

**BEDFORD BOROUGH  
PLANNING MONITORING REPORT  
2022-2023**

**NOVEMBER 2023  
(MONITORING INDICATOR 49  
UPDATED IN FEBRUARY 2024)**



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# 1 Introduction

## Purpose of this report

- 1.1 Local planning authorities are required to produce and publish monitoring reports by The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011)<sup>1</sup>. The Bedford Borough Planning Monitoring Report has been prepared in accordance with legislation and National Planning Practice Guidance<sup>2</sup>.
- 1.2 Monitoring is an essential part of the ongoing planning process, providing a mechanism to review the progress of development activity and to establish whether adopted policies are being effectively implemented and delivered. It also allows communities and interested parties to be aware of the progress local planning authorities are making towards delivering their vision and objectives, as set out in the development plan. Where it is found that policies are not achieving their intended outcomes, monitoring provides an opportunity to identify the reasons for this and the steps to be taken to improve their performance, including whether a full or partial review of the plan is necessary.
- 1.3 This Planning Monitoring Report covers the monitoring period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023, with updates to the end of October 2023 where these are considered to be relevant.

## Background

- 1.4 The Bedford Borough Local Plan 2030 was adopted in January 2020 and sets out the overarching spatial strategy for the borough up to 2030. It identifies the scale of new development that is required and a strategy for accommodating this growth. The local plan allocates specific sites for particular types of development and includes detailed policies across several thematic areas to manage new development.
- 1.5 The Local Plan 2030 (chapter 13) states that the Council will monitor the policies of the local plan, along with other saved policies, to assess their effectiveness in achieving the plan's vision and objectives. It states that the principal method for doing this will be through its established programme of monitoring reports which are published regularly on the Council's

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/767/regulation/34/made>

<sup>2</sup> PPG Paragraph 073; Reference ID: 61-073-20190315

website. The plan also states that targets and indicators to measure the effects of policies will be completed at regular intervals.

1.6 Minerals and waste matters are excluded as they are monitored separately by the Joint Minerals and Waste Team.

### **Structure of the Planning Monitoring Report**

1.7 This report sets out:

- The current documents forming the statutory development plan for Bedford Borough and other relevant planning guidance (section 2).
- Progress in preparing the Borough Council's Local Plan 2040 and other planning policy documents against the milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme (section 3).
- Progress made on neighbourhood planning (section 4).
- Key actions taken under the duty to co-operate (section 5).
- Progress on the implementation of all allocations in plans, including neighbourhood plans (section 6).
- Detailed monitoring results structured under the themes of natural environment, accessibility, delivering growth and placemaking (section 7).

## 2 The Development Plan for Bedford Borough

2.1 When determining planning applications, the decision shall be in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory development plan for Bedford Borough is currently made up of the following documents:

- Local Plan 2030 (adopted January 2020).
- Saved Local Plan 2002 policies (adopted October 2002).
- Saved Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2005 policies (adopted January 2005).
- Continuing policies in the Allocations and Designations Local Plan (adopted July 2013).
- The Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Strategic Sites and Policies (adopted January 2014).

2.2 The following Neighbourhood Development Plans were 'made' up to the end of the monitoring period, and therefore also form part of the statutory development plan for their designated area:

- Bletsoe (made June 2021).
- Bromham (made June 2021).
- Carlton and Chellington (made March 2020).
- Clapham (made July 2022).
- Felmersham and Radwell (made July 2022).
- Great Barford (made January 2022).
- Harrold (made January 2022).
- Milton Ernest (made November 2021).
- Oakley (made March 2020).
- Odell (made September 2022).
- Ravensden (made March 2023).
- Sharnbrook (made November 2021).
- Stevington (made June 2021).
- Thurleigh (made June 2021).
- Turvey (made September 2021).

- Willington (made March 2022).
- Wilshamstead (made January 2023).
- Wootton (made March 2022).

2.3 Since April 2023, the following additional Neighbourhood Development Plan has also been made:

- Great Denham (made 13 September 2023).

### 3 Implementation of the Local Development Scheme

- 3.1 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a rolling business plan for the preparation of key planning policy documents relevant to future planning decisions. The LDS that this document reports on was published in January 2022 and is available online at [www.bedford.gov.uk/lds](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/lds).

#### **Progress on the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2040**

- 3.2 The Council adopted Local Plan 2030 in January 2020, which sets out the strategy and planning policies for the borough to 2030. As part of the adoption of the plan, a policy was inserted committing the Council to an immediate review. Policy 1 states: “The Council will undertake a review of the Local Plan 2030, which will be submitted for examination no later than three years after the date of adoption of the plan...”
- 3.3 In line with the Local Development Scheme, on 12 January 2023, the Review of the Bedford Local Plan (Local Plan 2040) was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination. The hearing sessions opened on Monday 12 June 2023 (outside of the monitoring year) and were held in two blocks in June and September 2023.
- 3.4 Previous Issues and Options consultations were held between 14 July and 4 September 2020, and 29 June and 3 September 2021. The first of these consultations considered the scope of the local plan, a draft vision and key themes along with possible locations for development beyond 2030. A call for sites exercise was also undertaken. The second consultation narrowed the suitable development strategy options for the borough as well as included a number of draft policies for the town centre and retail, and development management issues. In June/July 2022, the Local Plan 2040 Plan for Submission was subject to a regulation 19 consultation.
- 3.5 Information on the progress of the Local Plan 2040, including the examination of the plan can be found at [www.bedford.gov.uk/localplan2040](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/localplan2040).



## Progress on Supplementary Planning Documents

- 3.6 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) provide more detailed advice and guidance on the implementation and interpretation of planning policies set out in the local plan. Unlike local plans, SPDs are not required to be submitted for independent examination but are subject to public consultation and are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 3.7 The LDS (appendix 3) lists the SPDs that have been adopted by the Council and these are published at [www.bedford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/other-planning-policy-documents](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/other-planning-policy-documents).
- 3.8 The SPDs the Council intends to prepare within the current LDS time period are listed in appendix 4 of the LDS<sup>3</sup>. The progress has been made during 2022/23 is outlined in Table 1.

<b>Table 1: Supplementary Planning Document preparation</b>		
<b>Supplementary Planning Document</b>	<b>Purpose</b>	<b>Status</b>
Health Impact Assessments	To guide the scope and content of HIAs	Being prepared as guidance rather than SPD.
Ford End Road planning brief and design code	To set out distribution of uses and guide development in support of Local Plan 2030 Policy 12.	This is behind timetable. Work on the development brief began in 2020 but was paused pending further clarity on the proposals for East West Rail. Following the recent Route Update Announcement the Council has restarted that work.

<sup>3</sup> Health Impact Assessments SPD is identified in the LDS, however the document is now to be adopted as guidance rather than an SPD.

Land south of the river planning brief and design code	To set out distribution of uses, phase and guide development in support of Local Plan 2030 Policy 14.	This is behind timetable. Work on the development brief began in 2020 but was paused pending further clarity on the proposals for East West Rail. Following the recent Route Update Announcement the Council has restarted that work.
Developing in the Forest of Marston Vale Design Guidance	To provide guidance on how to achieve the requirements of Local Plan 2030 Policy 36S.  The document was prepared in conjunction with Central Bedfordshire Council and the Forest of Marston Vale. Further information is available online <sup>4</sup> .	The SPD was adopted on 25 January 2023.
Trees and Development	To provide guidance on the types of trees for inclusion as part of landscaping, installation and future maintenance that is suitable for particular types of development. The guidance supports Local Plan 2030 Policies 38, 39 and 40. Further information is available online <sup>5</sup> .	This is behind timetable due to the Local Plan 2040 taking priority. Consultation on the scope of the draft document was undertaken in November and December 2022 and an eight week consultation on the draft SPD closes on 28 January 2024.
Bedford Borough Design Guide: Settlements and Streets	To provide guidance on design matters for future development and support design policies in the development plan. Further information on progress is available online <sup>6</sup> .	Public consultation on a draft design guide was undertaken in September and October 2022, and the SPD was adopted on 8 March 2023.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/forest-marston-vale-development-design-guidance>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/trees-supplementary-planning-document>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/bedford-borough-design-guide>

Design guidance to guide the development of small residential sites, infill development and extensions	To update and replace the Council's existing guidance "Residential Extensions, New Dwellings and Small Infill Developments" (RENSID) in support of Local Plan 2030 Policy 29.	No progress has been made since the publication of the LDS.  To be prepared as resources allow.
Guidance for the design of shopfronts	To update and replace the Council's existing guidance "Shopfronts and Advertisements in Conservation Areas" in support of Local Plan 2030 Policy 29.	No progress has been made since the publication of the LDS.  To be prepared as resources allow.
Guidance on advertisements	To provide design guidance on advertisements in support of Local Plan 2030 Policy 34.	No progress has been made since the publication of the LDS.  To be prepared as resources allow.

## 4 Duty to Co-operate

- 4.1 The Duty to Co-operate was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and is set out in section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004<sup>7</sup>. It places a legal duty on local planning authorities and county councils in England, and prescribed public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of local plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters.
- 4.2 During the monitoring year 2022/23 Bedford Borough Council has continued to work with neighbouring local authorities and other key partners to plan for strategic and cross boundary matters during the preparation of the Local Plan 2040. The Duty to Cooperate Compliance Statement (September 2023)<sup>8</sup> provides an overview of how the Council has fulfilled its duty and is supplemented by records of cooperation and outcomes.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/section/33A>

<sup>8</sup> <https://edrms.bedford.gov.uk/OpenDocument.aspx?id=keFvfxTswQBwDvBOxctXBw%3d%3d&name=ED69%20Duty%20to%20Cooperate%20Statement%20September%2007092023%20Redacted.pdf>

## 5 Progress on Neighbourhood Planning

- 5.1 Neighbourhood planning was introduced through the Localism Act 2011. New powers were introduced that allowed qualifying bodies to produce neighbourhood plans and neighbourhood development orders. Neighbourhood plans allow communities to set planning policies for their area. Once 'made' (adopted), neighbourhood plans become part of the development plan for their designated area.
- 5.2 The LDS does not include timescales for the preparation of new neighbourhood plans as these are led by Town and Parish Councils on behalf of their local communities; the timescales for their production or review are therefore set by the relevant Town or Parish Council.
- 5.3 During the monitoring year, the Council has not designated any additional Neighbourhood Areas, however since the end of the monitoring year, Shortstown Neighbourhood Area has been designated. 17 Neighbourhood Areas remain designated, covering the parishes listed in Table 2. These are parishes where no neighbourhood plan has yet been made (in some instances plans are in production).

<b>Table 2: Designated neighbourhood plan areas</b>	
<b>Neighbourhood Plan area</b>	<b>Designation date</b>
Brickhill	8 September 2016
Cardington	8 June 2016
Colmworth	20 February 2015
Cople	30 July 2015
Cotton End	21 August 2019
Dean and Shelton	30 July 2015
Pavenham	20 June 2014
Pertenhall and Swineshead	11 April 2017
Renhold	7 September 2020
Riseley	14 March 2018

Roxton	5 November 2014
Shortstown	18 September 2023
Stagsden	11 September 2015
Staploe	7 September 2020
Stewartby	26 November 2013
Wilden	14 November 2013
Wyboston, Chawston and Colesden	12 November 2014

5.4 During the monitoring year 2022/23, five Neighbourhood Plans were subject to referendum and subsequently made. These were:

- Clapham (made July 2022).
- Felmersham and Radwell (made July 2022).
- Odell (made September 2022).
- Ravensden (made March 2023).
- Wilshamstead (made January 2023).

5.5 Since the end of the monitoring year, one Neighbourhood Plan has been subject to referendum and subsequently made. This was:

- Great Denham (made September 2023).

5.6 More information on neighbourhood planning in the borough can be found at [www.bedford.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning).

## 6 Allocated Sites

- 6.1 This section of the monitoring report provides information on the implementation of all allocations in plans, including neighbourhood plans. Table 3 sets out the status of all allocated sites in the Local Plan 2030, saved Local Plan 2002 policy allocations and saved Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 allocations at the end of the 2022/23 monitoring year.
- 6.2 During the monitoring year, progress continued on delivering allocated sites in the development plan.

<b>Table 3: Status of Local Plan policy allocations at 31 March 2023</b>		
<b>Local Plan 2030 Policy</b>		<b>Status at 31 March 2023</b>
8	Key development sites in St Paul's Square	<u>Bank building site, St Paul's Square</u> No planning permission.  <u>Shire Hall, St Paul's Square</u> No planning permission.
9	Land at Duckmill Lane / Bedesman Lane, Bedford	No planning permission.
10	The station area, Ashburnham Rd, Bedford	No planning permission. Reliant on the East West Rail scheme.
11	Greyfriars, Bedford	Outline planning application 20/00140/MAO for up to 105 dwellings at Greyfriars Police Station was granted in April 2023. Discussions have commenced in association with redevelopment of land subject to Local Plan 2040 Policy HOU1 Greyfriars North.  The southern part of the site does not have planning permission but since the end of the monitoring year, pre-application discussions are underway with the landowner.

12	Land at Ford End Road, Bedford	No planning permission. Work on the development brief began in 2020 but was paused pending further clarity on the proposals for East West Rail. Following the recent Route Update Announcement the Council has restarted that work.
13	Land at Borough Hall, Bedford	No planning permission. Work on the design code was paused pending further clarity on the proposals for East West Rail. Following the recent Route Update Announcement the Council has restarted that work.
14	Land south of the river, Bedford	No planning permission. Work on the development brief began in 2020 but was paused pending further clarity on the proposals for East West Rail. Following the recent Route Update Announcement the Council has restarted that work.
18	Land at Gold Lane, Biddenham	Reserved matters for 119 dwellings in phase 1 (21/02820/M73) and 130 dwellings in phase 2 (21/03302/MAR) is secured and 106 of the dwellings in phase 1 have been completed. Construction has started on phase 2 of the development.
19	Land at 329 Bedford Road, Kempston	No planning permission.
20	Land at Mowbray Road, Bedford	No planning permission. An option for the purchase of the land from the Council has been agreed.
21	Land north of Beverley Crescent, Bedford	No planning permission. The three landowners have agreed the principles of a collaboration agreement and marketing to identify a promoter for the development will start once the collaboration agreement is in place.
22	Land at Lodge Hill, Bedford	No planning permission. The site has been marketed and an offer accepted.



23	Land to the rear of Bromham Road, Biddenham	Outline planning application 19/01394/MAO for residential development was approved on 15 October 2020. Reserved matters application 23/01106/MAR for 57 dwellings is pending consideration.
24	Land at Graze Hill, Bedford	Reserved matters application 21/01901/MAR for 163 dwellings was approved on 1 August 2022. A new roundabout has been provided on the B660 to provide entry / exit to the development and the housebuilder is on site.
25	Former Stewartby Brickworks	Outline planning application 18/03022/EIA for up to 1,000 dwellings was approved on 29 October 2021.
27	Land north of School Lane, Roxton	Reserved matters application 21/03333/MAR for 50 dwellings was approved on 5 April 2023. The housebuilder is now on site.
62	Kempston Hardwick Gypsy and Traveller site	Planning permission for two new day units with access, parking and associated works was granted in December 2018 (18/02566/DC3). Since the end of the monitoring year construction has started.
<b>Local Plan 2002 Policy</b>		<b>Status at 31 March 2023</b>
H2	Britannia Iron Works	Development completed.
H6	Biddenham Loop	Planning application 21/01592/MAF for 95 dwellings on land adjacent to Mercia Road is approved subject to S106 agreement. This is land originally set aside for school use.
H7	Land west of Kempston	Development completed.
H8	Land north of Bromham Road, Biddenham	Outline planning permission was granted under 01/02199/OUT and multiple reserved matters have been approved. 706 dwellings have

		been completed and 594 dwellings have extant planning permission but are not built.
H9	Land at Shortstown	Development completed.
H11	Land south of Fields Road, Wootton	Development completed.
H12	Land north of Fields Road, Wootton	Development completed.
H13	Land off Rousebury Road, Stewartby	Outline planning permission was granted under 07/01163/OUT and reserved matters have been secured for the first and second phases and a partial re-plan of an area in phase 2. 610 dwellings have been completed and 11 dwellings have extant planning permission but are not built.
H14 and E10	Elstow Storage Depot and Elstow Brickworks	<p>The new settlement of Wixams lies partly within Bedford Borough and partly within Central Bedfordshire. It consists of four “villages”.</p> <p>Development of Wixams Village 1 comprising 988 dwellings is completed. A new primary school opened in September 2009 and a village hall opened in April 2013. A local centre within Village 1 has been completed.</p> <p>Development of Village 2 is under construction and 767 dwellings are complete.</p> <p>The infrastructure and access points have been constructed within Village 3 and the site prepared as part of the strategic works carried out by the master developer. Reserved matters application 21/02615/MAR for 232 dwellings within parcel 3.4 was granted in December 2022 and reserved matters application 21/01440/MAR for 180 dwellings within parcel 3.5 was granted in October 2022.</p>

		<p>The remainder of Village 3 has extant outline planning permission. Development of Village 3 has started since the end of the monitoring year.</p> <p>Development of Village 4 is under construction and 145 dwellings are complete. Reserved matters application 23/01008/MAR for 111 dwellings at parcel 4, on land formerly identified as a school site is pending consideration.</p> <p>A purpose-built retirement village for the over 55s opened on a site adjacent to Village 1 in 2019 and a care home opened in 2021. Phase 2 consisting of a 62-unit extension to the retirement village has extent planning permission (18/03158/MAF) but development has not yet started.</p> <p>The construction of a regional distribution centre has been completed on a site north of Fisherswood Road. Reserved matters approval for a regional distribution centre on a site to the south west has now lapsed.</p> <p>Three commercial units have been completed on a site north of Watson Road. A business park comprising of six units is completed on a site north of Fisherswood Road, adjacent to the care home.</p>
H23	Housing in second order villages	<p><u>Land south of Cople Road, Cardington</u> Development completed.</p> <p><u>Land at West End Lane, Elstow</u> Development completed.</p> <p><u>Land off Pavenham Road, Oakley</u> Development completed.</p>

		<p><u>Land off Sandye Lane, Swineshead</u> No planning permission.</p> <p><u>Land off Keysoe Road, Riseley</u> Development completed.</p> <p><u>Land to the north of School Lane, Roxton</u> Development completed</p> <p><u>'Village Green', Spring Lane, Stagsden</u> Planning application 22/01932/REM for 6 dwellings was approved on 27 January 2023 and the development is under construction.</p> <p><u>Newton Road, Turvey</u> Development completed.</p> <p><u>Land adjoining the Old Pond House, Upper Dean</u> Development completed.</p> <p><u>Canons Close, Wootton</u> Development completed.</p> <p><u>Church Lane, Wymington</u> Development completed.</p> <p><u>Land between High Road, Hall Way and Meeting Close, Cotton End</u> Development completed.</p> <p><u>Land south of Bedford Road, Willington</u> Development completed.</p>
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E2	Land south of Cambridge Road	Development completed.
LR4	Rowing course	Planning permission for the watersports lake was granted in 2006 under BC/CM/2003/33 and a legal start has been made. The intention is that Local Plan 2040 Policy HOU11 will deliver the watersports facility alongside development.
<b>Allocations and Designations Plan 2013 Policy</b>		<b>Status at 31 March 2023</b>
AD3	Land at Hall End Road, Wootton	Development of 58 dwellings under planning permission 14/02939/MAF on the eastern part of the site is completed. The land reserved for education use, on the western part of the site has no planning permission.
AD4	Land at Old Ford End Road, Queens Park, Bedford	Development completed.
AD7	Land East of Eastcotts Road, Bedford	Development completed.
AD10	Lansdowne Road, Warwick Avenue and Dynevor Road, Bedford	Development completed.
AD11	Land at Medbury Farm, Elstow	No planning permission.  It is proposed to replace Policy AD11 with emerging Local Plan 2040 Policy EMP5.
AD12	Land at Bell Farm, Kempston	Development completed.

AD13	Marston Vale Innovation Park, Phase 2, Wootton	<p>The planning history of the site is extensive. A hybrid scheme (17/00666/MAO) permitted in May 2018 allowed for a mix of employment uses including leisure based employment and associated infrastructure. This permission was subsequently amended by four non-material amendment applications. Three reserved matters applications have been approved of which 21/00322/M73 for the layout, scale, appearance and landscaping of plots 4 and 5, providing approximately 24,000 sqm employment floorspace has been implemented. The construction of plot 6 (19/01176/NMA), providing a 37,626 sqm distribution warehouse has also been completed.</p> <p>A children's nursery school building on plot 1D (18/00644/DC3) was approved in June 2018 and the development is completed.</p> <p>The time limit for the submission of reserved matters under 17/00666/MAO expired in May 2021 and a new outline planning application (21/02077/MAO) to establish the principle of development of plots 1A to C (for Class E(b), C1 and sui generis uses) and plots 2 and 3 (for Class E(g) and ancillary B8 uses) was approved on 7 April 2022.</p>
AD15	Manton Lane Reservoir Site, Bedford	Development completed.
AD16	Land West of Manton Lane, Bedford	Was allocated as employment land but planning permission is now approved for a school (20/00488/MAR).
AD17	Land West of the B530, Kempston	No planning permission. A scheme is being prepared.

