

# Slough

## Inclusive Growth Strategy 2020-2025



## Slough Borough Council – Leader’s Foreword

### Councillor James C. Swindlehurst

#### ▷ Leader of the Council

▷ Cabinet Member for Regeneration & Strategy

▷ Member for the Cippenham Green Ward



**Welcome to the new Slough Inclusive Growth Strategy 2020-25.** As Leader of the Council, I’m excited to present a document that will drive many of the activities and services that we deliver and act as a cornerstone to our approach as an organisation, being evidence-driven, and putting the welfare and prosperity of the Borough’s residents first.

In the midst of recent success and ambitious plans to transform the Borough, we are presented with an enormous opportunity to ensure local people benefit, whilst securing new investment and encouraging business to ‘think’ and choose Slough. The impact of this is already being seen and there is much more to come. The regeneration of our town centre is a prime example and we hope that the area will become a symbol of the Borough’s future, projecting a positive and confident image to all.

I’m immensely proud of what our Borough has achieved in the past decade, driven by a group of committed partners, our diverse and entrepreneurial communities and businesses that call Slough home. We must build on these foundations, make the most of the opportunities that are in the pipeline and do all we can to position Slough as a place of shared prosperity, innovation, excellence and diversity.



**This Strategy is targeting growth which is inclusive** – that is characterised by well-paid and sustainable employment, a first-class education and skills system, augmented by a great living and working environment. Yet whilst Slough has continued to thrive, not everyone has been afforded the opportunity to flourish. We are resolutely focused on changing this, by being data driven and accountable for our actions.

I’m also aware that we cannot afford to be complacent – our economy does not operate in a vacuum and is subject to global competition and pressures. Macroeconomic shocks remain an omnipresent threat and something we must be prepared for – **COVID-19 is a seismic reminder of the precariousness of Slough’s success.** Our economic resilience is vital, particularly in terms of protecting our small businesses, entrepreneurs and self-employed, who are the most exposed.

We have therefore developed a Strategy with the expectation that we may need to change course. A five-year duration provides us with this flexibility and I look forward to working with you to deliver the actions within.

Image: The Curve

## Our **strategic vision**

**“** **Slough** will be an economy which is defined by its inclusiveness, diversity and resilience – where small businesses flourish, large employers invest, and residents have the opportunity to aspire and prosper. The Borough will harness the value of its international connections and the potential of redevelopment and regeneration to present a confident and dynamic image to the world, where a rounded and sustainable approach to growth is intrinsic to our success. **”**

## Our **inclusive commitment**

**This Strategy is the embodiment of a new strategic direction for the Borough – one which is predicated on a resolute and steadfast commitment to inclusive growth.**

The full potential of Slough will be unlocked if all who live and work in the Borough are encouraged to aspire, participate and prosper. The Strategy will act as the lynchpin for this ambition, driving a common agenda which resonates with government, businesses and local people. This inclusive growth commitment will be enshrined within the actions taken in the future, taking a direct read from the thrust and priorities contained within this document.

The Strategy's deliberate pursuit of inclusive outcomes is distinct and characterised by the following traits:

- + Responds to **new research insights**
- + Targets **equitable outcomes for all residents**
- + Takes a **holistic view of economic growth**
- + Celebrates Slough's **uniqueness and diversity**
- + Driven by **ownership and accountability**
- + Acting as a new catalyst for **key policy areas**
- + Regeneration **benefitting local communities**

## Inclusivity **driving resilience**

By focusing on the factors that will deliver inclusive growth and more equitably share in Slough's prosperity, the Strategy is also positioned to secure the Borough's economic resilience. The intent and approach set out within has been developed to strengthen Slough's competitiveness and ensure the Borough builds on its robust growth foundations.

Whilst the pace of change increases and the degree of certainty reduces, there is a need to remain vigilant and not take future growth prospects for granted. **This is particularly important in the face of persistent economic volatility and the impact of forces that will shape Slough's future prospects, such as COVID-19 and the UK's departure from the European Union (EU).** Both present significant risks and may challenge known weaknesses in Slough's economy.

By adopting an inclusive approach, the Borough has the chance to not only insulate itself from such negative effects, but to thrive as a result of new opportunities and the inherent characteristics of the local workforce. The Strategy is therefore underpinned by a firm belief that this will position Slough on a robust and sustainable growth trajectory.

