



# Relocating to Reading



Cultural place  
Living space  
Business base



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# Welcome to Reading



Reading is a vibrant business location and smart living choice just 40 miles west of London.

A defacto city and heartbeat of the prosperous Thames Valley region, Reading is one of Europe's strongest performing economies. Its proximity to the UK's global hub airport, Heathrow, and excellent connectivity to London and all points north, south, east and west is a key attraction to the many global companies based here.

Living and working in Reading brings with it many of the benefits of the big city experience but without the drawbacks, and with the added advantages of gorgeous countryside and the majestic River Thames on the doorstep.

Living and working in Reading brings with it many of the benefits of the big city experience but without the drawbacks



Greater Reading is home to 322,000 people



Reading is the home of the world top 200 ranked University of Reading



London is just 25 minutes by rail and Reading will become the western Elizabeth Line terminus in December 2019



Reading is the UK's number one tech cluster<sup>4</sup>



The world's longest running rock festival is synonymous with Reading



Wages in Reading are the highest in the UK outside London<sup>3</sup>



Reading is the UK's fastest growing city economy 2017-19<sup>1</sup>



Reading boasts the second fastest growth in creative jobs in the UK<sup>2</sup>



Reading is home to 13 of the world's top 30 largest global brands

<sup>1</sup>EY UK and Regions Economic Forecast 2017-19

<sup>2</sup>NESTA, The Geography of Creativity 2016

<sup>3</sup>Centre for Cities, Cities Outlook 2017

<sup>4</sup>Tech Nation 2017

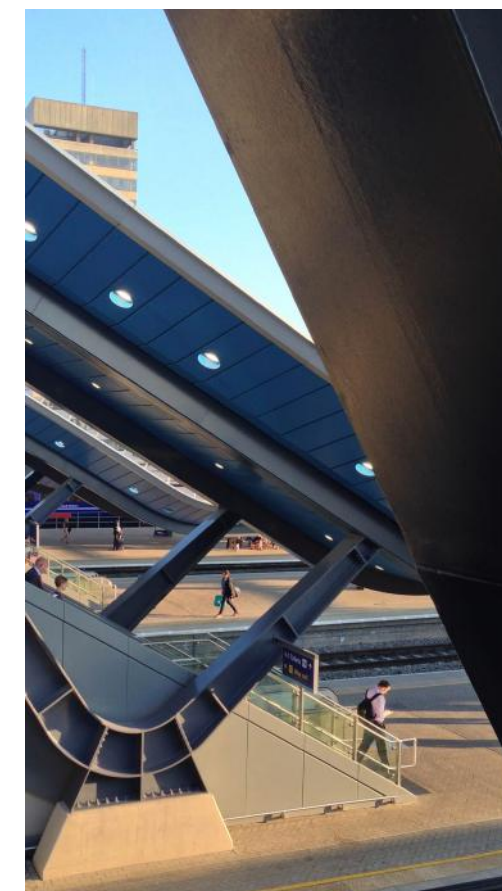




# Getting to know Reading

Welcome to Reading; the heart of the UK economy that balances innovation and productivity with an enviable quality of life.

Reading's roots stretch back over 1000 years. Founded on the banks of the River Kennet in the 8th century, by medieval times it had become one of the most important locations in Europe thanks to Reading Abbey, built by King Henry I of England as his final resting place. Subsequently, Reading developed into a hugely important industrial town in the 18th and 19th centuries and has re-invented itself in recent times as a cornerstone of the UK's knowledge economy.



Reading is the burial place of King Henry I of England



The vibrant central district is based around the new £900 million railway station. Soon to be the Elizabeth Line's new western terminus



While the Abbey's presence and elegant Victorian architecture still loom large today, Reading is best known as a vibrant, creative centre, attracting knowledge-based businesses and a highly-skilled workforce looking for a dynamic working environment allied to a high quality of life.

The vibrant central district is based around the new £900 million railway station. Soon to be the western terminus of the Elizabeth Line (Crossrail) from 2019, its thriving office, shopping and eating out areas are all within easy walking distance. New apartment blocks, close to many of Reading's new office buildings and entertainment centre, have been developed to take advantage of the fantastic connectivity. Family homes are plentiful in the surrounding neighbourhoods and close-by leafy Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Hampshire villages.

The presence of the world-leading University of Reading is felt throughout Reading – in the facilities it offers, its contribution to Reading's highly-skilled workforce, the talented students it attracts and in the research-led business environment it supports.



A majestic stretch of the River Thames separates the centre of Reading from leafy Caversham to the north, providing leisure opportunities and a wonderful green lung for workers and residents alike. The River Kennet flows through the central district, a backdrop to outdoor dining at the Oracle Riverside before it passes the gates of Reading Abbey.

Reading is a festival city. Perhaps best known as home to one of the world's most famous music festivals, the Reading Festival, there are also a multitude of young pretender festivals jostling to compete and entertain, allied to an exciting all year round arts scene.

Reading is a city of the future, combining a strong economy and exciting career opportunities with an exciting lifestyle offer. We hope you find this guide useful and are excited by prospects that Reading can offer you and your future.





# Central district – the beating heart of Reading

Reading has one of the most vibrant and walkable urban centres in the UK. You would be hard pressed to find somewhere that offers so much in such a concentrated area; a thriving shopping centre, a constantly evolving restaurant scene, museums, a medieval abbey, an attractive riverside, extensive pedestrianised areas and new living options, all well served by a brand new airport-style central station.

## Reading's Station district

Unrecognisable from just a few years ago, Reading now boasts a state-of-the-art station with the air of an international airport. Just two minutes' walk from Reading's main retail area, dynamic new office buildings ring the rail hub taking advantage of the 25 minute journey times to London. There is a new performance area and fast developing high-rise town centre living options all within walking distance.



## The Abbey Quarter

In the 12th century, Reading Abbey was one of Europe's most imposing buildings. Still dominating central Reading, the Abbey Ruins reopen to the public in 2018 following a major conservation programme. They are bounded to one side by the Victorian former prison building made famous by Oscar Wilde in his *Ballad of Reading Gaol*, written after his incarceration there, and to the south by Jane Austen's former school, the Abbey Gateway. To the west, nationally acclaimed Victorian formal garden, Forbury Gardens, is Reading's central park and is sited on top of the Abbey's former footprint. It is a popular destination, particularly in summer.



## That's entertainment

No need to go anywhere else for your cultural fix. Reading has a great array of bars and pubs, comedy clubs, live music venues, theatres and museums, and not forgetting a casino, all within 500 metres of each other.

Choose from South Street Arts Centre for alternative arts, the Hexagon for concerts and major shows, fantastic art exhibitions in the Madejski Gallery, the history of Reading in Reading Museum, touring bands at Sub89 or the Oakford, comedy at The Olympia Ballroom... and much more.



## Leading retail centre

Many of the UK's towns and cities would give their right arm for the retail diversity Reading offers. Anchored by the in-town Oracle and Broad Street Mall shopping centres at either end of Reading's pedestrianised main shopping street, Reading has a healthy mix of all the major chains and household names such as John Lewis, House of Fraser and Debenhams as well as an eclectic mix of independent businesses, ranging from a fashionable milliner to a comic store, fishmongers and jewellers. Harris Arcade and Smelly Alley are great places to find many of Reading's indies.



