

# Chester Civic Trust

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Cheshire West and Chester Council

# Cheshire West and Chester

365,000 population

Over 13,500 businesses

37 million visitors each year

Inclusive economy valued at  
£10.5 billion





# Chester Development Update

A woman in a wheelchair is smiling and interacting with a small dog on a city street. The background shows a busy urban environment with buildings and other pedestrians.

# ONE CITY. ONE PLAN. ONE FUTURE.



- Since first OCP published in 2012, over 70 projects have been completed totalling almost £1 billion
- Investments large and small
- The OCP provides a framework that prioritises inclusivity and sustainability to ensure a healthier, greener and fairer city
- [www.chesteronecityplan.co.uk](http://www.chesteronecityplan.co.uk)

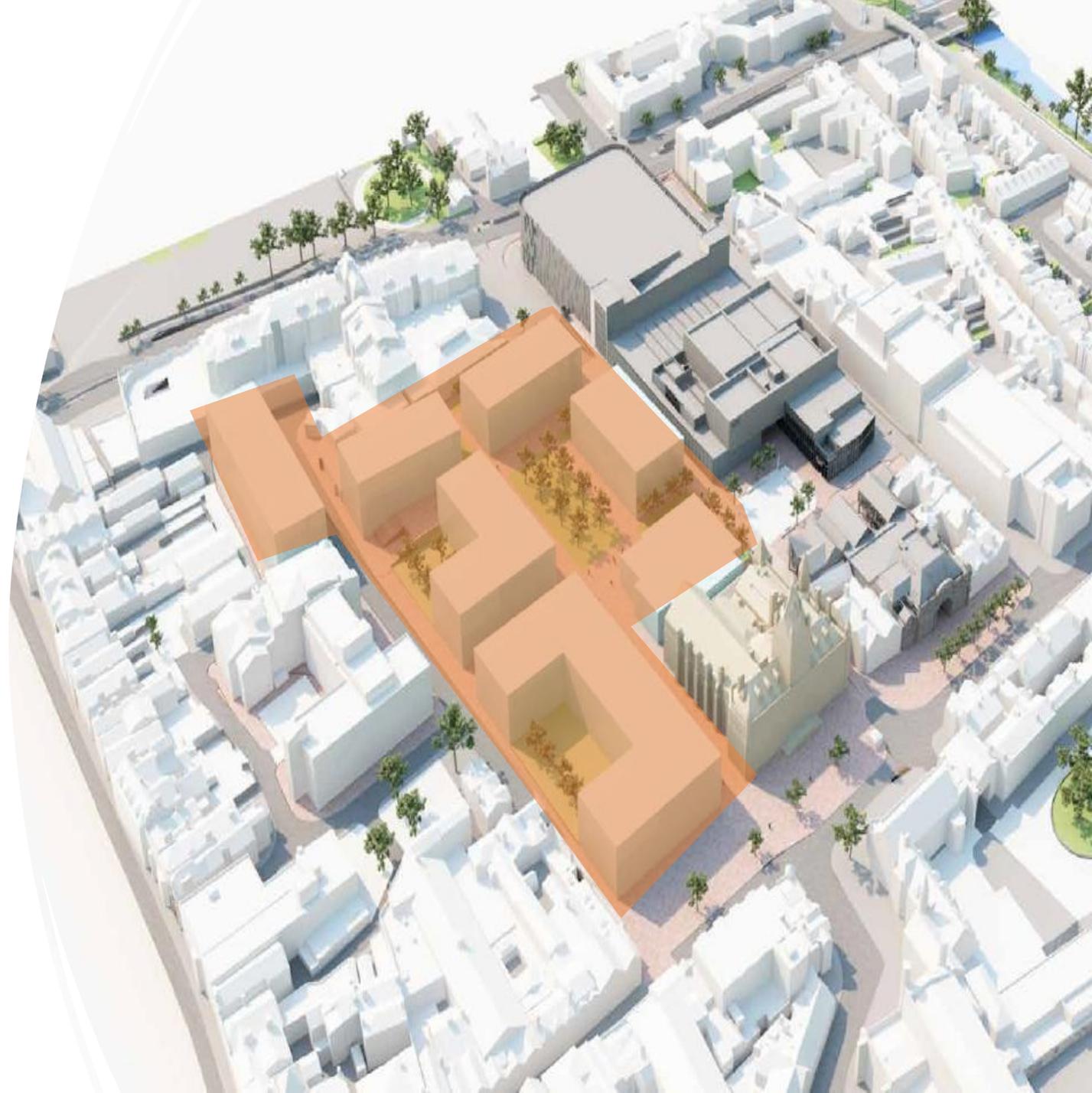
# Chester Northgate 1

- Award-winning Market with 30 stalls and over 7 million visits since opening
- Maray opening before Christmas
- Final F&B unit at advanced stage
- Six screen Picturehouse Cinema
- Multi-storey car park, with increasing usage
- More events in planning for Exchange Square.



# Chester Northgate 2

- Regeneration of Forum Shopping Centre, Gateway Theatre and Hamilton Place
- Appointed VINCI-ION preferred development partner in July
- Create a new residential community of 400+ homes
- Commence consultation in 2026 after signing of Pre-Development Agreement.



# Chester City Gateway

- Centred around Chester Rail Station and vicinity
- Aims to deliver improved station experience, public realm, active travel, and new housing
- Includes a Cheshire Archives Centre currently being built on site of former Enterprise Centre.





# Cheshire Archives - Opening 2026

- Cheshire's archives: a story shared – £29m transformation project
- £6.5 million from Heritage Fund
- £11 million CWC investment
- 2 new centres - Chester and Crewe
- Community engagement programme
- Extensive digital innovation
- Genuinely sector-leading project

[Cheshire's archives: a story shared -  
www.cheshirestoryshared.org](http://www.cheshirestoryshared.org)

# Cultural Partnerships



As part of the Experiencing theme of Chester One City Plan:

- Delivered **Chester Contemporary** which was a visual arts festival utilising unique and unexpected spaces across the city - evolving into a Community Interest Company (CIC), formation of its board underway to drive future strategy.