AD18	Land North of the A6-A428 Link Road, Bedford	Planning permission was granted under 18/02231/MDC4 for the erection of microbrewery with access road (Class B2) (detailed element) and outline proposals with all matters reserved except access and site clearance for mixed use development, to include employment B1, B2, B8, D2 leisure use, A3, A4 and hotel uses. Only the outline proposals (which has lapsed) are within the allocated site. Reserved matters application 19/00921/MAR for the construction of a leisure activities centre is pending consideration.
AD19	Land at Manton Lane, Bedford	Outline planning application 23/01128/MDC3 for the provision of eight pitches for travelling showpeople is pending consideration.
AD20	Land at Bedford Road, Great Barford	Planning application 16/00873/MAF for the development of 54 dwellings and 1 acre area of land to provide a site for a Primary Care Facility has been approved and the dwellings are completed. Development of the Primary Care Facility has not started.
AD21	Land at Chawston Lake, Roxton Road, Wyboston	Full planning permission (17/00880/MAF) was granted in 2017 for use as a holiday village including 8 holiday chalets (including manager's chalet), 20 caravan plots, camping area, facilities buildings and associated landscaping and ancillary works. The development was not implemented and the permission has lapsed.
AD22	Land North of Ravensden Road, Salph End, Renhold	No planning permission.

AD23	Bedford River Valley Park Enabling Development	<p>Enabling development at Bedford River Valley Park has been allocated in the development plan for a number of years in order to finance the delivery of a watersports lake and other leisure opportunities. Whilst planning permission for the watersports lake has been granted and development legally commenced, the project has progressed no further. The enabling development hasn't happened, but the Council's aspiration to deliver the lake and leisure uses in support of wider growth in the borough remains a priority.</p> <p>A new scheme has been drawn up to take the project forward. Whilst the original enabling development envisaged employment, leisure and education uses on the site with the possibility of a continuing care retirement community, the refreshed scheme will deliver a mixed use development including residential units, an education facility, a care home, and watersports lake set in a well landscaped, multi-functional greenspace.</p> <p>It is proposed to replace Policy AD23 with Local Plan 2040 Policy HOU11.</p>
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6.3 Table 4 shows the estimated number of dwellings allocated in 'made' and emerging neighbourhood plans and the status of allocated sites at the end of the 2022/23 monitoring year.

<b>Table 4: Status of Neighbourhood Plan policy allocations at 31 March 2023</b>		
<b>Parish</b>	<b>Dwellings allocated</b>	<b>Status at 31 March 2023</b>
Bromham	500	<u>BP - Beauchamp Park</u> Resolution to approve outline planning permission (19/01904/MAO) for 390 dwellings subject to legal agreement.



		<p><u>SR - The Stagsden Rise Development</u> Reserved matters application 20/02520/MAR for 80 dwellings was granted in September 2021. The development is under construction and 33 dwellings are completed.</p> <p><u>OS - Old Stable Yard Development</u> Allocation for 30 dwellings. No planning permission.</p>
Clapham	500	<p><u>Policy HG2: Land at Milton Hill</u> Planning application 21/00332/EIA for 500 dwellings is pending consideration.</p>
Great Barford	500	<p><u>Policy H1: Land at Great Barford West</u> Allocation for 500 dwellings. No planning permission. Neighbourhood Plan Policy H1 requires the preparation of a development brief before a planning application is submitted. Discussion with the site promoter on the preparation of a development brief is underway.</p>
Sharnbrook	500	<p><u>Policy S3 – Land at Hill Farm, Mill Road</u> Outline application 22/01037/MAO for up to 500 dwellings and planning application 22/02193/MAF for 500 dwellings are pending consideration.</p>
Carlton and Chellington	32	<p><u>Policy CC5 - Land at the Causeway</u> Planning application 21/02406/FUL for 9 dwellings was approved on 9 March 2023.</p> <p><u>Policy CC6 - The Causeway</u> Development of 18 dwellings was completed in 2020/21.</p> <p><u>Policy CC7 - Land north of the Moor</u> Allocation for 4 dwellings. No planning permission.</p>

Harrold	25	<p><u>Policy HARROLD NDP2: Land at Odell Road</u> Allocation for 17 dwellings. No planning permission.</p> <p><u>Policy HARROLD NDP3: Land east of Orchard Lane</u> Allocation for 8 dwellings. No planning permission.</p>
Milton Ernest	25	<p><u>Policy ME H1: Rushden Road</u> Allocation for 25 dwellings. No planning permission.</p>
Oakley	40	<p><u>ONP HG1: Land at Station Road</u> Outline planning application 21/02394/MAO for up to 40 dwellings was allowed on appeal in July 2023.</p> <p><u>ONP HG1: Land to the rear of the High Street</u> Outline planning application 23/02494/MAO for 10 dwellings is pending consideration.</p>
Turvey	50	<p><u>Policy T1: Carlton Road</u> Outline planning application 23/00019/MAO for 25 dwellings is pending consideration.</p> <p><u>Policy T1: Mill Rise</u> Resolution to approve planning permission (21/03304/MAF) for 24 dwellings subject to legal agreement.</p>
Willington	50	<p><u>Policy W4 – Land off Sandy Road</u> Outline planning application 20/02151/MAO for 50 dwellings was approved in July 2022. Reserved matters application 23/01034/MAR for 50 dwellings is pending consideration.</p>

Bletsoe	11	<p><u>BNP Policy 2 Land behind Captains Close</u> Allocation for 8 dwellings. No planning permission.</p> <p><u>BNP Policy 3 Land north of the Old Rectory</u> Allocation for 3 dwellings. No planning permission.</p>
Felmersham and Radwell	13	<p><u>Policy FR3: Land at the Old Road, Felmersham</u> Allocation for 6 dwellings. No planning permission.</p> <p><u>Policy FR4: Perch Heights, Carlton Road, Felmersham</u> Allocation for 7 dwellings. No planning permission.</p>
Odell	None	
Ravensden	20	<p><u>Policy RNP3: Land adjoining Willow Farm, Butler Street</u> Allocation for 10-15 dwellings. No planning permission.</p> <p><u>Policy RNP4: Former barns at Cleat Hill Farm</u> Allocation for up to 5 dwellings. No planning permission.</p>
Stevington	None	
Thurleigh	30	<p><u>Policy HS2 – Land at The Beeches, High Street</u> Outline planning application 20/02155/MAO for 11 dwellings was granted in August 2021. Revised outline application 23/00386/M73 is pending consideration.</p> <p><u>Policy HS3 – Land at Hayle Field, High Street</u> Reserved matters application 22/00370/MAR for 20 dwellings was approved on 23 November 2022.</p>
Wilshamstead	None	

Wootton	105	<p><u>Policy W3 – Land between Potters Cross and Wootton Road</u> Allocation for 50 dwellings. No planning permission.</p> <p><u>Policy W4 – Land south of Keeley Lane</u> Planning application 23/01846/MAF for 20 dwellings is pending consideration.</p> <p><u>Policy W5 – Land at Tinkers Corner, Keeley Lane</u> Allocation for 15 dwellings. No planning permission.</p> <p><u>Policy W6 – Land on south side of Keeley Lane</u> Outline planning application 22/01035/MAO for 20 dwellings was approved on 18 November 2022.</p>
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## **7 Monitoring Indicators**

- 7.1 This section reports on the implementation of local plan policies under the four themes of natural environment, accessibility, delivering growth and placemaking. Key objectives from the Local Plan 2030 are grouped at the start of each theme. For context, the relevant themes from the emerging Local Plan 2040 are also identified.
- 7.2 Data relating to the 2022/23 monitoring year is presented but as the plan period started in 2015, where possible, data for the monitoring indicators has been 'baselined' at 2015 to establish trends and to enable more effective analysis.

## Theme 1: Natural environment

LP2030 Objective 1. Deliver high quality growth that will facilitate the development of more sustainable and inclusive places for local communities, which are equipped to respond to the impacts of climate and economic change and offer the opportunity to live more healthy lifestyles. Where it is viable and sustainable to do so, encourage the re-use of land that has been previously developed.

LP2030 Objective 8. Develop a strong and multifunctional urban and rural green infrastructure network through protecting, enhancing, extending and linking landscapes, woodland, biodiversity sites, heritage sites, green spaces and paths.

LP2030 Objective 9. Support and create a high quality, inclusive and safe built environment which values local landscape and settlement character and which conserves and enhances the historic environment and is enjoyed by all.

LP2030 Objective 10. Protect and enhance our natural resources including air, soil minerals and water to minimise the impacts of flooding, climate change and pollution.

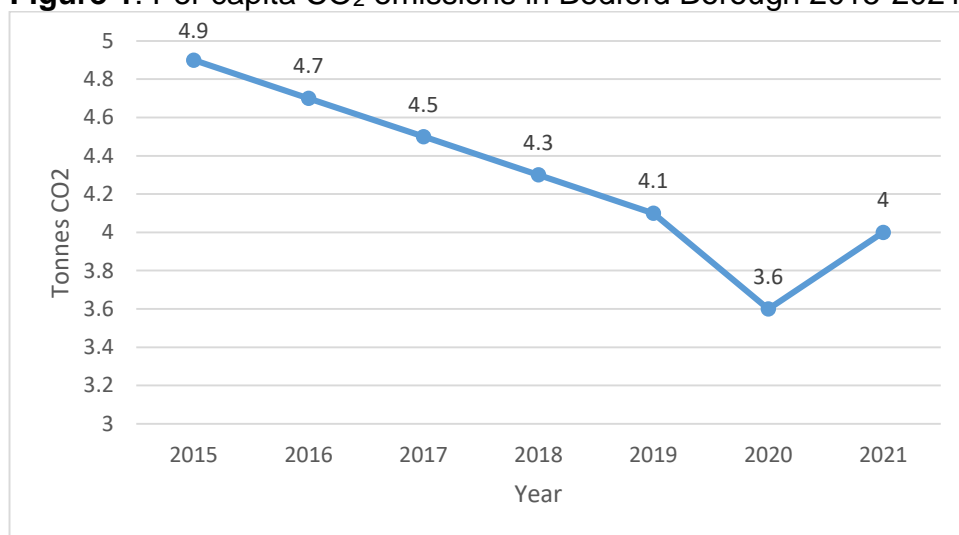
This section broadly aligns with emerging Local Plan 2040 Theme 1: Greener

Monitoring indicator 1 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
1a Reduction in carbon emissions	51S, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 89	Carbon emissions in the borough per capita	2015 = 4.9 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> per capita 2016 = 4.7 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> per capita 2017 = 4.5 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> per capita 2018 = 4.3 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> per capita 2019 = 4.1 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> per capita 2020 = 3.6 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> per capita 2021 = 4.0 tonnes CO <sub>2</sub> per capita	DBEIS
1b Delivery of district heating networks	51S, 55	Information about the installation of district heating networks	District heating system capabilities are being developed at Rookery South Resource Recovery Facility near Stewartby	BBC
1c Delivery of renewable and low carbon energy generation schemes	51S, 53, 55, 56, 57	Number of renewable energy installations completed annually	Solar photovoltaics = 432	DBEIS
			Onshore wind = 0	
			Landfill gas = 0	
			Sewage gas = 0	
			Municipal solid waste = 1	
			Plant biomass = 0	
			Animal biomass = 0	
1d Planning permissions for renewable and low carbon energy generation schemes	51S, 53, 55, 56, 57	Number of permissions granted for renewable and low carbon energy generation	4 permissions	DBEIS

7.3 It is established that the leading cause of climate change is the release of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the atmosphere through human activity. Climate change is already evident in the form of increased extreme weather events, rising sea levels, longer droughts and heatwaves, and retreating polar ice and glaciers.

- 7.4 The Climate Change Act 2008 introduced a statutory target of reducing carbon dioxide emissions to at least 80% below 1990 levels by 2050 and in 2019 the government adopted a legally binding target for the UK to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- 7.5 Local Plan 2030 Policy 51S requires development and the use of land and buildings to address climate change, adapting to anticipated future changes and mitigating against further change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- 7.6 Data from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (DBEIS)<sup>9</sup> presented in Figure 1 shows gradually decreasing trends for carbon dioxide emissions (tonnes) per capita between 2015 and 2020 whilst a slight increase was recorded in 2021.

**Figure 1:** Per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in Bedford Borough 2015-2021



<sup>9</sup> DBEIS (2023) UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics, 2005 to 2021. Table 1.2: Local authority territorial carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions estimates. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics>



- 7.7 Heat networks provide an opportunity in dense urban areas to use low-carbon heat sources to heat communities with a much greater overall efficiency than individual gas boiler systems. The Bedford Heat Mapping and Masterplanning Study 2019 mapped the heat demand of the urban area as well as the major anchor loads of the area. The Rookery South Resource Recovery Facility occupies a former clay extraction pit near Stewartby and started operating in January 2022. The facility processes around 550,000 tonnes of household, commercial and industrial (non-hazardous) waste every year – thus reducing landfill. The waste is combusted and the heat converts water into steam, which drives generators to produce electricity for the national grid. When at full capacity, the facility is capable of generating enough baseload electricity to power 112,500 homes and recovering resources and by-products for reuse. District heating system capabilities are being developed at the facility<sup>10</sup>.
- 7.8 Existing renewable energy installations at local authority level are published annually by DBEIS. Most of the data relating to renewable energy technologies is based on records of installations that have been registered under an accreditation scheme. Technologies that are not supported by such schemes or that are not registered for some other reason are therefore likely to be underrepresented. The Regional Renewable Statistics reports the number of installations, capacity and annual electricity generation from a range of renewable energy technologies. The latest data<sup>11</sup> shows that at the end of 2022 there were around 3,040 renewable energy installations in the borough, the vast majority being solar photovoltaics (around 3,016 installations). 15 onshore wind, two landfill gas, two plant biomass, one animal biomass, one sewage gas, one municipal solid waste, one anaerobic digestion, and one hydro installation were also recorded. The same dataset estimates that renewable electricity generation in the borough is 145.5 GWh per year which is 14GWh more than last year's estimate. For comparison, annual electricity consumption in the borough was 702.5 GWh in 2021<sup>12</sup>, 3.5GWh more than in 2020. Increasing renewable energy supply is therefore crucial to the Council achieving carbon neutrality in its operations by 2030 and for the UK to meet its commitments to climate change mitigation.
- 7.9 The Renewable Energy Planning Database (REPD) records the status of all renewable energy and combined heat and power projects for which a planning application has been submitted including the dates of permission being granted or refused, and when the project became operational. Small-scale technologies that do not require planning permission are not included in the dataset.

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<sup>10</sup> Further information available at <https://www.rookerysoutherf.co.uk/about-the-facility/>

<sup>11</sup> DBEIS (2023) Renewable energy by local authority 2014-2022. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/regional-renewable-statistics>

<sup>12</sup> DBEIS (2023) Subnational total final energy consumption. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/total-final-energy-consumption-at-sub-national-level>

- 7.10 The REPD<sup>13</sup> shows that planning permission was granted for four projects during 2022/23: a solar photovoltaic farm at Land north of College Farm, Green Lane, Clapham (22/01581/MAF), solar panels and air source heat pump units at Oakley Primary Academy, Station Road (22/02104/FUL), a roof mounted 159kWp solar PV system at Bedford Academy, Mile Road, Bedford (22/00939/SPNJ), and a roof mounted 880kWp solar PV system at Unit 8 Hudson Road, Bedford (22/02543/SPNJ). In late July 2022, the Elstow solar farm which is made up of 8,004 solar panels and is capable of generating up to 4.2MW of electricity became operational.
- 7.11 The latest data on renewable energy installations and renewable electricity generation will be reported in the next monitoring report. Analysis of this data will help to assess the extent to which the Council's planning policies relating to renewable energy generation are achieving their intended outcomes and helping to achieve the local plan vision and objectives in addition to the Council's carbon neutrality pledge and UK-wide targets relating to climate change mitigation.

Monitoring indicator 2 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
2a Development proposed and delivered in the riverside area of Bedford town centre	17	Number of planning permissions received and determined in the riverside area  Whether proposals satisfied the policy tests	0 permissions	BBC

- 7.12 Planning applications for development proposals on land bordering the River Great Ouse in Bedford town centre are assessed against criteria set out in Local Plan 2030 Policy 17. There were no planning permissions for development in the riverside area of Bedford town centre during the 2022/23 monitoring year.

<sup>13</sup> DBEIS (2023) Renewable Energy Planning Database. Available at <https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/a5b0ed13-c960-49ce-b1f6-3a6bbe0db1b7/renewable-energy-planning-database-repd>

Monitoring indicator 3 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
3a Green infrastructure created and lost on completed site allocations	35S, 36S, AD24, AD26, AD27	Amount of new green infrastructure created and existing green infrastructure lost on completed site allocations	<p>During the 2021/22 monitoring year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At Manton Lane Reservoir Site (AD15), grass areas, new tree and native buffer planting along the eastern, northern and western boundaries along with walking and cycling links into the green access route around north / north-west of the town have been provided.</li> </ul> <p>During the 2022/23 monitoring year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Land at Shortstown (H9) provided an ecological corridor linking to the adjacent County Wildlife Site. Throughout the site, new tree and shrub planting complements retained trees. Formal and informal sports provision – play areas, trim trail, footpaths and cycle paths, green spaces – provide opportunities for outdoor recreation and active travel. The site also incorporates a central village green, public square, green corridors, and green spaces.</li> <li>Opportunities for outdoor recreation and active travel have been provided at Land south of Fields Road (H11) by way of public open space, a play area hub, and green linear corridors, which provide connections to Berry Wood and to the wider landscape. Additional woodland tree planting, wildflower meadows,</li> </ul>	BBC

			<p>attenuation areas, aquatic planting and two new ecological ponds provide ecological benefits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New tree, shrub, bulb and grass planting; creation of new habitats; and provision of a 0.43 hectare area of amenity open space were delivered at Landsdowne Road, Warwick Avenue and Dynevor Road, Bedford (AD10).</li> </ul>	
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- 7.13 The Local Plan 2030 emphasises the importance of green infrastructure in the borough, citing its environmental and health benefits as well as its capacity to enhance and conserve the historic environment by improving the setting of infrastructure assets, improve access to it and help contribute to the sense of place and a tangible link with local history. Local Plan 2030 Policy 35S relates to the provision, protection and enhancement of green infrastructure in the borough.
- 7.14 The Bedford Borough Green Infrastructure Plan 2009 identifies a strategic green infrastructure network which is divided into six separate Opportunity Zones. Saved Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 Policy AD24 provides further detail about the zones and the priorities for the protection and enhancement of green infrastructure within them.
- 7.15 The Council has reviewed the method of data collection to monitor delivery of local plan policy objectives to achieve a net gain in green infrastructure. It is considered that this is most effectively monitored by the loss / creation / enhancement of green infrastructure links on completed Local Plan allocated sites. The Council did not report progress achieved towards this indicator last year and therefore information relating to 2021/22 and 2022/23 is presented in this monitoring report.
- 7.16 During 2021/22, Manton Lane Reservoir Site, Bedford, allocated for employment development in the Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 (AD15) was completed. The development (planning application 19/01860/MAF) includes new tree, shrub and native buffer planting along the eastern, northern and western boundaries which will deliver ecological enhancements for local wildlife and serve to soften the visual impact of the building. Links into the green access route around north / north-west of the town including improvements to the shared use path from Murdock Road to Brickhill Drive allotments accessway and a shared cycle footway alongside Manton Lane from the Brickhill Drive junction to the site have been provided.

- 7.17 During 2022/23, Local Plan 2002 allocated sites Land at Shortstown (H9) and the residential element of Land south of Fields Road, Wootton (H11) were completed. Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 site Landsdowne Road, Warwick Avenue and Dynevor Road, Bedford (AD10) was also completed.
- 7.18 Land at Shortstown (H9) is a mixed use development with residential, commercial, community and sports and recreation uses. The site incorporates a variety of green infrastructure assets including parks and gardens, green spaces, playing fields, street trees, as well as footpaths and cycleways. The site has been built out in three phases.
- 7.19 A public square is provided in phase 1A (planning application 07/01295/MAR) to the east of the Shorts Building and provides a space for interaction and socialising, soft landscaping including herbaceous shrub planting, a play area, and a segregated pedestrian area. A locally equipped area of play and a smaller play area are provided in phase 1B (planning application 07/02347/MAR).
- 7.20 Phase 2A (planning application 13/00612/MAR) contains a 0.14 hectare park (Clock Gardens) located between Littlekit and Paul Waller Avenue. The park is nearly circular in shape and contains a clock tower in its centre, twelve rose beds separated by gravel hard surfacing and seven hornbeam trees around its perimeter. Several roads are tree lined and soft landscaping throughout the wider site includes a mix of wildflower planting, native hedges, shrubs and trees. Within phase 2B there is a kidney-shaped park that measures 0.81 hectares with play equipment and seating located in an area of chestnut trees that are subject to a Tree Preservation Order (planning application 13/00829/MAR). Phase 2C (planning application 13/01054/MAR) contains a toddler's play area.
- 7.21 Phase 3 (planning application 16/02461/MAR) comprises 13 hectares of land and incorporates a central village green (Eastcotts Green), four play areas, and an amenity area (Clock Park) with formal and informal sports provision. The Clock Park is located adjacent to Paul Waller Avenue and immediately opposite Clock Gardens and contains a central play hub with trim trail, sports pitches and two multi-use games areas. The old railway cutting has been developed into an ecological corridor with new tree planting, hedgerows, native shrubs, wildflowers, footpaths and cycle paths. The nature area forms part of a continuous ecological corridor linked to the County Wildlife Site located to the south within the disused railway track. A central landscaped corridor extends from the central Cardington Green to the ecological corridor. The landscaped corridor is formed from existing protected trees and incorporates one of the four local areas of play. Pedestrian and cycle routes meander through the central village green and alongside the landscaped corridor, connecting into earlier phases via two new crossings across Paul Waller Avenue. Native tree planting throughout the site compliments retained trees and helps form green corridors and green spaces and forms a strong edge to the surrounding landscape. The existing strip of tree planting

to the south-eastern boundary abutting the DVSA is retained to act as a landscaping buffer. The well-established and spaced London Plane trees lining Paul Waller Avenue have been retained with the exception of small areas at crossing points. Additionally, the group of mature Norway Maples that run along Harrowden Lane from Paul Waller Avenue to the ecological corridor have been retained. Box hedges and shrub planting predominantly define front residential curtilages.