The Oracle Riverside had a major makeover in 2017 with new riverside amphitheatres and restaurants, while neighbouring Broad Street Mall has also refurbished to create a light and airy commercial centre.

Reading has been a Fair Trade town since 2004, led by Reading International Solidarity Centre (RISC) which has its own shop and café as well as performance spaces.

Central Reading is also well used as a cultural space with regular street performances in the summer, the ARENA cultural programme, an annual street food festival and talented street musicians. Market Place hosts street food markets twice a week.





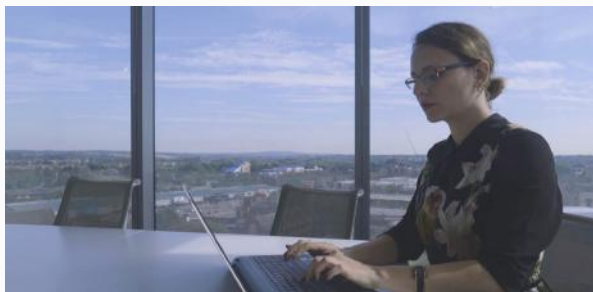


# Working in Reading

Reading is a great place to work, do business or base your company.

Reading's economy has been one of the outstanding performers in the UK and Europe for several decades. It has benefited from its position at the forefront of the innovation and knowledge economy, attracting and retaining a highly skilled and well paid workforce, becoming the UK and European HQ for major corporations, as well as home to a thriving small to medium sized business economy.

In the last few years, the huge transport infrastructure investment in Reading Station has attracted new commercial investment in the form of new office spaces and major residential developments. There is now a vibrant start-up culture based around new co-working spaces.



**Central Reading Office District [ shown on map ]**

Over 2 million sq ft of new office buildings have been created or are in the pipeline within 500 metres of Reading station. Reading's central office district boasts nearly 5 million sq ft of offices in total and with easy connections via rail and bus, it is no wonder that more people commute into Reading than out.

There is a growing provision of space for start-up and small businesses in central Reading. Work.Life have opened collaborative workspace in The White Building; Spaces have developed nearly 40,000 sq ft of collaborative space at 9 Greyfriars; Fora opens workspace in Thames Tower in July 2018 and Pure serviced offices are available in The Blade. On the business parks, there is a range of options including the new Innovation Catalyst on Thames Valley Science Park.



A leading UK city economy<sup>1</sup>



One of the highest employment rates in the UK with growth in employment to 2019 forecast to be the fastest of any UK city<sup>2</sup>



The fifth best qualified workforce in the UK with almost 50% of the workforce educated to graduate level equivalent<sup>3</sup>



2nd highest wages in the UK (by average weekly wage)<sup>4</sup>



The second highest digital sector salary in the UK after London – £53,255<sup>7</sup>



A balanced economy with strengths in many sectors, from ICT to finance, professional services to energy and pharmaceuticals