- A **Chester Creative Spaces Collective** has been formed, with initial members including PACH, Visual Arts Chester, and the University. The group is collaborating with agents, Chester BID, CWC, and a creative CIC to explore available spaces in the city.
- Established a **Cheshire West wide Culture Partnership**, to develop a joined-up approach to campaigning for more engagement and investment in culture – to increase the number and range of people able to create and experience culture, developing a cultural manifesto. Looking for more Chester cultural and creative partners to join the partnership: <https://westcheshireculturepartnership.org/>
- Exploring **young person led space** in the city, there has been ongoing engagement led by Storyhouse with young people and the project is evolving to explore scope and opportunities for a dedicated space within the city.

# Chester City Centre

- Harrods' H Beauty - expected opening February 2026
- Northgate Arena refurbishment – expected opening spring 2026
- Council enabling development via disposal of Kirkton House site, for residential use with Pure Homes 31 apartments on five floors
- IKEA now open on Greyhound Retail Park
- Successful Purple Flag assessment.



# Chester Movement Strategy

- A city-wide, vision-led plan for transport, which will be developed in partnership with stakeholders, communities, and political leaders.
- Builds directly on the ‘Connecting’ theme of the Chester One City Plan, translating long-term aspirations into a practical transport investment programme
- Aligned with the Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) and looking ahead to 2045, the strategy focuses on 2025–2030 priorities to support regeneration, growth, and sustainability
- Work has recently commenced, starting with a technical evidence base for the study and will run to mid-2026.



# Chester Movement Strategy - Engagement

- CMS addresses movement at multiple scales (from regional access to city centre navigation) and includes targeted 'deep dives' into key locations and issues
- Explore practical solutions for challenges such as the future role of Inner Ring Road, Chester Park & Ride, and city centre accessibility, ensuring alignment with Chester's broader ambitions
- A comprehensive engagement programme is in development, to focus on shaping priorities, trade-offs and proposals for the future of the city's transport network
- We are committed to inclusive, ongoing dialogue to shape a strategy that reflects Chester's diverse needs and aspirations.