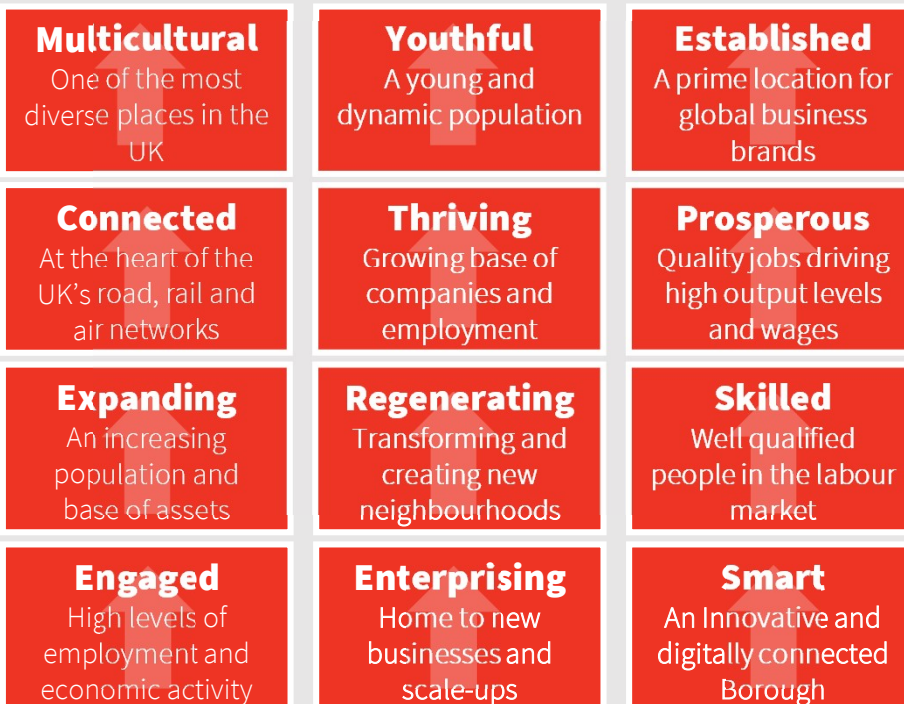
Slough's growth story is one founded on making best use of its assets, a collective will to succeed and maintaining an international perspective. This lays the foundations for the next chapter.



## Building on our **strengths**

**To deliver our vision for shared prosperity, resilience and to affirm Slough's position as one of the most inclusive economies in the UK, we must acknowledge and build on the Borough's strengths.**

Slough's economic success story is defined by the factors that underlie its competitiveness and unique character. They paint a compelling picture which has drawn businesses and people from far afield and forms the basis for Slough's enviable global reputation. This Strategy uses these as a springboard for furthering this momentum.



## Tackling our **weaknesses**

**This Strategy also adopts an honest view of Slough's inherent weaknesses, as seen within a broad base of evidence, and the barriers that are holding inclusive growth back.**

There is a prescient need to tackle known issues and redress challenges which continue to stifle the fortunes of Slough's residents and businesses. Each form an important part of the way Slough is perceived as a place and are hindering the opportunity for people to take a greater share in Slough's economic success.



# Our **strategic priorities**

**This strategy is action-orientated and defined by the scale of collective ambition within.**

It responds to the opportunity to reinforce Slough's reputation for excellence, widen shared prosperity and capitalise on large-scale regeneration that will position the Borough as a progressive, productive and 'smart' place. It is also shaped by the threats to the local economy, stressing the need for Slough to not solely focus on growth, but also resilience.

Our **six priorities** are underpinned by:

- ▶ **The need to update policy** and orientate around inclusive growth...
- ▶ **Respond to the wider strategic imperative** and deliver against national objectives...
- ▶ **A deeper understanding of Slough's economic health** and competitiveness
- ▶ **Building on a track record of success** and the pipeline of investment in Slough...
- ▶ **The need to be transparent about our focus** and accountable for our achievements...

Each priority feeds through to a series eight actions, which form the basis for delivery and making a substantive change to the fortunes and wellbeing of Slough's residents and businesses.