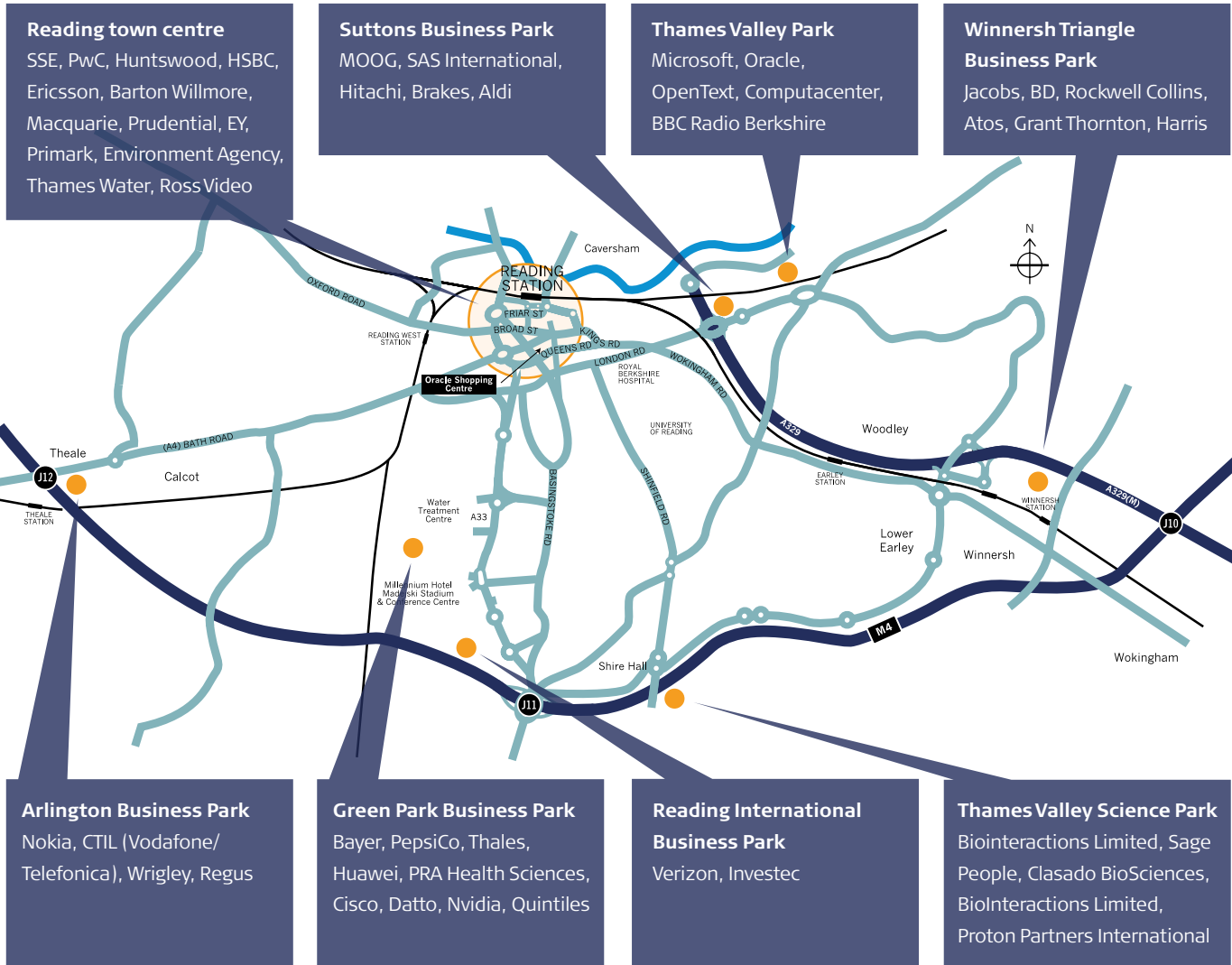


Top 3 most productive workforce in the UK<sup>5</sup>



Top 25 European City for Foreign Direct Investment<sup>6</sup>

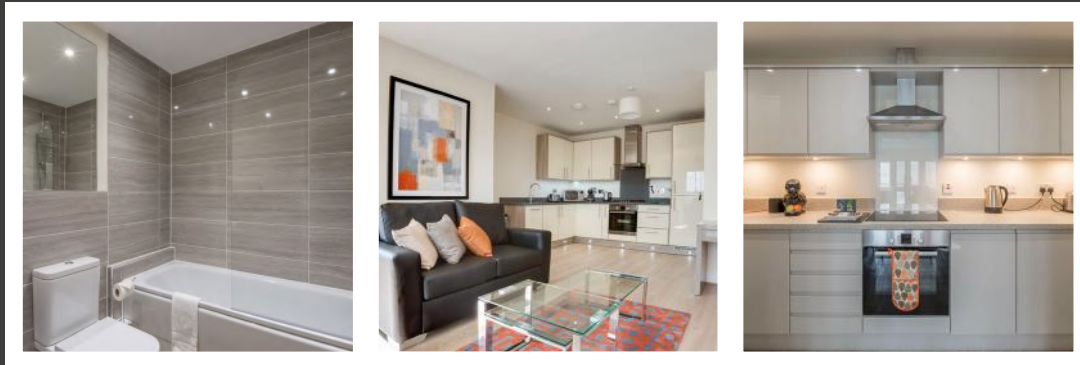
Businesses based on Reading business parks include:



<sup>1</sup> PwC Good Growth Cities Report 2017, <sup>2</sup> EY UK and Regions Forecast 2016, <sup>3,4,5</sup> Centre for Cities 2017, <sup>6</sup> FDI Awards 2016/17, <sup>7</sup> Tech Nation 2017



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## Who's doing business in Reading?

Reading's economic strength is based on many of the UK's high growth sectors, in particular, the creative and digital sectors, professional, scientific, technology, administration and support services, which in turn attracts other innovation and knowledge based companies.

### Technology and creative sector

Reading's strong mix of tech businesses and a highly-skilled workforce sits at the heart of Europe's largest tech cluster – the Thames Valley. From global giants to high growth SMEs and starts ups, Reading's tech sector specialises in software, telecoms, cyber security, cloud computing, big data and the Internet of Things.

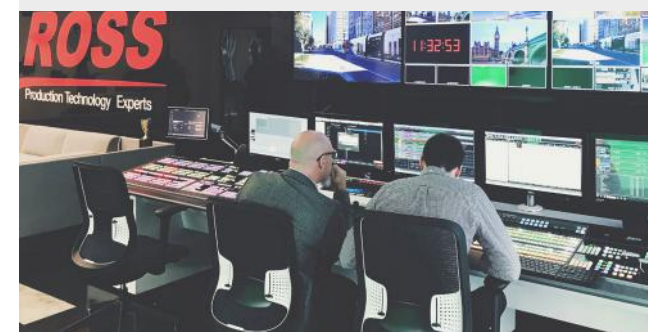
- Reading has the highest digital density in the UK with nearly twice the density of its nearest competitor (Tech Nation 2017) and is the UK's number 1 tech cluster.
- EY estimate that the digital sector accounts for 25% of Reading's productivity.
- An international talent pool – 29% of the workforce in Reading tech businesses are from outside the EU (Savills 2017)
- Reading is home to over 20% of the privately owned, independent top 100 tech companies in the South of England by turnover.
- Nesta's *The Geography of Creativity* report (2016) highlighted the major growth in employment in the creative sector in Reading with the second highest growth in employment in the UK after London.
- The creative sector in Reading employs more than 40,000 people across nearly 5000 businesses, making up 11% of total employment in Reading.



#### Ross Video

Canadian video production application company Ross Video relocated to Reading (2017) to open a new, purpose-designed EMEA HQ and Customer Experience Centre.

David Ross, CEO, said: "Our new office in The White Building is certainly one of the most impressive spaces I have worked in and gives us everything we need to build on recent success and open the next chapter in the company's development story." Set across two floors, it features a large green-screen demo studio and training centre.



**Microsoft,**  
**Oracle, Cisco, Huawei,**  
**Open Text, Bullitt, Datasift,**  
**Verizon, Ultima Business Solutions,**  
**Pulsant, Atex, Halian, Symantec,**  
**Acision, Datto, Nvidia, Atos,**  
**Ericsson, Nokia**





## Bio-pharma and biotech

Located within the wider 'golden triangle' of UK life sciences activity, Reading is increasingly seen as a major player attracting life sciences businesses to relocate here.

### Thames Valley Science Park

The opening of the Thames Valley Science Park (TVSP) will only add to that offer. Providing a mixture of office and laboratory space on flexible terms, TVSP already has life science and healthcare tenants signed including Menarini Pharma and Proton Partners. The latter is a cancer treatment centre featuring some of the UK's first proton beam treatment.

Mike Moran, CEO of Proton Partners, said: "Reading is the perfect location for our third centre – it is close to well-connected transport links and will be at the heart of one of the most exciting and thriving projects in the health and life sciences sector in Europe, Thames Valley Science Park."

**Bayer Life Sciences,  
PRA Health Sciences,  
Archimedes International,  
Quintiles, Becton Dickinson,  
Pierre Fabre, Tosoh  
Bioscience, Lein Applied  
Diagnostics**

### Bayer Life Sciences

Bayer relocated its UK and Ireland HQ to Green Park in Reading in 2016. The global pharmaceutical giant, famed for world leading research in cardiology, ophthalmology, women's health and oncology and developing brands such as Aspirin, Berocca and Rennie relocated around 500 employees to their £13m new HQ building on Green Park in Reading.

The new Bayer Life Sciences building houses the company's UK & Ireland leadership team and all its life sciences businesses except crop science (based in Cambridge). It also houses a brand new state of the art science education laboratory, Baylab (pictured below).



Bayer identified a number of key business advantages in relocating to Green Park/Reading:

- The ability to recruit the best talent – since the move, Bayer have experienced a 250% increase in applications for jobs with the company in their new HQ
- Further improve innovative working practices through the bespoke new building design
- Connectivity – based close to Heathrow with excellent UK-wide connectivity through the M4, Great Western rail mainline and Crossrail.
- Locate the company within the Life Sciences golden triangle
- Provide excellent local amenities for staff

Simon Greenstreet, Head of Communications and Public Affairs UK & Ireland at Bayer, said: "Our decision to move to Reading's Green Park was based on the company's future needs, the location; access to and from the site for major travel infrastructure including airports and railways; the atmosphere and proximity to other leading blue-chip and International companies – all of which makes this location compatible with Bayer UK's positioning and reputation".

## Financial and professional business services

Reading has grown into a regional and national hub for financial and business services.

