



BEDFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL



Bedford Borough
Planning Monitoring Report
1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025

KEY MONITORING RESULTS



1,792 SQM

NET EMPLOYMENT FLOORSPACE WAS LOST

576

NET NEW HOMES WERE COMPLETED



35.27 HA

NEW WOODLAND CREATED IN THE FOREST OF MARSTON VALE



99.8%

FAVOURABLE OR UNFAVOURABLE RECOVERING SSSI LAND



82,000

JOBS IN 2023



1,439

DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

£54,841 DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS

Secured towards off-site outdoor sports space and off-site equipped / natural play space

17,986 SQM OPEN SPACE

Provided in association with new development

122 AFFORDABLE HOMES BUILT

27.6% of homes permitted on sites subject to affordable housing were affordable

1,895 NEW BUSINESSES

The net number of new businesses created between 2015 and 2024

28 NEW HOMES PERMITTED IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Outside the urban and settlement policy area boundaries



PER CAPITA CO2 EMISSIONS

Per capita carbon dioxide emissions have fallen from 5.1 tonnes in 2015 to 3.5 tonnes in 2023

159,042 SQM

The amount of employment floorspace with outstanding planning permission to be implemented



38% OF HOUSEHOLD WASTE SENT FOR REUSE, RECYCLING OR COMPOSTING



95.19% OF PROPERTIES HAVE ACCESS TO GIGABIT SPEEDS



4,255 HOMES HAVE PLANNING PERMISSION BUT ARE NOT BUILT

1. Introduction

Purpose of this report

- 1.1 Local authorities are required to produce and publish monitoring reports through the [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 \(as amended by the Localism Act 2011\)](#). The Bedford Borough Planning Monitoring Report has been prepared in line with this legislation and the principles set out in National Planning Practice Guidance¹.
- 1.2 Monitoring is an essential part of the ongoing planning process, providing a mechanism to review the progress of development activities and 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 outlined in the local plan. Where it is found that policies are not achieving their intended outcomes, monitoring provides an opportunity to identify the reasons behind this and the steps to be taken to improve their performance. This may involve undertaking a full or partial review of the Local Plan.
- 1.3 This report covers the monitoring period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025 and includes, where relevant, updates to the end of October 2025.

Background

- 1.4 The Bedford Local Plan 2030 (adopted in January 2020) sets out the overarching spatial strategy to guide

development across the borough up to 2030. It identifies the amount and scale of new development that is required and where it should be accommodated. It also allocates specific sites to accommodate different types of development and includes detailed policies across several thematic areas to inform the assessment and determination of planning applications.

- 1.5 Bedford Borough Council assesses the effectiveness of its policies set out in Bedford's adopted Local Plan (along with the saved policies set out in the documents listed in paragraph 2.1) through an established programme of monitoring reports, which are published regularly on its website. Targets and indicators to measure the effects of policies are completed at regular intervals.
- 1.6 Minerals and waste matters are excluded from this report because Central Bedfordshire Borough Council monitors them through a separate joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

Structure of this report

- 1.7 This report sets out:
 - the current adopted documents forming the borough's statutory development plan and other relevant planning guidance (section 2).
 - progress in preparing the Bedford Local Plan and other planning policy documents against the milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme, including key actions taken under the duty to co-operate (section 3).
 - progress made on neighbourhood planning (section 4).

¹ NPPG: Paragraph 073: Reference ID: 61-073-20190315

- progress on the implementation of site allocations in adopted plans, including neighbourhood plans (section 5).
- detailed monitoring results structured under the themes of natural environment, accessibility, delivering growth and placemaking (section 6).

2. Bedford Borough's development plan

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

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

2.2 The following Neighbourhood Plans that were made (adopted) up to the end of the monitoring year and form part of the statutory development plan in their designated area are:

- Bletsoe (made in June 2021);
- Bromham (made in June 2021);
- Carlton and Chellington (made in March 2020);
- Clapham (made in July 2022);
- Felmersham and Radwell (made in July 2022);
- Great Denham (made in September 2023);

- Great Barford (made in January 2022);
- Harrold (made in January 2022);
- Milton Ernest (made in November 2021);
- Oakley (made in September 2022);
- Odell (made in September 2022);
- Ravensden (made in March 2023);
- Riseley (made in April 2024);
- Sharnbrook (made in November 2021);
- Stevington (made in June 2021);
- Thurleigh (made in June 2021);
- Turvey (made in September 2021);
- Willington (made in March 2022);
- Wilshamstead (made in January 2023); and
- Wootton (made in March 2022).

2.3 Since April 2025, the Cotton End Neighbourhood Plan (June 2025) has also been made (adopted).

3. Implementation of the Local Development Scheme

3.1 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a rolling business plan that guides the preparation of policy documents relevant to future planning decisions. The [LDS](#) on which this document reports was published in January 2022.

Progress on the Bedford Local Plan 2040

3.2 The Bedford Local Plan 2030 sets out a commitment to submit an update or replacement to the government no later than three years after the date of its adoption. This review led to the

creation of the Bedford Local Plan 2040, which was submitted to the secretary of state on 12 January 2023, in line with the LDS.

- 3.3 The government appointed a planning inspector to undertake the review of the Bedford Local Plan. The hearing sessions were held in two blocks in June and September 2023.
- 3.4 In November 2023, the planning inspector agreed to pause the Local Plan 2040 examination to allow us to address the matters of concern: the delivery of housing and the deliverability of strategic infrastructure, particularly improvements to the A421. The period was extended due to the announcement of the Universal theme park (subject to planning permission being granted) in December 2023 and their public engagement exercises in April and May 2024.
- 3.5 Following the council's update in May 2025, the planning inspector issued a letter in June 2025 stating that *"there was no reasonable way for the examination of the Bedford Local Plan 2040 to continue"* and strongly recommended its withdrawal. The inspector advised that a new plan should be created through a new plan-making process in partnership with the local community and other stakeholders, which would fully incorporate the significant impacts and opportunities of the Universal theme park.
- 3.6 In October 2025, elected members of the council agreed to withdraw the Local Plan 2040 from the examination and commence a new local plan. All relevant correspondence is published on the Local Plan 2040 [examination webpage](#).

Progress on the duty to cooperate

- 3.7 The duty to co-operate (as set out in [section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#)) places a legal duty on local planning authorities 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.
- 3.8 During the monitoring year, the council has continued to work with neighbouring local authorities and other key partners to coordinate strategic and cross boundary matters during the examination of the Local Plan 2040.

Progress on Supplementary Planning Documents

- 3.9 All 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 subject to independent examination but undergo public consultation and are a material consideration in the assessment and determination of planning applications.
- 3.10 Appendix 3 of the Local Development Scheme lists the SPDs that have been adopted and these are published on the [other planning policy documents webpage](#). Appendix 4 sets out those documents the council intends to prepare within the current time period of the scheme. The progress that has been made during 2024/25 is outlined in table 1.

Table 1: Supplementary Planning Document preparation

Supplementary Planning Document / title	Purpose	Status
Health Impact Assessments (HIAs)	To guide the scope and content of HIAs	No longer to be an SPD - Health impact assessments guidance has been produced and published on the council's website.
Ford End Road planning brief and design code	To set out distribution of uses and guide development in support of policy 12 of the Local Plan 2030	This work is now being taken forward through the Bedford Local Opportunity Plan, aiming to guide and maximise opportunities presented by East West Rail.
Land south of the river planning brief and design code	To set out distribution of uses, phase and guide development in support of policy 14 of the Local Plan 2030	This work is now being taken forward through the Bedford Local Opportunity Plan, aiming to guide and maximise opportunities presented by East West Rail.
Developing in the Forest of Marston Vale: Design Guidance	To provide guidance on how to achieve the requirements of policy 36S of the Local Plan 2030.	The SPD was adopted on 25 January 2023 in conjunction with Central Bedfordshire Council and the Forest of Marston Vale.
Trees and Development	To provide guidance on the application of policies 38, 39 and 40 (Local Plan 2030) and trees and landscaping	The SPD was adopted on 11 June 2024.
Bedford Borough Design Guide: Settlements and Streets	To provide guidance on design matters to steer future development and support the application design policies in the development plan	The SPD was adopted on 8 March 2023.
Design guidance for small residential sites, infill development and extensions	To update and replace existing guidance in support of policy 29 of the Local Plan 2030	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 existing guidance (adopted in 2005) in support of policy 29 of the Local Plan 2030	No progress has been made since the publication of the LDS
Guidance on advertisements	To provide design guidance on advertisements in support of policy 34 in the Local Plan 2030	No progress has been made since the publication of the LDS

4. Progress on neighbourhood planning

- 4.1** Neighbourhood planning was introduced through the Localism Act 2011 to allow qualifying bodies (e.g. parish and town councils) to produce neighbourhood plans and neighbourhood development orders. Neighbourhood plans allow communities to set planning policies to shape the future planning of their area. Once 'made' (adopted), neighbourhood plans become part of the borough's development plan, and their policies are used to determine the outcome of planning applications in that designated area.
- 4.2** During the monitoring year, no new additional neighbourhood areas were designated. Wymington neighbourhood area was officially designated on 9 June 2025, which covers the entire parish.
- 4.3** 16 neighbourhood areas remain designated in the borough, 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).
- 4.4** More information on neighbourhood planning in the borough can be found on the [neighbourhood planning webpages](#).

Table 2: Designated neighbourhood plan areas

Neighbourhood Plan area	Designation date
Brickhill	8 September 2016
Cardington	8 June 2016
Colmworth	20 February 2015
Cople	30 July 2015
Dean and Shelton	30 July 2015
Pavenham	20 June 2014
Pertenhall and Swineshead	11 April 2017
Renhold	7 September 2020
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
Wymington	9 June 2025

- 4.5** During the monitoring year, the Riseley Neighbourhood Plan was subject to referendum and subsequently made on 2 April 2025. Since the end of the monitoring year, the Cotton End Neighbourhood Plan, which had been subject to referendum was subsequently made on 2 June 2025.

5. Allocated sites

- 5.1** This section of the monitoring report provides information on the implementation of all allocations in plans, including neighbourhood plans. Tables 3, 4 and 5 set 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 2024/25 monitoring year.
- 5.2** During the monitoring year, progress continued on delivering allocated sites in the development plan.

Table 3: Status of Local Plan 2030 policy allocations at 31 March 2025

Local Plan 2030 policy	Status at 31 March 2025
Policy 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.
Policy 9: Land at Duckmill Lane/Bedesman Lane, Bedford	No planning permission.
Policy 10: The station area, Ashburnham Road, Bedford	No planning permission. This site is reliant on the East West Rail scheme.
Policy 11: Greyfriars, Bedford	Up to 105 dwellings was granted at Greyfriars police station in April 2023 (outline planning application 20/00140/MAO). The site has subsequently been sold to BPHA to help facilitate their redevelopment of the land to the north. The southern part of the site does not have planning permission but has recently been sold to a new landowner.
Policy 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 East West Rail scheme. However, this work is now being taken forward as part of the Bedford Local Opportunity Plan, aiming to guide and maximise the opportunities presented by East West Rail. Planning application 24/01244/MAF (107 dwellings at Queens Works, Ford End Road) is at appeal.
Policy 13: Land at Borough Hall, Bedford	No planning permission.

Policy 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 East West Rail scheme. However, this work is now being taken forward as part of the Bedford Local Opportunity Plan, aiming to guide and maximise the opportunities presented by East West Rail.
Policy 18: Land at Gold Lane, Biddenham	Reserved matters: 119 dwellings in phase 1 (21/02820/M73) and 130 dwellings in phase 2 (21/03302/MAR) is secured. Phase 1 has been completed and construction of phase 2 is nearly completed.
Policy 19: Land at 329 Bedford Road, Kempston	No planning permission.
Policy 20: Land at Mowbray Road, Bedford	No planning permission. The council has exchanged contracts for the sale of the land. The purchaser has undertaken public consultation on their proposals. Planning application 25/01950/MAF (152 dwellings and replacement playing field and outdoor sports facilities) is awaiting decision. The application includes the allocated land plus some additional non-allocated land and is proposed to be delivered in two phases.
Policy 21: Land north of Beverley Crescent, Bedford	No planning permission.
Policy 22: Land at Lodge Hill, Bedford	No planning permission. The site has been marketed and heads of terms have been agreed to purchase the land from the council.
Policy 23: Land to the rear of Bromham Road, Biddenham	57 dwellings were granted reserved matters approval on 21 February 2025 (application 23/01106/MAR).
Policy 24: Land at Graze Hill, Bedford	Reserved matters (application 21/01901/MAR) for 163 dwellings were approved on 1 August 2022. A new roundabout has been provided on the B660 to provide entry/exit to the development. The site is under construction and 88 dwellings are completed.
Policy 25: Former Stewartby Brickworks	Up to 1,000 dwellings was granted in outline on 29 October 2021 (planning application 18/03022/EIA): The developer has undertaken public consultation on the scheme and a reserved matters application 25/01992/MAR (the layout and landscaping of earthworks and drainage) is awaiting decision.
Policy 27: Land north of School Lane, Roxton	Reserved matters (application 21/03333/MAR) for 50 dwellings was approved on 5 April 2023. The site is under construction and 23 dwellings are completed.
Policy 62: Kempston Hardwick - gypsy and traveller site	Two new day units with access, parking and associated works was granted permission in December 2018 (18/02566/DC3) and construction has started.

