website	IBC Economic Development	January 24
Agents event – launch Regeneration Fund and promote Invest in Ipswich	IBC Economic Development, Planning, Property, private sector	November 23
Agents engagement – quarterly roundtables with agents to share information and intelligence	IBC Economic Development, private sector	Quarterly
Identify speaking events and conferences inc. UK Real Estate Investment and Infrastructure Forum (REIIF) for the Leader and Chief executive. Potential to engage PR company to get Ipswich notice through speaking engagements and press opportunities	IBC Economic Development	Bi-annual
Deliver Regeneration Fund to activate space – use it to create good news / national interest in Ipswich	IBC Place, private sector	March 26
4. Use partners and existing businesses as ambassadors for the place		
Based on the Suffolk Ambassadors programme create materials and deliver a launch event for Ipswich Ambassadors	IBC Economic Development, private sector	April 24
Virtual Invest in Ipswich network created to share the latest information about delivery and development	IBC Economic Development	January 24
Share information through Town Deal / Vision Board and other partnership groups about Ipswich	IBC Economic Development	Quarterly

5. Directly engage with prospective incoming businesses around locating and growing in Ipswich		
Develop Invest in Ipswich familiarisation route – pilot with stakeholders Potential augmented reality trail developed through Digital Ipswich	IBC Economic Development	Summer 24
Contact prospective occupiers – House of Commons event aimed at generating commercial interest in Ipswich – follow up with visits and tours	IBC Economic Development & Comms, SCC	Autumn 24
Develop Corporate Management Team (CMT) account management leads for key employers – meet them twice a year to discuss barriers to and opportunities for growth Priority list agreed Meetings start and then quarterly	IBC Economic Development with CMT	December 24
6. Offer a single point of contact concierge service to incoming businesses		
Single point of contact identified for each prospective incoming business (CMT and operational)	IBC Economic Development with	As required
Define bespoke concierge service – might include a single point of contact, financial incentives, jobs fairs and recruitment support, introductions to partners, networking events	IBC Economic Development with partners	As required
Deliver recruitment events with partners for specific opportunities	IBC Economic Development, Jobcentre Plus, UoS, SNC	As required
Create contact list across all stakeholder's with which incoming businesses might want to connect	IBC Economic Development	Autumn 23
7. Support existing business growth through the Suffolk Growth Hub and Ipswich Business Partnership newsletter		
Use UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to support continued business support offer including wayfinding, small grants and information sharing Influence the county deal to ensure that business support remains a priority for pooled UKSPF and other funds	IBC Economic Development, Comms IBC leadership team, Leader, Economic Development & SCC	To March 25 2023/2024
Develop a business newsletter mailing list and template Send a quarterly newsletter to businesses from portfolio holder	IBC Economic Development	January 2024
With partners deliver business breakfasts and events in Ipswich	IBC Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Business, SCC	March 2024 then quarterly
Develop a business directory to share Ipswich narrative and enable Ipswich business to business, business to customer and council local purchasing	IBC Economic Development	Spring 24

8. Ensure that the skills offer meets local need now and, in the future		
Influence county wide skills delivery to ensure that it meets Ipswich needs	IBC Economic Development, SCC	Ongoing
Use UKSPF to deliver skills programmes that meet the needs of employers and residents	IBC Economic Development, SCC	Autumn /Winter 23
Engage in partnership activity with our skills providers e.g. through the Yacht Academy, Integrated Health & Care Academy and Tech Centre to develop skills programmes with employers	IBC Ec. December	Ongoing
9. Supporting our evening & night-time economy		
Establish new sector group for evening & night-time economy and arrange quarterly meetings	IBC Economic Development, licensing, private sector	Autumn/Winter 23
Create an evening & night-time academy strategy & action plan with private sector partners	IBC Economic Development, private sector	Summer 24
Deliver a shared sector-led event as proof of concept – creating a bigger bang by working collaboratively	IBC Economic Development, private sector	Summer 24
10. Develop networks to help our businesses help themselves		
Provide support to our sector led groups for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture & the arts • Evening & Night-Time Economy • Financial, Insurance & Professional Services • Digital /Tech Sector • Advanced Manufacturing & Logistics 	IBC Economic Development, private sector	Quarterly meetings
Support approaches to peer-to-peer networking between businesses – delivering 2 events per year focused on networking and support	IBC, Economic Development, SCC, private sector	From Summer 23

Picture Credit – All About Ipswich and the Gift Competition Winners