- Prudential have had a long association with Reading
- Business consultancies PwC, Grant Thornton and EY all have their Thames Valley regional offices in Reading
- Finance houses Barclays, VISA, HSBC and Macquarie all have offices in central Reading
- There is a strong legal representation in central Reading from firms such as Olswang, Shoosmiths, Clarks Legal, Boyes Turner, Bland & Blandy and Field Seymour Parkes
- Planning consultancies Peter Brett Associates, Barton Wilmore and Lichfields are all based in Reading, attracted by the healthy levels of development in Reading and the surrounding Thames Valley

**Prudential, PwC, EY,  
Grant Thornton, Shoosmiths,  
Barclays, Clarks Legal, VISA,  
HSBC, Sage, Olswang, Blandy & Blandy,  
Clark's Legal, Boyes Turner,  
Barton Willmore, Lichfields,  
Peter Brett Associates,  
Austin Fraser, gcs,  
Field Seymour Parkes**

### PwC

PwC has more than doubled its Reading partner numbers and increased its office accommodation in response to the fast-growing Reading and Thames Valley technology market. Partner numbers have grown from 15 to 33 and the office now has more than 400 staff supporting clients and fast-growth businesses in the region,

*"With more than £12 billion in annual digital tech revenues and 45,000 tech jobs, Reading is one of the jewels in the crown of the UK's technology industry. We are investing heavily in people and partners to support our clients' growth and competitiveness."*

John Ellis, Reading Office Senior Partner



## Energy and environment

Reading's competitive business advantage is aided in the energy sector by the University of Reading's world leading research in climate change and meteorology, energy grids and urban sustainability.

Based in Reading, Anesco are the UK's leading energy efficiency solutions company. They are ranked among the top 100 of the UK's fastest growing private companies in the Sunday Times Virgin Fast Track league table.

**SSE, Thames Water, Wood,  
European Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasts,  
Royal Meteorological Society,  
Anesco**







**FDI City of the Future 2018/19**

Reading was named among the top 25 European cities for FDI (foreign direct investment) in the latest FDI Cities of the Future report. The ranking takes into consideration a number of business criteria to assess the attractiveness of a city for future investment, including the number of FT global companies, proportion of companies in knowledge-based industries, jobs and ease of doing business.

**International businesses**

Attracted by proximity to the UK’s global hub airport, Heathrow, since 2000, nearly 50% of international companies taking over 50,000 sq ft in Reading have been US companies, of which 65% have been technology companies. They include Verizon, Carbon Black and Microsoft.



**International twin cities**

Düsseldorf – Reading has been twinned with Düsseldorf for 70 years and has regular cultural and business exchanges.

Richardson, Texas – Reading has a business twinning agreement with Richardson in the US Telecom Corridor. Richardson is home to major corporates including Verizon, Rockwell Collins and Cisco, all of whom have chosen Reading as their European base.

Reading is also twinned with Clonmel in Ireland, San Francisco Libre in Nicaragua and Speightstown in Barbados.

**Other sectors**

Defence **Thales, Rockwell Collins, Harris**

**Rockwell Collins**

Blue-chip aerospace and defence organisation Rockwell Collins has recently moved to Winnersh Triangle to a new purpose built facility comprising a 40,000 sq ft workshop, research and development space plus 30,000 sq ft of offices over 3 floors.

FMCG **PepsiCo, Tesco, Wrigleys**

Retail **Hammerson (Oracle Shopping Centre), Primark (UK headquarters), Broad Street Mall, John Lewis Partnership, Debenhams, House of Fraser, Apple store, Marks and Spencer, Argos distribution centre**



**FORBURY PLACE**  
FORBURYPLACE.COM

The Forbury Place Estate is Reading’s only urban Business district. The Estate is comprised of three prestigious HQ buildings totalling 600,000 sq ft set in a prime town centre location.

- No.1 – fully let

No. 2 – 146,000 sq ft over 6 floors available

No. 3 – 11,000 sq ft up to 74,500 sq ft available

Exceptional town centre car parking

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## Connectivity – all routes lead to Reading

Whether travelling by train, car or even water, Reading is at the epicentre of Britain's transport network and is one of the best connected locations in the UK. London is just 25 minutes by train, Heathrow and Gatwick have direct transport connections, the M4 links Reading to London, the south west and Wales. Those with more time on their hands navigate the Thames and Kennet.

### By rail

HM The Queen opened Reading's new £900 million railway station in 2014. Over 200 services a day link Reading directly with London Paddington and Waterloo. With the electrification of the mainline, the 25 minute London Paddington-Reading route is getting even more reliable and quicker.

In 2019, Reading will become the western terminus of the Crossrail Elizabeth Line, becoming part of London's Oystercard travel system. Reading will have direct rail links into London's West End, the City of London and Canary Wharf.

In addition to London, 180 other UK locations are directly connected by rail to Reading, including Gatwick, Birmingham (via Birmingham International) and Southampton Airport (a direct rail link to Heathrow Airport is also planned in the next few years), Cardiff and Edinburgh, Birmingham, Bristol, Manchester and Newcastle. Approximately 500,000 passengers pass through Reading Station each week.

Work is due to start on a new station for Green Park, serving Green Park Business Park, the Madejski Stadium and Green Park Village.



Reading has the longest river  
frontage of any local authority along the  
length of the Thames





### By road

Central Reading is just 2 miles from the east/west M4, with a number of its business parks strategically located at M4 junctions 10, 11 and 12 to facilitate good access. It is also one junction from the north/south A34 main route. Reading has received major investment in park and ride facilities in recent years and upgrades to main arterial routes to allow for a Mass Rapid Transit Scheme



### By bus

Reading Buses were UK Bus Operator of the Year (2016). One of the most innovative bus companies in the UK, they provide services linking Reading station, business parks and all the main residential areas with central Reading through a contactless ticketing system.



### By bike

The banks of Reading's waterways provide excellent cycleways around Reading and there is currently major investment in extending dedicated cycle routes across Reading. Reading's Readybike scheme allows visitors to rent bikes from over 20 different locations (pick up and drop off at different locations) and there are several bike hire schemes operating from the station. Most journeys in Reading are achievable in 20 minutes by bike.

