

Our Burton upon Trent Story

Burton upon Trent is an attractive and historic town, beautifully situated on the River Trent. Whilst it's within Staffordshire it is also extremely close to Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Leicestershire giving it a fantastic, strategic location within the Midlands. The town has excellent connectivity, the Trent and Mersey canal runs through it, and it is known globally for brewing due to the quality of local water.

Apart from the stunning 'blue' aspects of the place it has amazing 'green' credentials with the glorious and wild Washlands being walkable from the town centre, it is the capital of the National Forest and is near to the Peak District National Park. It boasts local assets such as as the National Memorial Arboretum, the National Football Centre, Alton Towers, Drayton Manor, and there are major businesses in the area such as Molson Coors, JCB and Briggs of Burton; it is the centre of a significant area.

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This story articulates the distinctiveness, character and characteristics of Burton upon Trent, highlighting what makes it special and the opportunities for the development and promotion of both town and area. The overarching narrative consists of themes, which are pillars and chapters of the story, and a big idea which is the emotional purpose for the place. They represent what needs to be focused on for Burton upon Trent to prosper. The thematic areas combine elements that are already important in the place, alongside its potential, and lesser-known ingredients of the Burton upon Trent experience.

building on our brewing and heritage story

When you ask people what they know about Burton upon Trent, virtually they all say beer. This resonance is about the industry, the businesses, and the brewing dynasties but it is also about the product. India Pale Ale (IPA) is enjoyed the world over and was created in the town. This brewing story is special and needs telling in a more confident and modern way as it is of great interest for many people, and Burton upon Trent can rightly claim to be the spiritual home of beer. Think about the success of the Guinness Storehouse in Dublin, which is one of Ireland's leading attractions, achieved by making its narrative compelling and contemporary; there is a fantastic opportunity for Burton upon Trent to do the same. What makes an even more interesting story is the by-products of brewing, Marmite and Bovril, which are still made in the town.

Burton upon Trent boasts a rich history, and one only has to marvel at some of the architecture to get a feel for the heritage of the place. The town was mentioned in the Domesday Book, various battles were fought there during the English Civil War, Burton Abbey was the most significant monastery in Staffordshire and hosted frequent royal visits in the 11th, 12th and 13th centuries. Sinai Park House built in the 13th century epitomises this rich history, and was a vital location for the Romans, Mediaeval monks and English aristocracy as a place of convalescence, with a hunting lodge and farm. It is now being lovingly restored and is a visual symbol of the historical importance of Burton upon Trent. This is a town and area that simply oozes character, stories and interest.

capitalising on our green, our blue and our sporting pedigree

The most important asset that Burton upon Trent possesses is in its name, the River Trent. It is a blue jewel that is akin to a linear park through the town and beyond. However, there is a great opportunity to make even more of this fantastic feature and for it to be a more central part of the place experience for leisure, events, activities and well-being. Burton upon Trent is also blessed with a canal as well, and Barton Marina is a popular spot for locals and visitors alike. Equally glorious are the Trent Washlands, part of the National Forest and a wild space for wildlife and recreation within walking distance of the town centre, with work underway to better connect the two. This is just part of the wonderful, natural environment that is the National Forest, a 200 square mile wooded landscape and Burton upon Trent is the largest town within it and it can capitalise on this even more given the importance we all place on open spaces and active living.

Burton upon Trent is home to the National Football Centre, the flagship and base for the English national teams. Whilst it isn't an attraction as such, it is a prestigious venue for the area and a symbol of the importance of sport within the community. Burton Albion, unsurprisingly nicknamed the Brewers, is a football club at the heart of the community and local people are proud of it and make full use of its facilities. It has an active community trust which uses sport and the brand to benefit communities across the town. Burton Rugby Football Club was founded in 1870 and boasts great facilities and that same community ethos, whilst Uttoxeter Racecourse, one of the leading National Hunt tracks in the Midlands is close by. From space to sport to community, Burton upon Trent adds up to a fantastic place to grow your life and a family.

harnessing our heartland

Burton upon Trent is a regional centre of significance and needs to exude the confidence that comes with this. Some have been more concerned that it seems to be on the edge of Staffordshire, close to other counties, not sure if it is the East or is it West Midlands; it is at the heart of the Midlands and strategically centred. This is why it is an excellent place to do business, a wonderful place to live and can be a hub for a wider visitor experience. It is surrounded by major cities such as Derby, Nottingham and Leicester with Birmingham not far away; this offers up major benefits for the growth of Burton upon Trent, just contemplate the universities and the potential they have to spawn start-up businesses. The town is a manufacturing centre, on a logistics corridor and as such has fantastic growth opportunities.

It is surrounded by outstanding assets such as the National Forest, National Memorial Arboretum, the Peak District National Park and many other attractions; hence the role it can play as an important visitor centre. This in turn can drive a stronger night-time economy with much sought-after cultural experience and events; all helped by development of the town centre and better links to a revitalised river area. Burton upon Trent as a base to explore the Midlands is a realistic and attractive proposition, especially as the town has an appealing sense of place already. Here is an opportunity to reach out to strengthen within.

the big idea for Burton upon Trent

The big idea is an emotional and behavioural statement of intent for Burton upon Trent and sits above and alongside the themes. It projects what the place is about, what it stands for and what is important. This isn't a strap line or marketing message, rather it is a 'strategic signature' for the whole area.

By changing thinking and doing things differently, Burton upon Trent can better utilise its assets: radiating influence, building confidence, cultivating and encouraging strong leadership, developing new relationships, bringing business and place together.

reimagining our roots

Burton upon Trent will have a prosperous future by projecting forward in a contemporary way what made it special. It has historically been a centre of significance and its location will continue that; it will rediscover and animate its connection with the river; it will shout out its brewing story with freshness and modernity; it will nurture its nature and use it to attract people to live in and visit the area; it will reach out and connect with the assets that surround it, from attractions to cities, and it will do all this with confidence. A special place with a vibrant future.