- 7.22 The south of the allocation at Land south of Fields Road, Wootton (H11) is part of Berry Wood which was planted between 1991 and 1994 and comprises a 115 hectare mix of plantation, open grassland, ponds and paths. Within the development site (planning application 15/02060/MAF), a formal avenue of tree planting lines the spine road, which intersects the five parcels of residential development. Each residential parcel is bordered by green linear corridors of open space that connect to the open space in the south and west of the site. A series of formal and informal grass mown paths, footpaths, cycle paths and bridleways connect the strategic open space to the wider landscape. This creates opportunities for active travel and interaction with nature for residents and visitors. Native hedgerow planting defines the boundaries between the strategic open space and the residential area, reinforcing a sense of place. Additional woodland tree species have been planted throughout the site, thereby helping to assimilate the development into the wider landscape. The majority of the open space serving the development is located to the south and west of the site and comprises areas of open grassland, woodland tree planting, managed woodland, wildflower meadows, drainage attenuation areas, two ecological ponds and a habitat corridor which links to the two existing ponds located to the south of the site. The attenuation areas include aquatic planting and wildflower meadow suitable for damp conditions which provide ecological benefits. A play area hub containing timber play equipment partly within the wooded area and picnic area with tables and seating is bordered by organised shrub and tree planting. This central hub provides opportunities for outdoor play and recreation, social interaction, and decorative trees create a focal meeting point.
- 7.23 Whilst development at Landsdowne Road, Warwick Avenue and Dynevor Road, Bedford (AD10) (planning application 13/02417/MAF) entailed the demolition of former university buildings and the removal of many of the trees within the site, this was mitigated by the retention of some mature trees and the creation of new habitats and tree planting. A parcel of public open space measuring 0.43 hectares between Linden Road and Dynevor Road provides amenity open space and a children's play area. It contains a variety of species of retained and new tree planting, yew and hornbeam hedges, mixed shrubs, bulbs, grass and paths and restored tennis courts.

Monitoring indicator 4 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
4a Woodland creation in the Forest of Marston Vale	36S	Amount of new woodland planted (ha)	119.28 hectares of new woodland area was created in the Forest of Marston Vale during 2022/23. Of the total, 56.99 hectares of new woodland area was created within Bedford Borough	The Forest of Marston Vale Trust
4b Planning contributions secured towards the delivery of the Forest of Marston Vale	36S	Financial contributions secured as a result of planning permissions granted (through S106)	£21,295.72 in total	BBC
4c Progress in the delivery of Bedford River Valley Park and Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park	AD26, AD27	Information relating to the delivery of these two strategic green infrastructure projects	The Oxford to Cambridge Arc Central Area Growth Board partnership has submitted a bid for £30 million capacity funding from government to support delivery of the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park	BBC

- 7.24 Strategic green infrastructure projects within the borough are the Forest of Marston Vale, Bedford River Valley Park and the Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park.
- 7.25 The Forest of Marston Vale is one of England’s nationally designated community forests covering 61 square miles of land between Bedford and Milton Keynes. Further information is available at [www.marstonvale.org](http://www.marstonvale.org). Over 800ha of green and blue infrastructure in the east of Bedford will be delivered by the Borough Council and partners to form Bedford River Valley Park. Further information is available at [www.bedfordrivervalley.org.uk](http://www.bedfordrivervalley.org.uk). The Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park scheme consists of a 26km canal connecting Milton Keynes to the head of navigation of the River Great Ouse at Kempston. The project is led by the Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Trust. Further information is available at [www.bmkwaterway.org](http://www.bmkwaterway.org).

- 7.26 In order to meet the target for 30% tree cover in the Forest of Marston Vale as a whole, Local Plan 2030 Policy 36S sets out a requirement to provide tree cover at 30% within new developments or provide an off-site financial contribution, secured through a S106 agreement.
- 7.27 In the monitoring year 2022/23, a further 119.28 hectares of new woodland area was created in the Forest of Marston Vale. Within the Bedford Borough half of the Forest, this was centred around 16.65ha of new woodland on land at Berry Farm, Wootton which will form part of Berry Wood. In total 26,370 trees were planted with over 300 local residents attending a community planting event. A further 16.71ha of new woodland was planted on land at Medbury Farm, near Elstow. Other sites planted within Bedford Borough totalled 23.63ha across 16 sites within the Forest area, bringing the total to 56.99ha for the year with 71,896 trees planted. All of these projects were supported under the 'Trees for Climate' programme, a new Defra-sponsored programme to accelerate woodland creation activity within the Forest of Marston Vale and other Community Forests up until April 2025.
- 7.28 Planting activity generally alternates between Bedford Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council administrative areas, with the 61 square mile designated Forest of Marston Vale area spanning the boundary. During this monitoring year, marginally more activity took place within Central Bedfordshire with 62.29ha planted compared to the 56.99ha planted within Bedford Borough.
- 7.29 A total of £21,295.72 in developer contributions was secured towards the Forest during the monitoring year, which is less than the amount secured last year (£28,770.36) but more than in 2020/21 (£0). In 2022/23, a contribution of £20,766 was secured through S106 for the change of use of land at Box End, Green End Road, Kempston to a cemetery (21/03110/MAF) and a contribution of £529.72 through S106 for the development of a dwelling at Land adjacent to 1 Whitley Road, Shortstown (22/01615/FUL).

Monitoring indicator 5 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
5a Progress in preparing the Developing in the Forest of Marston Vale SPD	36S	Details of preparation in accordance with milestones in the LDS	The SPD was adopted on 25 January 2023	BBC



7.30 The supporting text to Policy 36S states that a supplementary planning document will be produced jointly with Central Bedfordshire Council to inform development within the Forest area. Consultation on a draft document was undertaken in June and July 2022 and the SPD was adopted on 25 January 2023.

Monitoring indicator 6 What is being measured	Related policies	Target	Result	Data source
6a Progress in preparing the Trees and Development SPD	37, 38, 39, 40	Details of preparation in accordance with milestones in the LDS	Consultation on the scope of the draft document was undertaken in November and December 2022 and an eight week consultation on the draft SPD closes on 28 January 2024	BBC

7.31 The supporting text to Local Plan 2030 Policy 38 states that a supplementary planning document will be produced to provide guidance on the types of trees for inclusion as part of landscaping installation and future maintenance that is suitable for particular types of development. Consultation on the scope of the draft document was undertaken in November and December 2022 and an eight week consultation on the draft SPD closes on 28 January 2024.

Monitoring indicator 7 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
7a Extent of areas of biodiversity and geodiversity importance	42S, 43	Details of any net loss / net gain in areas of biodiversity and geodiversity importance	Eight Sites of Special Scientific Interest covering 166.7ha. No change from previous year	Natural England
			Eight Local Nature Reserves covering 114.55ha. No change from previous year	

7.32 Local Plan 2030 Policies 42S and 43 set out objectives for the biodiversity and geodiversity of the borough to be protected and enhanced where appropriate.

7.33 Sites of special scientific interest (SSSI) are nationally important sites designated by Natural England and contain the best examples of the UK’s flora, fauna, geological or geophysical features. There are eight sites of special scientific interest in the borough (see Table 5) covering 166.7 hectares of land<sup>14</sup>. The largest SSSI in the borough is Odell Great Wood (85.94ha). There has been no change to the area of SSSI land in the borough during 2022/23.

<b>Table 5: Sites of Special Scientific Interest in Bedford Borough, 2023</b>		
<b>SSSI site</b>	<b>Main habitat</b>	<b>Area (hectares)</b>
Biddenham Pit	Earth heritage	0.42
Felmersham Gravel Pits	Standing open water and canals	21.52
Hanger Wood	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland – lowland	23.95
Odell Great Wood	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland – lowland	85.94
Stevington Marsh	Neutral grassland – lowland / Calcareous grassland – lowland	7.62
Swineshead Wood	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland – lowland	21.87
Tilwick Meadow	Natural grassland - lowland	2.54
Yelden Meadows	Natural grassland - lowland	2.84
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>166.7</b>

7.34 Local nature reserves (LNR) are sites that are in the control of and have been suggested by a local authority, but they are designated by Natural England. They are of local importance and have wildlife or geological interest. The sites are publicly accessible and have a management plan in place to ensure their biodiversity or geodiversity is maintained and the wildlife is not damaged as a result of public access. In August 2023 there were eight local nature reserves in Bedford Borough (see Table 6) covering 114.55 hectares of land<sup>15</sup>. There has been no change to the area of LNR land in the borough during 2022/23.

<sup>14</sup> Natural England Designated Sites System Available at <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSearch.aspx>

<sup>15</sup> Natural England Designated Sites System Available at <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSearch.aspx>

<b>Table 6: Local Nature Reserves in Bedford Borough, 2023</b>		
<b>LNR site</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Area (hectares)</b>
Bromham Lake	Biological	10.89
Browns Wood	Biological	6.03
Fenlake Meadows	Biological	19.15
Harrold Odell Country Park	Biological	59.31
Hill Rise	Biological	0.85
Mowsbury Hill	Biological	2.77
Park Wood	Biological	5.2
Putnoe Wood	Biological	10.35
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>114.55</b>

7.35 The condition of SSSI land in England is assessed by Natural England using categories agreed through the Joint Nature Conservation Committee. There are five reportable condition categories: favourable, unfavourable recovering, unfavourable no change, unfavourable declining, destroyed / part destroyed. Natural England's objective is to achieve 'favourable condition' status for all SSSIs. Favourable condition means that the SSSI's habitats and features are in a healthy state and are being conserved by appropriate management. Assessments of SSSIs are conducted on a six-year cycle.

Monitoring indicator 8 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Direction of change	Data source	
8a Condition of SSSIs in the borough with a view to 100% being in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition	42S, 43	% of SSSI units in favourable, unfavourable recovering, unfavourable no change, unfavourable declining, destroyed / part destroyed	Favourable	51.33ha (30.79%)	No change	Natural England
			Unfavourable recovering	29.14ha (17.48%)	Down	
			Unfavourable no change	85.94ha (51.55%)	Up	
			Unfavourable declining	0.3ha (0.18%)	No change	
			Destroyed / part destroyed	0ha (0%)	No change	

7.36 According to data published on Natural England's designated sites system<sup>16</sup>, the proportion of SSSI site area assessed to be in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition is 48.27%, this is primarily due to the resurvey of Odell Great Wood in the monitoring year and its condition declining. Overall, the majority of SSSI land is deemed to be in unfavourable no change condition (51.6%) with the next highest proportion in favourable condition (30.8%). Just 0.3ha of SSSI land in the borough is assessed to be in unfavourable declining condition.

Monitoring indicator 9 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Direction of change	Data source
9a Condition of locally important sites (county wildlife sites, roadside nature reserves and local geological sites)	42S, 43	Percentage of locally important sites in positive conservation management	2015/16 = 50.4% 2016/17 = 52.8% 2017/18 = 54.0% 2018/19 = 54.0% 2019/20 = 52.8% 2020/22 = 57.6%	Up	Defra The Wildlife Trust

<sup>16</sup> Available at <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteSearch.aspx>

- 7.37 Locally important sites are non-statutory and are known in Bedford Borough as county wildlife sites, roadside nature reserves and local geological sites.
- 7.38 The Single Data List 160-00 (SDL160) aims to measure the performance of local authorities at protecting their local biodiversity and geodiversity, by assessing the implementation of positive conservation management on local sites. The implementation of positive conservation management, defined as management which contributes to maintaining or enhancing the features of interest for which a site has been selected, is widely used for assessing improvements in biodiversity and geodiversity. The status of every site that counts towards the biodiversity indicator is reviewed every five years to assess whether they are still considered to be in positive conservation management.
- 7.39 For a variety of reasons, information for the year 2020/21 was not collected and the most recent data available for the borough therefore incorporates the years 2020/21 and 2021/22. Data from The Wildlife Trust for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Northamptonshire for 2020/22 shows that 72 local sites are in positive conservation management in Bedford Borough, this represents 57.6% of the total number of sites. Aside from a decline recorded in 2019/20, historical data<sup>17</sup> shows a gradual increase in the proportion of local sites in positive conservation management in the borough.

Monitoring indicator 10 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
10a Impact of development on the River Great Ouse and its environs	44	Number of and details of planning permissions for development on or connected to the River Great Ouse	2 permissions	BBC
10b Impact of development on the River Great Ouse and its environs	44	Completed new development on or connected to the River Great Ouse	Completion of five static houseboats at Priory Marina, Bedford	BBC

<sup>17</sup> Defra (2023) Nature conservation: Local sites in positive conservation management in England. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/env10-local-sites-in-positive-conservation-management>

- 7.40 The River Great Ouse within Bedford Borough is a focal point for formal and informal recreation and sport, and supports a range of diversity. Local Plan 2030 Policy 44 requires development proposals along and adjoining the River Great Ouse to improve access to the river including canoe portage areas and related facilities; deliver improvements to facilities having regard to the Bedford Waterspace Study 2011; ensure that new river moorings have pedestrian and vehicle access to an adopted road; ensure that new marinas have access to an adopted road and provide adequate car parking; and ensure that any new development or activities do not lead to adverse impacts on Natura 2000 sites downstream of Bedford, including as a result of increased flooding or because of pollution.
- 7.41 During 2022/23, two planning permissions were granted for development on or adjoining the River Great Ouse, which is one more than last year. The application details and the reasons for granting planning permission during 2022/23 are summarised in Table 7.

<b>Table 7: Planning permissions granted for development on or connected to the River Great Ouse during 2022/23 and the reasons for granting permission</b>			
<b>Application reference</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>Description of development</b>	<b>Reasons for granting planning permission</b>
22/00759/COU	Priory Marina, Barkers Lane, Bedford	Change of use of 22 existing leisure moorings to residential use	The development would not deliver improvements to the site or river when having regard to the Bedford Waterspace Study 2011, however given the scale and scope it would be unreasonable to resist the development on this basis alone. The development would not conflict with any of the remaining criteria set out in Policy 44.
22/01588/FUL	Priory Marina, Barkers Lane, Bedford	Development of five floating homes	The development would not deliver improvements to the site or river when having regard to the Bedford Waterspace Study 2011, however given the scale and scope it would be unreasonable to resist the development on this basis alone. The development would not conflict with any of the remaining criteria set out in Policy 44.

7.42 Five static houseboats within a development of 12 static houseboats in total at Priory Marina, Bedford (18/00990/MAR) were completed in 2022/23.

Monitoring indicator 11 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
11a Status of the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA)	32, 47S, 88	Nitrogen dioxide levels in the Bedford town centre AQMA	The annual mean NO <sub>2</sub> objective of 40 µg/m <sup>3</sup> within the Bedford town centre AQMA was not exceeded	BBC

7.43 There is one Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in Bedford town centre where the annual mean level of nitrogen dioxide exceeds national air quality standards, mainly due to the large number of road vehicles. The Air Quality Annual Status Report 2023<sup>18</sup> identifies that the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide was not exceeded during 2022. This is a reduction from last year with one exceedance. There was one diffusion tube result within 10% of the 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> limit situated on Prebend Street within the AQMA (39.1 µg/m<sup>3</sup>). This is the first time this location has fallen below 40µg/m<sup>3</sup> (annual mean) since measurements began at this location, this is partly due to work to reduce congestion and idling traffic in this area, an increase in less polluting vehicles and possible residual behaviour changes following the Covid-19 pandemic. The Air Quality Annual Status Report 2023 goes on to say that monitoring data will continue to be reviewed to consider the possibility of reducing the current size of the AQMA.

Monitoring indicator 12 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Direction of change	Data source
12a Water quality	32, 47S, 50S	Proportion of watercourses classified as good or very good biological or chemical quality	Ecological class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very good = 0 watercourses</li> <li>• Good = 2 watercourses</li> <li>• Moderate = 16 watercourses</li> <li>• Bad = 1 watercourse</li> </ul>	No change	Environment Agency

<sup>18</sup> The Air Quality Annual Status Report 2023 and reports from previous years are available at <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/environmental-issues/noise-nuisances-and-pollution/air-quality/air-quality-overview>

			Chemical class • All waterbodies fail	Historical data is not comparable	
12b Compliance with Environment Agency advice on water quality	32, 47S, 50S	Number of planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on water quality grounds	0 permissions	No change	Environment Agency
12c Compliance with Environment Agency advice on flooding	92, 93	Number of planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on flooding grounds	0 permissions	No change	Environment Agency

- 7.44 The Water Framework Directive is the primary piece of legislation regulating water quality in the borough. Its objectives are to prevent deterioration of waterbodies and to improve them such that they meet the required status for that given waterbody (rivers, lakes, estuaries, coastal and groundwaters).
- 7.45 Bedford falls within the Ouse Upper and Bedford management catchment, although this itself is split into five separate operational catchments and Bedford Borough falls largely within the Great Ouse Bedford catchment and the Great Ouse Lower catchment. A small portion of land to the south of the borough falls within the Ivel catchment. The Great Ouse Bedford operational catchment contains 13 water bodies and the Great Ouse Lower operational catchment contains 20 water bodies. The latest water quality readings (2022 cycle 3) are published on the Environment Agency's online Catchment Data Explorer<sup>19</sup>. The status for watercourses in Bedford Borough, and watercourses with part of their catchment in the borough are shown in Table 8. The survey in 2022 found that two waterbodies achieved good ecological status whilst 16 achieved moderate ecological status and one achieved bad ecological status. There has been no change in the ecological status of any waterbodies in Bedford Borough from the previous survey (2019 cycle 3); however, historical survey data shows that the

<sup>19</sup> Available at: <https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/RiverBasinDistrict/5>



ecological status of Begwary Brook has worsened since 2016 whilst the ecological status of Colmworth Brook has improved from poor to moderate status.

<b>Table 8: Water quality in water bodies in Bedford Borough in 2022</b>					
<b>Operational catchment</b>	<b>Water body name</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Hydro-morphological designation</b>	<b>Ecological class</b>	<b>Chemical class</b>
Great Ouse Bedford	Brogborough Lake	Lake	Artificial	Good	Fail
Great Ouse Bedford	Bromham Brook	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Bedford	Cople Brook	River	Heavily modified	Good	Fail
Great Ouse Bedford	Elstow Brook (DS Shortstown)	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Bedford	Elstow Brook (US Shortstown)	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Bedford	Felmersham Gravel Pits	Lake	Artificial	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Bedford	Harrowden Brook	River	Heavily modified	Bad	Fail
Great Ouse Bedford	Ouse (Newport Pagnell to Roxton)	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Bedford	Renhold Brook	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Bedford	Sharn Brook	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Bedford	Stewartby Lake	Lake	Artificial	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Lower	Begwary Brook	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Lower	Colmworth Brook	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Lower	Duloe Brook	River	Not designated artificial or heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Lower	Kym	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Lower	Kym (and Til)	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Lower	Ouse (Roxton to Earith)	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Lower	Pertenhall Brook	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail
Great Ouse Lower	Stone Brook	River	Heavily modified	Moderate	Fail

- 7.46 Guidance published by the Environment Agency<sup>20</sup> on how to use the online Catchment Data Explorer should be considered when interpreting the chemical classification data: For the 2019 assessment of chemical status, the Environment Agency changed some methods and increased their evidence base. Due to these changes all water bodies in England now fail chemical status and this assessment is not comparable to previous year's assessments. Chemical status was not surveyed as part of the latest assessment in 2022 cycle 3.
- 7.47 The Environment Agency publishes a list of applications it has lodged objections to on flood risk and water quality grounds to assist local authorities and meet their reporting obligations to government<sup>21</sup>. The information indicates that during 2022/23, the Environment Agency lodged objections on flood risk grounds to three planning applications that were submitted for development proposals in Bedford borough. Of these, two applications are not yet determined (as of September 2023) and one was granted permission following submission of an updated Flood Risk Assessment and on the assumption that the development constituted 'water compatible' development, in accordance with the Environment Agency's advice. No permissions were granted with unresolved objections from the Environment Agency during the monitoring year.
- 7.48 Information published by the Environment Agency indicates it made objections to two planning applications in the borough on grounds of water quality in 2022/23. Of these, one application is not yet determined (as of September 2023) and one was granted permission following submission of a further document to resolve the initial Environment Agency objection. Subsequent feedback from the Environment Agency following further discussion resulted in their previous objection being withdrawn. No permissions were granted with unresolved objections from the Environment Agency during the monitoring year.