Table 4: Status of Local Plan 2002 policy allocations at 31 March 2025

Local Plan 2002 Policy	Status at 31 March 2025
Policy H2: Britannia Iron Works	Development completed.
Policy H6: Biddenham Loop	95 dwellings on land adjacent to Mercia Road was granted in December 2023 (planning application 21/01592/MAF). The development is under construction.
Policy H7: Land west of Kempston	Development completed.
Policy H8: Land north of Bromham Road, Biddenham	Outline planning permission was granted under 01/02199/OUT and multiple reserved matters have been approved. 735 dwellings have now been completed. 565 dwellings have extant planning permission but are not built.
Policy H9: Land at Shortstown	Development completed
Policy H11: Land south of Fields Road, Wootton	<p>The housing element of the allocation is completed whilst the employment aspect is partially developed. A hybrid scheme (17/00666/MAO) to permit a mix of employment uses including leisure-based employment and associated infrastructure in May 2018 was subsequently amended: 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 square metres of employment floorspace has been implemented.</p> <p>A children's nursery school on plot 1D (18/00644/DC3) was approved in June 2018 and has 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 (class E(b), C1 and sui generis uses) and plots 2 and 3 (class E(g) and ancillary B8 uses) was approved in April 2022.</p> <p>Hybrid planning application 24/02197/MOF – full planning application (class E(g)(iii) / B2 / B8 unit) on plot 2 and outline planning application (class E(g)(i) / E(g)(ii) / E(g)(iii) unit with ancillary B8 uses) on plot 3 was granted in November 2025.</p>
Policy H12: Land north of Fields Road, Wootton	Development completed.

Policy H13: Land off Rousebury Road, Stewartby	Development completed.
Policies H14 and E10: Elstow Storage Depot and Elstow Brickworks	<p>The new settlement of Wixams lies partly within the borough and partly within Central Bedfordshire, and 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 948 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 24/02019/MAR for 133 dwellings within parcel 3.2 was granted in March 2025. Reserved matters application 21/02615/MAR for 232 dwellings within parcel 3.4 was granted in December 2022. Reserved matters application 21/01440/MAR for 180 dwellings within parcel 3.5 was granted in October 2022. Development of parcels 3.4 and 3.5 is under construction. The remainder of the village has extant outline planning permission.</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 was granted in January 2024 and the development is under construction.</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 57-unit extension to the retirement village has extant planning permission (23/02015/MAF). 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 of 88,423 square metres on land to the southwest (23/02566/MAR) was granted in June 2024.</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>

Policy 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>: Development completed.</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>
Policy E2: Land south of Cambridge Road	Development completed.
Policy 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.

Table 5: Status of the Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 policy allocations at 31 March 2025

Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013: Policy reference	Status at 31 March 2025
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Policy 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.
Policy AD4: Land at Old Ford End Road, Queens Park, Bedford	Development completed.
Policy AD7: Land East of Eastcotts Road, Bedford	Development completed.
Policy AD10: Lansdowne Road, Warwick Avenue and Dynevor Road, Bedford	Development completed.
Policy AD11: Land at Medbury Farm, Elstow	No planning permission.
Policy AD12: Land at Bell Farm, Kempston	Development completed.
Policy AD13: Marston Vale Innovation Park, Phase 2, Wootton	Development completed.
Policy AD15: Manton Lane Reservoir Site, Bedford	Development completed.
Policy AD16: Land West of Manton Lane, Bedford	Allocated as employment land but planning permission was approved for a school (20/00488/MAR) which is now completed and opened in January 2025.
Policy AD17: Land West of the B530, Kempston	No planning permission: 3 drive-thru cafes and/or restaurants and commercial/trade counter/builders merchants and associated works is awaiting decision (planning application 25/01169/MAF)
Policy AD18: Land North of the A6-A428 Link Road, Bedford	Planning permission was granted under 18/02231/MDC4 to erect a microbrewery with access road (Class B2) (detailed element) and outline mixed use development proposals with all matters reserved except access and site clearance to include employment B1, B2, B8, D2 leisure use, A3, A4 and hotel uses, but only the outline proposals (which have lapsed) are within the allocated site. Reserved matters application (19/00921/MAR) to construct a leisure activities centre is awaiting decision.
Policy AD19: Land at Manton Lane, Bedford	Outline planning permission (application 23/01128/MDC3) was granted in March 2024 (provision of 8 travelling show people pitches)
Policy AD20: Land at Bedford Road, Great Barford	Planning application (16/00873/MAF) to support the development of 54 dwellings and 1 acre of land to provide a primary care facility has been granted (not yet started) and the dwellings are completed.

Policy AD21: Land at Chawston Lake, Roxton Road, Wyboston	Planning application 17/00880/MAF was granted in December 2017 to construct a holiday village including 8 holiday chalets, 20 caravan plots, camping area/facilities and ancillary works. The development was not implemented, and the permission has lapsed.
Policy AD22: Land North of Ravensden Road, Salph End, Renhold	No planning permission.
Policy AD23: Bedford River Valley Park - enabling development	Enabling development at Bedford River Valley Park has been allocated to finance the delivery of a watersports lake and other leisure uses in support of wider growth opportunities. The original plan focused on employment and leisure uses. While the watersports lake has planning permission and a legal start has been made, the enabling development hasn't progressed.

5.3 Table 6 shows the estimated number of dwellings allocated in 'made' and emerging neighbourhood plans and the status of allocated sites at the end of the monitoring year.

Table 6: Status of Neighbourhood Plan policy allocations at 31 March 2025

Parish	Dwellings allocated	Status at 31 March 2025
Bromham	500	<p><u>BP - Beauchamp Park</u> 390 dwellings were granted outline (planning application 19/01904/MAO) in January 2024.</p> <p><u>SR - The Stagsden Rise Development</u> 80 dwellings granted reserved matters (application 20/02520/MAR) in September 2021. The development is under construction and 76 dwellings are completed.</p> <p><u>OS - Old Stable Yard Development</u> 30 dwellings allocated. Planning application 25/00216/MAF is awaiting decision (30 dwellings).</p>
Clapham	500	<p><u>Policy HG2: Land at Milton Hill</u> Resolution to approve 500 dwellings (outline permission 21/00332/EIA) subject to legal agreement.</p>
Great Barford	500	<p><u>Policy H1: Land at Great Barford West</u> Planning application (24/02391/MAO is awaiting decision (500 dwellings)</p>
Sharnbrook	500	<p><u>Policy S3 – Land at Hill Farm, Mill Road</u> Hybrid full planning application 22/02193/MOF (304 dwellings) and outline permission (196 dwellings) were granted in August 2025.</p>

Bletsoe	11	<p><u>BNP policy 2 Land behind Captains Close</u> No planning permission (8 dwellings allocated)</p> <p><u>BNP policy 3 Land north of the Old Rectory</u> No planning permission (3 dwellings allocated).</p>
Carlton and Chellington	32	<p><u>Policy CC5 - Land at the Causeway</u> Development of 9 dwellings was completed in 2024/25.</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> No planning permission (4 dwellings allocated).</p>
Felmersham and Radwell	13	<p><u>Policy FR3: Land at The Old Road, Felmersham</u> No planning permission (6 dwellings allocated).</p> <p><u>Policy FR4: Perch Heights, Carlton Road, Felmersham</u> No planning permission (7 dwellings allocated).</p>
Great Denham	None	
Harrold	25	<p><u>Policy HARROLD NDP2: Land at Odell Road</u> 17 dwellings allocated. No planning permission.</p> <p><u>Policy HARROLD NDP3: Land east of Orchard Lane</u> 8 dwellings allocated - no planning permission.</p>
Milton Ernest	25	<p><u>Policy ME H1: Rushden Road</u> Resolution to approve 25 dwellings (outline permission 23/02638/MAO) subject to legal agreement.</p>
Oakley	40	<p><u>ONP HG1: Land at Station Road</u> Up to 40 dwellings was allowed on appeal in July 2023 (outline planning application 21/02394/MAO).</p> <p><u>ONP HG1: Land to the rear of the High Street</u> Outline planning permission 23/02494/MAO for 10 dwellings was granted in March 2025. Reserved matters application 25/02085/MAR for 10 dwellings is awaiting decision.</p>
Odell	None	
Ravensden	20	<p><u>Policy RNP3: Land adjoining Willow Farm, Butler Street</u> 10-15 dwellings allocated. Planning application (24/02409/MAF) is awaiting a decision (20 dwellings).</p>

		<u>Policy RNP4: Former barns at Cleat Hill Farm</u> No planning permission (up to 5 dwellings allocated).
Riseley	None	
Stevington	None	
Thurleigh	30	<u>Policy HS2 – Land at The Beeches, High Street</u> 11 dwellings were granted outline permission (application 20/02155/MAO) in August 2021 and revised outline application 23/00386/M73 to amend biodiversity net gain requirements was granted in November 2023. 11 dwellings were granted reserved matters (application 24/01167/MAR) in January 2025. <u>Policy HS3 – Land at Hayle Field, High Street</u> 20 dwellings were granted reserved matters (application 22/00370/MAR) in November 2022 and the development is under construction.
Turvey	50	<u>Policy T1: Carlton Road</u> 25 dwellings were granted outline planning permission (application 23/00019/MAO) in April 2025. <u>Policy T1: Mill Rise</u> 24 dwellings were granted (planning application 21/03304/MAF) in July 2025.
Willington	50	<u>Policy W4 – Land off Sandy Road</u> 50 dwellings were granted reserved matters (application 23/01034/MAR) in May 2024 and the development is under construction.
Wilshamstead	None	
Wootton	105	<u>Policy W3 – Land between Potters Cross and Wootton Road</u> Planning application 24/02426/MAF is awaiting decision (50 dwellings) <u>Policy W4 – Land south of Keeley Lane</u> 20 dwellings were granted in June 2025 (planning application 23/01846/MAF) <u>Policy W5 – Land at Tinkers Corner, Keeley Lane</u> No planning permission (15 dwellings allocated) <u>Policy W6 – Land on south side of Keeley Lane</u> 20 dwellings were granted outline (planning application 22/01035/MAO) in November 2022 and the reserved matters application (23/02636/MAR) was granted in June 2024.

6. Monitoring indicators

- 6.1** This section reports on the implementation of adopted 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.
- 6.2** Data relating to the 2024/25 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

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.

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.

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.

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



Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
1a: Reduction in carbon emissions	51S, 53, 55, 56, 57, 89	Carbon emissions in the borough per capita	2015 = 5.1 tonnes CO ₂ per capita 2016 = 4.9 tonnes CO ₂ per capita 2017 = 4.7 tonnes CO ₂ per capita 2018 = 4.5 tonnes CO ₂ per capita 2019 = 4.2 tonnes CO ₂ per capita 2020 = 3.8 tonnes CO ₂ per capita 2021 = 4.0 tonnes CO ₂ per capita 2022 = 3.7 tonnes CO ₂ per capita 2023 = 3.5 tonnes CO ₂ per capita	DESNZ
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 = 413 Onshore wind = 0 Landfill gas = 0 Sewage gas = 0 Municipal solid waste = 0 Plant biomass = 0 Animal biomass = 0 Anaerobic digestion = 0 Hydro = 0 Cofiring = 0	DESNZ
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	3 permissions	DESNZ

6.3 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.

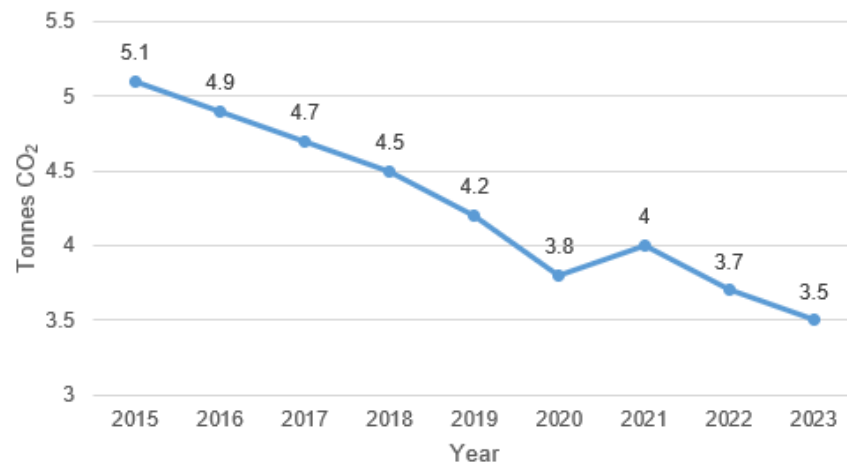
6.4 The Climate Change Act 2008 introduced a statutory target of reducing carbon dioxide emissions to at least 80% below

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.

6.5 Policy 51S of the Local Plan 2030 requires development and the use of land and buildings to address climate change, adapting to anticipated future changes and mitigating against further change through greenhouse gas emission reductions.

6.6 Data from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ)² presented in figure 1 shows gradually decreasing carbon dioxide emissions (tonnes) per capita between 2015 and 2020. Whilst a slight increase was recorded in 2021, the latest data for 2023 shows that borough emissions per capita have reduced to their lowest levels since 2015.

Figure 1: Per capita carbon dioxide emissions in the borough (2015-2023)



6.7 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 (published in 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. It processes around 550,000 tonnes of household, commercial and industrial (non-hazardous) waste annually to reduce landfill. The waste is combusted and the heat converts water into steam, which drives generators to produce electricity for the national grid, capable of powering 112,500 homes when at full capacity and recovering resources and by-products for reuse. District heating system capabilities are being developed at the site.

6.8 DESNZ also produces local authority data annually on existing renewable energy installations at local authority level. Most of the data relating to renewable energy technologies is based on records of installations that have been registered under an accreditation scheme, which leads to underrepresentation of technologies (e.g. small-scale solar PV/wind) that are not registered or accredited under such schemes. The latest data from the Regional Renewable Statistics³ shows that at the end of 2024 there were around 4,237 renewable energy installations in the borough, the vast majority being solar photovoltaics (around 4,213 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 91.5 gigawatt hours (GWh) per year which is 6.4 GWh less than last year's estimate (97.9 GWh). For comparison, annual

² UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics, 2005 to 2023 (DESNZ, 2025). Table 1.2: Local authority territorial carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions estimates, which is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics>

³ Renewable electricity by local authority 2014-2024 (DESNZ, 2025). Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/regional-renewable-statistics>

electricity consumption in the borough was 673.4 GWh in 2023⁴, 5.8 GWh less than in 2022.