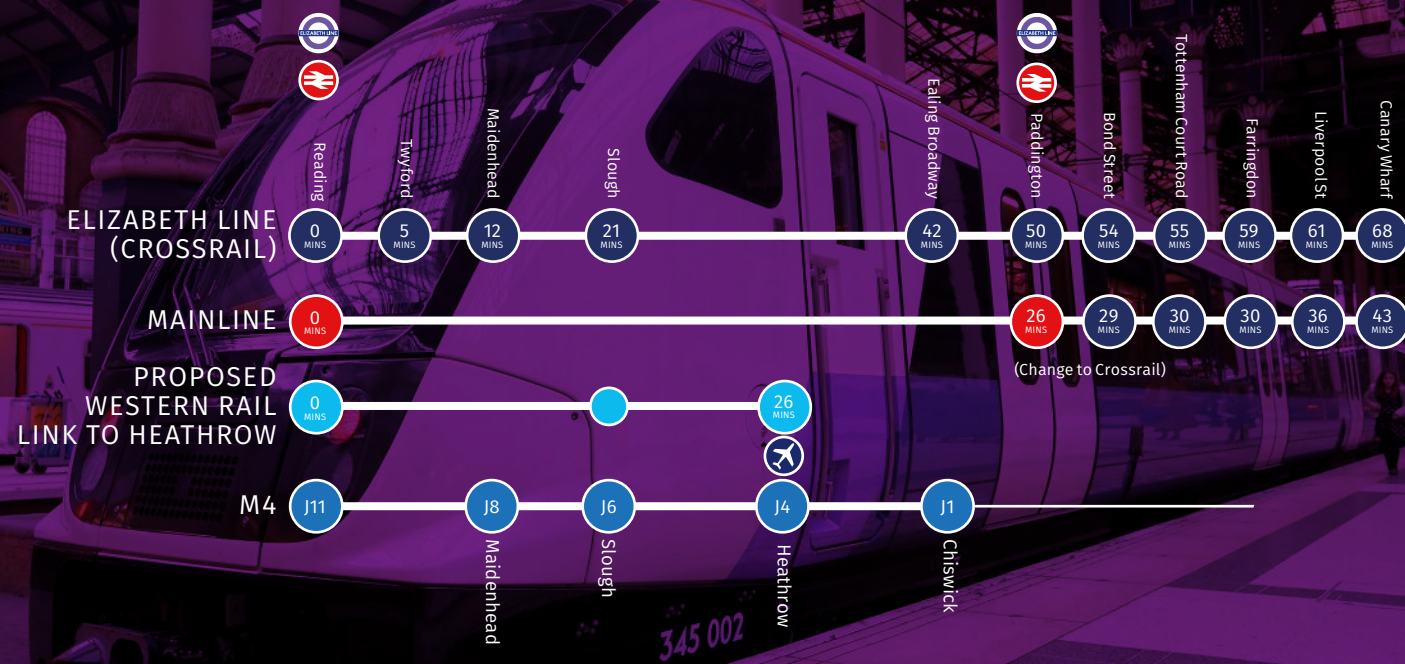


### To the airports

Reading is 40 minutes from Heathrow via a direct RailAir coach link. The proposed Western Rail Link to Heathrow would link Reading directly by rail to Heathrow in under half an hour. Decisions on developing the new route will be taken in 2018. Reading also has a direct rail link to Gatwick Airport (90 minutes).

With the opening of the Elizabeth Line, direct rail journey times between Reading and Bond Street and Liverpool Street will be under an hour.

### Approximate travel times to/from Reading to/from Heathrow and London



### #rivercity

Reading sits at the confluence of two rivers, the Kennet and Thames, with wonderful green parks and meadows rolling down to these majestic waterways. The Thames Path is popular for walking and cycling and Reading is also a major water sports destination, home to the GB national rowing training centre, the Thames hosts rowing regattas, a marina, dragon boat racing and even has its own festival, the Reading-on-Thames Festival.

There are popular boat trips and cruises up to Mapledurham while lots of people live on the river – in houseboats or in the river frontage homes at Caversham, Pangbourne, Sonning and Purley.

The River Kennet flows through the heart of the business district, with outside dining at the Oracle Riverside, riverside pubs, restaurants on the weir and the historic ruins of Reading Abbey on its route.



# A university town

The University of Reading's two Reading campuses are an integral part of Reading. The University recently celebrated the 90th anniversary of its Royal Charter. Having been founded as an extension college of Oxford University in the 19th century, it now ranks within the world's top 200 universities (THES World University Rankings 2016/17).

Nearly 80% of the University's research is rated as internationally excellent or world-leading (Research Excellence Framework), placing Reading 19th in the UK by research intensity.

Research strengths include:

- Agriculture, veterinary and food sciences
- Earth systems and environmental sciences
- Architecture, built environment and planning
- Business and management

The University is a key partner for businesses in the region through knowledge transfer, graduate recruitment and people development. Its new Thames Valley Science Park offers cutting-edge lab and office space for businesses while its Henley Business School is a world-leading teaching and research centre.

The University's three museums, cinema, sports park and events programme are a major benefit to people in Reading, not to mention the 123 hectares of beautiful award-winning parkland on its Whiteknights campus.

Many of the University's 17,000 students (from over 150 countries) and 4000 staff play an active part in the life of Reading. The University's public events programme has included in recent years talks by people as diverse as Stephen Fry and Alastair Campbell.

Reading students play an active role in the life of Reading with popular student club nights, special shopping events and as volunteers in schools and for charities across Reading.

And with over 20% of the University's graduates staying in Reading afterwards, 'Gown' in Reading is most definitely part of 'town'.



## One of the top 200 universities in the world, the University of Reading plays an integral part in Reading life and makes an invaluable contribution to the local area



20% of the University's students stay in Reading after graduating







# A cultural place

Whether you are interested in the arts, sport, outdoor life, food or music, Reading is well placed to meet your needs.

## Foodie heaven

Reading is a foodie destination with outdoor dining on the river a major attraction. New arrivals on the waterfront at the Oracle Riverside include Comptoir Libanais, The Real Greek and Franco Manca while inland they have been joined by Pho Vietnamese Street Food, Soju Korean Restaurant, Honest Burger and The Botanist in recent months!

Street food markets provide a real buzz in the centre twice a week while the daily coffee fix can be found in chains and independent alike. Smart hotel dining can be found at Malmaison or the Forbury Hotel or head to the surrounding villages for high class pub dining.



## Night-life

Reading is a 24/7 destination with a lively night-time economy. Whether you are looking for live music, clubs, bars, restaurants or casinos, Reading is always open.

Many of the clubs and bars are based in the central district, catering to a mix of locals, students and visitors and Reading has preserved part of its brewing heritage through pubs such as the Nag's Head.

Reading has an excellent live music scene with a number of local bands gaining national fame in recent times such as Sundara Karma and The Amazons and many music venues such as The Oakford and legendary Purple Turtle.



## Heritage

Among Reading's 800 listed buildings is the burial place of King Henry I of England. The ruins of his mausoleum, Reading Abbey, one of the great medieval abbeys, re-opened in 2018 following a major conservation project.

Oscar Wilde wrote one of his most famous works, *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*, following his two year stretch in Reading Prison and Jane Austen went to school in the Abbey Gate.

Victorian architects Soane, Waterhouse, Gilbert Scott and Pugin all designed buildings in the town while a number of the great names of late industrial Britain are synonymous with Reading – the biscuits of Huntley and Palmer, the seeds of Suttons and the beer of Simonds. Reading Museum is a great starting point for exploring this heritage while the Museum of English Rural Life is the best place in the country to learn about Britain's food, agricultural and rural heritage.

## Investing in Reading art

Fresh from its own Year of Culture in 2016, which included the opening of Reading Gaol for an international artshow, Reading has enjoyed major cultural investment in recent times. Arts Council England have funded the refurbishment of South Street Arts Centre and created three new National Portfolio Organisations in Reading; the Heritage Lottery Fund funded a major refurbishment of the Museum of English Rural Life and the Abbey conservation project. Arts Council England and Heritage Lottery Fund are also investing in Reading through the Great Places scheme.



## Arts and culture

Many of Reading's art spaces are in the heart of the central district. Art lovers should head for the Madejski Art Gallery, visit artists' studios on the annual studio trails in the Whiteknights area or Caversham, take in the University degree show or participate in one of Jelly's art workshops.

South Street Arts Centre has an eclectic programme of music, theatre and comedy. Its acclaimed SITELINES programme takes theatre to places you would not expect to see it – from football changing rooms to hotel bedrooms. The Hexagon has larger scale theatrical shows, major name comedy, classical music and Reading's famous pantomime. The Concert Hall, with its gorgeous glass ceiling and famous organ, plays host to concerts, talks and major events.