Monitoring indicator 13 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Direction of change	Data source
13a Water stress	50S, 52	Water stress classification of the Anglian Water company area	Serious water stress for the region within which Bedford Borough sits	No change	Environment Agency

<sup>20</sup> <https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/help/usage#chemical-status>

<sup>21</sup> Environment Agency objections to planning on the basis of flood risk and water quality 2016/2017 to 2021/2022. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environment-agency-objections-to-planning-on-the-basis-of-flood-risk>

13b Water consumption	50S, 52	Average household water consumption	129.3 litres per head per day (metered and unmetered)	Down	Anglian Water
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7.49 The Environment Agency has developed a methodology for identifying and classifying relative levels of water stress in England. The East of England, which includes the Anglian Water supply region in which Bedford lies was considered an area of serious water stress in 2013 when the classification was revised. The latest determination in 2021<sup>22</sup> confirms that the Anglian Water supply region remains an area of serious water stress.

7.50 The average household water consumption (metered and unmetered) in the Anglian Water area in 2022/23 was 129.3 litres per head per day. This is a decrease of 9.4 litres per head per day compared to 2021/22<sup>23</sup>.

Monitoring indicator 14 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Direction of change	Data source
14a Waste reuse / recycling / composting	47S, 48, 49	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting	2015/16 = 37.5% 2016/17 = 40.7% 2017/18 = 44.5% 2018/19 = 42.9% 2019/10 = 42.7% 2020/21 = 40.0% 2021/22 = 37.0%	Down	Defra

7.51 The Joint Minerals and Waste Team are responsible for the determination of minerals and waste planning applications for Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Borough Council. The shared service also monitors minerals and waste sites in Central Bedfordshire, Bedford Borough and Luton Borough and publishes results annually in the Minerals and Waste Monitoring Report<sup>24</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> Environment Agency (2021) Water stressed areas – final classification 2021. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/water-stressed-areas-2021-classification>

<sup>23</sup> Anglian Water Services Limited (2023) Annual Integrated Report 2023. Available at <https://www.anglianwater.co.uk/siteassets/household/about-us/air-2023.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> The most recent monitoring report covers the period 1 January 2022 – 31 December 2022. Available at [https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/48/minerals\\_and\\_waste/450/development\\_framework/4](https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/48/minerals_and_waste/450/development_framework/4)

7.52 Data on household waste recycling rates is not included in the Minerals and Waste Monitoring Report. Data published by Defra<sup>25</sup> shows that the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting in 2021/22 was 37.0%, this is a reduction of 3% from the amount recorded in 2020/21. The decline in recycling rate may be attributed to the fact that over the period of Covid-19 restrictions, there were some disruptions to waste collection operations and the widespread closure of household waste recycling centres. Furthermore, the national lockdowns and rules for the operation of some businesses had a significant impact of generation of waste during this period.

Monitoring indicator 15 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
15a Development on designated Village Open Spaces	AD40	Number of planning permissions for development resulting in the loss of all or part of a Village Open Space  Reasons why permission was granted	0 permissions	BBC
15b Development on designated Urban Open Spaces	AD43	Number of planning permissions for development resulting in the loss of all or part of a Urban Open Space  Reasons why permission was granted	6 permissions	BBC
15c Development on designated Local Green Spaces	45	Number of planning permissions for development resulting in the loss of all or part of a Local Green Space  Reasons why permission was granted	0 permissions	BBC

7.53 The Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 affords protection to Village Open Spaces and Urban Open Spaces through policies AD40 and AD43 respectively. Local Green Spaces were introduced in the NPPF and provide a higher tier of

<sup>25</sup> Defra (2022) Local authority collected waste management – annual results. Available at [https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/lgastandard?mod-metric=46&mod-period=15&mod-area=E06000055&mod-group=AllUnitaryLalnCountry\\_England&mod-type=comparisonGroupType&mod-groupType=namedComparisonGroup](https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/lgastandard?mod-metric=46&mod-period=15&mod-area=E06000055&mod-group=AllUnitaryLalnCountry_England&mod-type=comparisonGroupType&mod-groupType=namedComparisonGroup)

protection for open spaces. Local Green Spaces are designated on the Policies Map and have been determined as demonstrably special to the communities they serve. Local Plan 2030 Policy 45 acknowledges that development proposals which result in the loss of part or all of a Local Green Space or would have a negative impact on the features that make it locally significant will not be permitted unless very special circumstances can be demonstrated.

7.54 During 2022/23, six planning permissions were granted for development resulting in the loss of all or part of an Urban Open Space whilst no planning permissions were granted for development resulting in the loss of all or part of a Village Open Space. This is one more than last year. The reasons for granting planning permission are summarised in Table 9. No planning permissions were granted for development resulting in the loss of all or part of a Local Green Space during the monitoring year.

<b>Table 9: Planning permissions granted for development resulting in the loss or partial loss of a Village Open Space or Urban Open Space during 2022/23 and the reasons for granting permission</b>			
<b>Application reference</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>Description of development</b>	<b>Reasons for granting planning permission</b>
22/00345/DC3	Castle Newnham School, Polhill Avenue, Bedford	New classroom block	Due to the relatively small footprint of the building, the development is not considered to significantly affect the open space surrounding the school buildings. The development is also of public benefit to the school and the local community as it will provide extra space for students with educational needs that require specialist small group teaching. For these reasons it is considered the harm to the open space is low, that public benefits are significant and the aims of Policy AD43 are therefore complied with.
22/01847/FUL	Bedfordshire Police Headquarters, Woburn Road, Kempston	Removal of a set of storage containers and erection of a new storage unit	The development will not cause a visual amenity issues, it is not on a grass area and there are already other storage containers. Given the siting, size and height, it will not affect the area to function as a green break in the built up area so the reason for designation is not considered to be compromised.

22/01927/FUL	Kempston Rovers Football Club, Hillgrounds Road, Kempston	Development of an artificial turf 3G pitch with associated flood lighting, fencing and hard standing	Overall, the development will not compromise the reason of designation as it would not change the use of the site being an outdoor playing field nor affect its function as a green break in the built up area.
22/02059/S73A	Goldington Academy, Haylands Way, Bedford	Retrospective application for the installation of a temporary Portakabin building used as a classroom	Overall, the portakabin building will not compromise the reason of designation as it is within the existing school ground for the use as classrooms and does not impact on any sports field. Given the siting, size and height, it will not affect the area to function as a green break in the built up area. A condition limiting the use to a period of five years has been imposed.
22/00379/MDC3	Land at the former Robert Bruce Middle School, Bedford Road, Kempston	Erection of a new special educational needs school	The development will result in the loss of a green break viewed from Hillgrounds Road and fails to secure improvements in public open space provision. However, there is a pressing need to increase SEN school capacity and benefit of this is considered to outweigh the identified harms.
21/03302/MAR	Land at Gold Lane, Biddenham	Reserved matters for 130 dwellings	Outline planning permission was granted at appeal during a short period prior to the adoption of the Local Plan 2030 when the Council was unable to demonstrate a five year land supply.

Monitoring Indicator 16 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
16a Development in designated local gaps	AD42	Number of planning permissions for development in local gaps  Reasons why permission was granted	1 permission	BBC

- 7.55 Saved Allocations and Designations Local 2013 Policy AD42 seeks to prevent the coalescence of settlements between nearby rural settlements, particularly with the urban area. Policy AD42 restricts development which would diminish a local gap unless suitable justification can be given. The areas where the local gaps policy applies are shown on the Policies Map.
- 7.56 One planning applications for development within a local gap were granted during 2022/23, this is one less than last year. The application details and the reasons for granting planning permission during 2022/23 are summarised in Table 10.

<b>Table 10: Planning permissions granted for development within a local gap during 2022/23 and the reasons for granting permission</b>			
<b>Application reference</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>Description of development</b>	<b>Reasons for granting planning permission</b>
21/03302/MAR	Land at Gold Lane, Biddenham	Reserved matters for 130 dwellings	<p>Outline planning permission was granted at appeal during a short period prior to the adoption of the Local Plan 2030 when the Council was unable to demonstrate a five year land supply.</p> <p>The appeal decision for 18/00140/MAO stated that the development would compromise the purpose of the gap, resulting in moderate harm and found that the development was contrary to the development plan when considered as a whole. However, such harm would be outweighed by the provision of new market and affordable housing which were afforded significant weight. As the Council was unable to demonstrate a five year land supply, under the titled balance the adverse impacts did not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The Inspector found that despite the conflict with the development plan, material considerations indicated that the development would represent sustainable development as defined in the NPPF.</p>

**Theme 2: Accessibility**

LP2030 Objective 7. Improve the borough’s transport infrastructure in order to support growth in the local economy and to make the borough more attractive as a place to live and do business. Reduce congestion in the borough, particularly into and around the town centre and by making journeys by public transport, walking and cycling more attractive to encourage an increase in more sustainable and healthy modes of transport.

LP2030 Objective 6. Deliver existing and future infrastructure needs to support growth in both urban and rural areas of the borough through the implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy and other means.

This section broadly aligns with emerging Local Plan 2040 Theme 2: More accessible.

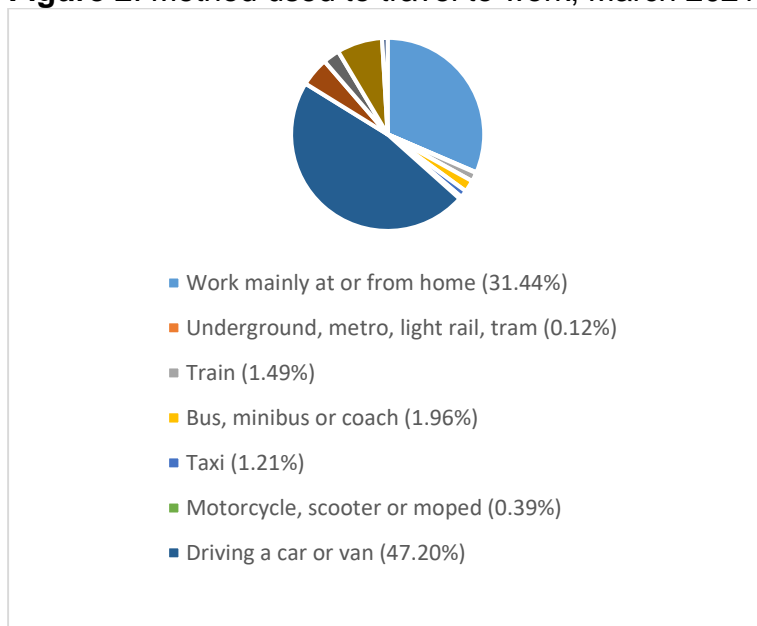
Monitoring indicator 17 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Direction of change	Data source
17a Walking activity	AD36	Percentage of adults who walk for any purpose	At least once per month = 81.7%	Up	Department for Transport
			At least once per week = 76.1%	Up	
			At least 3 times per week = 45.6%	Up	
			At least 5 times per week = 33.3%	Up	
17b Cycling activity	AD39	Percentage of adults who cycle for any purpose	At least once per month = 14.8%	Down	Department for Transport
			At least once per week = 8.9%	Down	
			At least 3 times per week = 5.3%	Down	
			At least 5 times per week = 2.9%	Down	



17c Delivery of new cycle and footways	91, AD36, AD39	Amount of newly adopted footway and cycleway delivered annually	1,270 metres carriageway footway and 0 metres offstreet footway was adopted during 2022/23	Down	BBC
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7.57 Information on method of travel to work from the 2021 Census has now been published. The results for Bedford Borough are illustrated in Figure 2<sup>26</sup> and shows that 62,297 usual residents aged 16 years and over in employment were commuting to work outside their home. Of these, 5.2% used public transport, 77.7% were in a car or van and 15.2%% were cycling or on foot. The data also shows that 31.4% of people aged 16 years and over in employment in Bedford Borough work mainly at or from home.

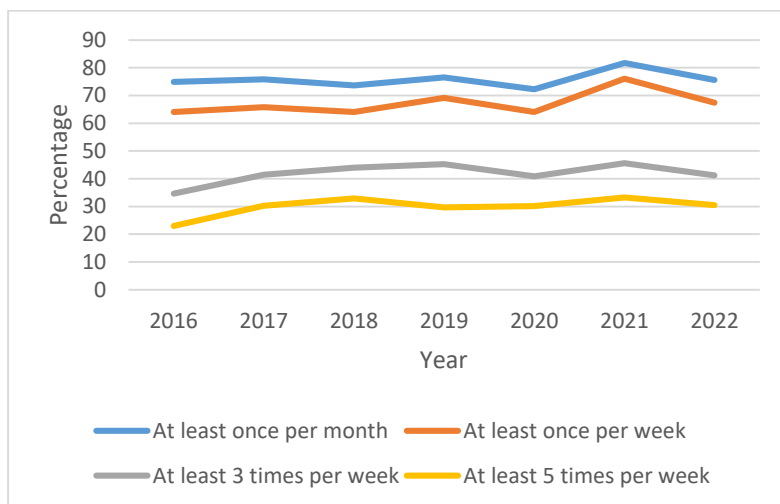
**Figure 2:** Method used to travel to work, March 2021



<sup>26</sup> ONS (2023) Method used to travel to work by local authority. Table TS061-2021-4. Available at <https://www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/TS061/editions/2021/versions/4>

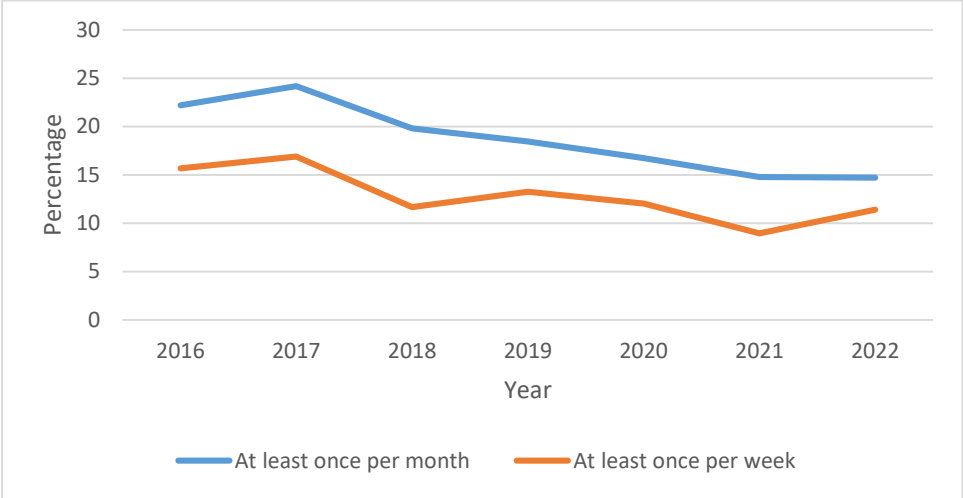
- 7.58 Sustainable transport modes as defined in the NPPF includes “any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, ultra low and zero emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport”.
- 7.59 Participation in walking and cycling at local authority level is compiled from the National Travel Survey and Active Lives Survey<sup>27</sup>. The data in Figure 3 generally shows a gradual increase in walking in Bedford Borough between 2016 and 2021. Whilst there was a slight decline as a result of the changes in lifestyle necessitated by the implementation of a national lockdown at the beginning of 2020 to curb the spread of Covid-19, an increase in walking was observed between 2020 and 2021. However, the latest data shows reductions in all frequencies of walking between 2021 and 2022. In comparison, the cycling data in Figure 4 generally shows a gradual decline in cycling activity in the borough between 2017 and 2021 although the latest data shows that the number of adults who cycle at least once per week has increased from 2021 levels. Cycling frequencies for at least three times per week and at least five times per week, which were reported in the last monitoring report have been removed from the published data due to the low frequencies recorded in the sample.

**Figure 3:** Percentage of adults who walk for any purpose by frequency 2016-2022



<sup>27</sup> DfT (2023) Proportion of adults who do any walking or cycling, for any purpose, by frequency and local authority: England. Table CW0302 and CW0303. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/walking-and-cycling-statistics-cw>

**Figure 4:** Percentage of adults who cycle for any purpose by frequency 2016-2022



- 7.60 During the monitoring year, 1,270 metres carriageway footway and 0 metres offstreet footway was adopted by the Council. This is slightly less than the amount that was adopted in 2021/22 (1,427 metres).
- 7.61 Future planned walking and cycling provision in the borough will be set out in the Council’s forthcoming Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan.

Monitoring indicator 18 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
18a Availability of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging points	51S, 89	Total number of publicly accessible electric vehicle charging points available	115 publicly accessible electric vehicle charging points available in Bedford Borough	Department for Transport

- 7.62 The Council aims to maximise the use of sustainable transport in developments, and support low carbon public and personal transport such as electric cars, bikes and buses. Data published by the Department for Transport<sup>28</sup> shows that on 1 July 2023 there were 115 publicly accessible electric vehicle charging points in Bedford Borough which is an increase from 110 in April 2022. The latest data shows that within Bedford Borough there are 61.9 charging devices per 100,000 population.
- 7.63 As part of the Government’s commitment to meeting its target of net zero emissions by 2050, it made changes to the Building Regulations relating to the provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Approved Document S, which came into force on 15 June 2022, applies to new residential and non-residential buildings as well as to those undergoing major renovation, requiring them to install electric vehicle chargers as part of the works being undertaken. The introduction of these requirements through the building regulations will help to boost the installation of new electric vehicle charging points nationally.
- 7.64 In 2021, the Council published a bus strategy for the borough: the Bus Service Improvement Plan. The strategy sets out the gaps in the present network and in response includes a number of projects and ambitions relating to future provision. The majority of this future provision does not relate to physical infrastructure changes, rather initiatives including encouraging the digitalisation of ticketing and improving timetabling information.

Monitoring indicator 19 <b>What is being measured?</b>	<b>Related policies</b>	<b>Information gathered</b>	<b>Result</b>	<b>Data source</b>
19a Delivery of transport infrastructure and network improvements	90S	Details relating to progress made in delivering the transport infrastructure and network improvements identified in Policy 90S	During the monitoring year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Government’s commitment to the delivery of East West Rail was endorsed in the 2022 Autumn Statement.</li> <li>Network Rail published The Bedford Area Strategic Advice document in August 2022. The document recommends a new London-bound fast line platform (also known as up-fast) be built at Bedford</li> </ul>	BBC National Highways East West Rail

<sup>28</sup> DfT (2023) Publicly available electric vehicle charging devices by local authority, 1 July 2023. Available at <https://maps.dft.gov.uk/ev-charging-map/index.html>

			<p>station and that improvements are made to station facilities and gate line capacity as part of the planned East West Rail.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Detailed planning permission for Wixams railway station was secured in February 2023.</li> <li>• The M1 J13-J16 smart motorways programme works were completed.</li> <li>• The Development Consent Order for the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet upgrade scheme was approved by government in August 2022 and enabling work has commenced.</li> </ul>	
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7.65 A number of strategic infrastructure projects, which have implications for transport and the highways network within the borough, are identified in Local Plan 2030 Policy 90S. The policy states that the Council will work with its partners, agencies and developers to deliver reduced congestion around the town centre and key strategic routes while promoting sustainable transport modes. The safeguarded routes are shown on the Policies Map.

7.66 Progress on each project at the end of the monitoring year is presented in Table 11 and where possible, a more up to date position is provided.

<b>Table 11: Status of transport schemes identified in Local Plan 2030 Policy 90S</b>			
<b>Scheme</b>		<b>Description</b>	<b>Status at 31/03/2023</b>
i	Redevelopment of Bedford Rail Station and additional car parking provision	The Bedford Town Investment Plan emphasises the need to develop an attractive road corridor along Midland Road, between the station and the town centre. Separately from the Towns Fund bid, but supported by it, it is also anticipated that Bedford Midland Station will be redeveloped as part of East West Rail.	East West Rail company undertook a consultation on its options for the route its railway will take through Bedford Borough including proposals for the redevelopment of Bedford station in spring 2021.