6.9 The Renewable Energy Planning Database (REPD) tracks the progress of UK renewable electricity projects over 150 kiloawatts (kWh) through the planning system⁵. The database shows that three projects were granted planning permission during 2024/25 (although no projects became operational during the monitoring year)⁶. The total includes:

- a 49.9 megawatts (MW) solar farm to the south of Bushmead Road, Staploe (24/00858/MAF);
- a battery energy storage facility at the entrance to Elms Farm Industrial Estate, Bedford (24/00997/FUL); and
- a 10.4 MW solar farm comprising of an array of 15,968 ground mounted solar PV panels at Gooseys Lodge, Wymington (23/02517/MAF).

6.10 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 its carbon neutrality pledge and UK-wide targets relating to climate change mitigation.

Monitoring indicator 2	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	No permissions	BBC

6.11 Planning applications on land bordering the River Great Ouse in Bedford town centre are assessed against criteria set out in policy 17 of the Local Plan 2030. There were no planning permissions in the riverside area of Bedford town centre during the monitoring year.

6.12 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. Policy 35S of the Local Plan 2030 relates to the provision, protection and enhancement of green infrastructure in the borough.

⁴) Subnational total final energy consumption (DESNZ, 2025) at: www.gov.uk/government/collections/total-final-energy-consumption-at-sub-national-level

⁵ It includes the dates of planning permission being granted or refused, when construction started, and when the project became operational. Small-scale technologies that do not require planning permission are not included in the dataset.

⁶ Renewable Energy Planning Database (DESNZ, 2025) at www.gov.uk/government/publications/renewable-energy-planning-database-monthly-extract

Monitoring indicator	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	Carlton and Chellington Neighbourhood Plan allocation: Land at The Causeway (policy CC5) was completed (21/02406/FUL). The existing hedgerow along the eastern boundary has been retained and new native evergreen hedgerow planting has been introduced along western garden boundaries. A number of ornamental trees, ornamental shrubs and specimen shrubs have been planted throughout the development and along property frontages. A grass area is provided along the western boundary adjacent to The Causeway and to all private rear gardens.	BBC

6.13 The Bedford Borough Green Infrastructure Plan (adopted in 2009) identifies a strategic green infrastructure network, which is divided into six separate opportunity zones. Policy AD24 of the Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 provides further detail about the zones and their priorities to protect and enhance green infrastructure.

6.14 In 2022/23, the method of data collection was reviewed and this found that the loss/creation/enhancement of green infrastructure links on completed Local Plan allocated sites was the most effective way of monitoring delivery of policy objectives to achieve a net gain in green infrastructure.

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
4a Woodland creation in the Forest of Marston Vale	36S	Amount of new woodland planted (ha)	109.69 hectares of new woodland area was created in and around the Forest of Marston Vale during 2024/25. Of the total, 35.27 hectares of new woodland was created in the 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 section 106)	£280.44	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	In March 2025, the Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Trust appointed consultants to investigate the feasibility of constructing the waterway, including concept designs on the first 2-kilometres section in the eastern part of the route near Bedford.	BBC

- 6.15** 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.
- 6.16** 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. The council and its partners will deliver over 800 hectares of green and blue infrastructure in the east of Bedford to form [Bedford River Valley Park](#). The [Bedford to Milton Keynes Waterway Park](#) scheme, led by the Bedford & Milton Keynes Waterway Trust, consists of a 26km canal connecting Milton Keynes to the head of navigation of the River Great Ouse at Kempston.
- 6.17** In July 2024, the project's delivery phase was launched following executive approval in June, which will focus on constructing sections of the waterway as part of a flexible and strategic approach as funding opportunities become available. In March 2025, the Bedford and Milton Keynes Waterway Trust appointed consultants to work on the first 2km section in the eastern part of the route near Bedford, which will cross beneath the A421 via an underpass that has already been built. The design aims to integrate the canal with existing sustainable drainage systems at Bedford Commercial Park.
- 6.18** In order to meet the 30% tree cover targets in the Forest of Marston Vale, policy 36S of the Local Plan 2030 sets out a requirement to provide tree cover at 30% within new developments in the borough or provide an off-site financial contribution, secured through a section 106 agreement.
- 6.19** In the monitoring year 2024/25, a further 109.69 hectares of new woodland area was created in and around the Forest of Marston Vale, all under the Defra sponsored [Trees for Climate](#) programme. Within Bedford Borough, a total of 35.27 hectares of new woodland planting was delivered across 17 projects, which involved the planting of over 30,770 trees and over 3.343km of new hedgerow and involved the engagement of around 525 people.
- 6.20** Planting activity focuses primarily on a mix of native broadleaf trees and shrubs, selected to regenerate the landscape and boost biodiversity, extending across Bedford and Central Bedfordshire administrative areas, with the 61 square mile designated Forest of Marston Vale area spanning the boundary. The Trees for Climate programme enables planting activity to radiate out into a surrounding 'halo' of up to 10 miles beyond the core forest area, bringing wider areas into scope (including Milton Keynes). During this monitoring year, 35.27 hectares of planting occurred in Bedford, 56.45 hectares in Central Bedfordshire, and 17.97 hectares in Milton Keynes.
- 6.21** During the monitoring year, £280.44 in developer contributions was secured towards the forest, which is more than the amount secured last year (£0), but less than the amounts secured in 2022/23 (£21,295.72) and in 2021/22 (£28,770.36). This reflects the preference for planting on site (monitoring indicator 4a) and only seeking financial contributions where this cannot be achieved.

Monitoring indicator	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 line with milestones in the LDS	The SPD was adopted on 25 January 2023.	BBC

- 6.22** 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	Related policies	Target	Result	Data source
6a: Progress in preparing the Trees and Development SPD	37, 38, 39, 40	Details of preparation in line with milestones in the LDS	The SPD was adopted on 11 June 2024.	BBC

- 6.23** The supporting text to policy 38 of the Local Plan 2030 confirms that a supplementary planning document will be produced to provide guidance on the types of trees that should be included in landscaping installation and future maintenance, tailored to specific types of development. The SPD was adopted in the monitoring year, on 11 June 2024.
- 6.24** Policies 42S and 43 of the Local Plan 2030 set out objectives to protect and enhance the biodiversity and geodiversity of the borough where appropriate.

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result (hectares)	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	8 Sites of Special Scientific Interest covering 166.7 ha. No change from previous year 8 Local Nature Reserves covering 126.54 ha. No change from previous year	Natural England

- 6.25** 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. [Natural England's designated sites system](#) shows that in August 2024 there are eight sites of special scientific interest in the borough (see table 7) covering 166.7 hectares of land. The largest SSSI in the borough is Odell Great Wood (85.94 hectares). There has been no change to the area of SSSI land in the borough during 2024/25.

Table 7: Sites of Special Scientific Interest in Bedford Borough, as at 2025

SSSI site	Main habitat	Area (hectares)
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 /	7.62

SSSI site	Main habitat	Area (hectares)
	Calcareous grassland – lowland	
Swineshead Wood	Broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland – lowland	21.87
Tilwick Meadow	Natural grassland - lowland	2.54
Yelden Meadows	Natural grassland - lowland	2.84
Total		166.7

6.26 Local authorities declare local nature reserves (LNR) in consultation with 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. [Natural England's designated sites system](#) shows that in August 2025 there are eight local nature reserves in the borough (see table 8) covering 126.54 hectares of land. There has been no change to the area of LNR land in the borough during 2024/25.

Table 8: Local Nature Reserves in Bedford Borough, as at 2025

LNR site	Type	Area (hectares)
Bromham Lake	Biological	10.89
Browns Wood	Biological	18.02
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
Total		126.54

6.27 Natural England assess the condition of SSSIs using six categories: favourable, unfavourable recovering, unfavourable no change, unfavourable declining, part destroyed and destroyed. The goal 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	Related policies	Information gathered	Result (hectares)	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, part destroyed, destroyed	Favourable = 51.3ha (30.8%) Unfavourable recovering = 115.08ha (69.0%) Unfavourable no change = 0ha (0%) Unfavourable declining = 0.3ha (0.2%) Part destroyed = 0ha (0%) Destroyed = 0ha (0%)	No change	Natural England

6.28 According to data published on [Natural England's designated sites system](#), the proportion of SSSI site area assessed to be in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition is 99.8%. Overall, the majority of SSSI land is deemed to be in unfavourable recovering condition (69.0%) 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. There

has been no change to the condition of SSSI land in the borough during 2024/25.

Monitoring indicator	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% 2021/22 = 57.6% 2022/23 = 58.4% 2023/24 = 57.6%	Down	Defra

6.29 Locally important sites are non-statutory areas identified at local level for their significant nature conservation value. Local sites are known in the borough as county wildlife sites, roadside nature reserves and local geological sites.

6.30 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.

6.31 The latest data (2023/24) from Defra shows that 72 local sites are in positive conservation management in the borough; this represents 57.6% of the total number of sites (125). Aside from a small dip recorded in 2023/24, historical data shows a gradual increase in the proportion of local sites in positive conservation management in the borough⁷.

6.32 In 2023, the government appointed responsible authorities to deliver local nature recovery strategies (LNRS). These locally led strategies will identify key actions and locations for supporting recovery and resilience of the ecological network and the environmental services nature provides. Bedford Borough Council is working with Central Bedfordshire Borough Council, Luton Borough Council and other stakeholders to develop a [LNRS](#) covering the whole of Bedfordshire. Consultation on a draft LNRS was undertaken between 1 July and 7 September 2025.

Monitoring indicator	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	1 permission	BBC
10b: Impact of development on	44	Completed new development on or	None	BBC

⁷ Defra (2025) 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>

the River Great Ouse and its environs		connected to the River Great Ouse		
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6.33 The River Great Ouse is a popular destination for recreation and sport, offering a mix of formal and informal options. Policy 44 of the Local Plan 2030 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.

6.34 During 2024/25, only one development on or adjoining the River Great Ouse was granted planning permission, which is one less than last year. The application details and the reasons behind the approval are summarised in table 9.

Table 9: Development on or connected to the River Great Ouse granted permission during 2024/25 and the reasons behind the decision

Application reference	Site	Description of development	Reasons for granting planning permission
22/01468 /EIAWM	Land to the north east and west of Willington	Extension and consolidation of mineral extraction and the importation	The restoration strategy aims to increase nature conservation habitats such as wetland,

	Lock Quarry, St Neots Road, Willington	of inert material to the north east and west of the existing Willington Lock quarry and mineral processing plant site	floodplain grazing marsh and wet woodland along the River Great Ouse. Various planning conditions have been imposed to ensure that development aligns with the restoration strategy.
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6.35 No new development on or connected to the River Great Ouse was completed in 2024/25.

Monitoring indicator	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	One exceedance of the annual mean NO ₂ objective of 40 µg/m ³ within the Bedford town centre AQMA	BBC

6.36 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 2024](#) identifies that in 2023 there was one exceedance of the annual mean nitrogen dioxide objective of 40 µg/m³ after bias adjustment and annualisation. This is at the same location (Prebend Street) as historically has been above the limit for a number of years. There was one diffusion tube result within 10% of the 40 µg/m³ limit situated on St Peters Street within the

AQMA (37.9 µg/m³). There were no exceedances of the hourly objective for the seventh year running.

6.37 The 2023 monitoring results were higher than the number of exceedances in 2022, which was zero, however 2022 used the national rather than local bias adjustment factor applied to 2023 data. Had the national bias adjustment been applied this year, all diffusion tube monitoring locations would have seen a reduction from 2022 results.

6.38 The results from 2023 and the previous five years show how that areas to the east, north, and south of the AQMA have consistently been at concentrations below 90% of the annual mean objective. Only the centre of the AQMA has recorded concentrations within 10% of the objective. Due to the impact of the covid-19 pandemic on air quality data during 2020 and 2021, it will be necessary to continue gathering data during 2024 to support any decisions to reduce the size of the AQMA through the Annual Status Report process.

Monitoring indicator	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"> • Very good = 0 watercourses • Good = 2 watercourses • Moderate = 16 watercourses 	No change for ecological class. Historical data on chemical class is not comparable	Environment Agency

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bad = 1 watercourse Chemical class <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waterbodies fail (all) 		
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	Down	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

6.39 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).

6.40 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 Catchment Data Explorer](#). The status of watercourses and watercourses with part of their catchment in the borough are shown in table 10. 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 ecological status of Begwary Brook has worsened since 2016 whilst the ecological status of Colmworth Brook has improved from poor to moderate status.

Table 10: Water quality in water bodies in the borough in 2022

Operational catchment	Water body name	Type	Hydro-morphological designation	Ecological status	Chemical status
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

Operational catchment	Water body name	Type	Hydro-morphological designation	Ecological status	Chemical status
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

6.41 The Environment Agency's [guidance](#) 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).

6.42 The Environment Agency publishes a list of applications where it objected on flood risk and water quality grounds to aid local authorities and meet government reporting obligations⁸. During 2024/25, the Environment Agency lodged objections on flood risk grounds to six planning applications in the borough. Of these, one application was refused, one was withdrawn, and four applications are not yet determined (as of August 2025).

6.43 The Environment Agency also made objections to four planning applications in the borough on grounds of water quality in 2024/25. Of these, two applications were refused, one was granted permission, and one application is not yet determined (as of August 2025). The Environment Agency objected to the change use application 24/00913/MAF at The Mansion House, Northampton Road, Bromham from a residential dwelling to a hotel due to non-mains drainage proposed in sewered area. However, following confirmation that the applicant is planning to connect to mains drainage, the Environment Agency raised no objection to the planning application. No permissions were granted with

unresolved objections from the Environment Agency during the monitoring year.

Monitoring indicator	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 the borough sits	No change	Environment Agency
13b: Water consumption	50S, 52	Average household water consumption	123.9 litres per person per day (metered and unmetered)	Down	Anglian Water

6.44 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 2021⁹ confirms that the Anglian Water supply region remains an area of serious water stress.

6.45 Anglian Water Services Limited's [Annual Integrated Report 2025](#) shows that the average household water consumption (metered and unmetered) in the Anglian Water area in 2024/25 was 123.9 litres per person per day.