Dance and singing are big in Reading. Dance clubs and classes range from lindy hop to salsa at a wide range of venues such as Watlington House, RISC and the Rising Sun Arts Centre, while there are choirs ranging from Reading Bach Choir to the Rock Choir.

## Multi-cultural Reading

Being one of the most multicultural places in the UK brings huge benefit to Reading. The town has attracted a workforce, students and visitors from across the world for centuries and currently over 150 languages are spoken in homes across Reading.

A globally recruited workforce is at the heart of its economic success driving the knowledge economy and the many diverse community celebrations across the town are testament to the open and friendly atmosphere in Reading.



A city of festivals

When asked, 63% of 20–35 year olds associated Reading with one of the world’s most famous musical events, the Reading Festival (Reading UK survey 2017), which attracts 100,000 people to the banks of the Thames in Central Reading every year. The Festival has hosted many of the greatest rock bands on the planet over the last 50 years or more, from the Rolling Stones to Iggy Pop, Nirvana, Arctic Monkeys, Eminem and The Cure.

Reading can justifiably claim to be a city of festivals. The Reading Festival isn’t Reading’s only music festival – Are You Listening and Oxjam involve many of the live music venues throughout the town, raising money for good causes with gigs by up and coming bands. Reading has its own Fringe Festival of comedy, theatre and music, SITELINES theatre in unusual places festival, the annual Eat Reading street food weekend, Reading Pride, Carnival, Diwali, Eid, Chinese New Year, Reading Children’s Festival, Water Fest and from 2017, the Reading-on-Thames Festival, to mention a few.

Get sporty

Reading is sports mad with both professional and amateur sport at its heart. Reading Football Club fluctuate between the Premiership and Championship, attracting large crowds to the majestic 25,000 seater Madejski Stadium. There are a large number of amateur leagues and clubs in the Reading area catering for all ages and standards from five years old and upwards.

Reading is also well known for hockey with both Reading Hockey Club’s men and women’s teams playing in England’s top division. There is also semi-professional basketball in the form of Reading Rockets.

Athletics is popular with over 15,000 competing in the Reading Half Marathon every year, well attended Park Runs and an active athletics club.

Reading also boasts an outdoor velodrome, swimming pools, excellent parks, an impressive indoor climbing centre, a dry-slope ski centre in nearby Bracknell, as well as gymnastic clubs that provide GB team members.



On the water

Reading’s location on the Thames makes it one of the UK’s premier rowing destinations and it is home to Team GB Rowing’s training lake at Caversham as well as a number of rowing and canoeing clubs, annual rowing regattas and dragon boat racing. There is also a large marina for more leisurely boating activities.

Thames Lido

The wonderful Victorian pool has been restored beautifully and is now offering open air swimming again alongside a fabulous new restaurant and bar. The Lido specialises in massage treatments.

Walking

Reading is surprisingly green. For a business location, you are never more than a few minutes from a green space. Reading has the longest river Thames frontage of any borough in the UK with most of that frontage being public parks and part of the Thames Path and National Cycle Route 4.

Thames Valley Park, the University’s Whiteknights campus, Forbury Gardens as well as Reading’s other parks, Kennet river banks and award-winning Green Park are all popular green lungs. Historic Caversham Court Gardens sits on the banks of the Thames offering beautiful views and open air theatre and cinema.

The beautiful surrounding countryside of Berkshire, South Oxfordshire and North Hampshire (including the Chilterns AONB) offers great walking and cycling areas within a 10 minute drive from Reading as well as wonderful heritage – Highclere Castle, Stonor Park, Cliveden and Basildon Park are all in easy striking distance.

Cinema

Showcase Reading recently completed their overhaul turning the entire complex into a Cinema De-Lux, complete with luxurious soft reclining leather chairs. For those who prefer to stay in the town centre VUE sits right on Riverside offering a massive variety of screenings with special offers of half-price tickets on Monday nights. The University Film Theatre offers access to both mainstream and more alternative cinema in comfortable surroundings.

Adrenaline Rush

For those seeking something to get the blood pumping Reading has plenty on offer to get even the biggest thrill seeker excited. From woodland battles at Delta Force paintballing in Mapledurham and CQB Airsofting at ‘The Mall Zed Events’ in Central Reading, to trampoline parks, go-karting, jet ski and an inflatable aqua park at Lagoon Park, making the most of Reading’s abundance of water.

Relaxed

If you prefer a relaxing day out, Reading has you covered there too. From journeys through time at Reading Museum, the URE Museum of Greek Archaeology and the Cole Museum of Zoology, to an afternoon in the Amazon at the Living Rainforest. Art galleries are also a must visit in Reading with the Stanley Spencer Gallery at nearby Cookham and Reading’s Art Scope just a taste of what is on offer.





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## Where to live in Reading

Reading has a buoyant housing market with the successful economy continuing to attract relocations. The average house price in Reading is £322,000 so prices still compare well with nearby London.

From new build apartment living in the heart of Reading to larger flats or a choice of Victorian and new build family houses in surrounding neighbourhoods, there is a wide variety of housing on offer. For those seeking a more rural existence, there is plenty of easy commuting choice in the towns and villages around.



New family homes are being built in Woodley (pictured) as well as South Reading



Character homes around the University are built of famous Reading brick



Central Reading: new homes such as proposed Kenavon Drive alongside the River Kennet



Village life - Sonning



Verto - 18 storey luxurious mixed use development in central Reading (Haslams)

### In the country

There are lots of options in Berkshire's villages and small towns - all within easy striking distance of Reading. Choose from pretty Thames-side villages or the inspiring beauty of the Chilterns, the scenery rivals anywhere in the south of England.

**To the east** - Sonning, Twyford, Wargrave, Henley, Wokingham

**To the south** - Shinfield, Arbourfield and Spencers Wood, Silchester, Tadley and Mortimer

**To the north** - Sonning Common, Peppard, Nettlebed

**To the west** - Pangbourne, Streatley & Goring, Basildon, Burghfield and Woolhampton, Bucklebury and Yattendon



# Reading neighbourhoods

## Tilehurst

Reading's most westerly suburb, three miles from the centre, Tilehurst has its own station and village centre. Arranged around the Tilehurst Triangle (known locally as "the village"), Tilehurst maintains its own identity and has a good range of property, from Victorian terraces using Tilehurst tiles to thatched cottages and late 20th century estates.

## West Reading

Possibly Reading's most cosmopolitan area, gravitating around Oxford Road, one of the main western arteries, Central West Reading is a lively and buzzing neighbourhood with lots of Victorian terraced housing.