# Dee House & Quicks Garage

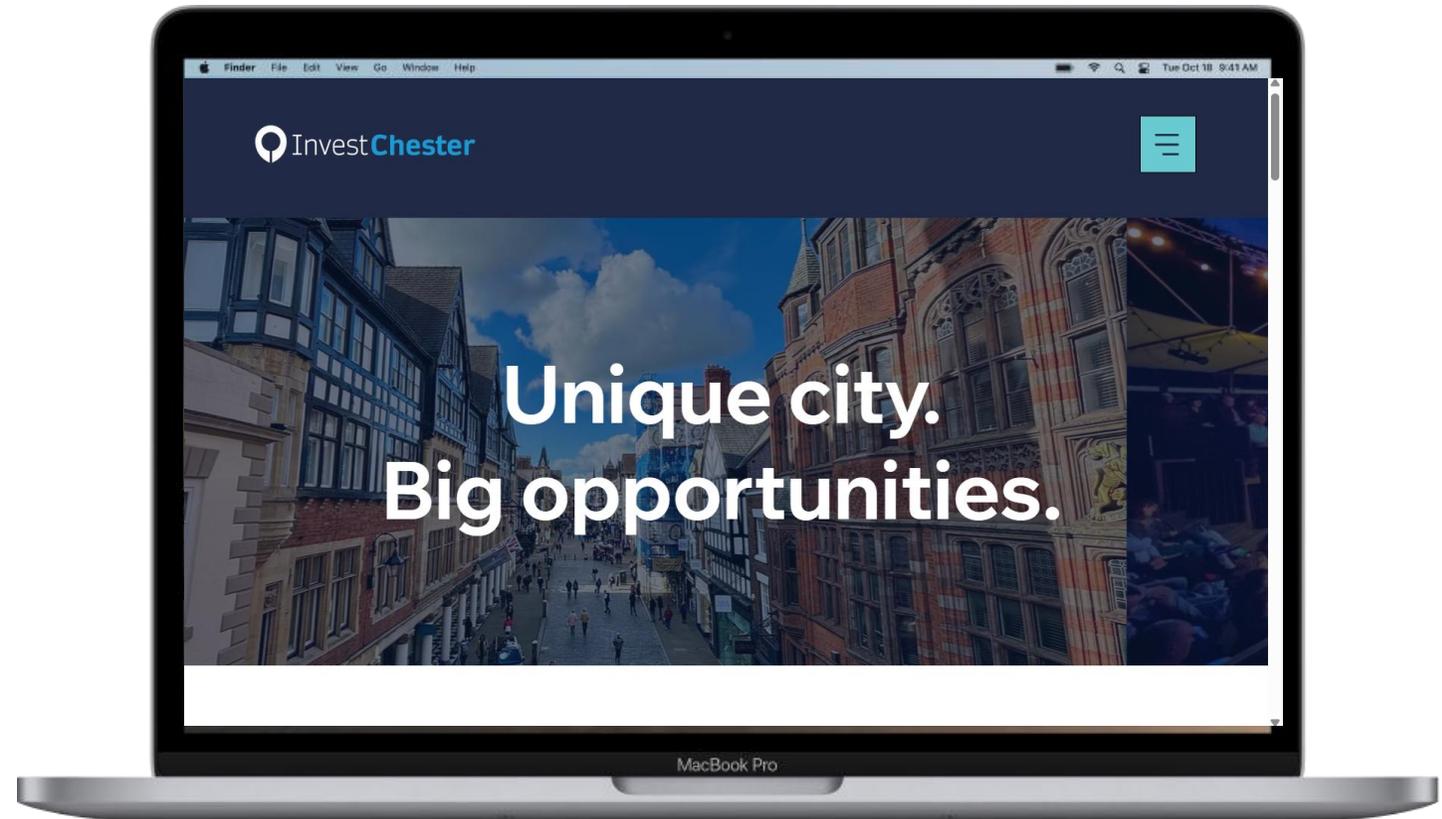
- **Dee House:** Chester Historic Building Preservation Trust commissioned to take one final look at saving the facade and incorporating it into a potential redevelopment of the site. The report is nearing completion before a pre app submission process in early 2026.
- **Quicks Garage:** A prominent but constrained building on Lower Bridge Street which we hope a new sustainable use will come forward for; however, no buyer confirmed at present.