⁸ Environment Agency objections on the basis of flood risk and water quality: 2016/2017 to 2024/2025 (www.gov.uk/government/publications/environment-agency-objections-to-planning-on-the-basis-of-flood-risk)

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

This is a reduction of more than 8 litres per person per day compared to 2023/24 (132.0 litres). The report goes on to state that this reduction is underpinned by the large-scale roll out of smart meters, customer-side leakage and Anglian Water's ongoing behaviour change programme.

Monitoring indicator	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% 2019/20 = 42.7% 2020/21 = 40.0% 2021/22 = 37.0% 2022/23 = 35.7% 2023/24 = 38.0%	Up	Defra

6.46 Central Bedfordshire Council oversees the determination of minerals and waste planning applications and monitors minerals and waste sites on behalf of Bedford Borough Council and Luton County Council, and publishes results annually in the [Minerals and Waste Monitoring Report](#). The most recent monitoring report covers the period 1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023.

6.47 Data on household waste recycling rates is not included in the Minerals and Waste Monitoring Report. Data from Defra shows that the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling, composting or anaerobic digestion in 2023/24 was 38.0% - this is an increase from the amount recorded in 2022/23 (35.7%)¹⁰.

¹⁰ Local authority collected waste management – annual results (Defra, 2024). Available at <https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/lgastandard?mod-metric=46&mod->

Monitoring indicator	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	1 permission	BBC
15b: Development on designated urban open spaces	AD43	Number of planning permissions for development resulting in the loss of all or part of an urban open space	2 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	0 permissions	BBC

6.48 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 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.

[period=15&mod-area=E06000055&mod-group=AllUnitaryLainCountry_England&mod-type=comparisonGroupType&mod-groupType=namedComparisonGroup](https://lginform.local.gov.uk/reports/lgastandard?mod-metric=46&mod-type=comparisonGroupType&mod-groupType=namedComparisonGroup)

6.49 During 2024/25, one planning permission led to the loss of all or part of an urban open space and two planning permissions led to the loss of all or part of a village open space. This is three more than last year. The application details and the reasons behind the approval are summarised in table 11. No planning permissions were granted that led to the loss of all or part of a local green space during the monitoring year.

Table 11: Planning permissions granted that resulted in the loss or partial loss of a village open space or urban open space during 2024/25 and the reasons behind the decision

Application reference	Site	Description of development	Reasons for granting planning permission
24/00779/FUL	Wootton Lower School, Bedford Road, Wootton	Erection of a two-storey extension	Given that part of the site is not publicly accessible due to it being on the school grounds and the extension would be located on an area of hardcore within an enclosed site, the area of land does not aid towards the visual relief of the built-up area. As such the development of this area of village open space would not harm the wider designated site
24/00216/MDC3	Bedford Academy, Mile Road, Bedford	Erection of a two-storey teaching block	A small part of the site lies within a designated Urban open space. However, this is not considered to compromise the designation as the development will be seen in context with the existing

Application reference	Site	Description of development	Reasons for granting planning permission
			school building and grounds and does not harm its reason for designation
24/00591/FUL	Sailors Bridge Cottage, Woburn Road, Kempston	Change of use of land from urban open space to residential amenity land and a garden room	Given the siting, size and height of the garden room, it will not affect the area to function as a green break in the built-up area

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
16a: Development in designated local gaps	AD42	Number of planning permissions in local gaps	No permissions	BBC

6.50 Saved policy AD42 of the Allocations and Designations Local Plan seeks to prevent the coalescence of settlements between nearby rural settlements, particularly with the urban area, and 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. No planning permissions within a local gap were granted during 2024/25, which is one less than last year.

THEME 2: ACCESSIBILITY

Local Plan 2030: 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.

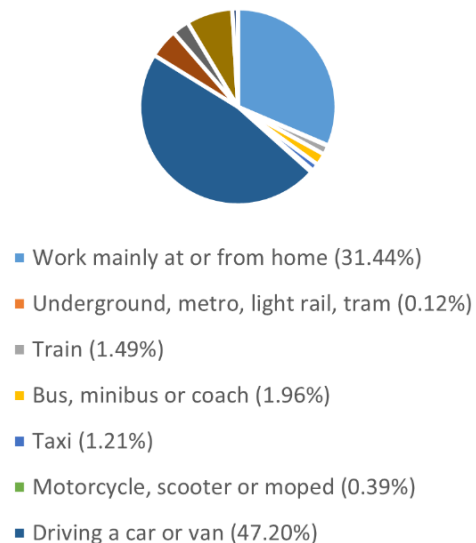
Local Plan: Objective 7: Improve the borough's transport infrastructure in order to support growth in the local economy and to make the borough more attractive as a place to live and do business. Reduce congestion in the borough, particularly into and around the town centre and by making journeys by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

Monitoring indicator	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 = 82.2% At least once per week = 75.1% At least 3 times per week = 45.4% At least 5 times per week = 34.6%	Up	Department for Transport
17b: Cycling activity	AD39	Percentage of adults who cycle for any purpose	At least once per month = 19.7% At least once per week = 15.2%	Up	Department for Transport
17c: Delivery of new cycle and footways	91, AD36, AD39	Amount of newly adopted footway and cycleway delivered annually	311 metres carriageway footway and off-street footway	Up	BBC



6.51 Information on method of travel to work in the borough from the 2021 census has now been published. The results are illustrated in figure 2¹¹ 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 the borough work mainly at or from home.

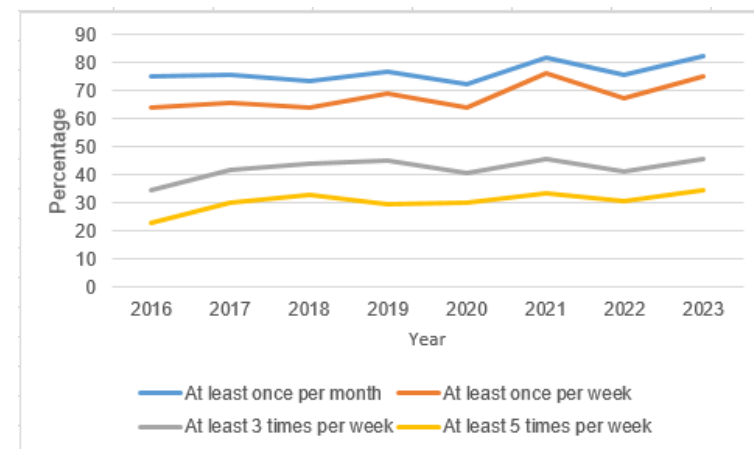
Figure 2: Method used to travel to work, March 2021



6.52 Participation in walking and cycling at local authority level is compiled from the National Travel Survey and Active Lives Survey¹². The data in figure 3 generally shows a gradual

increase in walking in the borough between 2016 and 2021. The national lockdown that started in early 2020 to limit the spread of COVID-19 did lead to a small decline in activity due to lifestyle changes, but there was a noticeable increase in walking from 2020 to 2021. The latest data shows increases in all frequencies of walking between 2022 and 2023. 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 increases in all frequencies of cycling. Cycling frequencies of at least three times per week and at least five times per week, which were reported in previous monitoring reports have been removed from the published data due to the low frequencies recorded in the sample.

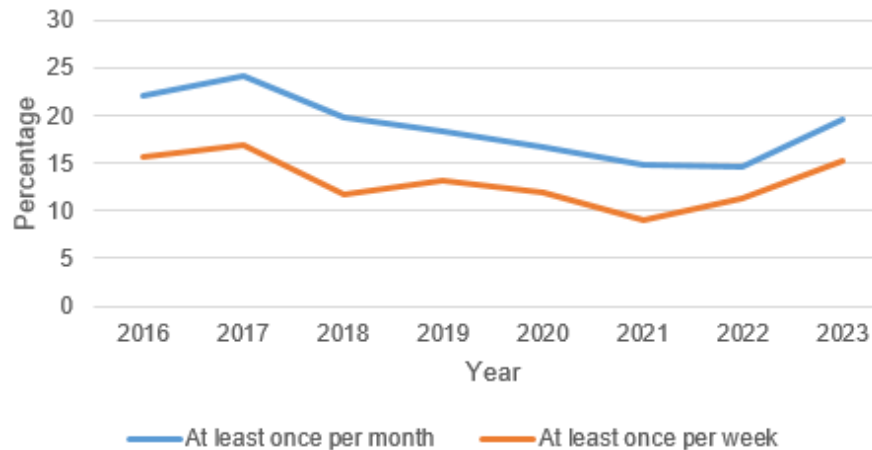
Figure 3: Percentage of adults who walk for any purpose by frequency (2016-2023)



¹¹ Method used to travel to work by local authority (ONS, 2023) at <https://www.ons.gov.uk/datasets/TS061/editions/2021/versions/4>

¹² Proportion of adults who do any walking or cycling, for any purpose, by frequency and local authority: England (DfT, 2024) at www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/walking-and-cycling-statistics-cw

Figure 4: Percentage of adults who cycle for any purpose by frequency 2016-2023



6.53 During the monitoring year, 311 metres of carriageway footway or off-street footway was adopted. This is more than the amount that was adopted in 2023/24 (0 metres). Future adoption of footways and cycle links will be set out in the forthcoming Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan.

Monitoring indicator	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	202 publicly accessible electric vehicle charging points	Department for Transport

¹³ Publicly available electric vehicle charging devices by local authority, 1 July 2025 (Department for Transport, 2025) at <https://maps.dft.gov.uk/ev-charging-map/index.html>.

6.54 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 from the Department for Transport¹³ shows that on 1 April 2025 there were 202 publicly accessible electric vehicle charging points in the borough, which is an increase from 186 in July 2024. The latest data shows the borough has 107.8 charging devices per 100,000 population.

6.55 The [Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy \(2024-2027\)](#) sets out the locations where new electric vehicle charging points will be installed in the borough, including the urban area and larger villages, especially where on street parking is limited.

6.56 The building regulations require new residential and non-residential buildings and major renovations to have electric vehicle charging infrastructure. This aligns with the government's 2050 net-zero target and will increase the number of new electric vehicle charging points in new developments.

6.57 The [Bus Service Improvement Plan](#) sets out the gaps in the present network and in response includes a number of projects and ambitions relating to future provision. Most 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	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
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"> In July 2024, the council signed the formal contract with Network Rail to start work on Wixams station. Enabling works began in autumn 2024. The Secretary of State for Transport issued safeguarding directions for the land required for East West Rail in November 2024. A final non-statutory consultation on East West Rail was undertaken between November 2024 and January 2025. 	BBC National Highways East West Rail

6.58 A number of strategic infrastructure projects are identified in policy 90S of the Local Plan 2030. 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.

6.59 Progress on each project at the end of the monitoring year is presented in table 12 and where possible, a more up to date position is provided.

Table 12: Status of transport schemes identified in policy 90S of the Local Plan 2030

Scheme	Description	Status at 31/03/2025
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.	<p>East West Rail company undertook a consultation on its options on the route its railway will take through the borough including the redevelopment of Bedford station in spring 2021.</p> <p>The Bedford Area Strategic Advice document (Network Rail, August 2022) 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, alongside improvements to station facilities and gate line capacity as part of the planned redevelopment of the station.</p> <p>The Route Update Announcement published in May 2023 confirmed its preferred route alignment the government's commitment to the delivery of East West Rail to Bedford and Cambridge was endorsed in the 2024 autumn budget statement.</p> <p>East West Rail is preparing amended station design proposals to support future rail capacity due to the increased certainty of the Universal project proceeding (subject to planning permission being granted).</p>

Scheme	Description	Status at 31/03/2025
ii. Development opportunities around Ford End Road and Prebend Street		A bid to the Housing Infrastructure Fund has been submitted to construct the Prebend Street Relief Road, and the council is working with Homes England to develop this further.
iii. Wixams railway station	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 potential to act as an enabler for wider growth across the sub-region.	<p>The station was granted planning permission (22/01933/MAR) in February 2023. In May 2023, after reviewing the council's outline business case, the Secretary of State for Transport agreed that construction should proceed. Amendments to the design of the station building and car park (24/01889/MAR) was approved in February 2025. In July 2024, the council signed the formal contract with Network Rail to start work on the station and enabling works began in autumn 2024.</p> <p>Universal Destinations and Experiences announced on 9 April 2025 that it would bring a theme park and resort to the former brickworks site at Kempston Hardwick, pending planning consent approvals. As a result of the announcement, partners are now exploring the options to expand from the original two-platform design to a four-platform layout to accommodate a significant increase in demand.</p>
iv. East-West rail scheme	The exact route and stations along East West Rail connection stage 2 (Bletchley to	East West Rail Oxford to Bicester is complete and the section between Bicester and Bletchley has recently been completed and following testing and training over the coming months is on course to begin passenger

Scheme	Description	Status at 31/03/2025
	<p>Bedford) have yet to be confirmed.</p> <p>The redevelopment of Bedford Midland and Bedford St. Johns stations are expected as part of, or coinciding with, East West Rail. Connection stage 2 (Bletchley to Bedford) which is projected to open in 2030.</p> <p>Connection Stage 3 (Bedford to Cambridge) is currently proposed to open in the mid-2030s.</p>	<p>services in late 2025. The section between Bletchley and Bedford is currently progressing through detailed design.</p> <p>The government confirmed its commitment to East West Rail in the 2024 autumn budget, including a commitment to accelerate work on the Marston Vale Line for 2030 services.</p> <p>In November 2024, the Secretary of State for Transport issued safeguarding directions for the land required for East West Rail.</p> <p>A final non-statutory consultation on East West Rail ended in January 2025. A statutory consultation is expected to take place in winter 2025/26.</p>
v. Schemes identified in the Bedford Town Centre Strategy (Transporting Bedford 2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Britannia Road improvements • Bromham Road / Shakespeare Road / Ashburnham Road junction • Bedford High Street • Clapham Road / A6 / superstore (northbound) and Clapham Road / Manton Lane / 	Works completed

Scheme	Description	Status at 31/03/2025
	Shakespeare Road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ampthill Road corridor • Cauldwell Street / Britannia Road junction 	
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	A6-A421 link	The council has hired consultants to prepare a strategic outline business case that will be submitted to the Department for Transport to gain programme entry to the major road Network programme (an agreed priority for the England's Economic Heartlands transport body in the 2025-2030 period).
x. Improvements on Highway England's strategic road network ¹⁴	A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet – upgrade to a new 10-mile dual carriageway with a number of junction improvements	Work to build the new A421 dual carriageway started in April 2024. The road is scheduled to open to traffic in spring 2027. Between February and April 2024, the garage, hotel and commercial building on the southbound side of the A1 between the Great North Road and Black Cat roundabout were demolished. The new Roxton link road opened to traffic in June 2025.

