



Your village... Your high street...

# Your future

A Vision for **New Malden** Town Centre



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New Malden Town Centre



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# Foreword

## A vision for New Malden

### Economic regeneration is a top priority for the development of New Malden Town Centre.

We want to attract new investors and to be well-placed to bid for funds to help us to breathe new life into the High Street and ensure that it reflects local needs, improve the area's social, economic and physical wellbeing.

New Malden boasts a vibrant and diverse community and a great mix of large and small businesses, and the High Street at its heart has a lot to offer. Times are hard, however, and the challenges that the area faces are an opportunity for us to work together to find ways to harness all the local knowledge, skills and strong community spirit that exists to help to regenerate the High Street, working with the community and businesses to identify our strengths and weaknesses.

The community is an active one, but there is still untapped potential for an even greater contribution from local people to the vibrancy and self-confidence of the High Street. A number of businesses on the High Street have formed an association with the aim of taking responsibility for their own destiny.

Close consultation with the community has been crucial in raising the profile of the project. Local people have told us what matters most to them and have come together to share ideas for the future shape of the town centre. It is vital that the vision reflects the views of residents and businesses. People have told us that they value strongly New Malden's 'village feel', and want to keep and enhance it.

A joined-up Town Centre Vision will help to shape a better New Malden, influencing developments and changes to ensure they meet local needs and aspirations. This vision sets out the vision and aspirations of the local community, and we will use it to help inform external funding bids and as an investor guide that will help us to implement this vision.





We, the Maldens and Coombe Neighbourhood Committee have recognised the need and are now leading a cross-party Strategic Working Group to develop the vision. Officers from across the Council are providing technical support and expertise.

We are committed to ensuring that New Malden Town Centre is a place that works for local people and somewhere that others choose to visit. With the right vision in place, New Malden will be in a much better position to secure investment to enable it to become reality.

### **Councillors Ken Smith and Patrick Codd**

Co-Chairs of Maldens and Coombe Neighbourhood Committee



***New Malden has a massive amount of potential but there are some key issues that need to be addressed, such as the High Street being dominated by slow moving traffic. Also, the entrance to the train station isn't promoted and is dull, lifeless and doesn't inspire visitors to come again. We are lucky to be below the national average on vacant units but certain shop fronts, which have got great potential, could do with being tidied up. However, by working together, the business community and local people have a real opportunity to make things better for visitors, residents and everyone who works here.***



Andy Ross, Suttles of Malden



## New Malden - past and present

New Malden was established when the railway arrived in December 1846 on the main line from London Waterloo, and became part of the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames in 1965.



It is now one of the borough's main town centres. With a population of around 28,500, New Malden also serves as a key district centre for people living in nearby areas such as Old Malden, Kingston Vale, Coombe Hill and Roehampton Vale.

There are many independent businesses on the High Street who, like many retailers nationwide, are struggling in the current economic climate. Tudor Williams, one of the country's oldest independent department stores is still





trading 100 years after first opening its doors to the public. In recent years a number of High Street units have become empty. A vacancy rate survey in January 2013 showed New Malden has a ground floor retail unit vacancy rate of 4.1%, compared with 6.3% across London and the national rate of 10.9%.

In the 1970s the first Korean families began to settle here and set up businesses. The former residence of the South Korean ambassador was in Lord Chancellor's Walk, off Coombe Lane West. In 2013 New Malden is home to more than 3,495 Koreans, which is 2.2% of the borough's population and the largest Korean community in England and Wales.

The High Street is dotted with a wide range of authentic Korean shops, restaurants and businesses with many of the street signs written in Hangeul as well as English. The area is proud to offer a cultural experience unlike anywhere else in the UK, which is celebrated all year round but particularly at the annual Korean Festival.

The annual Malden Fortnight Festival, which hosts a range of fun and cultural events organised by the local community, is another highlight in the social calendar.

“  
**The area is proud  
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the UK...**

”



## The process

Future physical development and change in New Malden is defined by the Kingston Local Development Framework Core Strategy.

This sets out a vision that includes:

- New Malden District Centre will be a thriving and attractive shopping destination
- Redevelopment at Cocks Crescent and around New Malden Train Station will enhance the vitality of the District Centre
- Sustainable methods of travel will be promoted to facilitate movement through the neighbourhood and reduce traffic congestion, especially around the High Street
- Improved pedestrian and cycle networks will allow easy access to the neighbourhood's key services, especially at the District Centre
- Support public realm improvements in New Malden District Centre
- Work with Kingston University and other partners to create economic opportunities to retain talent it develops

Our Town Centre Vision will complement the Core Strategy, acting as a guide for external developers. Whilst the vision will not determine planning matters, it will inform potential investors and serve as a guide for developers and provide local information to inform decisions.

There are several relevant linked strategy documents. Further details can be found in Appendix I to this document, available online at [www.kingston.gov.uk](http://www.kingston.gov.uk).





The New Malden Town Centre Vision has been developed through public consultation, carried out during summer 2012. The outcome was fed back to local residents and businesses through an 'exhibition of ideas' during December 2012, where exhibition boards were displayed at local venues including Waitrose and the Malden Centre.