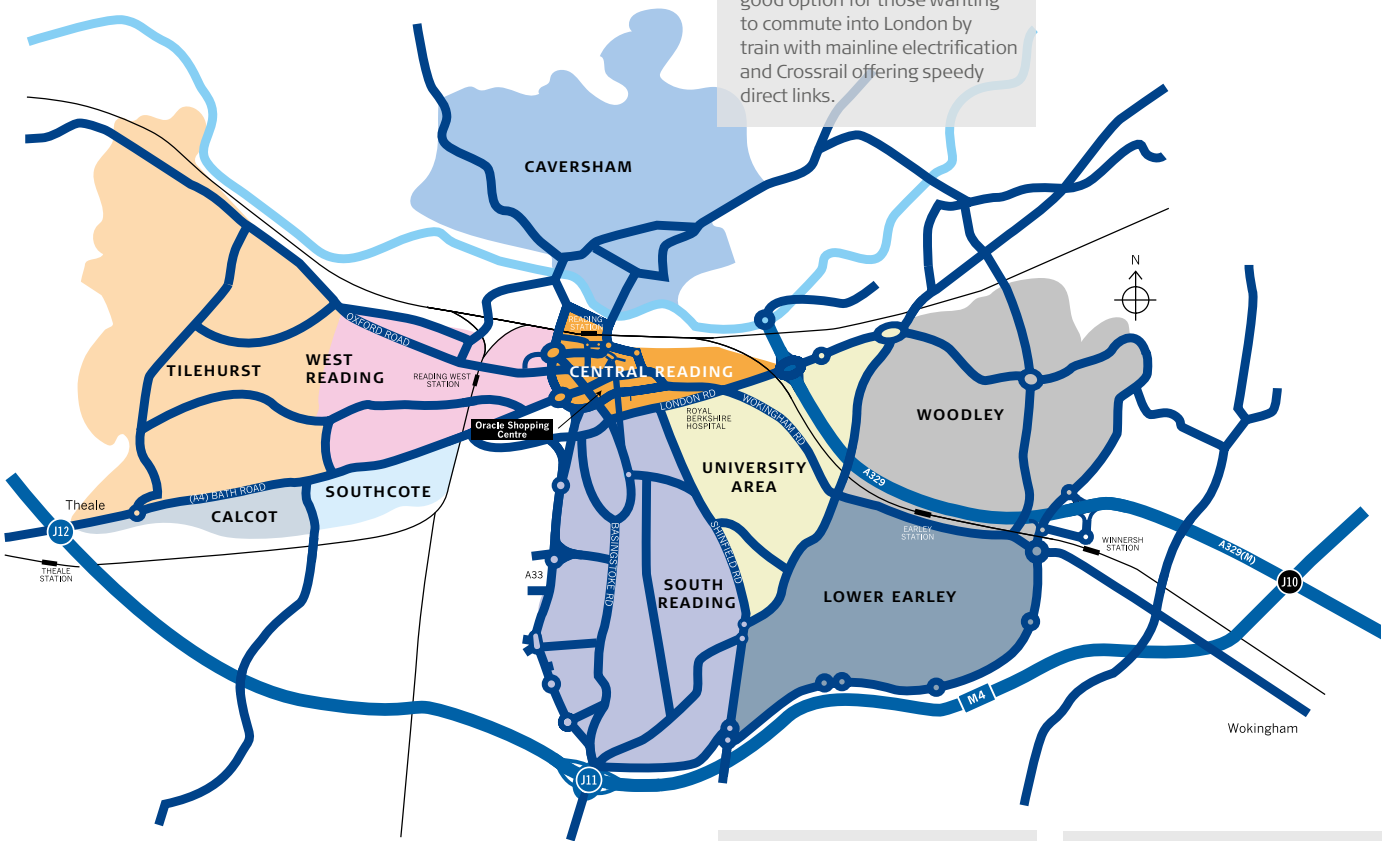
## Central district – RG1

Reading's centre is going through a renaissance, offering a great life/work balance. A major residential investment has created new homes in the urban core alongside a vibrant restaurant and retail offer with new bars and eateries opening. Great for people who like to live, work and play in the same neighbourhood.

The Abbey Quarter is developing its own character as the medieval Abbey Ruins complete a two year conservation project; the Oracle's riverside dining offer has had a major investment. Reading urban living is also a good option for those wanting to commute into London by train with mainline electrification and Crossrail offering speedy direct links.

## Caversham

North of the River Thames, Caversham has always had its own character. The urban centre has a village like feel and there is plentiful character housing as you head uphill from its centre. Caversham residents benefit from easy access to a glorious stretch of the Thames, a new pedestrian/cycle bridge to Reading station and central Reading and a good range of schools. Access to the Chilterns lies just to the north of Caversham.



## South Reading

The area of Reading developing the fastest, there are major new housing schemes being developed at Green Park Village and Kennet Island, a new station planned at Green Park and increasing employment opportunities around the business parks and Madejski stadium area. New homes 1–2 miles from the town centre.

## Lower Earley

Once one of Europe's largest new housing developments, Lower Earley has matured over the last 40 years and is a sought after location on the edges of Reading, with easy access to the M4, Reading centre and Wokingham and Bracknell to the east.

## Woodley

To the east of Reading but still part of its contiguous urban footprint and part of Wokingham Borough, Woodley has its town centre, town council and identity. Many of its residents work in Reading but choose a more suburban lifestyle. Housing is more modern, with plentiful one storey homes as well as lots of new family homes under construction.

## University area

The University's 125 hectare Whiteknights campus is a green award-winning oasis within Reading. It is ringed by character housing, ranging from the Victorian terraces built for Huntley & Palmer's biscuit factory workers in the 19th century to larger Victorian/Edwardian brick homes. Popular with students, academics and only 10 minutes downhill to central Reading.



# Education

Relocating to Reading provides lots of school choice and access to some of the best schools in the country through a wide range of academies, grammar schools, independent schools and even the UK's best technical college.

- Reading schools boast some of the best A level results in the country with the highest average points score per academic entry including three schools in the top 100 schools.
- Reading School (boys state grammar) is the top performing school in the South East (Sunday Times South East State Secondary School of the Year 2017) with the 7th best GCSE and A Levels results in the country.
- Reading University Technical College (UTC, 14–18 year olds) is the first in the country to be rated 'outstanding'
- Reading has the highest proportion of pupils per population going to Oxbridge and Russell Group universities in the UK.







Reading's borough boundary is relatively small compared to the size of the Greater Reading area. Many people who live in 'Reading' may live or go to school in Wokingham or West Berkshire although still think of themselves as being in Reading. You will need to consider where you are living relative to borough boundaries.

**Primary**

There are a wide variety of primary schools throughout Reading providing a high quality start in life to a multicultural pupil group. Visit Reading, Wokingham and West Berkshire local authorities for full lists of schools.

**State secondary**

You can choose between co-ed and single sex comprehensives, academies and a University Technical College (UTC). There is also a boys and girls high performing selective state grammar school (admission through 11+ entrance examination), Reading School and Kendrick School.

**Private secondary**

Girls: The Abbey, Queen Anne's School  
Boys: Reading Blue Coat School, Crosfields  
Co-ed: Leighton Park School, St Joseph's College, Hemdean House

**Further education**

Reading College provides a wide range of vocational and HE courses for the post sixteen age group.

**University of Reading**

The University of Reading is rated as one of the world's top 200 universities with renowned research expertise in meteorology and climate change, biological sciences, archaeology, agriculture, built environment and planning, typography, business and classics. The University is also known for the quality of its teaching and its excellent record on graduate employability.

**Baylab**

Many organisations, museums and businesses contribute to educating the young people of Reading. This includes the new Baylab. As part of its new HQ building, Bayer has also created a world-leading science education facility. Baylab is a new science lab providing free science workshops for primary and secondary schools as well as further education. Aligned to the national curriculum, it boasts state-of-the art research equipment and professional facilitation along with an interactive exhibition on the work of Bayer.