Scheme	Description	Status at 31/03/2025
	Potential impacts on the borough: A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon; A45 / A6 Chowns Mill roundabout and M1 J13-J16 smart motorways programme	Works have been completed on the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Works have been completed on the A45 / A6 Chowns Mill roundabout improvement, and Works have been completed on the M1 J13-J16 smart motorways programme.

6.60 The next Local Transport Plan is expected to run to 2050. Comments were recently invited on a survey which will help to shape all policies relating to transport and inform its position on transport issues that the council does not control, such as railways, commercial bus services and waterways. As well as the public survey, the council will be consulting with transport groups, community organisations, schools, businesses, the emergency service, parish councils, and other stakeholders.

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
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	During the 2023/24 monitoring year: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £4,517,666 in Community Infrastructure Levy contributions have been collected. • The Council spent £10,505,954.91 of previously collected CIL on the Transporting Bedford 2020 project, improvements at 	BBC

¹⁴ Highways England is now National Highways

		Delivery Plan ¹⁵	<p>Allhallows and Paula Radcliffe Way and public open spaces' footbridges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seven new section 106 agreements were signed and the funding secured through these agreements equates to £1,740,680.15 at present. • £12,374 received in s106 contributions relating to historic permissions. • £11,332,925 of s106 contributions spent across projects in highways, education, rights of way and green space. <p>2024/25 monitoring year data (CIL and section 106) will be published in the next Infrastructure Funding Statement.</p>	
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6.61 The [Infrastructure Funding Statement 2023-2024](#) highlights that over the reported year, £4,517,666 in Community Infrastructure Levy contributions were collected. The council spent £10,505,954.91 of previously collected CIL on the Transporting Bedford 2020 project, improvements at Allhallows and Paula Radcliffe Way, and public open space footbridges. This is less than the amount of Community Infrastructure Levy contributions that were collected in the previous year (£6,039,065).

6.62 During 2023/24, seven new section 106 agreements were signed and the funding secured through these agreements

equates to £1,740,680.15 (at present). The council received £12,374,719 in section 106 contributions and spent £11,332,925 across projects in highways, education, rights of way and green space. This is more than the amount of section 106 contributions received (£5,555,843) and spent (£1,952,774) in the previous year.

6.63 The Infrastructure Funding Statement (2024-2025) has not yet been published, but it will be available to view on the [Community Infrastructure Levy web page](#) and key headlines will be reported in the next monitoring report.

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
21a: Telecommunications infrastructure	95, 96	Number of planning permissions granted	<p>No applications for domestic equipment permitted</p> <p>2 applications for communications infrastructure permitted</p>	BBC

6.64 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.

¹⁵ The Infrastructure Delivery Plan sets out strategic and local infrastructure requirements to support planned new development in the borough over the local plan period.

- 6.65** The government's target is to provide at least 85% of UK premises with gigabit-capable broadband by 2025, and to achieve nationwide coverage (at least 99%) by 2030. Coverage stands at 99.4% (≥ 30 Mbps) across the borough with superfast speeds. Data from [Think Broadband](#) shows that 87.70% of properties in Bedford Borough have access to gigabit speeds. This is up from 82.85% last year.
- 6.66** The Openreach Full Fibre investment programme has the objective of providing 20 million premises throughout the UK with ultrafast full fibre broadband by 2026. The [deployment map](#) shows that Openreach has started its full fibre upgrade in the borough. Openreach intend to continue building past 2026 to reach as many as 30 million premises before the end of 2030 assuming the investment conditions are still supportive. This investment includes the fibre first programme which means new development will be planned with a full fibre solution. Similar to Openreach, Virgin Media completed its gigabit broadband upgrade through Project Lightning in December 2021.
- 6.67** The development of telecommunications infrastructure is mostly covered under permitted development rights. Where planning permission is required, policy 95 of the Local Plan 2030 is used to assess domestic equipment and policy 96 relates to the consideration of telecommunication equipment.

THEME 3: DELIVERING GROWTH

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.

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

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.



Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
22a: Progress in meeting the number of net additional jobs required to 2030	69S	Information about the number of net additional jobs created.	9,000 jobs created between 2015 and 2023	BRES

6.68 Policy 69S of the Local Plan 2030 requires the provision of 6,900 additional jobs in the borough over the period from 2015 to 2030, focussed primarily in the urban area and on the employment sites that are already allocated in the development plan.

6.69 According to the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES), there were approximately 82,000 jobs in the borough in 2023¹⁶. In the period 2015 to 2023, an additional 9,000 jobs were recorded, which exceeds the total number of additional jobs required under policy 69S to 2030.

6.70 BRES data shows that, in the period 2015 to 2023, the “real estate” broad industrial group experienced the largest proportional increase (200%). With regard to actual increases in employment, approximately 3,000 jobs were created in “health and social work” broad industrial group between 2015 and 2023, whilst the “transportation and storage” and “accommodation and food service” broad industrial groups both exhibited a rise of approximately 2,000 jobs between 2015 and 2023. In terms of job losses, the “wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles” broad industrial group experienced the largest

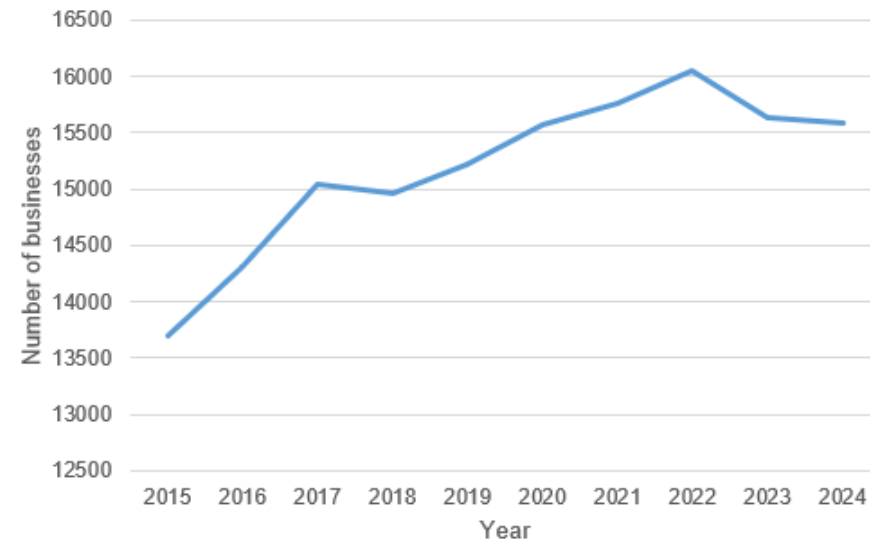
¹⁶ Labour market profile at nomisweb.co.uk (ONS via NOMIS, 2023)

actual decrease of approximately 2,000 jobs between 2015 and 2023. The “electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply” broad industrial group experienced the largest proportional decrease from approximately 400 jobs in 2015 to 200 jobs in 2023, representing a fall of 50%.

Monitoring indicator	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 1,895 businesses between 2015 and 2024	IDBR

6.71 Data from the Inter-Departmental Business Register¹⁷ presented in figure 5 shows a reduction of 460 businesses in the borough between 2022 and 2024 following a peak in 2022. However, there has been a notable increase of 13.8% in the number of businesses in the borough since 2015.

Figure 5: Business count in Bedford borough: 2015-2024



Monitoring indicator	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	No permissions	BBC

6.72 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

¹⁷ UK business counts from the Inter Departmental Business Register (ONS, 2024) at www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports.

needed to achieve this ambition including education and training opportunities. To facilitate this, policy 74 of the Local Plan 2030 requires that an employment and skills plan is provided for development over 200 dwellings or 5 hectares of 'B' class uses.

6.73 During the monitoring year, no planning applications were eligible to submit an employment and skills plan, which is the same as the previous year.

6.74 Bedford Borough Council carries out employment monitoring on sites where more than 100 square metres of employment floorspace is proposed. Table 13 summarises the total amount of employment floorspace (use classes B1, B2, B8 and E(g)) completed in the borough over the period from 1 April 2015.

Table 13: Summary of B1, B2, B8 and E(g) floorspace losses and completions in the borough (2015/16-2023/24)

Year	Gross internal floorspace loss (sqm)	Gross internal floorspace gain (sqm)	Net internal floorspace total (sqm)
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
2023/24	544	1,648	1,104
2024/25	2,164	372	-1,792

Definitions:

- Use class B2: General industry
- Use class B8: Storage and distribution.
- Use class E: Commercial business and service. Class E(g) uses can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity:
 - 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.

6.75 The Local Plan 2030 did not propose to increase the existing employment land supply figure as supporting evidence suggested that existing supply allocated in previous plans, was sufficient to meet future needs to 2030.

6.76 Existing employment sites are categorised 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 (policy 71). Sites within the remaining categories - collectively known as key employment site - will be expected to remain primarily in class B employment use (Policy 70).

6.77 Progress with delivery of employment policy allocations carried forward from the Local Plan 2002 and Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 is reported in section 5 of this report.

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result (square metres)	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) = -1,247 sqm E(g)(ii) = 0 sqm E(g)(iii) = 0 sqm E(g) unspecified = 0 sqm B2 = -545 sqm B8 = 0 sqm E(g) / B2 / B8 mixed = 0 sqm Total = -1,792 sqm	BBC

6.78 For the 2024/25 monitoring year, there was a net loss of 1,792 square metres employment floorspace completions 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). Most new employment floorspace completed during the monitoring year was in E class (g)(i) office and B2 general industrial uses. The total includes the erection of a 100 square metre industrial unit at Unit 2 Windsor Road, Bedford (23/01278/FUL); a 123 square metre workshop at Laing O'Rourke, Barford Road, Little Barford (24/01517/FUL); and a 149 square metre office building at Rushey Ford Business Park, West End Road, Kempston (23/01968/S73). The greatest loss of office floorspace (1,229 square metres) resulted from the prior approval to change the use to residential at 1 Lurke Street, Bedford (23/01315/CPNMA). Further information is presented in the [Employment Monitoring Report](#).

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result (square metres)	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 = 1,396 sqm E(g)(ii) loss = 0 sqm E(g)(iii) loss = 0 sqm E(g) unspecified loss = 0 sqm B2 loss = 768 sqm B8 loss = 0 sqm E(g) / B2 / B8 mixed loss = 0 sqm Total loss = 2,164 sqm	BBC

6.79 During the monitoring year, no employment floorspace was lost through redevelopment. 2,164 square metres of employment floorspace was lost through change of use to non-employment uses - this is up from 544 squares metres from last year. Losses were focused within the Bedford urban area. The reasons for granting planning permission are given in table 14.

Table 14: Development completions resulting in a loss of employment floorspace to non-employment use during 2024/25 and the reasons behind the decision

Application reference	Site and description of development	Reasons for granting planning permission
23/01275/COU	1 Brereton Road, Bedford Change of use of two office units to retail	The site is located within the urban area of Bedford in the Midland Road Local Centre. The principle of additional retail and commercial uses are considered acceptable. A planning condition has been imposed to limit the proposed use to class E (c, e and g).
23/02444/S73A	First and second floors 12A Fenlake Road Industrial Estate, Bedford Change of use from industrial to public worship and provision of education	There is insufficient evidence to suggest that the site is currently in a class B use: the unit has previously been used as a sports and social club, leisure uses and as an auction house. The operational hours of the place of worship are limited to Fridays and weekends and therefore do not significantly overlap with those of the adjacent employment premises. It is considered that the development would not prejudice the efficient and effective use of adjacent employment units. Whilst there is no compelling evidence to prove that the site is no longer needed for employment, there is no evidence to demonstrate otherwise, and this in itself is not sufficiently contrary to policy 71 to warrant refusal on this basis.

6.80 In 2024/25, 1,229 square metres of office floorspace was lost through permitted development rights which enabled

the change of use of offices to dwellings at 1 Lurke Street, Bedford (23/01315/CPNMA). This is up from 304 square metres from last year.

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result (square metres)	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) = 1,015 sqm E(g)(ii) = 0 sqm E(g)(iii) = 2,332 sqm E(g) unspecified = 38,907 sqm B2 = 665 sqm B8 = 93,161 sqm E(g) / B2 / B8 mixed = 22,962 sqm Total = 159,042 sqm	BBC

6.81 At 31 March 2025, there was employment floorspace (net) to be implemented equating to 159,042 square metres. This included sites which have extant planning permissions. The majority of this floorspace is within B8 storage and distribution uses and unspecified E(g) offices/research and development/light industrial uses. Most outstanding floorspace is located at existing employment sites in the Bedford and Kempston urban area, established businesses in the rural area, at saved Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 allocation AD13 (Marston Vale Innovation Park, Wootton) and at saved Local Plan 2002 allocation H14 (Elstow Storage Depot).

6.82 The amount of outstanding employment floorspace (net) to be implemented at 31/03/2025 is more than at the end of the previous monitoring year (49,205 square metres).