It will be agreed by the Maldens and Coombe Neighbourhood Committee.

The Community of New Malden Businesses and other local groups will also help guide and deliver the priorities outlined in the vision.

“  
***Our Town Centre Vision will complement the Core Strategy, acting as a guide for external developers.***  
”



# Issues and opportunities

The way people live their lives has changed dramatically over the last ten years or so, contributing to the decline of high streets nationwide. People can buy online or go to out-of-town centres where parking is usually free. These are significant challenges for high street traders. New Malden High Street must be able to adapt and offer something that neither shopping centres nor the internet can provide.

Supermarkets now offer many services that previously were the preserve of the High Street, including opticians and GP surgeries. It is these social and cultural services which will provide reasons to go to the High Street as opposed to a shopping centre further away. When looking at how the High Street can adapt, we need to look beyond just price-based considerations to include community wellbeing and sustainability.

## **New Malden specific issues and opportunities:**

- Town Centre Management Thriving high streets are generally well-managed. To support and strengthen the role and attractiveness of New Malden, there is a need to develop some form of town centre management. There is an opportunity for the Community of New Malden Businesses, working with the Council and others, to develop an approach that will deliver significant economic confidence and enable the High Street to respond to local needs.
- There are currently no welcome signs or anything to mark an entrance to New Malden High Street. Development of a 'gateway' and the use of distinctive paving, lighting and street furniture could help to create a unique identity for the town centre.





- Retail potential New Malden is well placed in terms of retail potential. With an average home value of around £370,000, it is a fairly affluent area. However, with destinations such as Kingston and Wimbledon nearby, many residents are perhaps going elsewhere to do their shopping. Apex and CITowers provide a significant amount of office space right next to New Malden Train Station; the towers are almost full suggesting that there is also a lot of potential for lunch hour shopping. If New Malden High Street can improve its appeal, residents and commuters may be persuaded to stay and spend in their local high street rather than travelling further afield. There are relatively few empty shops but there has been an increase in 'one pound', charity and betting shops in the last few years, reducing the appeal of the High Street. It has a very unique offer in terms of its Korean influence, with a significant number of Korean restaurants on the High Street.
- The High Street's shop frontages are generally not that attractive and could be improved, perhaps with an agreed palette. Also a third of outlets are Korean run, with fascias, advertisements and information in Korean script. As much as this generates a unique shopping experience it can also foster ambiguity.
- The train station's location on the High Street provides potential to drive trade to shops. However, the entrance is obscure and there are no signs to further transport links. This part of the High Street could be developed to create a more welcoming impression of New Malden and promoted as a transport hub.



- The Crescent and Causeway Resource Centres, recently demolished on Cocks Crescent, presents a significant development site opportunity immediately adjacent to the High Street. How this is redeveloped will have an impact on the High Street and has the potential to contribute significantly towards increasing economic confidence. Consideration could be given to reconsider the existing Development Brief for the area, to ensure it reflects local needs and will work to support the economic improvement of the High Street.
- Traffic congestion is an issue in the town centre and routes to the High Street are not currently attractive to pedestrians and cyclists. There is also a need to improve access to and from the shops to the north and east of the High Street. Improving access is as much about keeping traffic moving as it is about creating an environment where people find it easy to move around the High Street.



- There is currently no attractive open space that could be used for events or markets. St George's Square has the potential but would require development as it is currently poorly designed and uninviting for use.
- New Malden has the highest Korean population in England and Wales and as a consequence has a unique offer in London in terms of Korean restaurants and food shops. There is, however, a need to develop more cross cultural and cohesion projects to encourage greater collaboration between the Korean community and other communities in New Malden.



“  
***New Malden is a diverse area but the communities don't really mix with each other. By working together, and finding out what the local community priorities are, we can create a thriving high street.***  
”

*Local resident*



## New Malden priorities

The Strategic Working Group (SWG) identified nine New Malden priorities, which were used as the basis for the consultation with local residents and businesses:

1. The redevelopment of the Cock's Crescent area
2. To enhance the area around New Malden Train Station and provide improved links with bus services through, for example providing 'real time' travel information and signage
3. Provide an attractive, usable community open space for example St George's Square
4. The creation of a 'New Malden identity' through the use of high quality and distinctive style of paving, street furniture and lighting
5. Improving access to the Town Centre to create an environment that is attractive and safe for pedestrians and keeping traffic moving
6. Developing 'gateway' features that will create a sense of arrival for visitors to New Malden
7. Shop front improvements on the High Street
8. Encourage and promote community events such as more festivals and markets
9. Improve social and leisure facilities in New Malden

The consultation revealed that New Malden residents and businesses ranked the most important priority as 'enhancing the area around the Train Station'; followed by three other priorities all too close to separate; 'improving access to the town centre', 'shop front improvements' and 'encourage more festivals and markets'.

Using the priorities and aspirations that came out of the consultation, designs and illustrations have been produced to show how they can be implemented.