			<p>The Bedford Area Strategic Advice document (August 2022) produced by Network Rail recommends a new London-bound fast line platform (also known as up-fast) be built at Bedford station. The preferred option is to realign the down-fast line and extend the current platform 4 out over the alignment of the current down-fast to create an island platform. The document recommends that improvements are made to station facilities and gate line capacity as part of the planned East West Rail redevelopment of the station.</p> <p>A Route Update Announcement published in May 2023 by the East West Rail Company confirms the proposals which will be taken forward for further development.</p>
ii	Development opportunities around Ford End Road and Prebend Street		<p>A bid for Housing Infrastructure Fund resources to construct the Prebend Street Relief Road has been submitted, and the Council is working with Homes England to develop this further.</p>
iii	Wixams railway station	<p>A new station at Wixams on the Midland Main line south of Bedford will deliver connectivity to residents of the strategic housing site of Wixams and the station is considered to have</p>	<p>Detailed planning permission for the station (22/01933/MAR) was secured in February 2023; and, in May 2023, after considering the Outline Business Case submitted by the Council; the</p>

		potential to act as an enabler for wider growth across the sub-region.	Secretary of State for Transport agreed that construction should proceed.
iv	East-West rail scheme	The exact route and stations along East West Rail connection stage 2 (Bletchley to Bedford) have yet to be confirmed. The redevelopment of Bedford Midland and Bedford St. Johns stations are expected as part of, or coinciding with, East West Rail. Connection stage 3 (Bedford to Cambridge) is projected to open in 2030	<p>East West Rail Oxford to Bicester is complete and the section between Bicester and Bletchley is currently under construction and is due to become operational in 2024/25. The section between Bletchley and Bedford is currently progressing through detailed design. The East West Rail Company has confirmed that statutory consultation will take place in the first half of 2024, followed by a Development Consent Order submission in early 2025.</p> <p>The Government's commitment to the delivery of East West Rail was endorsed in the 2022 Autumn Statement and the announcement in May 2023 of the preferred route for the section between Bedford and Cambridge. The Route Update Announcement published by the East West Rail Company confirms the proposals which will be taken forward for further development. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Confirming a preferred route alignment between Bedford and Cambridge</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Six-tracking of the Midland Mainline at Bedford</li> <li>• Relocation of Bedford St. John's station</li> </ul>
v	Schemes identified in the Bedford Town Centre Strategy (Transporting Bedford 2020)	Britannia Road improvements	Works completed
		Bromham Road / Shakespeare Road / Ashburnham Road junction	Works completed
		Bedford High Street	Works completed
		Clapham Road / A6 / superstore (northbound) and Clapham Road / Manton Lane / Shakespeare Road	Works completed
		Amphill Road corridor	Works completed
		Caldwell Street / Britannia Road junction	Works completed
vi	Marsh Leys Junction Improvements	Improvements to junctions	Works completed
vii	A6 / A421 junction improvements	Resurfacing and junction improvements	Works completed
viii	Dualling of the Bedford Western Bypass	The A6-A421 link	The Council has recently commissioned consultants to prepare a Strategic Outline Business Case for submission to the Department for Transport to gain Programme Entry to the Major Road Network programme. The scheme is an agreed priority for the England's Economic Heartlands SNTB in the 2025-2030 period.
ix	Improvements on Highway England's <sup>29</sup> strategic road network	A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet – upgrade to a new 10 mile dual carriageway with a number of junction improvements	Construction is due to start by the end of 2023 and the road is scheduled to open in 2027/28.

<sup>29</sup> Highways England is now National Highways



		A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon – outside of Bedford Borough but could influence the borough	Works completed
		A45/A6 Chowns Mill roundabout improvement – outside of Bedford Borough but it provides an important strategic connection in the region	Works completed
		M1 J13-J16 smart motorways programme – outside of Bedford Borough but it could influence the borough	Works were completed in March 2023

Monitoring indicator 20 <b>What is being measured?</b>	<b>Related policies</b>	<b>Information gathered</b>	<b>Result</b>	<b>Data source</b>
20a Financial contributions towards the delivery of infrastructure	58S, 86S, 87, 90	Details of planning contributions secured towards new and expansion of existing infrastructure and the most up to date Infrastructure Delivery Plan	Information for the 2022/23 monitoring year will be published in Bedford Borough Council's Infrastructure Funding Statement 2022-2023	BBC

7.67 The Council has prepared, in consultation with service providers, an Infrastructure Delivery Plan setting out strategic and local infrastructure requirements to support planned new development in Bedford Borough over the local plan period.

7.68 Bedford Borough Council's Infrastructure Funding Statement for 2022-2023 has not yet been published. When it has been finalised it will be available to view on the Council's website<sup>30</sup> and key headlines will be reported in the next monitoring report.

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/community-infrastructure-levy-cil/community-infrastructure-levy-cil>

Monitoring indicator 21 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
21a Telecommunications infrastructure	95, 96	Number of planning permissions granted for telecommunications infrastructure	0 applications for domestic equipment permitted 8 applications for communications infrastructure permitted	BBC

- 7.69 Policy 94 of the Local Plan 2030 sets out the requirements expected from new development to provide on-site infrastructure to support the installation of, and allow the future upgrade and maintenance of, fibre optic broadband. The policy states that appropriate open access fibre optic infrastructure to enable high speed and reliable broadband connection should be in accordance with national and local objectives to increase coverage.
- 7.70 The national government objective for the provision of superfast broadband to 95% of UK premises by 2020 has been achieved. Coverage stands at 98.3% ( $\geq 30$  Mbps) across the borough with superfast speeds
- 7.71 The government target now is to provide up to 85% of UK premises with gigabit capabilities by 2025. Data published by Think Broadband shows that 92.65% of properties in Bedford have access to gigabit speeds<sup>31</sup>. This is up from 78.5% last year.
- 7.72 The Openreach Full Fibre investment programme has the objective of providing 20 million premises throughout the UK with ultrafast full fibre broadband by December 2026<sup>32</sup> and the deployment map shows that Openreach has started its Full Fibre upgrade in Bedford Borough. This investment by Openreach includes the Fibre First programme which means new development will be planned with a full fibre solution. Similar to Openreach, Virgin Media announced in December 2020 that they have completed Project Lightning which has upgraded their network to offer gigabit broadband<sup>33</sup>.

<sup>31</sup> Think Broadband (2023) <https://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/E06000055>

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.openreach.com/fibre-broadband/where-when-building-ultrafast-full-fibre-broadband>

<sup>33</sup> <https://news.virginmediao2.co.uk/virgin-media-o2-completes-gigabit-upgrade-in-boost-for-britains-broadband-target/>

7.73 The development of telecommunications infrastructure is mostly covered under permitted development. Where planning permission is required, Local Plan 2030 Policy 95 is used to assess proposals for domestic equipment and Policy 96 relates to the consideration of telecommunication equipment. During 2022/23, no planning applications for domestic equipment were permitted and eight applications for communications infrastructure were permitted. 13 applications for communications infrastructure were refused due to the proposals being visually prominent in the street scene.

**Theme 3: Delivering growth**

LP2030 Objective 1. Deliver high quality growth that will facilitate the development of more sustainable and inclusive places for local communities, which are equipped to respond to the impacts of climate and economic change and offer the opportunity to live more healthy lifestyles. Where it is viable and sustainable to do so, encourage the re-use of land that has been previously developed.

LP2030 Objective 3. Support a stronger local economy delivering economic growth, broadening employment opportunities, and attracting and enabling high value businesses to prosper for the benefit of the borough’s existing and future residents.

LP2030 Objective 4. Create a distinctive, attractive and multi-functional town centre for the future with a particularly strong focus on leisure and visitor economy activities.

This section broadly aligns with emerging Local Plan 2040 Theme 3: More prosperous.

Monitoring indicator 22 <b>What is being measured?</b>	<b>Related policies</b>	<b>Information gathered</b>	<b>Result</b>	<b>Data source</b>
22a Progress in meeting the number of net additional jobs required to 2030	69S	Information about the number of net additional jobs created.	7,000 jobs created between 2015 and 2022	BRES

7.74 The Bedford Economy and Employment Land Study 2015 and the Employment Land Needs Addendum 2018 estimates a requirement for 6,900 additional jobs in the borough between 2015 and 2030. This requirement is outlined in Local Plan

2030 Policy 69S. The policy states that the main focus for jobs growth will be the urban area and on the employment sites that are already allocated in the development plan.

- 7.75 According to the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES)<sup>34</sup>, in 2015 there were approximately 73,000 jobs in Bedford Borough and the latest data shows that in 2022 there were approximately 80,000 jobs in the borough. In the period 2015 to 2022 an additional 7,000 jobs were recorded which exceeds the total number of additional jobs required by Policy 69S to 2030.
- 7.76 BRES data shows that in the period 2015 to 2022, the “property” broad industrial group experienced the largest proportional increase, followed by the “construction” broad industrial group. With regard to actual increases in employment, the “transportation and storage”, “accommodation and food service”, and “health and social work” broad industrial groups each exhibited an increase of approximately 2,000 jobs between 2015 and 2022. In terms of job losses, the “other service activities” broad industrial group experienced both the largest proportional and actual decrease from approximately 3,000 jobs in 2015 to 1,250 jobs in 2022, representing a fall of 58%.

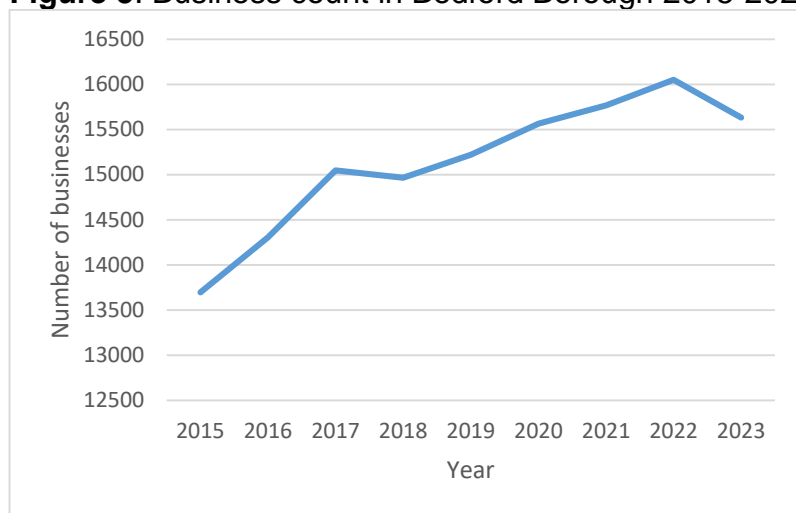
Monitoring indicator 23 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
23a Business creation	69S, 70, 71, 72S, 74, 75	Number of new businesses created (net)	A gain of 1,935 businesses between 2015 and 2023	IDBR

- 7.77 Data from the Inter-Departmental Business Register<sup>35</sup> presented in Figure 5 shows a reduction of 420 businesses for Bedford Borough between 2022 and 2023 following a peak in 2022. However, there has been a notable increase of 14% in the number of businesses in the borough since 2015.

<sup>34</sup> ONS (via NOMIS), Labour market profile (2023) Available at [nomisweb.co.uk](https://nomisweb.co.uk)

<sup>35</sup> ONS (2023) UK business counts from the Inter Departmental Business Register. Available at: [https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157199/subreports/idbr\\_time\\_series/report.aspx?](https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157199/subreports/idbr_time_series/report.aspx?)

**Figure 5: Business count in Bedford Borough 2015-2023**



Monitoring indicator 24 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
24a Preparation of Employment and Skills Plans in accordance with Policy 74	74	Number of applications requiring an Employment and Skills Plan to be prepared / number of Employment and Skills Plans prepared	0 permissions	BBC

7.78 It is important for the workforce to have relevant skills for the borough’s future economy. A highly skilled and employable workforce, with access to training and work opportunities, is essential to support the borough’s growth agenda by helping to attract inward investment and enabling local businesses to expand. The local plan aims to assist delivery of the job opportunities needed to achieve this ambition including education and training opportunities. To facilitate this, Local Plan 2030 Policy 74 requires that an employment and skills plan is provided for development over 200 dwellings or 5 hectares of ‘B’ class uses.

7.79 No employment and skills plans were produced during the monitoring year, which is the same as the previous year.

7.80 'Employment generating uses' are traditionally known as 'B' Class uses (offices, industrial, warehousing and distribution). The Use Classes Order was updated on 1 September 2020. Class B1 Business was revoked and replaced by Class E(g). Class E – Commercial Business and Service is broken down into 11 parts. Class E(g) uses which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity are as follows:

- E(g)(i) Offices to carry out any operational or administrative functions.
- E(g)(ii) Research and development of products and processes.
- E(g)(iii) Industrial processes.

Use Class B2 General Industry and B8 Storage and Distribution are retained.

7.81 Bedford Borough Council carries out employment monitoring on sites where more than 100 sqm of employment floorspace is proposed.

7.82 Table 12 summarises the total amount of employment floorspace (Use Classes B1, B2, B8 and E(g)) completed in the borough for each year from 1 April 2015.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Gross internal floorspace loss (sqm)</b>	<b>Gross internal floorspace gain (sqm)</b>	<b>Net internal floorspace total (sqm)</b>
2015/16	40,897	24,225	-16,672
2016/17	12,917	25,355	12,438
2017/18	29,314	14,049	-15,265
2018/19	3,463	66,818	63,355
2019/20	13,033	129,357	116,324
2020/21	207	93,399	93,192
2021/22	2,264	204,104	201,840
2022/23	3,294	44,332	41,038

- 7.83 Local Plan 2030 does not plan for an increase in the existing employment land supply figure as supporting evidence suggested that existing supply, allocated in previous plans, was sufficient to meet future needs.
- 7.84 The local plan categorises existing employment sites into four groups to reflect recommended future action: protect and maintain, protect and enhance, protect and develop, and monitor and manage. Sites classified as monitor and manage are those that may not continue to meet the needs of businesses in the future as they are likely to reach the end of their functional life within the plan period. Redevelopment of such sites to non-class B employment uses will normally be supported by the Council (Policy 71). Sites within the remaining categories, collectively known as key employment sites, will be expected to remain primarily in class B employment use (Policy 70).
- 7.85 Progress with delivery of employment policy allocations carried forward from the Local Plan 2002 and Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 is reported in the Allocated Sites section of this monitoring report.

Monitoring indicator 25 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
25a Net additional employment floorspace delivered	69S, 70, 71, 72S, 74, 75	Annual net gain / loss of B2/B8 and E(g) employment floorspace	E(g)(i) = -774 sqm E(g)(ii) = 0 sqm E(g)(iii) = -233 sqm E(g) unspecified = 6,415 sqm B2 = 71 sqm B8 = 8,267 sqm E(g) / B2 / B8 mixed = 27,292 sqm  <b>Total = 41,038 sqm</b>	BBC

- 7.86 For the 2022/23 monitoring year, 41,038 sqm net additional employment floorspace has been completed in the borough. Whilst this is significantly lower when compared to previous monitoring years, it follows a considerable gain in net additional employment floorspace in 2021/22 (201,840 sqm). Planning permission 20/01446/MAF for the development of a storage building at 69 Cardington Road, Bedford (7,490 sqm) and demolition of the existing building and 20/00044/MAR for the erection of Class B2 / B8 buildings at 3M UK Plc, Hudson Road, Bedford (21,832 sqm) contributed significantly to the net



additional employment floorspace completed during the monitoring year. At Wixams, six flexible use commercial units were completed on land to the north of Fisherswood Road (6,970 sqm).

Monitoring indicator 26 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
26a Loss of employment floorspace	71	Annual development completions resulting in a loss of employment floorspace to non-employment use  Reasons why permission was granted	E(g)(i) loss = 2,284 sqm E(g)(ii) loss = 0 sqm E(g)(iii) loss = 233 sqm E(g) unspecified loss = 0 sqm B2 loss = 0 sqm B8 loss = 0 sqm E(g) / B2 / B8 mixed loss = 0 sqm  <b>Total loss = 2,517 sqm</b>	BBC

7.87 During the monitoring year, 777 sqm employment floorspace was lost through redevelopment for employment uses. 2,517 sqm employment floorspace was lost through change of use to non-employment uses, this is up from 2,264 sqm last year. Such losses were mainly focused within the Bedford urban area and at one site in Wymington in the rural area. The reasons for granting planning permission are summarised in Table 13.

<b>Table 13: Development completions resulting in a loss of employment floorspace to non-employment use during 2022/23 and the reasons for granting permission</b>			
Application reference	Site	Description of development	Reasons for granting planning permission
21/01189/FUL	32 High Street, Wymington	Change of use from commercial to residential (Class C3)	The residential use of the site is considerable preferable to a light industrial use in this location due to its limited parking, shared access and the proximity of residential properties

7.88 In 2022/23, 2,284 sqm office floorspace was lost through permitted development rights for the change of use of offices to dwellings at 46 Harpur Street (20/02103/CPNO), 64 Harpur Street (20/02855/CPNO), 65 Harpur Street (20/00557/CPNO),

67 Harpur Street (19/02263/CPNO), 15 Kingsway (20/00450/CPNO), and 14-16 Albany Road (21/01165/CPNO), this is up from 886 sqm last year.

Monitoring indicator 27 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
27a Employment land supply	69S, 70, 71, 72S, 74, 75	Outstanding supply of B2 / B8 and E(g) net employment floorspace with planning permission	E(g)(i) = -1,077 sqm E(g)(ii) = 0 sqm E(g)(iii) = 946 sqm E(g) unspecified = 23,399 sqm B2 = 735 sqm B8 = 7,195 sqm E(g) / B2 / B8 mixed = 602 sqm  <b>Total = 31,800 sqm</b>	BBC

- 7.89 At 31 March 2023 there was outstanding employment floorspace (net) to be implemented equating to 31,800 sqm. This includes sites which have been granted planning permission in the past and remain extant. The majority of outstanding floorspace is within unspecified E(g) offices / research and development / light industrial uses. B8 storage and distribution uses also represent a high proportion of outstanding permissions. Most outstanding employment floorspace is located at existing employment sites in the Bedford and Kempston urban area, established businesses in the rural area, and at saved Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 allocation AD13 (Marston Vale Innovation Park, Phase 2, Wootton).
- 7.90 The amount of outstanding employment floorspace (net) to be implemented at 31/03/2023 is significantly lower than at the end of the previous monitoring year (148,916 sqm). This can be attributed to the significant amount of employment floorspace that was completed in the borough during 2021/22 and that planning permission for a regional distribution centre totalling 81,570 sqm at Elstow (17/02657/MAR) has lapsed.

Monitoring indicator 28 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
28a Amount of new build employment floorspace permitted in the countryside	75	Net increase in floorspace in accordance with the policy criteria	E(g)(i) = 0 sqm E(g)(ii) = 0 sqm E(g)(iii) = 0 sqm E(g) unspecified = 0 sqm B2 = 982 sqm B8 = 0 sqm E(g) / B2 / B8 mixed = 0 sqm  <b>Total = 982 sqm</b>	BBC
28b Amount of new build employment floorspace completed in the countryside	75	Net increase in floorspace in accordance with the policy criteria	E(g)(i) = 0 sqm E(g)(ii) = 0 sqm E(g)(iii) = 0 sqm E(g) unspecified = 3,190 sqm B2 = 848 sqm B8 = 0 sqm E(g) / B2 / B8 mixed = 0 sqm  <b>Total = 4,038 sqm</b>	BBC

7.91 Local Plan 2030 Policy 75 encourages new employment development that needs to be in the countryside in order to support the rural economy, providing certain criteria can be satisfied. During 2022/23, several agricultural storage barns to support farming and other rural activities such as commercial equestrian-related developments were granted. A total of 982 sqm new build employment floorspace was granted in the countryside, comprising a 182 sqm commercial building in Milton Ernest (22/01308/FUL), a 61 sqm workshop extension in Souldrop (22/00311/FUL), and a 738 sqm stores building in Wymington (22/01457/FUL). 580 sqm Class E(g) use employment floorspace was granted under permitted development rights through the Class R (agricultural buildings to a flexible commercial use) prior notification process during the monitoring year. The total amount of new build employment floorspace granted in the countryside during 2022/23 is less than last year (2,845 sqm office, light industrial and mixed employment uses).

- 7.92 During 2022/23, 4,038 sqm new build employment floorspace was completed in the countryside. This new floorspace is for general industrial uses (Class B2) in Sharnbrook and Wymington and unspecified E(g) offices / research and development / light industrial uses at Colworth Science Park, Sharnbrook. The amount of new employment floorspace completed in the countryside is significantly more than last year when 633 sqm for light industrial uses ((Class E(g)(iii))) was completed.
- 7.93 Government guidance in the NPPF requires a 'town centres first' approach to the location of new retail, office and leisure uses defined as 'main town centre uses' (known as the sequential test). It requires planning policies to promote the long term vitality and viability of town centres, meeting anticipated needs for town centre uses in or on the edge of centres where sites are available or otherwise in other accessible locations that are well connected to the town centre. The main town centre uses as defined in the NPPF are summarised below:
- Retail (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres).
  - Leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls).
  - Offices.
  - Arts, culture and tourism (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).
- 7.94 The Bedford Retail Study 2015 and update in 2018 looked at the need for additional retail floorspace over the plan period. The study showed that, if existing commitments are taken up, there will be additional capacity for 11,790 sqm net floorspace for comparison goods and 2,980 sqm net floorspace for convenience goods. By the end of the plan period at 2030 this is forecast to increase to 34,210 sqm net floorspace for comparison goods and 4,330 sqm net floorspace for convenience goods.
- 7.95 The Commercial Leisure Needs Study 2018 concludes that for most commercial leisure categories there is adequate provision. However, over the plan period there may be a requirement for additional restaurants and cafes, and qualitative changes may result in a need emerging for more health and fitness centres.
- 7.96 The hierarchy of town centres in Bedford Borough is set out in Local Plan 2030 Policy 77S. This policy defines a four tier hierarchy of 1) Strategic Centre (Bedford), 2) District Centre (Kempston), 3) Local Centres (including 5 'urban centres' and 8 'key service centres'), and 4) Neighbourhood Centres.

7.97 Bedford Borough Council carries out town centre use monitoring on sites where more than 100 sqm of employment floorspace is proposed.