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result (square metres)	Data source
28a: Amount of new build employment floorspace permitted in the countryside	75	Annual B2/B8 and E(g) new build employment floorspace permitted in the countryside	E(g)(i) = 0 sqm E(g)(ii) = 0 sqm E(g)(iii) = 0 sqm E(g) unspecified = 0 sqm B2 = 0 sqm B8 = 0 sqm E(g) / B2 / B8 mixed = 0 sqm Total = 0 sqm	BBC
28b: Amount of new build employment floorspace completed in the countryside	75	Annual B2/B8 and E(g) new build employment floorspace completed in the countryside	E(g)(i) = 149 sqm E(g)(ii) = 0 sqm E(g)(iii) = 0 sqm E(g) unspecified = 0 sqm B2 = 0 sqm B8 = 0 sqm E(g) / B2 / B8 mixed = 0 sqm Total = 149 sqm	BBC

6.83 Policy 75 of the Local Plan 2030 encourages new employment development that needs to be in the countryside support the rural economy, providing certain criteria can be satisfied. During 2024/25, no new build employment floorspace was granted in the countryside, which is significantly less than last year (6,879 square metres of class E(g), B2, and B8 uses).

6.84 During 2024/25, 149 square metres new build office employment floorspace class E(g)(i) was completed in the countryside at Rushey Ford Business Park, West End

Road, Kempston. The amount of new employment floorspace completed in the countryside is less than last year when 600 square metres of class B2 general industrial uses was completed.

6.85 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).

6.86 If existing commitments are taken up, there will be additional capacity for 11,790 square metres net retail floorspace for comparison goods and 2,980 square metres for convenience goods (Bedford Retail Study, updated in 2018). By the end of the plan period at 2030, this is

forecast to increase to 34,210 square metres net floorspace for comparison goods and 4,330 square metres net floorspace for convenience goods.

6.87 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 (Commercial Leisure Needs Study, 2018).

6.88 The hierarchy of town centres in Bedford Borough is set out in Local Plan 2030. Policy 77S defines a 4-tier hierarchy of:

- 1) Strategic Centre (Bedford)
- 2) District Centre (Kempston)
- 3) 13 Local Centres (including 5 'urban centres' and 8 'key service centres')
- 4) Neighbourhood Centres.

6.89 Town centre use monitoring on sites is undertaken where more than 100 square metres of employment floorspace is proposed.

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result (square metres)	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.	Retail = 145 sqm Leisure and entertainment = -2,715 sqm Offices = -2,249 sqm Arts, culture and tourism = 2,917 sqm	BBC

		Details of floorspace created / lost	Unspecified town centre uses = 104 sqm Total = -1,798 sqm	
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 = 487 sqm Leisure and entertainment = 0 sqm Offices = -183 sqm Arts, culture and tourism = 1,130 sqm Unspecified town centre uses = -127 sqm Total = 1,307 sqm	BBC

6.90 During 2024/25, planning permissions resulting in a loss of 1,798 square metres of town centre use floorspace within defined centres in the borough were granted. Table 15 shows the net amount of floorspace that was permitted for town centre uses within the borough's defined centres during the monitoring year.

Table 15: Net amount of floorspace for town centre uses within defined centres granted planning permission in 2024/25

Centre	Retail (sqm)	Leisure and entertainment (sqm)	Offices (sqm)	Arts, culture and tourism (sqm)	Unspecified town centre uses (sqm)
Town centre	145	-2,715	-2,143	2,917	104
District centre	0	0	0	0	0
Local centres	0	0	-106	0	0
Neighbourhood centres	0	0	0	0	0

- 6.91** The loss of 2,143 square metres of office floorspace from within Bedford town centre results from a grant of prior approval to change the use of 16 St Cuthberts Street, Bedford (24/02158/CPNMA) from office to residential. Permission to change the use of 53-55 High Street, Bedford (24/00523/FUL) from a nightclub to a 29-bedroom hotel and change of use of 29 Mill Street, Bedford (24/02010/FUL) from a nightclub to a hotel result in the loss of 2,715 square metres leisure and entertainment floorspace and the gain of 2,917 square metres arts, culture and tourism floorspace within the town centre. The gain of 145 square metres retail floorspace within Bedford town centre results from the change of use of 3-4 The Arcade, Bedford (23/01319/FUL) from residential and storage to a food bank. Planning permission to change the change of use of the ground floor of 29 Harpur Street, Bedford (24/00209/FUL) to unspecified class E results in the gain of 104 square metres unspecified town centre use floorspace.
- 6.92** Within the local centres, a grant of prior approval to change the use of 70A Tavistock Street, Bedford (24/00608/CPNMA) results in the loss of 106 square metres of office floorspace to residential use.
- 6.93** No additional floorspace classified under town centre uses was permitted in Kempston district centre or the borough's neighbourhood centres during the monitoring year.
- 6.94** During 2024/25, planning permissions resulting in a net gain of 1,307 square metres town centre use floorspace outside defined centres in the borough were granted. The

application details and the reasons behind the permissions are summarised in table 16.

Table 16: Planning permissions granted for town centre uses outside defined centres during 2024/25 and the reasons behind the approval

Application reference	Site and description of development	Reasons for granting planning permission
23/01126/FUL	Interchange Retail Park, Race Meadows Way, Kempston Erection of three buildings to seven individual kiosk units of 487 sqm in total	The development provides a series of small-scale kiosk premises; a different form of premises to meet a different occupier type. The physical form and configuration of the premises is entirely different to the existing vacant premises within Bedford. Even with extensive physical works to reconfigure the floorspace in the vacant units, the type of floorspace and premises are not suitable. Furthermore, none of the vacant units have associated external space. The sequential assessment demonstrates that no suitable sequentially preferred sites are available to accommodate the proposed use.
24/00913/MAF	Mansion House, Northampton Road, Bromham Change of use of dwelling to a 13-bedroom hotel (1,130 sqm)	Policy 76S supports the provision of hotels in countryside locations, provided that it is well related to a defined settlement policy area, a small settlement or the built form of other settlements. The site is considered to be well related to a small settlement and therefore the proposal accords with policy 76S.

		Whilst the proposal conflicts with policy 77S, this conflict is considered to be minor given the proposal relates to the change of use of an existing building. Furthermore, the development plan supports the provision of hotels beyond strategic centres, district centres, local centres and neighbourhood centres.
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Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result (square metres)	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 = 312 sqm Leisure and entertainment = 0 sqm Offices = -1,229 sqm Arts, culture and tourism = 0 sqm Total = -917 sqm	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 = 167 sqm Offices = 0 sqm Arts, culture and tourism = 0 sqm Total = 167 sqm	BBC

6.95 During 2024/25, developments resulting in a net loss of 917 square metres of town centre use floorspace within defined centres in the borough were completed. Table 17 shows the net amount of floorspace for town centre uses that was completed within the borough's defined centres during 2024/25.

Table 17: Net amount of floorspace for town centre uses completed within defined centres during 2024/25

Centre	Retail (sqm)	Leisure and entertainment (sqm)	Offices (sqm)	Arts, culture and tourism (sqm)
Town centre	145	0	-1,229	0
District centre	0	0	0	0
Local centres	167	0	0	0
Neighbourhood centres	0	0	0	0

6.96 During 2024/25, 145 square metres of retail floorspace was completed in Bedford town centre through the change of use of 3-4 The Arcade, Bedford (23/01319/FUL) from residential and storage to a food bank. 1,229 sqm office floorspace was lost from within Bedford town centre through prior approval to change the use of 1 Lurke Street, Bedford to residential (23/01315/CPNMA).

6.97 Within the local centres, a gain of 167 square metres of retail floorspace resulted from the change of use of two office units to retail at 1 Brereton Road, Bedford (23/01275/COU).

6.98 Developments resulting in a net gain of 167 square metres of town centre use floorspace outside defined centres in the borough were completed during 2024/25, which is less than last year (359 square metres). A 167 square metres drive-through coffee shop was completed at B&M Home Store, Riverfield Drive, Bedford (23/02413/FUL).

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
31a: Preparation	77S, 78, 79, 81	Number of applications requiring an impact	No impact assessments	BBC

of impact assessments in line with policy 78		assessment to be prepared / number of impact assessments prepared for retail and leisure development proposals outside of defined centres.		
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- 6.99** For out-of-centre retail and leisure developments, policy 78 of the Local Plan 2030 requires an impact assessment above a certain threshold size. For leisure development, the threshold is 2,500 square metres gross floorspace. For retail development: if the nearest centre to the proposed development is Bedford town centre or Kempston district centre, the threshold is 500 square metres net floorspace; ii. if the nearest centre to the proposed development is a local centre, the threshold is 200 square metres net floorspace.
- 6.100** During 2024/25, no planning permissions exceeding the local threshold for retail or leisure use were granted. This is the same as last year.
- 6.101** A core principle of national planning policy is the impact of main town centre uses on the vitality and viability of a retail centre. National Planning Practice Guidance 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 annually¹⁸.

- 6.102** Nexus conducted a health check in June 2020 to gather information on the diverse uses within Bedford town centre, which contributed to the Bedford Town Centre Study. This study considers perceptions of safety, accessibility, environmental quality, and the representation of retailers in each retail area. Regularly updating these indicators will be essential for assessing the effectiveness of local plan policies moving forward.

Monitoring indicator	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 2023/24 = 36,025,620 2024/25 = 31,530,058 (until February 2025)	BBC
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% 2023 = 17.0% 2024 = 15.0%	BBC

¹⁸ NPPG: Paragraph 006; Reference ID: 2b-006-20190722

- 6.103** Since 2011, Bedford town centre has been keeping track of pedestrian footfall with two Springboard counters – one on Silver Street and the other on Midland Road. Funding was secured through the Town Deal to install 11 new cameras throughout the town centre, which have been operational since April 2022. These new cameras, provided by O2, utilise advanced spatial insights and micro-location technologies, offering a deeper dive into the data and enhancing our understanding of Bedford town centre. However, there is a mismatch between the new cameras and the Springboard counters. While we can compare monthly data since April 2022, the new information does not align with data from previous years.
- 6.104** 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. While the 2021/22 data showed an increase in footfall above that recorded in the previous year the footfall in 2020/21 and 2021/22 was 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 2023/24, the total pedestrian footfall in Bedford was approximately 36 million, which is more than in 2022/23 (30.98 million). The monitoring cameras stopped working in February 2025, so a full year of data is not available for 2024/25. However, pedestrian footfall was approximately 31.5 million from 1 April 2024 until 17 February 2025. The O2 cameras have now come back online.
- 6.105** High vacancy rates can negatively impact the liveness and charm of the town centre. However, a certain degree of churn is a healthy and natural part of a dynamic property market as units open, move or close. In this context, vacant units can be found in even the strongest of town centres.
- 6.106** Bedford town centre experienced reducing vacancy rates (by unit count) between 2015 and 2018, before a peak of 14% in 2020. Vacancy rates in 2021 and 2022 reduced from 2020 levels to 13% and then fell from 17% in 2023 to 15% in 2024. The vacancy rate (by square foot) is 20%, which is an increase from 18% in 2023. This means there are fewer units vacant, but those which are vacant occupy a larger floorspace. In 2024, most vacant units were in mixed class E/F2 and class E uses. The 2024 vacancy rate at 15% is slightly higher than the national average of 14%.
- 6.107** Projects and developments to improve the town centre environment and drive economic growth are ongoing and are being progressed through initiatives including the recently completed High Street Heritage Action Zone, Towns Fund and One Public Estate programme.
- 6.108** In 2021, Bedford Borough Council was awarded £22.6 million to deliver [seven key regeneration, transport and skills-led projects](#) through the [Town Investment Plan](#): the regeneration of the Station Quarter and Midland Road, public realm improvements in St Paul's Square, upgrades to roads and pedestrian/cycling networks, and investment in health, science, and digital skills at Bedford College. The projects aim to improve town centre accessibility, reduce congestion, enhance the public realm and expand educational opportunities.
- 6.109** The Midland Road public realm improvements, completed during the monitoring year, included reduced road widths to

enable significantly widened pavements, modern street furniture, upgraded street lighting and narrowed junctions and raised crossings. Work on the redevelopment of St Paul's Square has progressed and is expected to be finished in December 2025.

- 6.110** Stakeholder engagement undertaken between September 2023 and February 2024 helped shape the [Bedford and Kempston Town Centre Delivery Programme](#) which begin in June 2024. The programme includes council led projects and delivery partners to support the regeneration and revitalisation of Bedford and Kempston town centres.

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
33a: Development activity on Bedford High Street	16, 34	Number of planning permissions or advertisement consents on the High Street	3 permissions and 4 advertisement consents	BBC
33b: Development activity on Bedford High Street	16	Amount of completed new development on the High Street	0 square metres	BBC

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

- 6.112** During 2024/25, three planning permissions in Bedford High Street were granted and one application was refused. This is up from one permission and three refusals last year. Four advertisement consents in Bedford High Street were granted during 2024/25, which is the same as last year.

- 6.113** During the monitoring year, planning permission was granted to enable the subdivision and alteration of the shop front of 27 High Street to form two retail units. (24/00475/FUL and 24/00831/FUL). Planning permission was also granted to change the use of the first and second floors and part ground floor of 53-55 High Street to a hotel (24/00523/FUL).

- 6.114** Advertisement consents for two non-illuminated fascia signs at 68 High Street (24/02380/ADV), three internally illuminated fascia signs and one externally illuminated hanging sign at 73 High Street (24/01069/ADV) and six internally illuminated and non-illuminated signs at 115-117 High Street (24/01522/ADV) were granted during the monitoring year. Non-illuminated ATM tablet signage at 81 High Street (25/00124/ADV) was also granted during 2024/25.

- 6.115** During the monitoring year, no new development was completed in Bedford High Street.

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
34a: Activity in the visitor economy	76	Number of planning permissions (improvements and provision of new visitor accommodation)	5 permissions	BBC

6.116 The [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. Policy 76 of the Local Plan 2030 lists criteria to assess proposals which relate to the improvement and provision of new visitor accommodation.

6.117 During 2024/25, five schemes involving improvements to or provision of new visitor accommodation were granted permission; this is up from two last year. A three-storey extension providing 25 net additional bedrooms at Premier Inn, Fletcher Road, Kempston (24/01033/FUL) and 12

holiday caravans at Box End Park, Box End Road, Kempston (24/02035/MAF) were granted during the monitoring year. Planning permission was also granted to change the use of 53-55 High Street, Bedford. (24/00523/FUL) to a 29 bedroom hotel, change of use of 29 Mill Street, Bedford (24/2010/FUL) to a 34 bedroom hotel, and change of use of the Mansion House, Northampton Road, Bromham (24/00913/MAF) to a 13 bedroom hotel.