# Invest Chester Website



- Website now live – [investchester.uk](https://investchester.uk)
- Principal ‘Welcome Mat’ for investors
- Showcases eight key opportunity sites
- Case studies with recent investors
- Latest awards and accolades
- Facts and figures.

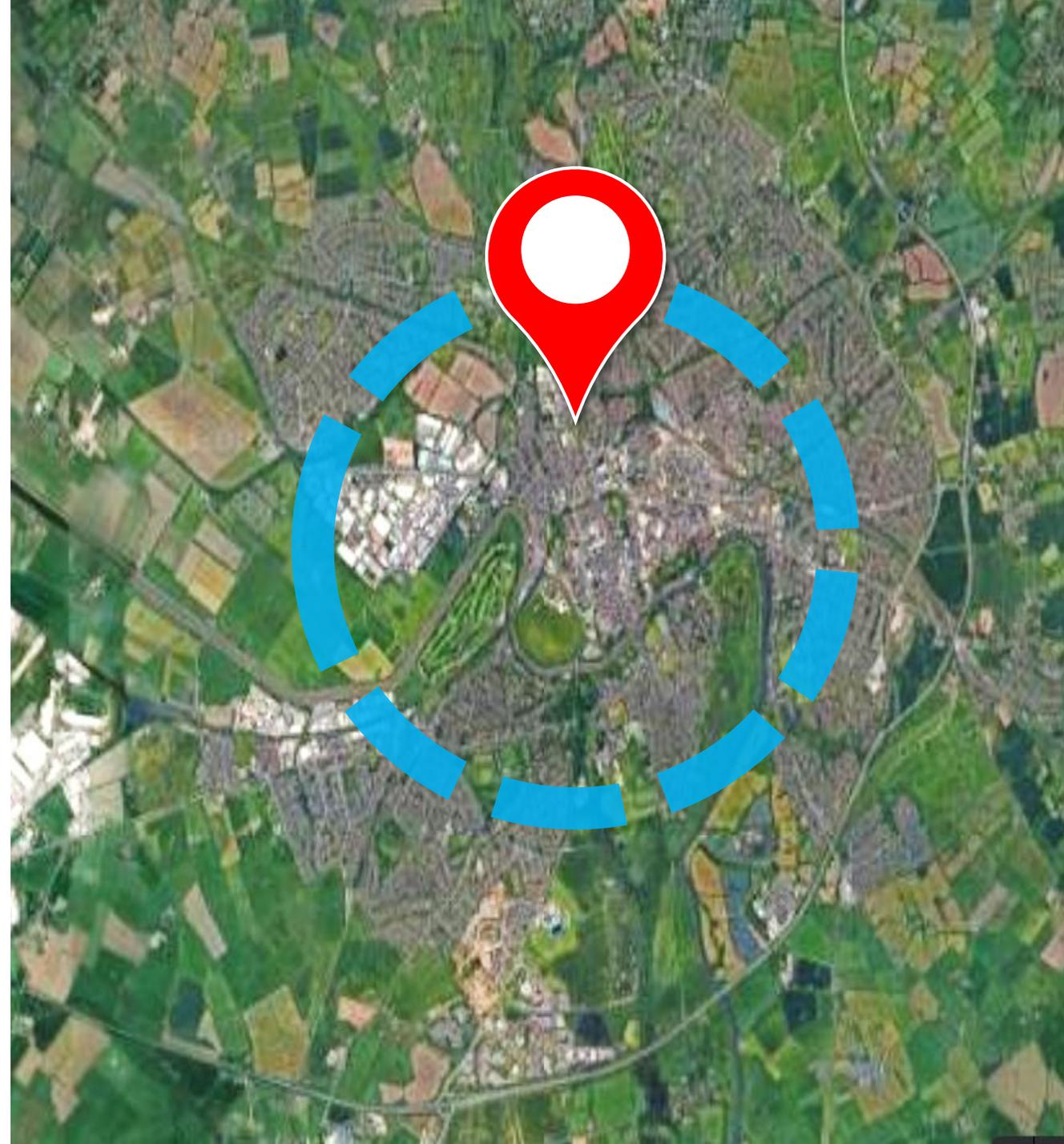




# Planning Update

# Local Plan

- Housing needs and locations for new homes
- Employment and retail development
- Where development should be restricted or protected
- Areas for shops, green spaces, and other facilities.