Monitoring indicator 29 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
29a Potential creation / loss of floorspace for town centre uses within defined centres	15, 77S, 78, 79, 80, 81	Planning permissions for town centre uses within defined centres. Details of floorspace created / lost	Retail = -456 sqm Leisure and entertainment = 196 sqm Offices = -1,179 sqm Arts, culture and tourism = 0 sqm  <b>Total = -1,439 sqm</b>	BBC
29b Potential creation / loss of floorspace for town centre uses outside defined centres	15, 77S, 78, 79, 80, 81	Planning permissions for town centre uses outside defined centres. Details of floorspace created / lost	Retail = -469 sqm Leisure and entertainment = 302 sqm Offices = 0 sqm Arts, culture and tourism = 0 sqm  <b>Total = -167 sqm</b>	BBC

7.98 During 2022/23, planning permissions resulting in a loss of 1,439 sqm town centre use floorspace within defined centres in the borough were granted. Table 14 shows the net amount of floorspace that was permitted for town centre uses within the borough's defined centres during the monitoring year.

<b>Table 14:</b> Net amount of floorspace for town centre uses within defined centres granted planning permission during 2022/23				
Centre	Retail (sqm)	Leisure and entertainment (sqm)	Offices (sqm)	Arts, culture and tourism (sqm)
Town centre	-679	253	-1179	0
District centre	0	0	0	0
Local centres	0	0	0	0
Neighbourhood centres	223	-57	0	0

7.99 The loss of 1,179 sqm office floorspace from within Bedford town centre results from a grant of prior approval for change of use from office to residential. The loss of 679 retail floorspace from within Bedford town centre results from a grant of prior approval for change of use from retail to residential at 113 High Street (22/00956/CPNMA) and from permission for change of use from retail to restaurant use at Unit 30 The Harpur Centre Shopping Centre (22/01374/FUL) and change of use from retail to hot food takeaway at 21 Harpur Street (22/02497/FUL). The gain of 253 sqm leisure and entertainment floorspace results from the change of use of 2 Allhallows (22/01168/COU) to an adult gaming centre and change of use of Unit 30 The Harpur Centre Shopping Centre (22/01374/FUL) to a restaurant. Within the neighbourhood centres, the gain of 223 retail floorspace results from a change of use from a car showroom to a bakery sales outlet at 122 Queens Drive, Bedford (22/02203/COU). 57 sqm leisure and entertainment use was also lost through the change of use from restaurant to hot food takeaway at 50 Bromham Road, Bedford (22/00421/COU).

7.100 During 2022/23, planning permissions resulting in a net loss of 167 sqm town centre use floorspace outside defined centres in the borough were granted. The application details and the reasons for granting planning permission are summarised in Table 15.

<b>Table 15: Planning permissions granted for town centre uses outside defined centres during 2022/23 and the reasons for granting permission</b>			
<b>Application reference</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>Description of development</b>	<b>Reasons for granting planning permission</b>
21/03288/FUL	Fairhill, land to the south of junction with Paula Radcliffe Way and Clapham Road, Bedford	Freestanding drive-thru restaurant measuring 350 sqm	Whilst the development will occupy an out-of-centre site, the accompanying sequential assessment demonstrates that the use is acceptable with respect to the sequential tests set out in the NPPF and adopted local policy.
22/01686/FUL	St John's Retail Park, Bedford	Demolition of existing retail unit (469 sqm) and the development of a drive-thru coffee shop measuring 183 sqm	The application site is already an established retail park and the proposal will replace a vacant and unused retail unit. The development is acceptable in sequential terms as there are no alternative available units or sites which would be suitable to accommodate the proposed use.

22/01747/FUL	The Chequers Inn, High Street, Yielden	Demolition of former public house (231 sqm) and erection of a dwelling	The application is supported by a Viability Report which sets out that the public house is no longer considered to be a viable business. In recent times it has been occupied by various tenants and has had a number of periods of closure; most recently being closed since 2017. Whilst the development would result in the loss of a community facility, the community facility is only of value if the business remains open for trade and is viable. Therefore, the Local Planning Authority would have no grounds to resist the loss of the public house.
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Monitoring indicator 30 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
30a Delivery of floorspace for town centre uses within defined centres	77S, 78, 79, 81	Amount of development completed for town centre uses within defined centres	Retail = -186 sqm Leisure and entertainment = 140 sqm Offices = -1,912 sqm Arts, culture and tourism = 0 sqm  <b>Total = -1,958 sqm</b>	BBC
30b Delivery of floorspace for town centre uses outside defined centres	77S, 78, 79, 81	Amount of development completed for town centre uses outside defined centres	Retail = 0 sqm Leisure and entertainment = 0 sqm Offices = 0 sqm Arts, culture and tourism = 0 sqm  <b>Total = 0 sqm</b>	BBC

7.101 During 2022/23, developments resulting in a loss of 1,958 sqm town centre use floorspace within defined centres in the borough were completed. No town centre use floorspace was completed outside defined centres during the monitoring year. Table 15 shows the net amount of floorspace for town centre uses that was completed within the borough's defined centres during 2022/23.

<b>Table 15: Net amount of floorspace for town centre uses completed within defined centres during 2022/23</b>				
<b>Centre</b>	<b>Retail (sqm)</b>	<b>Leisure and entertainment (sqm)</b>	<b>Offices (sqm)</b>	<b>Arts, culture and tourism (sqm)</b>
Town centre	0	140	-1,912	0
District centre	0	0	0	0
Local centres	-186	0	0	0
Neighbourhood centres	0	0	0	0

7.102 During 2022/23, 1,912 sqm office floorspace was lost through permitted development rights for the change of use of offices to dwellings within Bedford town centre. 140 sqm leisure and entertainment floorspace was completed in Bedford town centre through the change of use of the basement at 75 High Street to a drinking establishment. In the local centres, change of use resulting in a loss of 186 sqm retail floorspace to community space and a place of worship within Tavistock Street, Bedford urban centre was completed during the monitoring year.

<b>Monitoring indicator 31 What is being measured?</b>	<b>Related policies</b>	<b>Information gathered</b>	<b>Result</b>	<b>Data source</b>
31a Preparation of impact assessments in accordance with Policy 78	77S, 78, 79, 81	Number of applications requiring an impact assessment to be prepared / number of impact assessments prepared for retail and leisure development proposals outside of defined centres.	0 impact assessments	BBC

7.103 Local Plan 2030 Policy 78 sets local thresholds for retail and leisure proposals to be subject to an impact assessment if they are to be located outside of Bedford town centre, Kempston district centre and the local centres. For leisure development the threshold is 2,500 sqm gross floorspace. For retail development: i. if the nearest centre to the proposed development is



Bedford town centre or Kempston district centre, the threshold is 500 sqm net floorspace; ii. if the nearest centre to be proposed development is a local centre, the threshold is 200 sqm net floorspace.

7.104 During 2022/23, no planning permissions for development exceeding the local threshold for retail or leisure use were granted. This is lower than the previous monitoring year when one eligible planning application was supported by an impact assessment.

7.105 A test of policy for main town centre uses is its impact on the vitality and viability of a retail centre. National Planning Practice Guidance<sup>36</sup> offers a set of indicators that may be monitored to assess the health of a centre and its performance over time: diversity of land uses, vacancy levels, pedestrian flows (footfall), retailer representation, customer perceptions, commercial rents and yields, crime, accessibility and environmental quality. Information on town centre vacancies and pedestrian flows (footfall) is monitored annually by the Council. Furthermore, data on the diversity of uses in Bedford town centre was collated during the health check completed by Nexus in June 2020 to inform the Bedford Town Centre Study<sup>37</sup>. Perceptions of safety, consideration of accessibility, environmental quality and retailer representation for each retail centre was informed by the Nexus site visits and the findings are published in the Town Centre Study. Regular updating of the indicators over time will help to assess the overall success of local plan policies in this regard.

Monitoring indicator 32 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
32a Pedestrian footfall in Bedford town centre	77S, 78, 79, 81	Activity from counters in Bedford town centre locations	2015/16 = 14,073,911 2016/17 = 14,637,699 2017/18 = 14,629,509 2018/19 = 13,862,826 2019/20 = 12,468,422 2020/21 = 6,966,412 2021/22 = 8,501,206 2022/23 = 30,980,000	BBC

<sup>36</sup> PPG Paragraph 006; Reference ID: 2b-006-20190722

<sup>37</sup> <https://edrms.bedford.gov.uk/OpenDocument.aspx?id=FOOBK%2ftB0k3RX9VNvvelAw%3d%3d&name=Bedford%20Town%20Centres%20Study.pdf>

32b Occupancy rates	77S, 78, 79, 81	Vacancies (by unit count) in Bedford town centre	2015 = 13.0% 2016 = 12.6% 2017 = 11.7% 2018 = 10.9% 2019 = 13.0% 2020 = 14.0% 2021 = 13.0% 2022 = 13.0%	BBC
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- 7.106 Pedestrian footfall in Bedford town centre has been provided by two Springboard counters, one located on Silver Street and one on Midland Road since 2011. Through the Town Deal, funding has been provided for 11 new cameras to be installed across the town centre and these have now been in situ since April 2022. These cameras are different to the Springboard counters and are provided by O2 using their spatial insights and micro location technologies, meaning the data provided is more in depth and will allow for a better understanding of Bedford town centre. There is some disparity between the new cameras and the Springboard counters meaning that monthly comparisons since April 2022 are available but the new data is not comparable to previous year's data.
- 7.107 Historical data shows that pedestrian footfall in Bedford town centre increased between 2015/16 and 2016/17 but fell between 2016/17 and 2020/21. The data for 2021/22 shows an increase in footfall above that recorded in the previous year however the footfall in 2020/21 and 2021/22 is significantly lower than previous years as a result of the Covid-19 government enforced lockdowns and restrictions, and the reluctance of people to visit crowded areas. For 2022/23, the total pedestrian footfall, using the data provided by the new O2 cameras was 30.98 million. Annual footfall data collected by the new O2 cameras will be presented in future monitoring reports which will enable comparison to the current monitoring year.
- 7.108 A high concentration of vacant properties within a retail centre can detract from its vitality and viability by reducing the centre's attractiveness for shoppers. This is because when many of the shop units are not in active use, there is less reason for visiting the centre, as there will often be a smaller number of retail and leisure attractions. However, it is important to acknowledge that a degree of vacancy is inevitable and indeed desirable. Some 'churn' is expected in the market as units alter and change, as new businesses come in, and others leave. In this context, vacant units can be found in even the strongest of town centres.

- 7.109 Bedford town centre experienced reducing vacancy rates (by unit count) between 2015 and 2018, before a peak of 14% in 2020. Vacancy rates for 2021 and 2022 reduced from 2020 levels to 13%. In terms of unit numbers, the peak of 14% in 2020 accounted for 78 units being vacant which is only slightly higher than the number of units vacant in 2021 (77) and 2022 (75). The 2022 vacancy rate for Bedford town centre at 13% is slightly lower than the national average of 15%.
- 7.110 Projects and developments to improve the town centre environment and drive economic growth are ongoing and are being progressed through initiatives including the Towns Fund, High Street Heritage Action Zone, and One Public Estate programme.
- 7.111 Following the successful submission of the Town Investment Plan, Bedford was awarded £22.6m to deliver seven key regeneration, transport and skills-led projects. The regeneration of the Station Quarter and Midland Road will bring investment to these spaces as key gateways to the town centre and will see investment in walking and cycling infrastructure. The suggested public realm improvements to St Paul's Square will enhance the experience for both shoppers and visitors, increasing the vibrancy of the centre. The proposed investment in roads, pedestrian and cycling network will promote greater accessibility and mobility, while relieving pinch points across the town centre, reducing congestion and creating a safer environment for cyclists and pedestrians. The funding also includes a scheme for funding investment in health, science and digital skills through expanding the current offer from Bedford College. Further information on the town deal projects is available at <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/business/invest-bedford/towns-fund-0/towns-fund-projects>.

Monitoring indicator 33 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
33a Development activity on Bedford High Street	16, 34	Number of planning permissions or advertisement consents in Bedford High Street	2 permissions and 2 advertisement consents	BBC
33b Development activity on Bedford High Street	16	Amount of completed new development in Bedford High Street	140 sqm sui generis use as a drinking establishment	BBC

- 7.112 Local Plan 2030 Policy 16 acknowledges that in considering planning applications in Bedford High Street, weight will be given to a closed list of criteria. Given the central location of the High Street in Bedford town centre, its visual prominence

and historical significance, Local Plan 2030 Policy 16 prevents any further changes of use at ground floor level to restaurants and cafes, drinking establishments, hot food takeaways or nightclubs.

7.113 During 2022/23, two planning permissions for development proposals in Bedford High Street were granted and seven applications were refused. This is up from two permissions and one refusal last year. Two advertisement consents in Bedford High Street were granted during 2022/23 which is up from no consents last year.

7.114 Planning application 22/02537/FUL for extensions, infills and change of use to form serviced apartments and 22/02145/FUL for a replacement shop front were both granted at 113 High Street during the monitoring year. Advertisement consent for externally illuminated fascia signs at 58 High Street (22/02555/ADV) and 58A High Street (22/02556/ADV) were granted during the monitoring year.

7.115 During the monitoring year, 140 sqm leisure and entertainment floorspace was completed in Bedford High Street through the change of use of the basement at 75 High Street to a drinking establishment.

Monitoring indicator 34 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
34a Activity in the visitor economy	76	Number of planning permissions for improvement and provision of new visitor accommodation	0 permissions	BBC

7.116 The Council's Visitor Accommodation Review 2015 advises that the visitor market in Bedford is growing steadily. Although evidence shows that there is presently no unmet need for visitor accommodation in the borough, there may be opportunities to improve the visitor accommodation offer in some locations. Local Plan 2030 Policy 76 lists criteria for considering proposals which relate to the improvement and provision of new visitor accommodation.

7.117 During 2022/23, no planning permissions for involving improvement or provision of new visitor accommodation were granted, this is down from four last year.

7.118 Planning application 22/01571/MAF for erection of six self-contained eco lodges and managers accommodation at Hill Farm, Melchbourne Road, Riseley was refused as the proposal would establish new visitor accommodation in the countryside

which would not integrate well with the existing pattern of development. In addition, the scheme failed to secure suitable provisions for waste and recycling storage and collection, did not demonstrate adequate provision for foul waste disposal, and would result in unacceptable highway safety impacts.

## Theme 4: Placemaking

LP2030 Objective 2. Provide appropriate amounts and types of housing to meet the needs of the borough's urban and rural communities over the lifetime of the Plan.

LP2030 Objective 5. Achieve a borough where everybody has appropriate access to high quality health and social care as well as everyday essential services and community facilities. Where social and cultural wellbeing is supported, enabling all residents to lead healthy and independent lives.

LP2030 Objective 9. Support and create a high quality, inclusive and safe built environment which values local landscape and settlement character and which conserves and enhances the historic environment and is enjoyed by all.

This section broadly aligns with emerging Local Plan 2040 Theme 4: Better places.

Monitoring indicator 35 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
35a Delivery of the housing requirement over the plan period	4S	Annual and cumulative dwelling completions	2015/16 = 964 completions 2016/17 = 1,255 completions 2017/18 = 1,350 completions 2018/19 = 1,359 completions 2019/20 = 1,026 completions 2020/21 = 1,199 completions 2021/22 = 1,019 completions 2022/23 = 1,465 completions  <b>Total = 9,637 net completions</b>	BBC

- 7.119 Local Plan 2030 Policy 3S provides the overarching strategic framework, in response to the plan’s vision and objectives, for ensuring that the local plan delivers sufficient new development in sustainable locations to meet identified needs. It supports the overall provision of new homes and jobs to meet the assessed needs of the borough up to 2030 along with supporting infrastructure and services.
- 7.120 Existing planning permissions for residential development, together with previously allocated commitments and an allowance for windfall mean that the local plan allocates a minimum 3,169 new dwellings in order to ensure that the objectively assessed need for housing of 14,550 homes over the plan period will be met. This equates to an average of 970 dwellings per annum and is based on evidence in the Bedford Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) Updates of 2016 and 2018. Policy 4S sets out how a minimum 3,169 new dwellings will be allocated and distributed.
- 7.121 The number of net additional dwellings completed in 2022/23 was 1,465. This is higher than the number completed in the previous year, and continues the trend of delivery rates exceeding the annualised minimum housing figure of 970 net additional dwellings per annum in seven of the first eight years of the plan period. A total of 9,637 net dwelling completions have been delivered between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2023. This rate of delivery is not expected to be maintained. The Local Plan 2030 housing trajectory showed completions lower than the annual average in later years.

- 7.122 Of the 1,465 net additional dwellings completed in 2022/23, new build homes accounted for 1,318 of the total, or 87.4% of gross completions. The 132 homes that came from change of use from non-residential to residential accounted for 8.8% of the total gross completions. 58 new dwellings were created through conversion of existing residential properties. These additional dwellings were offset by 43 dwellings that were lost through demolitions, conversion or change of use<sup>38</sup>.
- 7.123 The majority of housing completions in 2022/23 were delivered at saved Local Plan 2002 policy allocations including Land north of Bromham Road, Biddenham (61 completions); Land at Shortstown (123 completions); Land east and west of Broadmead Road, Stewartby (151 completions); Wixams (former Elstow Storage Depot) (341 completions); and Land south of Fields Road, Wootton (94 completions). There were also 200 net additional dwellings delivered in the Bedford and Kempston urban area during 2022/23.
- 7.124 The progress of the delivery of housing policy allocations is reported in the Allocated sites section of this monitoring report.
- 7.125 Local Plan 2030 Policy 4S sets out the amount and distribution of housing development, seeking to direct new housing development to locations that are sustainable or can be made sustainable. The Local Plan primarily allocates housing land in the Bedford and Kempston urban area, the urban edge, former Stewartby brickworks and Roxton. Neighbourhood Plans have identified sites for residential development in the Key Service Centres of Bromham, Clapham, Great Barford, Sharnbrook and a range of smaller Rural Service Centres.

Monitoring indicator 36 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
36a Supply of dwellings with planning permission	4S	The number of dwellings with extant planning permission	2015/16 = 8,574 dwellings 2016/17 = 8,341 dwellings 2017/18 = 7,259 dwellings 2018/19 = 6,347 dwellings 2019/20 = 5,979 dwellings 2020/21 = 4,864 dwellings 2021/22 = 6,040 dwellings 2022/23 = 4,793 dwellings	BBC

<sup>38</sup> See [Housing Monitoring Report](#) for further information.



7.126 Whilst the number of outstanding permissions at the end of the 2022/23 monitoring year is lower than the previous year, the number of dwellings with outstanding planning permission has been retained at a high level during the first eight years of the Local Plan 2030 period.

Monitoring indicator 37 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
37a Progress in delivering housing opportunity sites	26	Details of applications and permissions relating to identified opportunity sites	No new planning applications were received or determined during the monitoring year	BBC

7.127 Local Plan 2030 Policy 26 identifies three housing opportunity sites at Dallas Road, Kempston; Bedford Blues Rugby Club, Bedford; and Ampthill Road (former Camford Works), Bedford. The sites are included in the Plan as they are considered suitable for development, but are also known to have particular constraints which may prevent them from coming forward in the plan period. As a result, they are not subject to allocations.

7.128 Of the three sites identified, Dallas Road has been granted planning permission for the development of 341 dwellings (19/02247/MAF) in August 2021.

7.129 A planning application (22/01899/EIA) for 508 dwellings, 96 bedroom care home, two storey advance technology building, drive-thru coffee shop and associated works at the site of the former Camford Works, Bedford is currently pending consideration. Emerging Local Plan 2040 Policy HOU3 allocates the site for a mix of residential and business uses.

7.130 There have been no planning applications received or determined for development of the site at Bedford Blues Rugby Club, Bedford. Informal discussions regarding the future of the site continue.

7.131 Policy 26 is proposed to be replaced by emerging Local Plan 2040 Policy DS6.

Monitoring indicator 38 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
38a Development outside settlement boundaries	5S, 6, 7S, AD41	Details of planning permissions granted for dwellings on sites that fall outside the urban area boundary or settlement policy area boundaries	115 new dwellings were permitted outside the urban and settlement policy area boundaries in 2022/23	BBC

7.132 In order to protect the character of Bedford and Kempston and to protect the countryside from inappropriate development, the extent of the urban area is defined in saved Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 Policy AD41. Local Plan 2030 Policies 5S, 6 and 7S together distinguish between the open countryside and settlements within it by identifying village Settlement Policy Areas and the type and location of development which will be acceptable. The boundaries are shown on the Policies Map.

7.133 During 2022/23, 115 new dwellings were permitted outside the urban and settlement policy area boundaries. Major developments make up a large proportion of the total and include planning permissions for 50 dwellings at Land between Sandy Road and Wood Lane, Willington (20/02151/MAO) and 30 dwellings at Land rear of 25 to 39 Howard Close, Wilstead (21/03124/MAR). The site in Willington is allocated in the Willington Neighbourhood Plan for 50 dwellings and permission was granted at a time when the Neighbourhood Plan had progressed to examination and the final examiners report had been received. While it was not a 'made' plan as stated in Policy 7S, the Neighbourhood Plan was nonetheless given significant weight in the decision making process by virtue of its advanced status. Reserved matters permission was granted for 30 dwellings in Wilstead following outline consent being allowed on appeal at a site outside of but adjoining the settlement policy area.

7.134 The total also includes four dwellings granted under permitted development rights through the Class Q (agricultural buildings to dwelling houses) prior notification process, two barn conversions, and six replacement dwellings in the countryside.