6.118 Two planning applications were refused permission during the monitoring year (as the proposals would establish new visitor accommodation in the countryside which would not integrate well with the existing pattern of development).

THEME 4: PLACEMAKING

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.

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.

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.



Monitoring indicator	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 2023/24 = 689 completions 2024/25 = 576 completions Total = 10,902 net completions	BBC

6.119 Policy 3S of the Local Plan 2030 provides the overarching strategic framework to deliver sufficient new development in sustainable locations in line with 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.

6.120 Existing planning permissions for residential development, together with previously allocated commitments and a windfall allowance mean that a minimum 3,169 new dwellings has been allocated to ensure that the objectively assessed need 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. Policy 4S sets out how a minimum 3,169 new dwellings will be allocated and distributed.

6.121 In 2024/25, 576 net additional dwellings were completed. Whilst this is lower than the number completed in previous

years, it follows a period when annual delivery rates exceeded the annualised minimum housing figure of 970 net additional dwellings per annum in seven of the first eight years of the plan period. This decreasing trend is reflective of the national decline in housing delivery in recent years. Mechanisms to boost housing delivery are being progressed as part of the government's wider package of planning reforms.

6.122 From 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2025, a total of 10,902 net dwelling completions were delivered in the borough (1090 dwellings per year). However, 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.

6.123 Out of the 576 net additional dwellings completed in 2024/25, 573 were new build homes (92.9% of gross completions) and 36 homes came from change of use from non-residential to residential (5.8% of the total gross completions). 8 new dwellings were created through conversion of existing residential properties. These additional dwellings were offset by 41 dwellings that were lost through demolitions, conversion or change of use. Further information is presented in the [Housing Monitoring Report](#).

6.124 Most housing completions in 2024/25 were delivered at saved Local Plan 2002 policy allocations including: Land north of Bromham Road, Biddenham (76 completions); Wixams (former Elstow Storage Depot) (167 completions) and at Local Plan 2030 policy allocations including Land at Gold Lane, Biddenham (55 completions); and Land at

Graze Hill, Ravensden (42 completions). There were also 52 net additional dwellings delivered in the Bedford and Kempston urban area during 2024/25.

6.125 The progress of the delivery of housing policy allocations is reported in section 5 of this report.

6.126 Policy 4S of the Local Plan 2030 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	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 2023/24 = 4,706 dwellings 2024/25 = 4,255 dwellings	BBC

6.127 Whilst the number of outstanding permissions at the end of the 2024/25 monitoring year is slightly lower than the previous year, the number of dwellings with outstanding planning permission has been retained at a high level during

the first nine years of the Local Plan 2030 period. The fall in outstanding planning permissions also reflects the national decline in the number of planning applications for new dwellings being submitted.

Monitoring indicator	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 permissions	BBC

6.128 Policy 26 of the Local Plan 2030 identifies three housing opportunity sites at Dallas Road, Kempston; Bedford Blues Rugby Club, Bedford and Ampthill Road (former Camford Works), Bedford. Although these are seen as suitable development opportunities, they are known to have particular constraints which may prevent them from coming forward in the plan period. As a result, they have not been identified as specific allocations.

6.129 Of the three sites identified, only Dallas Road has been granted planning permission: for the development of 341 dwellings (19/02247/MAF) in August 2021. Revised application (23/01975/M73) for changes to roofs, materials, and addition of balconies was granted in March 2024. A certificate (24/02074/LDP) to confirm the lawful implementation of planning permission 19/02247/MAF was issued on 27 January 2025. Since the original planning application was approved, site investigation has identified the presence of a large culvert running through the centre of the site, requiring a 10-metre wide easement. This has hindered the ability to implement the development as

approved and resulted in the need for the submission of a new application to bring forward to alternative scheme. Revised application 25/00268/M73 for changes to roofs, balustrades, and addition of doors was granted in August 2025 and revised application 25/00849/M73 to move residential units from the top storey of block C to a new top storey in block A was granted in September 2025.

6.130 Planning application (22/01899/EIA) to erect 508 dwellings, 96-bedroom care home, two storey advance technology building, drive-through coffee shop and associated works at the site of the former Camford Works, Bedford was refused in February 2024.

6.131 Informal discussions regarding the future of the site at Bedford Blues Rugby Club, Bedford are ongoing but no planning applications have been received to date.

Monitoring indicator	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	28 new dwellings were permitted outside the urban and settlement policy area boundaries	BBC

6.132 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 policy AD41 of the Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013. Collectively, policies 5S, 6 and 7S of the Local Plan 2030 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.

6.133 During 2024/25, 28 new dwellings were permitted outside the urban and settlement policy area boundaries. The total includes 1 dwelling granted under permitted development rights through the class Q (agricultural buildings to dwelling houses) process, seven barn conversions, and one replacement dwelling in the countryside.

Monitoring indicator	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 one replacement dwelling	BBC
39b: Scale of replacement dwelling activity	7S, 66	Number of completed replacement dwellings in the countryside	Two replacement dwellings were completed	BBC

6.134 Policy 66 of the Local Plan 2030 sets out the approach to the replacement and extension of dwellings in the countryside. During 2024/25, only one replacement dwelling in the countryside was granted permission in line with this policy, which is down from six last year. Two replacement dwellings in the countryside were completed during 2024/25, which is down from three last year.

Monitoring indicator	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 via 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 via rural exception schemes	BBC

6.135 To facilitate the provision of affordable housing specifically for local needs, we 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'. Policy 67 of the Local Plan 2030 allows for planning permission to be granted as an exception to policy where there are identified local needs in the rural area and several other requirements are met. No dwellings were permitted or completed under the rural exception scheme during the monitoring year.

Monitoring indicator	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	No rural worker dwellings were completed	BBC

6.136 There may be instances where a new dwelling in the countryside may be required on site to meet the needs of a worker in agricultural, forestry, horse breeding and training, livery or equivalent use. New rural worker accommodation in the countryside will be granted where it aligns with policy 68 of the Local Plan 2030. During 2024/25, no rural worker dwellings were granted planning permission or completed and two applications were refused as contrary to policies 7S and 68.

Monitoring indicator	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 line with government policy and guidance	3.35 year housing land supply from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2030	BBC

6.137 The NPPF requires all local planning authorities to identify and update annually a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites against their housing requirement. This five-year supply of deliverable housing sites is updated annually and the latest position is published on the [monitoring webpage](#). It demonstrates that the borough presently has a 3.35 year housing land supply over a five-year period from 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2030.

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result (housing delivery test)	Data source
43a: Performance against the national housing delivery test	4S	Annual	2018 = 129% no consequences 2019 = 125% no consequences 2020 = 133% no consequences 2021 = 144% no consequences 2022 = 130% no consequences 2023 = 145% no consequences	MHCLG DLUHC

6.138 The housing delivery test (HDT) is an annual measurement of housing delivery in plan area, based on percentage of the number of net homes delivered against the number of homes required, as set out in the relevant adopted plan, over a rolling three-year period. The consequences outlined in the NPPF are triggered when delivery falls below 95% of the target, requiring authorities to create an action plan to address under-delivery over this period.

6.139 The borough has consistently achieved a HDT score over 100% and as a result, faces no consequences.

Monitoring indicator	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	283 new dwellings were permitted on sites subject to affordable housing provision. Of these, 78 dwellings were affordable, equating to 27.6%.	BBC

			4 further planning permissions were granted to deliver 100% affordable housing equating to 12 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%) 2023/24 = 137 (19.4%) 2024/25 = 122 (19.8%) Total = 2,292 (21.0%)	BBC

6.140 The [Strategic Housing Market Assessment update and addendum](#) (August 2018) establishes an objectively assessed need of 4,188 affordable housing units over 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 per annum. Policy 58S of the Local Plan 2030 sets out the requirements in relation to affordable housing.

6.141 In 2024/25, 283 new dwellings were permitted on sites subject to affordable housing provision. Of these, 78 dwellings were affordable, equating to 27.6%. Four further planning permissions were granted on sites to achieve 100% affordable housing equating to a total of 12 dwellings. This is lower than last year when 804 new dwellings were permitted on sites subject to affordable housing provision - 168 (20.9%) of these were affordable.

6.142 In 2024/25, the borough recorded 122 affordable housing completions (which represented 19.8% of the total housing completions). Annual delivery rates of affordable housing have varied over the first nine 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. Please note: 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.

6.143 The [Housing Strategy 2021-2026](#) sets out the council's commitments to support the delivery of affordable housing to meet identified needs.

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
45a: Housing mix	59S	Gross dwelling completions by number of bedrooms	1 bedroom = 55 (8.9%) 2 bedroom = 186 (30.1%) 3 bedroom = 215 (34.8%) 4 and 4+ bedrooms = 161 (26.1%)	BBC
45b: Housing mix	59S	Gross dwelling completions by type	Flats, apartments or maisonettes = 136 (22.0%) Houses or bungalows: • Detached = 219 (35.5%) • Semi-detached = 160 (25.9%) • Terraced = 102 (16.5%)	BBC

6.144 Policy 59S of the Local Plan 2030 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 (see 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.

6.145 More three-bedroom dwellings were completed than any other size in 2024/25. Two and four or more bedroom dwellings also represented a high proportion of completions in the monitoring year. Flats, apartments or maisonettes made up 22.0% of total gross completions whilst houses or bungalows made up 77.9%. More detached houses or bungalows were completed than any other type in 2024/25.

6.146 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 most of the 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.

- 6.147** To accurately assess the performance of policy 59S in helping 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 continuously updating evidence of housing need and market demand.

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
46a: Housing mix	59S	Percentage of dwellings permitted that are accessible and adaptable (category 2)	63.1% of eligible dwellings	BBC
46b: Housing mix	59S	Percentage of dwellings permitted that are wheelchair accessible (category 3)	5.8% of eligible market dwellings 14.1% of eligible affordable dwellings	BBC

- 6.148** In response to the projected increase in the elderly population of the borough during the plan period, and evidence in the SHMA, policy 59S of the Local Plan 2030 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.

- 6.149** During 2024/25, 15 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 350 dwellings in total. 170 dwellings should have been secured to meet the accessible and adaptable homes policy requirements however 221 dwellings meeting the requirements were actually granted permission. This represents 63.1% of the total number of eligible dwellings, which is more than the number required by policy 59S.
- 6.150** During 2024/25, four 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 189 market and 71 affordable dwellings in total. 15 dwellings should have been secured to meet the wheelchair accessible homes policy requirements (10 market and 5 affordable). However, 21 dwellings (11 market and 10 affordable) meeting the requirements were actually granted permission. This represents 5.8% of the total number of eligible market dwellings and 14.1% of the total number of eligible affordable dwellings, which is more than the number of market and affordable dwellings required under policy 59S.
- 6.151** During the 2022/23 monitoring year, the results showed that policy 59S requirements relating to adaptations and wheelchair accessible homes were 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. Further to this, the council reviewed how it applied policy 59S to planning applications to ensure a consistent approach and maximise the delivery of accessible and adaptable dwellings and wheelchair user dwellings in line with policy requirements. 2023/2024 results: monitoring showed a marked improvement with close to policy complaint numbers of accessible and adaptable dwellings and wheelchair user dwellings being secured. 2024/25 results: monitoring showed that the numbers of accessible and adaptable dwellings and wheelchair user dwellings secured were above policy requirements.

6.152 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 approved permission of 50 dwellings at Land between Sandy Road and Wood Lane, Willington (23/01034/MAR) show a provision of 22 accessible and adaptable dwellings above the number required by policy 59S. Similarly, the approved permission of 20 dwellings at land on the south of Keeley Lane, Wootton (23/02636/MAR) show a provision of four accessible and adaptable dwellings above the policy requirement.

6.153 In addition, planning permission for 12 dwellings was approved at the site of former 111 Warwick Avenue, Bedford (23/01629/MAO). The plans show that two flats will

be category 2 compliant and two flats will be category 3 compliant. Whilst policy 59S requires six flats to be category 2 compliant, two ground floor flats will be built to meet the wheelchair accessible homes requirements of the building regulations (category 3), which are not required by policy 59S. As there is a borough wide shortage of category 3 homes, the reduction in the number of category 2 dwellings was considered acceptable.

Monitoring indicator	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	No permissions (class C3 use self-contained specialist housing bed spaces) 60 class C3 use self-contained specialist housing bed spaces were completed	BBC
47b: Housing mix	60	Number of new care home bed spaces (class C2) by type, permitted and completed	1 permission (25 Class C2 use care home bed spaces) and 8 class C2 use care home bed spaces were completed	BBC

6.154 Policy 60 of the Local Plan 2030 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.

6.155 During 2024/25, no self-contained specialist housing bed spaces (class C3 use) were granted planning permission. This is the same as last year. During 2024/25, 25 class C2

use care home bed spaces were granted planning permission - this is down from last year when 42 class C2 use care home bed spaces were granted. All 25 new class C2 use bed spaces permitted during the monitoring year were intended for children and were mostly located within the Bedford and Kempston urban area.

- 6.156** No class C3 use self-contained specialist housing bed spaces were completed during 2024/25. 8 class C2 use care home bed spaces were completed during the monitoring year, which is down from 72 last year. This includes the change of use of several residential dwellings to use as a children's care home within the urban area and in a key service centre.

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
48a: Housing mix	59S, 60	Number of specialist homes for older people permitted that are wheelchair accessible	No eligible units	BBC

- 6.157** Policy 59S stipulates that all specialist housing for older people meet the wheelchair accessible homes requirements of the building regulations. During the monitoring year, no planning permissions were eligible to achieve this standard, which is the same as last year.

