

CHELTENHAM
TOWN CENTRE

OPEN FOR BUSINESS



CHELTENHAM

ECONOMIC
RECOVERY
TASK FORCE



CHELTENHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

*We're moving
to Cheltenham*

movingtocheltenham.com

CHELTENHAM: OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Cheltenham's vibrant town centre has always been a significant part of the town's success. However, with the gradual decline in traditional high street retail in the face of increased competition from online shopping, Cheltenham – whilst faring better than many – has not escaped unscathed. The Covid-19 pandemic has only served to accelerate this change and brought new and diverse challenges for the future vitality of our town centre.

As we build towards recovery therefore, we need to recognise the opportunity our town centre can play in positively responding to this change – facilitating adaptation and development, fostering innovation and creativity and bringing communities together.

NET WORKS

Cheltenham has a rich network of interested groups who want to support new and existing businesses to seize these opportunities.

TALK TO US ABOUT YOUR IDEAS

info@movingtocheltenham.com



GEAR Shift

SEIZING THE OPPORTUNITY

Emerging from the pandemic, the town centre can play a vital role in supporting Cheltenham's recovery, harnessing its pioneering spirit and building on a multi-faceted reputation for culture, hospitality and creativity. All that is required is a willingness to be flexible and inventive in the way its premises and other spaces are utilised.

However, there is a perception that the planning system is negative and is a barrier to flexibility and innovation in town centres. On the contrary, both national and local policies encourage a wide variety of uses in town centres as long as they contribute to the vitality of their location.

Creative ideas for the development of individual opportunity sites or for larger areas will be encouraged therefore. Cheltenham Borough Council is looking to create a long lasting legacy for Cheltenham Town Centre without losing its core identity and character and contributing to the achievement of the Place Strategy.

The Council as a whole is committed to making our Borough the Cyber Capital of the UK and helping our town to continue to thrive. The Council has produced a recovery strategy which is both ambitious and forward looking, recognising the opportunity to go beyond recovery and to deliver renewal, lasting change and strong, sustainable communities for the future.

The Council, working with partner organisations and other stakeholders can also offer knowledge and expertise to maximise the opportunities for further investment in the town centre.

We will offer forward thinking creative partners out there looking to invest in Cheltenham help and support to aide our transformation. We pledge to provide business friendly planning and access to regulatory services and hand holding where necessary.



CHEL TENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL COMMITTS TO:

- ***Work closely with a range of stakeholders to strengthen the town's competitive position and investment value***
- ***Use our knowledge, expertise and land to deliver our vision to maximise the opportunities for further investment in the Town Centre***

AN ENABLING APPROACH

CHELTENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL EXTENDS TEMPORARY PLANNING RELAXATIONS

In March 2020, the council temporarily relaxed planning regulations to allow pubs and restaurants to operate as takeaways and allowed temporary structures or buildings for Covid-19 related reasons.

The planning department's swift and agile response to the pandemic was recognised with a national award from the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI).



The council recognises for many businesses and organisations, more physical space to accommodate social distancing and safer operations continues to be required and has extended the relaxation of the regulations to 1 January 2022.



NEW FLEXIBILITIES

PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT

You may have been familiar with some of the old planning use classes, such as A1 for shops, A3 for cafés or restaurants, B1(a) for offices where you normally needed planning permission to change these. However, changes since 2020 have created a new Use Class E (commercial, business and service purposes) bringing together the previously labelled A1, A2, A3, B1, B2, D1 and D2 uses, so no permission is required to change activities within this new Class. This makes it easier for businesses and landlords to gain flexibility of use.

PRIOR APPROVAL

Further permitted development rights are being introduced to allow for a change of use to residential subject to prior approval by the local planning authority on specific planning matters. There are restrictions including the size of the building, vacancy record, and the length of time in the previous use. There are issues that need to be addressed in the prior approval process, principally: transport including site access, flooding, contamination, noise impact from other uses, natural light and standard of accommodation, and the impact on the character of a conservation area.



Changes to permitted development rights have made it easier for businesses and landlords to gain flexibility of use.

CHELTENHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information on these new flexibilities, change of use or any planning related queries, go to Cheltenham Borough Council's Planning Portal at www.cheltenham.gov.uk/planning or contact us at info@movingtocheltenham.com

To find out more about the Cheltenham Economic Recovery Task Force and sign-up to receive regular updates go to movingtocheltenham.com/certf



CHELTENHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

CHELTENHAM

ECONOMIC
RECOVERY
TASK FORCE

*We're moving
to Cheltenham*