Key factor of growth: **Digital Disruption**

Key factor of growth: **Sustainability**

Key factor of growth: **Securing Talent**

**Priority 1:**  
Creating secure & productive jobs

**Priority 2:**  
A skills system working for all

**Priority 3:**  
Regeneration & infrastructure unlocking growth

**Priority 4:**  
Enterprise & scale-up ecosystem

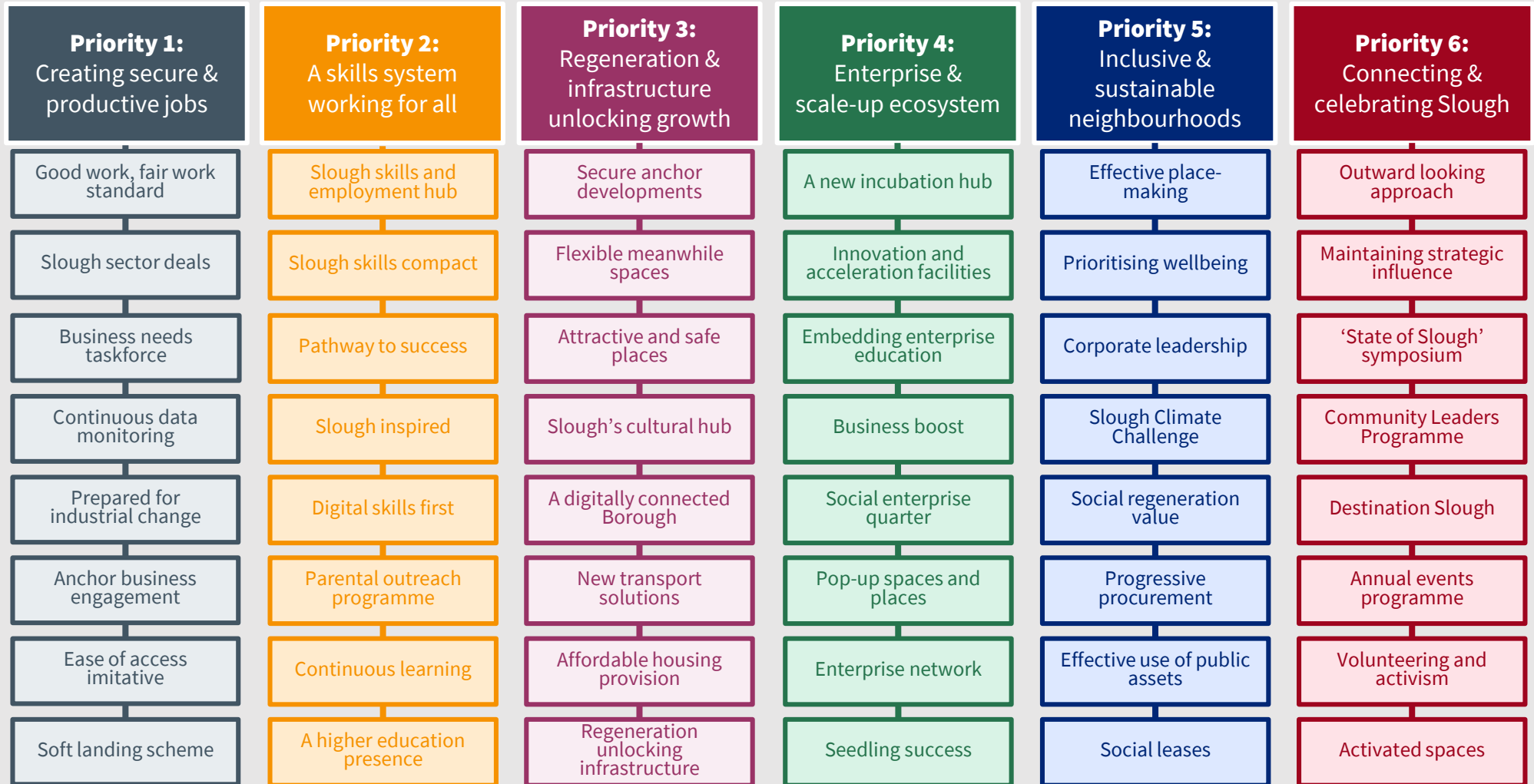
**Priority 5:**  
Inclusive & sustainable neighbourhoods

**Priority 6:**  
Connecting & celebrating Slough

Inclusive Outcomes

**People** ✓  
**Place** ✓  
**Businesses** ✓

# Our absolute focus on action



# Our commitment to **making it happen**

## Priority 1:

Creating secure & productive jobs

## Priority 2:

A skills system working for all

## Priority 3:

Regeneration & infrastructure unlocking growth

## Priority 4:

Enterprise & scale-up ecosystem

## Priority 5:

Inclusive & sustainable neighbourhoods

## Priority 6:

Connecting & celebrating Slough

## Clear Strategic Focus

Strategic priorities will target support in our:

**Largest Employment Sectors**  
**Most Specialised Sectors**  
**Fastest Growing Sectors**

And secure necessary investment in our thriving and regenerated:

**Town Centre**  
**Industrial Hubs**  
**Local Centres**

## Strength In Partnership

To deliver our strategic priorities we will **collaborate with key partners:**



## Being Accountable

Delivery of our strategic priorities will be underpinned by our commitment to:

**Put appropriate governance in place**

**Adopt consistent behaviours**

**Leverage collective capacity**

**Be prepared to change course**

**Connect with wider strategies**

## Tracking Performance

Monitoring progress and tracking our achievements will ensure our priorities are delivering lasting change through:

**A clear vision of what success is**

**Measurable performance indicators**

**Continuous and regular tracking**

**Transparent reporting**



## The Slough story: Exceptional assets propelling growth

**Slough's competitiveness and economic vitality are underpinned by an exceptional base of assets – organisations, institutions and employers that make an invaluable contribution to the Borough's ecosystem.** Each are important job and wealth creators in their own right, but combine to act as powerful drivers of growth, with a unique commitment to Slough and the people who call the Borough home.

### World-Class Employers

Slough is the preferred location for global brands, a number of which are headquartered in the Borough. Each provide valuable jobs, invest in upskilling local people, have extensive supply chains and are a symbolic of Slough's international profile. These employers have a pivotal role to play as part of a renewed focus on inclusive growth.



### World-Class Skills Providers

Slough benefits from a network of skills and training providers, who are responding to business need and giving local people the soft and technical skills to succeed. These offer access to further and higher education and are also actively delivering apprenticeships, creating clear pathways to employment and providing the inspiration to stay in Slough.



### World-Class Assets

The Borough also benefits from a rich tapestry of assets, which are key attractors of investment and champion the Slough brand. Each is geared to support growth, accelerate resident progression and to enable equitable outcomes across Slough diverse communities. By virtue of this, all will play a major role in delivering Slough's inclusive growth vision.



### World-Class Investors

Slough's physical landscape is being rapidly transformed. Landmark regeneration projects are being spearheaded by a number of developers, who are helping to reposition Slough, enhance its image and create new homes and trigger valuable employment. These projects will provide opportunities to deliver lasting inclusive outcomes and shape new, prosperous places.



## Acknowledgements

### **We would like to thank our partners and stakeholders who have contributed to the development of this Inclusive Growth Strategy.**

This document is the reflection of a collaborative effort and we have built a Strategy which is predicated on consensus, knowledge and the passion of those who are committed to making Slough a thriving place.

We would like to express particular thanks to those organisations and individuals who took the time to shape this report and inform the research that underpins it. Your inputs, attendance at meetings and participation at workshops have been invaluable and your insight, ambition and commitment are all embodied within this Strategy.

The Inclusive Growth Strategy has been developed such that it can be owned and delivered collectively, acknowledging the value and momentum that will be extracted through partnership. We look forward to working with organisations across the Borough, sub-region and nationally to secure an inclusive and prosperous future for Slough.

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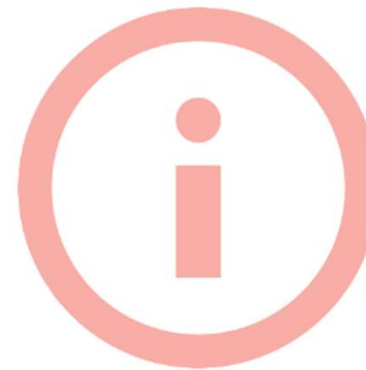
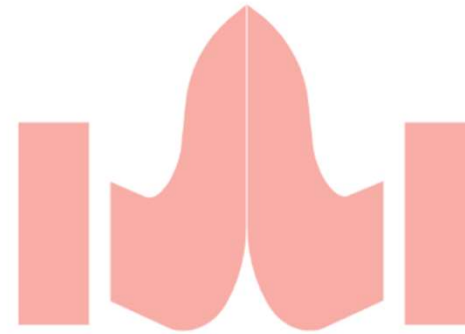
### **More information**

For more information on the Inclusive Growth Strategy, the evidence base and to find out how to get involved in its delivery, please contact:

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Strategy published in Summer 2020

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