Monitoring indicator 39 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
39a Compliance with policies for replacement dwellings in the countryside	7S, 66	Details of planning permissions for replacement dwellings in the countryside	Permission granted for six replacement dwellings	BBC
39b Scale of replacement dwelling activity	7S, 66	Number of completed replacement dwellings in the countryside	Eight replacement dwellings were completed	BBC

7.135 Local Plan 2030 Policy 66 sets out the Council’s approach to the replacement and extension of dwellings in the countryside. During 2022/23 planning permission was granted in accordance with policy for six replacement dwellings in the countryside, this is one more than last year. Eight replacement dwellings in the countryside were completed during 2022/23; which is up from two last year.

Monitoring indicator 40 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
40a Progress made in planning affordable housing schemes for local people	7S, 67	Number of affordable dwellings permitted through rural exception schemes	No affordable dwellings were permitted through rural exception schemes	BBC
40b Delivery of affordable housing schemes for local people	7S, 67	Number of affordable dwellings completed through rural exception schemes	No affordable dwellings were completed through rural exception schemes	BBC

7.136 In order to facilitate the provision of affordable housing specifically for local needs the Council will support rural exception sites. Such sites can be located in areas where housing development would not normally be encouraged on the basis that development proposals meet identified need for ‘qualifying persons’. Local Plan 2030 Policy 67 allows for planning permission to be granted as an exception to policy where there are identified local needs in the rural area and a number of

other requirements are met. During 2022/23 no planning permissions were granted for dwellings to meet local needs in the rural area and no dwellings were completed under the rural exception scheme. This is the same as in 2021/22.

Monitoring indicator 41 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
41a Supporting new homes for rural workers in accordance with Policy 68	7S, 68	Details of planning permissions granted for rural worker dwellings	No rural worker dwellings were permitted	BBC
41b Number of completed rural worker dwellings	7S, 68	Number of rural worker dwellings completed	One rural worker dwelling was completed	BBC

7.137 There may be instances where it is necessary for a new dwelling to be built in the countryside to meet the need for a worker to be accommodated on site, such as for an agricultural, forestry, horse breeding and training, livery or equivalent use. Planning permission for new rural worker accommodation in the countryside will be granted if it is in accordance with Local Plan 2030 Policy 68. During 2022/23, no planning permissions were granted for rural worker dwellings. Six planning applications for rural workers' dwellings were refused on the basis that they would be contrary to the aims of Policies 7S and 68. One rural worker dwelling was completed at Land at the Baulk, Clapham (18/00520/FUL) during the monitoring year.

Monitoring indicator 42 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
42a Five year housing land supply	4S	Details of sites likely to be delivered in the next five years. Assessment carried out in accordance with government policy and guidance	6.93 year housing land supply for the five year period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2028	BBC

7.138 Paragraph 74 of the NPPF requires all local planning authorities to identify and update annually a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites against their housing requirement. The Council's five-year supply of deliverable housing sites is updated annually and the latest position is published on the Council's website [www.bedford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/monitoring](http://www.bedford.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/monitoring). It demonstrates that the Council presently has a 6.93 year housing land supply for the five year period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2028.

Monitoring indicator 43 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Housing Delivery Test consequence	Data source
43a Performance against the national Housing Delivery Test (HDT)	4S	Annual published HDT results	2018 = 129%	None	DLUHC
			2019 = 125%	None	
			2020 = 133%	None	
			2021 = 144%	None	

7.139 The Housing Delivery Test (HDT) is a government annual measurement of housing delivery in the area of the relevant plan-making authorities. The HDT is a percentage measurement of the number of net homes delivered against the number of homes required, as set out in the relevant strategic policies for the area, over a rolling three-year period. The HDT results are published annually by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and the NPPF outlines a range of planning policy consequences for authorities who do not achieve set percentage results each year.

7.140 Bedford Borough has consistently achieved a HDT score over 100% and as a result, faces no consequences.

Monitoring indicator 44 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
44a Delivery of affordable housing in accordance with Policy 58S	58S	Number of affordable dwellings permitted on qualifying sites	1,217 new dwellings were permitted on sites subject to affordable housing provision. Of these, 293 dwellings were affordable, equating to 24.1%.	BBC

			Five further planning permissions were granted on sites for 100% affordable housing equating to a total of 15 dwellings	
44b Delivery of affordable housing in accordance with Policy 58S	58S	Affordable dwelling completions	2015/16 = 178 (17.7%) 2016/17 = 234 (18.0%) 2017/18 = 252 (18.4%) 2018/19 = 284 (20.7%) 2019/20 = 342 (32.9%) 2020/21 = 192 (16.0%) 2021/22 = 220 (21.2%) 2022/23 = 331 (21.9%)  <b>Total = 2,033 (21.1%)</b>	BBC

- 7.141 The Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update and addendum (August 2018) establishes an objectively assessed need for affordable housing of 4,188 dwellings for the period 2015-2030. Whilst an annualised requirement of affordable housing to be delivered is not set, this is equivalent to an average of 279 dwellings for each year of the plan period. Local Plan 2030 Policy 58S sets out the Council's requirements in relation to affordable housing.
- 7.142 In 2022/23, 1,217 new dwellings were permitted on sites subject to affordable housing provision. Of these, 293 dwellings were affordable, equating to 24.1%. Five further planning permissions were granted on sites for 100% affordable housing equating to a total of 15 dwellings. This is higher than last year when 1,892 new dwellings were permitted on sites subject to affordable housing provision, 447 (23.6%) of these were affordable.
- 7.143 There were 331 affordable housing completions in 2022/23 and this accounts for 21.9% of the total housing completions within the borough for the year. Annual delivery rates of affordable housing have varied over the first eight years of the plan period and the number of affordable dwellings delivered in only two years (2019/20 and 2022/23) during the plan period has achieved the amount that would be expected if the requirement were annualised. It should however be noted that this indicator only measures affordable housing achieved through the planning system; other affordable dwellings may be provided by Registered Providers acquiring properties in the housing market.

7.144 The Council's Housing Strategy 2021-2026<sup>39</sup> sets out the Council's commitments to support the delivery of affordable housing to meet identified needs.

Monitoring indicator 45 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
45a Housing mix	59S	Net dwelling completions by number of bedrooms	1 bedroom = 221 (14.7%)	BBC
			2 bedroom = 387 (25.7%)	
			3 bedroom = 499 (33.1%)	
			4 and 4+ bedroom = 401 (26.6%)	
45b Housing mix	59S	Net dwelling completions by type	Flats, apartments or maisonettes = 395 (26.2%)	BBC
			Houses or bungalows	
			Detached = 520 (34.5%)	
			Semi-detached = 405 (26.9%)	
			Terraced = 188 (12.5%)	

7.145 Local Plan 2030 Policy 59S seeks to provide a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community. The SHMA (Figure 102) presents the breakdown of need for different size homes in the period 2015-2035. Whilst this timeframe exceeds the adopted Local Plan period, the figures give an indication of the size homes of greatest need in the borough. The SHMA identifies that most of the market need is for three bedroom houses whilst most of the need for affordable housing is also for three bedroom houses with a need for two bedroom houses and one bedroom flats also identified.

7.146 More three bedroom dwellings were completed than any other size in 2022/23. Two and four or more bedroom dwellings also represented a high proportion of completions in the monitoring year. Flats, apartments or maisonettes accounted for 26.2% of total gross completions whilst houses or bungalows accounted for 73.8%. More detached houses or bungalows were completed than any other type in 2022/23.

<sup>39</sup> Available at <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/media/943/download?inline>

- 7.147 There are however several factors that should be appreciated when comparing the housing mix data currently being delivered against the mix of housing as recommended by the SHMA, which forms the most recent needs assessment for the borough. The SHMA provides only a snapshot in time and as such the needs outlined in it may not be the same as are required now. Secondly, it should be noted that the majority of housing currently being delivered was granted permission prior to the adoption of the Local Plan 2030 and, as such, their applications were assessed and approved against different policies. In light of this, analysis of completions alone at this stage does not provide a full picture of how Policy 59S is performing in this regard. Furthermore, even if the mix of housing permitted during the monitoring year were to be reviewed, the results may be skewed due to a number of these being reserved matters approvals for which the housing mix was approved under the outline permission, which was assessed against policies pre-dating the Local Plan 2030.
- 7.148 Therefore, to truly assess the performance of Policy 59S in helping to achieve the Local Plan 2030 objective to deliver appropriate types of housing to meet the needs of the borough, monitoring over a longer period of time will be required as will continuous updates on the evidence for housing need and market demand.

Monitoring indicator 46 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
46a Housing mix	59S	Percentage of dwellings permitted that are accessible and adaptable (category 2)	29% of eligible dwellings	BBC
46b Housing mix	59S	Percentage of dwellings permitted that are wheelchair accessible (category 3)	3.9% of eligible market dwellings 10.5% of eligible affordable dwellings	BBC

- 7.149 In response to the projected increase in the elderly population of the borough during the plan period, and evidence in the SHMA, Local Plan 2030 Policy 59S sets requirements relating to adaptations and wheelchair accessible homes. The policy stipulates that on sites of 3 or more dwellings, 49% of all new residential development should meet the accessible and adaptable requirements of the building regulations, and on sites of 20 or more dwellings a minimum of 5% of all market



housing and 7% of affordable housing should meet the wheelchair accessible homes requirements of the building regulations. The local plan supporting text clarifies that wheelchair accessible homes will only be required where the Council is responsible for nominating a person to live in the dwelling.

- 7.150 During 2022/23, 25 planning permissions were eligible to provide a percentage of dwellings that meet the accessible and adaptable homes requirements of the building regulations (category 2). These permissions provided 1,231 dwellings in total. 597 dwellings should have been secured to meet the accessible and adaptable homes policy requirements however 356 dwellings meeting the requirements were actually granted permission. This represents 29% of the total number of eligible dwellings, which is below the number required by Policy 59S. Some additional dwellings to meet the accessible and adaptable homes requirements will be provided at Parcel 3.5 Wixams Village 3. The approved mobility plan for the development of 180 dwellings (21/01440/MAR) shows that the scheme will provide 149 mobility housing units. Condition 5 of the planning permission requires details of the mobility housing to include accessibility standard, tenure, dwelling type and size to be submitted and approved in writing prior to development above ground level. The condition has not been discharged to date.
- 7.151 During 2022/23, ten planning permissions were eligible to provide a percentage of dwellings that meet the wheelchair accessible homes requirements of the building regulations (category 3). These permissions provided 864 market and 277 affordable dwellings in total. 67 dwellings should have been secured to meet the wheelchair accessible homes policy requirements (47 market and 20 affordable) however 58 dwellings (34 market and 24 affordable) meeting the requirements were actually granted permission. This represents 3.9% of the total number of eligible market dwellings and 10.5% of the total number of eligible affordable dwellings, which is slightly below the number required by Policy 59S for market dwellings but above the policy requirement for affordable dwellings.
- 7.152 Analysis of the results shows that Local Plan 2030 Policy 59S requirements relating to adaptations and wheelchair accessible homes is being applied inconsistently through the development management process. Some eligible planning permissions secured compliance via a planning condition whilst some eligible permissions did not secure any dwellings to meet the requirements. The Council is reviewing how it applies Policy 59S to planning applications in order to ensure a consistent approach and maximise the delivery of accessible and adaptable dwellings and wheelchair user dwellings in accordance with policy requirements.
- 7.153 Whilst some eligible planning permissions did not provide any dwellings to meet the policy requirements relating to adaptations and wheelchair accessible homes some permissions included more than the policy requirement. For example,

the reserved matters application for the development of 130 dwellings at Land north of Gold Lane, Biddenham (21/03302/MAR) did not secure any mobility housing as the Inspector's view at appeal (outline application 18/00140/MAO) was that a planning condition requiring such provision should not be imposed. The approved plans for a development of 232 dwellings at Parcel 3.4 Wixams Village 3 show a provision of 25 accessible and adaptable dwellings above the number required by Policy 59S.

7.154 Three further planning permissions were granted on sites for 100% affordable housing providing one dwelling that will be built to meet accessible and adaptable requirements and five dwellings that will be built to meet the wheelchair accessible homes requirements of the building regulations.

Monitoring indicator 47 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
47a Housing mix	60	Number of new self-contained specialist housing schemes (class C3) by type, permitted and completed	Permission for 62 Class C3 use self-contained specialist housing bed spaces	BBC
			10 Class C3 use self-contained specialist housing bed spaces were completed	
47b Housing mix	60	Number of new care home bed spaces (class C2) by type, permitted and completed	Permission for 64 Class C2 use care home bed spaces	BBC
			58 Class C2 use care home bed spaces were completed	

7.155 Local Plan 2030 Policy 60 relates to the provision of specialist housing, which includes care homes and extra care schemes, in line with the need to provide sufficient housing for all sectors of the community. The supporting text sets out the differences between class C2 care schemes and class C3 self-contained extra care schemes.

7.156 During 2022/23, planning permission was granted for 62 Class C3 use self-contained specialist housing bed spaces to form the second phase extension to Wixams Retirement Village, The Causeway, Wixams (18/03158/MAF). This is up from last year when 25 Class C3 use self-contained specialist housing bed spaces were granted. During 2022/23, planning

permission was granted for 64 Class C2 use care home bed spaces, this is down from last year when 83 Class C2 use care home bed spaces were granted. This includes the development of a doctors' surgery and 60 bedroom nursing home at Land north of Bromham Road (19/00973/MAF); change of use from a residential dwelling to a 3 bedroom children's home at 1 Cambridge Road, Bedford (22/02402/COU); and change of use from a residential dwelling to a 1 bedroom children's home at 24 Normandy Close, Kempston (22/02632/COU).

7.157 A total of 10 Class C3 use self-contained specialist housing bed spaces and 58 Class C2 use care home bed spaces were completed during the monitoring year.

Monitoring indicator 48 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
48a Housing mix	59S, 60	Number of specialist homes for older people permitted that are wheelchair accessible	62 eligible units (all wheelchair accessible)	BBC

7.158 Local Plan Policy 59S stipulates that all specialist housing for older people meet the wheelchair accessible homes requirements of the building regulations. During the monitoring year, only planning permission 18/03158/MAF for 62 Class C2 bed spaces was eligible to achieve this standard. The design and access statement submitted in support of the application states that Approved Document M, Principles of the Wheelchair Housing Design Guide and HCA Design and Quality standards will be achieved in the development. The building will provide level full wheelchair accessibility to all parts with lifts to all upper floors. This number is slightly down from 2021/22 when 63 Class C2 bed spaces were eligible to achieve the standard. This requirement was secured via condition.

Monitoring indicator 49 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
49a Operation of an up to date Self-build and Custom	59S	The number of entries on the Self-build and	2015/16 = 50 individuals, 0 groups 2016/17 = 137 individuals, 1 group 2017/18 = 172 individuals, 1 group	DLUHC

Housebuilding Register		Custom Housebuilding Register	2018/19 = 110 individuals, 0 groups 2019/20 = 169 individuals, 0 groups 2020/21 = 90 individuals, 0 groups 2021/22 = 107 individuals, 0 groups	
49b Compliance with the self build duty	59S	The number of plots permitted suitable for self and custom housebuilding	2015/16 = N/A 2016/17 = 59 2017/18 = 62 2018/19 = 24 2019/20 = 33 2020/21 = 30 2021/22 = 37  The number of eligible single plots granted planning permission to the end of the seventh base period is sufficient to meet the demand for self and custom build housebuilding in the borough, as evidenced by the number of entries on part 1 of the Council's register	BBC

- 7.159 Support for self build and custom build housing developments, in line with national guidance, is set out in Local Plan 2030 Policy 59S v) and in the supporting text. The Council has included a self-build and custom housebuilding policy in its emerging Local Plan 2040.
- 7.160 The Housing and Planning Act 2016 requires authorities to give suitable development permission in respect of enough serviced plots of land to meet the demand for self and custom housebuilding in the authority's area arising in each base period, as shown in the Council's Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Register.
- 7.161 The Council's register became operational in April 2016. On 5 January 2021, the Council divided the register into two parts with only those with a defined local connection included on Part 1 and other individuals or groups that have an interest in self-build plots in the borough but who do not have the required local connection to the area included on Part 2. The requirement to provide enough serviced plots to meet the demand shown on the register only applies to Part 1, but both Part 1 and 2 are used to assess the general level of demand.

7.162 Data compiled from the annual self-build returns submitted to government<sup>40</sup> shows that at October 2022 (which falls within the 2022/23 monitoring year) there were 107 entries on the register, which were all individuals. Table 17 shows how many people have entered the register each year since its creation and the number of entries on the register in total at the end of each base period.

**Table 17:** Number of new entries on the self-build register in each base period and the number of entries on the register in total at the end of each base period 2015/16-2021/22

Year (October to October)	Number of new individual entrants	Number of individuals removed from the register	Individuals on the register in total (net)	Number of new group entrants	Groups on the register in total
2015/16	50		50	0	0
2016/17	87		137	1	1
2017/18	35		172	0	1
2018/19	40	-102	110	0	1
2019/20	60	-1	169	-1	0
2020/21	28	-107	90	0	0
2021/22	17	0	107	0	0

7.163 The first base period covered seven months, running from 1 April 2016 to 30 October 2016. Each subsequent base period covers 12 months and runs from 31 October to 30 October the following year. The Council has three years from the end of each base period within which to grant the required number of development permissions. Data cleansing exercises took place in August 2019 and August 2021 which resulted in reductions in the numbers of individuals on the register. Registrants were asked to confirm that they wished to stay on the register.

7.164 Table 18 shows the supply of serviced plots by way of the number of new plots granted planning permissions in each base period.

<sup>40</sup> DLUHC and MHCLG (2023) Right to build registers monitoring: data for 2016 to 2021-22. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/self-build-and-custom-housebuilding-data-2016-2016-17-2017-18-and-2018-19>

**Table 18:** Planning permissions for plots suitable for self and custom build granted in each base period 2016/17-2021/22

Year (October to October)	Number of suitable single planning permissions granted	Cumulative number of suitable planning permissions granted since October 2016
2015/16	N/A	N/A
2016/17	59	59
2017/18	62	121
2018/19	24	145
2019/20	33	178
2020/21	30	208
2021/22	37	245

7.165 Between 2016 and October 2022, a total of 245 planning permissions for developments of a single dwelling in the borough were granted, which although not explicitly submitted as self and custom build applications, provide potential opportunities for self and custom build. The supply is currently measured only by planning permissions for a single dwelling and in practice it is likely that at least some dwellings on sites with more than one dwelling will also fall within the self and custom build definition of suitable permission.

7.166 The number of suitable single plots granted planning permission to the end of the seventh base period is sufficient to meet the demand for self and custom build housebuilding in the borough, as evidenced by the number of entries on part 1 of the Council's register.

\*The figures noted in red in this section were updated in February 2024.

Monitoring indicator 50 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
50a Progress delivering Gypsy and Traveller Pitches	61, 62, 63, 64	Details of permissions granted for new Gypsy and Traveller Pitches	2 permissions	BBC
50b Progress delivering Travelling Showpeople plots	61, 63, AD19	Details of permissions granted for Travelling Showpeople plots	0 permissions	BBC

7.167 Local Plan 2030 Policy 61 states that there is a need for two additional permanent gypsy and traveller pitches to 2030 and five additional travelling showpeople plots to 2030, reflecting the findings of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment 2017. Policy 62 requires that the two additional gypsy and traveller pitches are provided on the existing site at Kempston Hardwick. Planning permission for this was granted in December 2018 (18/02566/DC3) and the pitches are currently under construction. A site at Manton Lane, Bedford is already allocated under Policy AD19 in the Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 to make provision for the travelling showpeople plots. This additional accommodation has not been delivered to date, although a planning application for the provision of eight new plots for travelling showpeople (23/01128/MDC3) is currently pending consideration.

7.168 A more recent Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment<sup>41</sup> was completed in November 2021 to support the Local Plan 2040.

<sup>41</sup> <https://www.bedford.gov.uk/media/4069/download?inline>

Monitoring indicator 51 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
51a Meeting the needs for Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots in accordance with Policy 63	63, 64	Number of planning permissions for new Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites on unallocated land in the countryside	2 permissions	BBC

7.169 Local Plan 2030 Policy 63 is a criteria based policy relating to the provision of traveller sites on unallocated land in the countryside. During the monitoring year, planning permissions were granted for one mobile home and one touring caravan for one Gypsy family at Stevington Riding Club, Silver Street, Stevington (20/00373/COU) and one mobile home and one touring caravan for one Gypsy family at Three Acres, Tithe Road, Kempston (19/01500/FUL).

Monitoring indicator 52 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
52a Health Impact Assessments carried out in accordance with Policy 2S for policy documents	2S	Number of Health Impact Assessments prepared to support planning policy documents	A Rapid Health Impact Assessment Matrix was completed for the Local Plan 2040 – plan for submission version	BBC

7.170 A key objective of the planning system is to help support people in living healthy lives and this is reflected in section 8 of the NPPF 'Promoting healthy and safe communities'. Health and wellbeing is an underlying theme for the local plan and health features directly and indirectly in the Local Plan 2030 vision and objectives and across the local plan policies.

7.171 A Health Impact Assessment is a method of considering the positive and negative impacts of development on the health of different groups in the population, in order to enhance the benefits and minimise any risks to health.