Photomontage of what the bridge could look like with attractive lighting

### New Malden station area enhancements

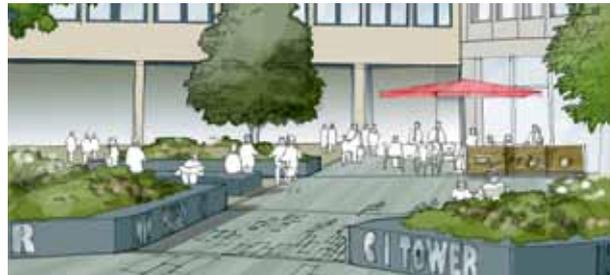
New Malden train station is in Zone 4 and is located on the High Street, providing a fantastic location to drive trade to the High Street shops.

However, the High Street entrance is small and uninviting, under a dark unlit bridge. There are no signs linking the station with the many bus stops immediately outside it. The Station Avenue entrance could also be improved.

This part of the High Street could be promoted as a transport hub, and give visitors a positive, welcoming impression of New Malden.

“  
**The area around the train station is very dirty, old and tired. It’s unwelcoming and needs a facelift**

”  
*Local business owner*



Plan and perspective of proposed St. George's Square enhancements (courtesy of Allen Pyke Associates)

### Community open space

There is a lack of attractive open space for the community to use for events or markets.

St Georges Square, owned by a subsidiary of CLS Holdings PLC which also owns CI Tower and Apex Tower, has the potential to fulfil this need.

The owners of the Square have recently received planning approval for an exciting landscaping scheme to revitalise the space and make it more welcoming.





Improvements to the Fountain roundabout could help to create a distinctive New Malden identity

### **New Malden identity and accessibility**

Are we there yet? There are no welcome signs or real features currently marking entry to New Malden High Street, so the town could benefit from the development of defining gateway features. The consultation highlighted respondents felt the Fountain was important as gateway feature but needs improving.

There could also be an opportunity to enhance a New Malden identity through the use of distinctive, high quality paving, street lighting and furniture. This will help people realise they have come into a different area and will distinguish New Malden from other parts of the Borough.



Potential improvements to Blagdon Road, 200m from the town centre

### **Improving access**

Traffic congestion is an issue on the High Street and nearby at the Fountain roundabout, contributing to a less than attractive pedestrian environment. Traffic delays can also make journeys to the town centre frustrating for people in cars or on buses, so improving access to the High Street and keeping traffic moving will create a more welcoming environment for pedestrians and car users alike. This will encourage people to stay and shop locally.





By agreeing to a colour palette, we could improve shop fronts, leading to an enhanced character and identity

### Shop front improvements

High quality, attractive shop fronts can improve the overall appearance of a High Street and the performance of a retail area.

The New Malden High Street shop frontages are inconsistent in style and there is little incentive for owners or tenants to enhance their appearance.

Approximately one third of the shops on the High Street are Korean shops, offering a unique shopping experience, though this can also be a source of mystery as much of the signage is in Korean script.

Improvements to shop fronts, including new windows, replacement of fascia signs in keeping with the character of the building and area can improve the appearance and is vital for attracting customers in and around the town centre.





New Malden Christmas market (photos courtesy of Jeremy Keates Photography)

### **Festivals and markets**

The New Malden community is very active, taking the lead in organising fun and cultural local events such as the annual Malden Fortnight Festival and Christmas lights switch on.

The Community of New Malden Business Group is working to improve the High Street and attract more shoppers.

There is more untapped potential for the local community to get involved in adding to the vibrancy and self-confidence of the High Street, for example through the recently established Farmers Market and through additional celebrations during the year.

New Malden offers a cultural experience unlike anywhere else; it is home to the largest Korean community in the UK. The High Street is dotted with a wide range of authentic Korean shops, restaurants and businesses.

There are opportunities to build on this unique cultural experience encouraging greater understanding and collaboration between the communities.



## Appendices

The appendices to this document are available online at [www.kingston.gov.uk](http://www.kingston.gov.uk)

**Appendix 1:** Policy Context

**Appendix 2:** Nature of Businesses on New Malden High Street (officer survey April 2012)

**Appendix 3:** Type of Businesses on New Malden High Street (officer survey April 2012)

**Appendix 4:** Retail study (2010)

If you have difficulty reading this leaflet because of a disability or because English is not your first language, or to request this information in other formats, please contact us or ask someone to contact us on your behalf.

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Your village... Your high street...

# Your future

A Vision for **New Malden** Town Centre

The Maldens and Coombe Neighbourhood Committee is made up of your local elected Councillors. The Neighbourhood Committee are responsible for making decisions about local services, which can be tailored to the local area.

The Neighbourhood system makes it easier for the Council to address different priorities in different parts of the Borough, and makes it easier for local people to influence the decisions that affect them.

For more information about the Neighbourhood Committee or the New Malden Town Centre Vision, contact the Neighbourhood Manager, Hannah Rees. Call **020 8547 5000** or email [hannah.rees@rbk.kingston.gov.uk](mailto:hannah.rees@rbk.kingston.gov.uk).