# Local Plan

- Issues and options consultation took place over the summer with over 13,000 comments received
- Officers continue to work on the evidence base for a new local plan
- Chester Civic Trust comments were received and will be considered as part of next steps
- Current timeline is to carry out second round of consultation autumn 2026 with submission of plan for examination to government by the end of 2026
- A range of legislation and changes are still awaited so the above timeline is still subject to change.



# Rising to the housing challenge

- Committed to increasing housing – over 320 completed recently in Winsford and Ellesmere Port, and 367 consented in Winsford
- Proactively reviewing surplus assets in both urban and rural areas to bring forward housing development opportunities
- Engaging with developers to review sites they are considering for housing



# Current housing targets and applications

- The Council has a target to provide 1,928 dwellings per annum (28,920 dwellings over 15 years)
- Over 12,000 homes currently being considered over pre-application and application stage
- Design code nearing completion with detailed conversations with highways
- All large-scale applications going through a design triage with a commitment to put additional resource to first planning appeal for an application refused on design grounds



# Visitor Economy



# Visitor Economy

- Worth over £2.25Bn to the borough
- Chester Cathedral – Project Discovery
- Chester Race Company – new Facilities Hub at and new hospitality building
- Chester Zoo Reserve holiday accommodation now open
- Glamping plans for Garden Park.





# Devolution



Cheshire +  
Warrington

Powering our future  
through devolution



## Devolution

- Cheshire and Warrington are part of the Government's Devolution Priority Programme (DPP)
- Opportunity of more influence over the decisions that affect us, more powers and more funding
- Includes a 30-year Mayoral Investment Fund of £21.7m per annum and Mayoral Capacity funding of £4m from 2025-26 to 2028-29
- Floor not the ceiling



# Devolution

- A [Combined Authority Shadow Board](#) is in place, chaired by Councillor Louise Gittins
- It is made up of the Leaders and Deputies of Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester, and Warrington as well as appointed members
- The Combined Authority will be formally created by Parliament and is expected to be in place from March 2026
- Mayoral elections will take place in May 2027



Cheshire+  
Warrington



# Devolution

- Our shared vision is for Cheshire and Warrington to be the **healthiest, most sustainable, inclusive and growing economy in the UK**
- For residents, it will mean better transport, more jobs, improved skills training, thriving town centres, and prosperous rural communities – **creating a place where everyone benefits**
- For businesses, it will enable growth and investment in our world-leading sectors and support growth in our SMEs and rural economies, **creating more and better jobs in the area**

Find out more:

**[cheshireandwarringtondevolution.com](https://cheshireandwarringtondevolution.com)**



# Achievements & Challenges



# Our vision

“A stronger future where we all play our part in thriving, caring, and sustainable communities”.



# Six missions



## Starting well:

The best possible start for our children and young people, with improved opportunity, a healthier start, greater resilience in families and the best possible support and care when it is needed.



## Opportunity in a fair local economy:

Local people and businesses contribute to and benefit from a strong and fair local economy.



## Tackling hardship and poverty:

More people feel more financially secure as the causes and impact of hardship and poverty are addressed by working alongside residents.



## Neighbourhood pride:

Residents live in well maintained, connected and safe places with good and affordable homes.



## Resilient people living their best lives:

Local people are enabled to flourish, be healthy, happy and independent for longer in supportive communities.



## Greener communities:

Individuals, public services and businesses take action to move to tackle the climate emergency, achieve net zero, protect the natural environment and adapt to the impact of climate change.

To make this happen, particularly when the demand our services face exceeds the funding we have available, we will **do things differently**. This will include working ever more closely with communities, scaling up prevention, raising our game with digital and insight, developing our workforce and strengthening our partnerships.

# 2024-5 Performance Highlights





**Thank you**

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