7.172 Local Plan 2030 Policy 2S seeks to reduce health inequalities and promote healthy lifestyles by requiring development to promote health, safety and active living for all age groups and encouraging physically active lifestyles through the provision of sustainable modes of transport. The policy seeks to ensure that development enhances health and wellbeing and does not have a negative impact on it by setting a threshold for providing Health Impact Assessments.

7.173 Policy 2S i) requires the Council to carry out Health Impact Assessments, which may be incorporated into sustainability appraisals, on all planning policy documents. During 2022/23, resources were focussed on preparing the Local Plan 2040. A rapid health impact assessment matrix was completed for the plan for submission version of the Local Plan 2040.

Monitoring indicator 53 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
53a Progress in preparing the Health Impact Assessments guidance	2S	Progress in accordance with milestones in the Local Development Scheme	The document was due to be completed in winter 2022 but work on the Local Plan 2040 examination took priority during 2023. Work on the document is being led by colleagues in Public Health. A draft has been prepared and will be the subject of consultation shortly.	BBC

7.174 The supporting text to Policy 2S states that “a guidance note will be provided which will include further advice in relation to where a Health Impact Assessment is required, what it should contain and the health outcomes the development should seek to achieve.” Work on the document is progressing and a draft will be subject to consultation shortly.

Monitoring indicator 54 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
54a Health Impact Assessments carried out in accordance with Policy 2S for planning applications	2S	Details of planning applications where HIAs have been prepared in accordance with policy.	1 planning application	BBC

7.175 Policy 2S ii) sets out that planning applications for all residential and mixed-use sites of 50 homes or more, employment sites of 5ha (gross) or more, retail developments over 500 sqm (gross internal area), or any other sites as requested by the local planning authority are required to submit a Health Impact Assessment. In 2022/23, a Health Impact Assessment was prepared for one application that exceeded the policy thresholds which is one more than last year.

Monitoring indicator 55 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
55a Progress in preparing a Bedford Borough Design Guide	28S, 29, 30	Details of progress in accordance with milestones in the Local Development Scheme	The Bedford Borough Design Guide was adopted on 8 March 2023	BBC
55b Progress in preparing updated design guidance on advertisements	28S, 29, 30, 34	Details of progress in accordance with milestones in the Local Development Scheme	No progress has been made on updating the guidance on advertisements. The LDS currently makes no commitment for the production of this document. It will be updated when resources allow	BBC

7.176 Government policy identifies good design as a key aspect of sustainable development and explains that it is indivisible from good planning. Paragraph 127 of the NPPF requires that local plans contain comprehensive and robust policies that set out the expectations regarding the quality of development. Local Plan 2030 contains a suite of policies in this regard.

7.177 The Council will, where appropriate, work with developers to prepare development briefs, codes and design guidance for major development sites allocated in the local plan. Preparation of new and updated design guidance will appear in the Local Development Scheme. During 2022/23, the Bedford Borough Design Guide has been under preparation. Public consultation on a draft document was undertaken in September and October 2022, and the Design Guide was adopted on 8 March 2023.

7.178 The supporting text to Local Plan 2030 Policy 34 states that the Council will publish updated design guidance on advertisements. No progress has been made on updating the guidance during the monitoring year.

Monitoring indicator 56 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
56a Production of design codes in accordance with Policy 29 when required by the policy	28S, 29, 30	Details of permissions where design codes are required / have been produced	2 design codes were approved in 2021/22 and none in 2022/23	BBC

7.179 Local Plan 2030 Policy 29 sets thresholds for planning applications to be guided by a design code to be agreed with the Council as part of the application process. The number of design codes approved in 2021/22 was not reported in the previous monitoring report. Two design codes were approved in 2021/22 and none were approved in 2022/23. The Wixams outline planning permission (99/01645/OUT as amended by 11/01380/M73) requires the approval of a design code for each village prior to the submission of the first reserved matters for development (except where strategic infrastructure or landscaping is proposed). The Village 3 Design Code is split into different parts with an overarching design code for the village approved in April 2021 (20/01818/AOC). This design code includes a more detailed assessment of the southern edge and education quarter. A detailed design code for the northern gateway was approved in July 2021 (20/02502/AOC).

Monitoring indicator 57 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
57a Permissions granted in the former Land Settlement Association Area	AD44	Details of planning permissions granted in accordance with specific policy requirements	5 permissions	BBC

7.180 The former Land Settlement Association area of smallholdings within Wyboston, Chawston and Colesden parish was created during the 1930s and supported decades of agricultural and horticultural activity. Saved Policy AD44 of the Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 is applicable to development proposals within the former Land Settlement Association area and sets out that permission will only be granted where applications:

- i. Maintain the distinctive spatial pattern, layout and scale of plots.
- ii. Respect the style, scale, appearance and orientation of the original dwellings and separation between them.
- iii. Protect residential amenity from inappropriate disturbance.
- iv. Do not result in unacceptable levels of traffic generation.

7.181 During 2022/23, five permissions were granted for development within the former Land Settlement Association Area, this is one more than last year. Planning permission was granted for a stable building adjacent to 13 Homefield Road, Chawston (22/00224/S73A), a steel framed storage building at 21 Rookery Road, Wyboston (21/01782/FUL), and a residential annexe at 11 Rookery Road, Wyboston (22/00569/FUL). A one and two storey side extension at 3 Rookery Road, Wyboston (22/00764/FUL) was allowed on appeal. The change of use of Sunrise Boarding Kennels, Chawston to a mixed use boarding kennels and cattery, including erection of two six-unit cat pens (22/01080/FUL) was also granted during the monitoring year.

Monitoring indicator 58 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
58a Permissions granted at Wyboston Lakes	73	Details of planning permissions granted in accordance with specific policy requirements	0 permissions	BBC

7.182 Wyboston Lakes lies close to the A428 and A1 to the east of Bedford Borough. It is close to the urban area of St Neots which is in Huntingdonshire district. The site is partially developed for recreation, leisure and hotel, conference and training uses providing a wide range of employment uses in a low density landscaped setting. Planning permission has also be granted for former B1 business uses. Policy 73 supports development at Wyboston Lakes subject to specific criteria which reflect the location and character of the site.

Monitoring indicator 59 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Direction of change	Data source
59a Number of heritage assets 'at risk'	41S	Entries on the National Heritage At Risk Register	9 entries (3 listed buildings, 5 scheduled monuments and 1 conservation area)	No change	BBC

- 7.183 Bedford Borough has a rich and distinctive historic environment and the borough contains a variety of designated and non-designated heritage assets. Within Bedford Borough currently (October 2023) there are 1,333 listed buildings and 28 conservation areas. There are also 69 scheduled monuments and 9 historic parks and gardens<sup>42</sup>. Of the 29 conservation areas in the borough, seven have a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan. These are Bedford, Biddenham, Bletsoe, Elstow, Hinwick, Little Barford and Stewartby. The Appraisal, Management Plan and Conservation Area for Little Barford were adopted during the monitoring year, in March 2023. Conservation Area Appraisals highlight a number of buildings which, while not listed on the National Heritage List, are considered important local buildings of positive townscape merit. There are over ten thousand archaeological sites, historic buildings, landscapes, find-spots, place names and parks and gardens recorded on the Bedford Borough Historic Environment Record, many of which could be considered to be non-designated heritage assets.
- 7.184 Local Plan 2030 Policy 41S requires development to preserve, and where possible, enhance the significance of heritage assets and minimise impacts on the historic environment. This is in line with the requirement in the NPPF to conserve heritage assets so they can be enjoyed by future generations.
- 7.185 Three listed buildings, five scheduled monuments and one conservation area are identified as being 'at risk' by Historic England as a result of neglect, decay, or inappropriate development and appear on the National Heritage at Risk Register. These assets are listed in Table 19 and are the same as those identified in the previous monitoring report.
- 7.186 The Council's Heritage and Built Environment Monitoring Report 2019-2020 identified two listed buildings and six scheduled monuments that were listed on Historic England's National Heritage at Risk Register in 2019. Since that time, one listed building (Parish Church of St Denys, Church Road, Church End, Colmworth) and Bedford conservation area have been added to the National Heritage At Risk Register. One scheduled monument (site discovered by aerial photography south of village, Cardington) has been removed from the National Heritage At Risk Register.

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<sup>42</sup> Historic England (2023) Listing. Available at <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

<b>Table 19: Heritage assets listed on the National Heritage at Risk Register, August 2023</b>	
<b>Asset name and location</b>	<b>Designation</b>
Church St Mary the Virgin, Church Road, Keysoe, Bolnhurst and Keysoe	Listed Building grade I
Parish Church of St Denys, Church Road, Church End, Colmworth	Listed Building grade I
Church of St Martin, Clapham Road, Bedford	Listed Building grade II
Settlement site north of Chapel End Farm, Cardington	Scheduled Monument
Bury Hill Camp, a motte and bailey castle with three fishponds, Thurleigh	Scheduled Monument
Yarl's Wood hermitage and moated site, Milton Ernest	Scheduled Monument
Palaceyard Wood medieval moated enclosure and associated enclosures, woodland bank and cultivation earthworks, Wyboston, Chawston and Colesden / Great Barford	Scheduled Monument
Manor Farm Iron Age univallate hillfort and medieval moated enclosure, Bolnhurst and Keysoe	Scheduled Monument
Bedford	Conservation Area

- 7.187 In partnership with BedfordBID and SEMLEP, the Council has been awarded funding from Historic England as part of their High Street Heritage Action Zone project. The High Streets Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) is a nationwide initiative designed to secure improvements to buildings and the public realm.
- 7.188 Bedford's HSHAZ programme is well underway, with a variety of cultural events planned for residents and visitors to enjoy around Bedford's town centre, and improvement works to High Street buildings and heritage projects. The programme has focussed on six buildings along the High Street, as well as improvement works to the public space: re-paving Silver Street (around The Faces) and widening the High Street's pavement.
- 7.189 The restoration of 19-21 High Street, a grade II listed building was completed in July 2022 and includes a newly painted front, comprehensive works to reinstate the classical style architectural design and detailing, and restoration of the original lion-head stringcourse which runs along the façade of the building. The restoration of 58 High Street has included installing a replacement traditional timber shopfront, as well as red stained glass details. Restorative work to Goldings (107 High Street) has included roof repairs and window upgrades. A new replacement shop front has been fitted and the traditional gold 'Golding & Co' lettering reinstated above the doorway. Further improvements are being delivered on 90, 97 and 113 High Street.

Monitoring indicator 60 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
60a Residential development on previously developed land	46S	Percentage of new dwelling completions (including conversions) on previously developed land	2015/16 = 39.4% 2016/17 = 45.0% 2017/18 = 41.5% 2018/19 = 26.5% 2019/20 = 27.0% 2020/21 = 48.0% 2021/22 = 32.2% 2022/23 = 25.8%	BBC
60b Non-residential development on previously developed land	46S, 65	Percentage of non-residential floorspace completions on previously developed land	2021/22 = 81.9% 2022/23 = 85.4%	BBC

7.190 Local Plan 2030 Policy 46S seeks to maximise the delivery of development through the reuse of suitably located previously developed land provided that it is not of high environmental or biodiversity value. The policy requires that poorer quality land should be used in preference to the best and most versatile agricultural land (grades 1-3a). It is therefore appropriate that the plan seeks to maximise the delivery of development on brownfield sites whilst recognising that greenfield development may be necessary.

7.191 No target is set for the proportion of new development on previously developed land however in line with national policy the Local Plan 2030 spatial strategy seeks to maximise opportunities for the reuse of specific brownfield sites within the urban area and at the former brickworks at Stewartby which is identified as a large scale brownfield site for future development. In addition, the Council is required to maintain a brownfield land register which provides up-to-date and consistent information on sites considered to be appropriate for residential development.

7.192 Government land use change statistics in England 2021-22<sup>43</sup> identify that 54% of new residential addresses in England were created on previously developed land. Whilst the percentage of new and converted dwellings on previously developed land

<sup>43</sup> DLUHC (2022) Land use change statistics 2021 to 2022. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/land-use-change-statistics-2021-to-2022>

in the borough in 2022/23 is lower than the national average, the proportion has varied during the first eight years of the plan period.

7.193 In 2022/23, there were 202 brownfield land completions in the Bedford and Kempston urban area, created mostly through the change of use of office space to residential and through the conversion of existing dwellings. Dwelling completions at Wixams new settlement also provided a large contribution.

7.194 The percentage of new non-residential floorspace completions on previously developed land in 2021/22 was 85.4% which is slightly more than last year (81.9%). This was largely as a result of the redevelopment of existing employment sites and the completion of six commercial units at the former Elstow Storage Depot (Wixams) (saved Local Plan 2002 site allocation H14).

Monitoring indicator 61 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
61a Delivery of new community space	98, 99	Number of planning permissions for new community facilities or extensions to existing facilities	5 permissions	BBC
61b Delivery of sports pitches in accordance with Policy AD28	97, 99, AD28	Number of planning permissions for sports and recreation facilities  To address deficiencies in existing provision identified in the Bedford Borough Council Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy	3 permissions	BBC
61c Delivery of open space in accordance with Policy AD28	AD28	Amount of open space provided in association with new development	24,877 sqm	BBC



61d Payments in lieu of on-site provision of open space and community facilities.	97, 98, AD28	Financial contributions secured in lieu of on-site provision	£16,013 secured towards off-site equipped / natural play space and £20,839 towards off-site outdoor sports space	BBC
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- 7.195 Community facilities are an important feature in settlements as they help to meet local needs and can provide opportunities for social and cultural interaction. Community facilities can include parish halls, places of worship, cemeteries, community centres, schools and colleges, health facilities, libraries, and leisure, arts and cultural facilities.
- 7.196 During 2022/23, four planning permissions were granted for new community facilities or extensions to existing facilities, this is down from five permissions last year. Planning permission was granted for a single storey extension to Wilden Village Hall (22/01358/FUL), the installation of two portakabin buildings for training and storage use at Bedfordshire Opportunities for Learning Disabilities, 106 Clapham Road, Bedford (22/01703/FUL), a teaching block, sports hall and sports facilities at Wixams Academy (23/00068/MDC3), and a sports pavilion and new artificial pitch at Wootton Upper School (22/00522/MAF).
- 7.197 Sports pitches, sports facilities, parks and open space contribute to the quality of life in and around settlements and it is important to ensure that the stock and range of facilities is adequate to serve the needs of both the existing and the future population of the area.
- 7.198 The Council commissioned a Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy<sup>44</sup> to assess the existing provision of, and future demand for, outdoor sports facilities. The study found that demand is broadly being met for all sports except for football and rugby league. Demand for all remaining sports can generally be met or be resolved in the future through quality improvements and the restoration of sites which are currently underutilised. There are shortfalls identified for 3G pitches which cannot be alleviated unless new provision is created. An increase in 3G pitch provision could also help reduce grass pitch shortfalls through the transfer of play, thus reducing overplay, which in turn can aid pitch quality improvements. As there are identified shortfalls on grass pitches, there is a need to protect both playing pitch provision currently in use and pitches that are no longer in use due to the potential that they may offer for meeting current and future needs.

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<https://edrms.bedford.gov.uk/OpenDocument.aspx?id=gh5UFxeJZtGZ%2fB3uANN4SA%3d%3d&name=Bedford%20Playing%20Pitch%20%20Outdoor%20Sport%20Strategy.pdf>

- 7.199 During 2022/23, planning permission was granted for the redevelopment of court 10 to provide one main tennis court and mini markings for four courts at Riverside Lawn Tennis Club, Bedford (22/00381/FUL). Planning permission was also granted for a teaching block, sports hall and sports provision comprising an all weather pitch, four multi-use games areas and two natural turf pitches at Wixams Academy (23/00066/MDC3). The sports facilities are intended primarily for educational use but will be made available to the wider community when not in use by the school as the applicant has explained that the school currently has a community agreement for the use of the sports pitches which they intend to retain.
- 7.200 In addition, planning permission was granted for the erection of a sports pavilion and a new artificial pitch at Wootton Upper School (22/00522/MAF) during the monitoring year. The development is being funded using Section 106 contributions secured from planning permission 15/02060/MAF, which required either a 4G pitch within the boundary of the Fields Road South, Wootton site or a contribution for 'the provision, repair and maintenance of the pitch within the vicinity of the development'. The facilities will provide a school and community facility for football, rugby, tennis and cricket and these facilities will be useable all year round. Once constructed, the sports facilities will be made available to the wider community when not in use by the school.
- 7.201 The NPPF defines open space as being of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.
- 7.202 The Bedfordshire Natural Capital Assessment published in May 2021 includes an assessment of open space in the borough against Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt). It shows that 68.1% of Bedford Borough residents did not have access to natural greenspace within 300m of their home. However, the borough performed more strongly in the provision of larger natural greenspaces, with 81.8% and 84.0% of residents living within 2km of a 20ha site and within 5km of a 100ha site respectively.
- 7.203 Saved Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 Policy AD28 requires provision of open space and built facilities in association with new development in accordance with local standards. The policy goes on to state that where possible, provision should be made on-site. Where this is not possible, practical or preferred, a financial contribution in lieu of on-site provision will be required.
- 7.204 Five planning permissions providing open space and built facilities in association with new development were granted during the monitoring year. This includes a locally equipped area of play at the centre of the residential parcel of phase 2 for 130

dwellings at Land at Gold Lane, Biddenham (21/03302/MAR). The officer assessment stated that the area of play is considered to be of a size that is commensurable to the space requirement for the 130 dwellings within phase 2 (946 sqm) and accounts for the under-provision of open space previously identified within phase 1 (171 sqm). Development of 163 dwellings at Graze Hill, Ravensden (21/01901/MAR) includes a locally equipped area of play adjacent to the housing parcel and a natural play area within the country park (1,000 sqm) and 2,100 sqm of informal and amenity green space. Open space enhancements at Priory Marina, Barkers Lane, Bedford are secured by a condition that requires the submission and approval of a scheme and timetable for enhancements prior to the occupation of five floating homes granted planning permission (22/01588/FUL). Provision of a green boulevard edge and outdoor community woodland walk open space (10,600 sqm) in association with a development of 50 dwellings at Land between Sandy Road and Wood Lane, Willington (20/02151/MAO) was secured through the S106 agreement. Within Wixams Village 3, a super locally equipped area of play containing 16 pieces of equipment and strategic landscaping (10,060 sqm) secured reserved matters approval (21/00672/MAR). The open space is split into six areas with three laid to grass, two set aside as wildflower areas and a central area containing play equipment. The perimeter of the open space and the play area will be surrounded by mixed species borders and trees with additional trees interspersed around the edges of the grassed areas.

7.205 Financial contributions towards 65 sqm off-site equipped / natural play space (£16,013) and 289 sqm off-site outdoor sports space (£20,839) were secured through the S106 agreement for the erection of nine dwellings at Land north of The Causeway, Carlton (21/02406/FUL) which was signed during the monitoring year.

Monitoring indicator 62 What is being measured?	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
62a Loss of sports and community facilities	97, 98, 99, AD28	Number of planning permissions allowing the loss of an existing sports or community facility through demolition, conversion or redevelopment	4 permissions	BBC

7.206 Safeguarding existing leisure, sports and community facilities is important to ensure that facilities are not lost to other types of development and that appropriate provision is made for the community to access these facilities. Local Plan 2030 Policy

99 sets out that the loss of existing sports and community facilities will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the facility is surplus to existing and future needs or the facility is to be relocated and is of a similar scale to the current facility, is of an equivalent standard and able to serve the same community.

7.207 During 2022/23, four planning permissions were granted for the loss of leisure, sports or community facilities, this is up from last year when aside from small losses of school playing fields to accommodate new built facilities, no such permissions were granted. The application details and the reasons for granting permission during 2022/23 are summarised in Table 20.

<b>Table 20:</b> Planning permissions granted for the loss of leisure, sports or community facilities during 2022/23 and the reasons for granting permission			
<b>Application reference</b>	<b>Site</b>	<b>Description of development</b>	<b>Reasons for granting planning permission</b>
22/00759/COU	Priory Marina, Barkers Lane, Bedford	Change of use of 22 existing leisure moorings to residential use	Whilst further leisure moorings would be lost, based on the market demand information submitted by the applicant and given that leisure moorings would remain and would occupy the majority of the site, it was considered that a reason for refusal could not be substantiated on this basis.
22/01588/FUL	Priory Marina, Barkers Lane, Bedford	Development of five floating homes	Whilst further leisure moorings would be lost, based on the market demand information submitted by the applicant and given that leisure moorings would remain and would occupy the majority of the site, it was considered that a reason for refusal could not be substantiated on this basis.
22/00379/MDC3	Land at the former Robert Bruce Middle School, Bedford Road, Kempston	Erection of a new special educational needs school	The development results in the loss of a significant part of the former playing fields of Robert Bruce School, but includes new provision. The proposed development will give access to the sports and community facilities being provided through the signing of a community use agreement. In addition, there is a pressing need to increase SEN capacity and the benefit of this was considered to outweigh the identified harms.

22/00522/MAF	Wootton Upper School, Hall End Road, Wootton	Erection of a pavilion and a new artificial pitch. Relocation of cricket nets and long-jump pit	The development will result in the loss of a small part of the playing field. However, a large proportion of the existing playing fields will be retained and the development will deliver significant sporting benefits for the school and local community.
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