# What next for Reading?

Reading is at an exciting point in its development; with new investments in transport, housing and commercial spaces in the pipeline and a brand new international convention centre on the horizon, Reading is looking to the future. And that future includes an exciting vision for a smart and sustainable Reading. The Reading 2050 Vision (see over) embraces Reading's green spaces, its heritage and diversity and its green tech, building on its strengths and natural assets to provide a framework to help shape its future development.

**Royal Elm Park**

A brand new international convention centre designed to accommodate over 5000 delegates is being developed alongside the Madejski Stadium. Work is due to start on site in 2018 and will include an ice rink and leisure offering as well as 600 new homes and a new hotel.



**Transport**

A new Green Park station to serve Royal Elm Park, the Madejski Stadium, Green Park Business Park and Green Park Village is funded. There are two new Mass Rapid Transport schemes in development to help transportation in east and south Reading. Crossrail will extend to Reading by December 2019, while the electrification of the Great Western mainline is due earlier.



**Reading Abbey Quarter**

The Ministry of Justice have plans to redevelop the historic Reading Prison site in central Reading, which sits alongside Reading Abbey. Locally, feasibility studies to create a new theatre/arts centre on the site are planned for 2018. The Hidden Abbey Project and Reading Abbey Revealed project are involved in conserving and researching the history of Reading Abbey.



**Urban living**

A major investment in new apartments is making Reading an increasingly exciting liveable centre with major new developments within walking distance of the station and new office buildings. An increase in facilities and services is following suit.

A wide group of stakeholders is interested in making better use of Reading's waterways, from water taxis to performance area – see Reading 2050 Vision for more ideas.

South Reading is also seeing whole new communities created such as that at Green Park Village. (pictured)





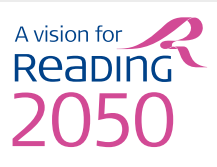
A vision for Reading in 2050

Reading has published an ambitious, smart and sustainable vision of its future, which puts green technology, culture and diversity and Reading’s rivers and parks at the heart of its development. The vision looks ahead 33 years, envisaging the development of a dynamic city underpinned by Reading’s existing strengths and natural assets:

**Green Tech City** – building on Reading’s established technological business base to ensure Reading performs strongly in a globally competitive economy.

**A City of Rivers and Parks** – embracing Reading’s waterways and green spaces to improve the quality of life and providing a vital lung for the city

**A City of Culture and Diversity** – Reading’s rich heritage and strong cultural base becomes a fundamental part of the city’s make-up. Reading in 2050 is a cultural destination in its own right as well as providing a great lifestyle for our current and future communities.



Find out more

General useful websites

- [www.livingreading.co.uk](http://www.livingreading.co.uk)
- [www.reading2050.co.uk](http://www.reading2050.co.uk)
- [www.investinreading.co.uk](http://www.investinreading.co.uk)
- [www.readingplaceofculture.org](http://www.readingplaceofculture.org)
- [www.explorerdg.com](http://www.explorerdg.com)
- [www.readingonthames.com](http://www.readingonthames.com)

University of Reading

- [www.reading.ac.uk](http://www.reading.ac.uk)

Local government

- [www.reading.gov.uk](http://www.reading.gov.uk)
- [www.wokingham.gov.uk](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk)
- [www.westberks.gov.uk](http://www.westberks.gov.uk)
- [www.southoxon.gov.uk](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk)

Media

- [www.inyourarea.co.uk](http://www.inyourarea.co.uk)
- [www.bbc.co.uk/news/england/berkshire](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/england/berkshire)
- [www.readingchronicle.co.uk](http://www.readingchronicle.co.uk)

Arts, culture and heritage

- [www.readingplaceofculture.org](http://www.readingplaceofculture.org)
- [www.readingarts.com](http://www.readingarts.com)
- [www.readingabbeyquarter.org.uk](http://www.readingabbeyquarter.org.uk)
- [www.readingmuseum.org.uk](http://www.readingmuseum.org.uk)
- [www.readingonthamesfestival.org](http://www.readingonthamesfestival.org)
- [www.readingpride.co.uk](http://www.readingpride.co.uk)
- [www.readingfringefestival.co.uk](http://www.readingfringefestival.co.uk)
- [www.theatrerereading.co.uk](http://www.theatrerereading.co.uk)
- [w3.risc.org.uk/main](http://w3.risc.org.uk/main)

Transport

- [www.reading-buses.co.uk](http://www.reading-buses.co.uk)
- [www.reading-travelinfo.co.uk](http://www.reading-travelinfo.co.uk)
- [www.gwr.com](http://www.gwr.com)
- [www.southwesternrailway.com](http://www.southwesternrailway.com)
- [www.crossrail.co.uk](http://www.crossrail.co.uk)
- [www.networkrail.co.uk](http://www.networkrail.co.uk)

Sport and leisure

- [www.readingfc.co.uk](http://www.readingfc.co.uk)
- [www.readinghockeyclub.org.uk](http://www.readinghockeyclub.org.uk)
- [www.readinghalfmarathon.com](http://www.readinghalfmarathon.com)
- [www.readingrc.com](http://www.readingrc.com)
- [www.thameslido.com](http://www.thameslido.com)
- [www.thamesrivercruise.co.uk](http://www.thamesrivercruise.co.uk)
- [www.visitthames.co.uk](http://www.visitthames.co.uk)
- [www.ediblereading.com](http://www.ediblereading.com)

Music and nightlife

- [www.readingfestival.com](http://www.readingfestival.com)
- [www.areyoulistening.org.uk](http://www.areyoulistening.org.uk)
- [www.purpleturtlebar.com/](http://www.purpleturtlebar.com/)
- [reading](http://reading)
- [www.oakfordsocialclub.com](http://www.oakfordsocialclub.com)
- [www.sub89.com](http://www.sub89.com)
- [www.rguide.com](http://www.rguide.com)
- [www.readingfilmtheatre.co.uk](http://www.readingfilmtheatre.co.uk)

Shopping

- [www.theoracle.com](http://www.theoracle.com)
- [www.broadstreetmall.com](http://www.broadstreetmall.com)
- [www.livingreading.co.uk](http://www.livingreading.co.uk)

Business locations

- [www.greenpark.co.uk](http://www.greenpark.co.uk)
- [www.winnershtriangle.co.uk](http://www.winnershtriangle.co.uk)
- [www.thamesvalleypark.com](http://www.thamesvalleypark.com)
- [www.suttonsbusinesspark.co.uk](http://www.suttonsbusinesspark.co.uk)
- [www.work.life/reading](http://www.work.life/reading)
- [www.spacesworks.com/reading](http://www.spacesworks.com/reading)
- [www.greyfriars-road](http://www.greyfriars-road)
- [www.tvsp.co.uk](http://www.tvsp.co.uk)

Accommodation

- [www.haslams.net](http://www.haslams.net)
- [www.houseoffisher.com](http://www.houseoffisher.com)

Social media

- [@investinreading](#)
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*Relocating to Reading* is produced by Reading UK

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