Monitoring indicator	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 register	2015/16 = 50 individuals, 0 groups 2016/17 = 137 individuals, 1 group	DLUHC

Housebuilding Register			2017/18 = 172 individuals, 1 group 2018/19 = 110 individuals, 0 groups 2019/20 = 169 individuals, 0 groups 2020/21 = 90 individuals, 0 groups 2021/22 = 107 individuals, 0 groups 2022/23 = 120 individuals, 0 groups 2023/24 = 122 individuals, 0 groups 2024/25 = 129 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 = 56 2017/18 = 60 2018/19 = 21 2019/20 = 30 2020/21 = 12 2021/22 = 13 2022/23 = 13 2023/24 = 29 2024/25 = 29 As of 30 October 2025 (the latest base period reported to MHCLG), the borough has a deficit of 50 plots when measured against the number of entries on part 1 of the register.	BBC

- 6.158** Self-build and custom build housing developments are supported, in line with national guidance, in policy 59S (v) of the Local Plan 2030.

6.159 The self-build register became operational in April 2016. By law, the overall number of planning permissions granted must be sufficient to meet the demand identified on the self-build and custom housing register¹⁹. The register is divided 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.

6.160 At October 2025 (within the 2024/25 self-build and custom build monitoring year) there were 129 entries on the register, all of which were individuals²⁰. Table 18 shows how many people have entered the register each year since its creation and the total number of entries on the register at the end of each base period.

Table 18: 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 (2015/16-2024/25)

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

¹⁹ Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (which amended the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015)

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
2022/23	15	-2	120	0	0
2023/24	14	-12	122	0	0
2024/25	7	0	129	0	0

6.161 The first base period ran 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. We have 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 and August – September 2024 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.

6.162 Table 19 shows the supply of serviced plots by way of the number of new plots granted planning permission in each base period.

Table 19: Planning permissions for plots suitable for self and custom build granted in each base period (2016/17-2024/25)

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	56	56

²⁰ Right to build registers monitoring: data for 2016 to 2022-23 (DLUHC and MHCLG, 2025) at www.gov.uk/government/publications/self-build-and-custom-housebuilding-data-2016-2016-17-2017-18-and-2018-19

2017/18	60	116
2018/19	21	137
2019/20	30	167
2020/21	12	179
2021/22	13	192
2022/23	13	205
2023/24	29	234
2024/25	29	263

6.163 Due to changes in the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015, starting from base period 5 (31 October 2019 to 30 October 2020), the council has changed how it measures demand. Instead of counting every single plot permission to gauge the demand reflected in the register, we only consider those plots where the developer has requested a Community Infrastructure Levy exemption specifically for self-build and custom housebuilding (CIL form 7 part 1). This method was further updated starting from base period 6, where as well as the exemption, all permissions that were explicitly for self-build and custom build plots, or subject to a planning obligation to deliver self-build and custom build plots, were also counted.

6.164 At 30 October 2025 (within the 2024/25 self-build and custom build monitoring year) the borough has a deficit of 50 self-build and custom build plots when measured against the number of entries on part 1 of the register.

Monitoring indicator	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	No permissions	BBC
50b: Progress delivering	61, 63, AD19	Details of permissions granted	No permissions	BBC

travelling showpeople plots		for travelling showpeople plots		
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6.165 Policy 61 of the Local Plan 2030 requires two additional permanent gypsy and traveller pitches to 2030 and five additional travelling show people plots to 2030. Policy 62 requires that the two additional gypsy and traveller pitches are provided on the existing site at Kempston Hardwick, which was granted planning permission in December 2018 (18/02566/DC3) and the pitches are under construction. A site at Manton Lane, Bedford is already allocated under policy AD19 in the Allocations and Designations Local Plan to provide travelling showpeople plots. Outline planning permission involving eight new travelling show people plots (23/01128/MDC3) at this site was approved in March 2024.

Monitoring indicator	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	No permissions	BBC

6.166 Policy 63 of the Local Plan 2030 is a criteria-based policy relating to the provision of traveller sites on unallocated land in the countryside. No planning permissions on unallocated traveller sites in the countryside were granted during the monitoring year.

6.167 The latest [Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment](#) was completed in November 2021.

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
52a: Health impact assessments carried out in accordance with policy 2S	2S	Number of health impact assessments prepared to support planning policy documents	None	BBC

6.168 A key objective of the planning system is to help support people in living healthy lives. Health and wellbeing is an underlying theme of the local plan.

6.169 Policy 2S of the Local Plan 2030 seeks to reduce health inequalities, promote health, safety and active living in all age groups such as physical activity and sustainable modes of transport through the preparation of a health Impact assessment in planning policy documents and planning applications (over certain thresholds²¹). The assessment is a method of considering the positive and negative impacts of development on the health of different groups in the population to enhance the benefits and minimise any risks to health.

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
53a: Progress in preparing the health impact assessments guidance	2S	Progress in line with milestones in the Local Development Scheme	Health Impact Assessments guidance has been produced	BBC

²¹ 50 homes or more, employment sites of 5 hectares (gross) or more, retail developments over 500 square metres (gross internal area) or any other sites (as requested).

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
54a: Health Impact Assessments carried out in accordance with policy 2S	2S	Details of planning applications where HIAs have been prepared in accordance with the policy.	No planning applications	BBC

6.170 In 2024/25, whilst four planning applications exceeded the policy thresholds and were required to submit a health impact assessment, none were prepared during the monitoring year (as predated the publication of the Health Impact Assessments guidance). The recent publication of the [Health Impact Assessments guidance](#) on the council's website and implementation with development management colleagues will help to ensure that all eligible planning applications submit a health impact assessment at the validation stage. In addition, other types or scales of development not covered in policy 2S will be encouraged to submit health impact assessments at the pre-application stage (if service engaged) or when a planning application is submitted or at EIA screening / scoping stage.

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
55a: Progress in preparing a Bedford Borough Design Guide	28S, 29, 30	Details of progress in line with milestones in the Local Development Scheme	The Bedford Borough Design Guide was adopted in 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	BBC
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6.171 The NPPF identifies good design as a key aspect of sustainable development and local plans should 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.

6.172 The council will, where appropriate, work with developers to prepare development briefs, codes and design guidance to guide major development sites allocated in the local plan. Preparation of new and updated design guidance will appear in the Local Development Scheme. The Bedford Borough Design Guide was adopted on 8 March 2023.

6.173 The supporting text to policy 34 of the Local Plan 2030 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	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
56a: Production of design codes in line with policy 29 when required	28S, 29, 30	Details of permissions where design codes are required / have been produced	No design codes were approved	BBC

6.174 Policy 29 of the Local Plan 2030 states that developments over certain thresholds must prepare a design code as part of the application process. No design codes were approved in 2024/25.

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
57a: Permissions granted in the former Land Settlement Association Area	AD44	Details of planning permissions granted in line with specific policy requirements	1 permission	BBC

6.175 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 is applicable to development proposals within the former Land Settlement Association area and sets out that planning permission will only be granted where they:

- maintain the distinctive pattern, layout and scale of plots;
- respect the style, scale, appearance and orientation of the original dwellings and separation between them;
- protect residential amenity from inappropriate disturbance; and
- do not result in unacceptable levels of traffic generation.

6.176 During 2024/25, one permission was granted development within the former Land Settlement Association Area; this is three less than last year. During the monitoring year, planning permission was granted to demolish an existing outbuilding and erect a timber prefabricated single storey annexe at 41 Rookery Road, Wyboston (24/01083/FUL).

Monitoring indicator	Related policies	Information gathered	Result	Data source
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58a: Permissions granted at Wyboston Lakes	73	Details of planning permissions granted in line with specific policy requirements	No permissions	BBC
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6.177 Wyboston Lakes lies close to the A428 and A1 to the east of the borough, east of St Neots. The site includes a mix of recreation, leisure and hotel, conference and training uses in a low-density landscaped setting and B1 uses have planning permission. Policy 73 supports development at Wyboston Lakes subject to specific criteria which reflect the location and character of the site. No planning permissions were granted on this site during the monitoring year.

Monitoring indicator	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'	10 entries (4 listed buildings, 5 scheduled monuments and 1 conservation area)	No change	BBC

6.178 According to the [National Heritage List for England](#), the borough is home to 1,333 listed buildings, 29 conservation areas, 68 scheduled monuments and 9 parks and gardens. (September 2025). The conservation areas with a Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan are Bedford, Biddenham, Bletsoe, Elstow, Hinwick, Stewartby and Little Barford. The Bedford Borough Historic Environment Record identifies 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.

6.179 Policy 41S of the Local Plan 2030 requires development to preserve, and where possible, enhance the significance of heritage assets and minimise impacts on the historic environment.

6.180 Historic England's [National Heritage at Risk Register](#) identifies a number of buildings 'at risk' as a result of neglect, decay, or inappropriate development (as listed in table 20). No assets have been added or removed from the register since last year.

Table 20: Heritage assets listed on the National Heritage at Risk Register (September 2025)

Asset name and location	Designation
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
Parish Church of All Saints, High Street, Great Barford	Listed building: grade II
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

6.181 Bedford's High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ) programme, which ended in March 2024, focussed on restoring six shopfronts (All Ears, The Blue Monk, Sundae's Gelato, the former Goldings building, The Medic Centre and the Salvation Army), improving public spaces like Silver Street and the High Street pavement and maintaining the former Debenhams building and upgrading of the listing of Bedford Shire Hall to grade II* and the Bedford Corn Exchange to grade II.

Monitoring indicator	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% 2023/24 = 44.7% 2024/25 = 40.4%	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% 2023/24 = 69.7% 2024/25 = 100.0%	BBC

6.182 Policy 46S of the Local Plan 2030 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).

6.183 While the proportion of new development on previously developed land has no target in the Local Plan 2030, the spatial strategy seeks to prioritise development on brownfield or underused sites within the urban area. In addition, the council maintains a brownfield land register which provides up-to-date and consistent information to encourage investment and support housing development.

6.184 The percentage of new and converted dwellings on previously developed land in 2024/25 was 40.4% which is lower than last year (44.7%). Government land use change statistics in England (2021-22) identify that 54% of new residential addresses were created on previously developed land ²². Whilst the percentage of new and converted dwellings on previously developed land in the borough in 2024/25 is lower than the national average, the proportion has varied during the first ten years of the plan period.

6.185 In 2024/25, most new and converted dwellings on previously developed land were provided at Wixams new settlement. The percentage of new non-residential floorspace completions on previously developed land in 2024/25 was 100%, which is higher than last year (69.7%).

²² Land use change statistics 2021 to 2022 (DLUHC, 2022) at www.gov.uk/government/statistics/land-use-change-statistics-2021-to-2022

Monitoring indicator	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	2 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 Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy	No permissions	BBC
61c: Delivery of open space in line with policy AD28	AD28	Amount of open space provided in association with new development	17,986 square metres	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	£54,841 secured towards off-site outdoor sports space and off-site equipped / natural play space	BBC

6.186 Community facilities such as parish halls, places of worship, cemeteries, community centres, schools and colleges, health facilities, libraries, and leisure, arts and cultural facilities serve several vital functions, helping to meet local needs and foster social and cultural interaction.

6.187 During 2024/25, two new community facilities or extensions to existing facilities were granted permission (this is three less than last year):

- Change of use of the first floor, 2-6 Cauldwell Street, Bedford from an office to a place of worship (24/00240/COU).
- Erection of two 50 seat covered stands at Real Bedford Football Club (24/02234/MAF) who utilise the pitch located to the south west of Bedford Town Football Club.

6.188 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.

6.189 The [Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy](#) examines the existing outdoor sports facilities and looks ahead to future needs, which shows that demand is broadly being met across all sports, except football and rugby league. For other sports, demand can generally be met or resolved in the future through quality improvements and the restoration of sites which are currently underutilised. There are shortfalls in 3G pitches which cannot be alleviated unless new provision is created (which could also help alleviate grass pitch shortfalls through the transfer of play). Due to identified shortfalls of grass pitches, there is a need to protect both playing pitch provision currently in use or disused to help meet existing and future needs.

6.190 During 2024/25, no planning permissions were granted for sports and recreation facilities; this is down from 2 permissions last year.

6.191 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 residents did not have access to natural greenspace within 300 metres 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 2 kilometres of a 20 hectare site and within 5 kilometres of a 100 hectare site respectively.

6.192 Saved policy AD28 of the Allocations and Designations Local Plan 2013 requires provision of open space and built facilities in association with new development in line with local standards. Where provision cannot be made on-site, a financial contribution in lieu of on-site provision will be required.

6.193 Seven planning permissions providing open space and built facilities in association with new development were granted during the monitoring year. This includes:

- 108 square metres informal and amenity green space provided as part of the change of use of 3 and 5 The Crescent, Bedford to nine flats (24/01421/FUL), which exceeds the policy requirement of 59 square metres;
- the change of use of 9 and 11 The Crescent, Bedford to nine flats (23/00810/FUL) which provides 80 square metres of informal and amenity green space at the rear

of the building, which exceeds the policy requirement of 62 square metres;

- 12 dwellings at the site of former 111 Warwick Avenue, Bedford (23/01629/MAO), which includes 139 square metres informal and amenity green space (40 square metres at the front and 99 square metres at the rear of the building), which exceeds the policy requirement of 95 square metres;
- 20 dwellings at land on the south of Keeley Lane, Wootton (23/02636/MAR), which includes several small areas of informal and amenity green space plus a larger area adjacent to the public right of way which equates to 464 square metres (which exceeds the policy requirement of 282 square metres);
- 252 square metres of informal and amenity green space as part of the development of 11 dwellings at The Beeches, High Street, Thurleigh (24/01167/MAR), which exceeds the policy requirement of 147 square metres;
- 57 dwellings to the rear of Bromham Road, Biddenham (23/01106/MAR) which includes 634 square metres of informal and amenity green space and 409 square metres equipped and natural play space. The area is below the policy requirements for informal and amenity green space (812 square metres) and equipped / natural play space (410 square metres)²³; and
- 50 dwellings at land between Sandy Road and Wood Lane, Willington (23/01034/MAR) which delivers 10,600 square metres of retained habitat, woodland and trails

²³ The appeal decision states that whilst the development would be at odds with a strict reading of policy AD28, around 5,300 square metres of land to the north beyond the flood zone 2 contour would be available for informal recreation for much of the year. The

appeal decision concluded that the development provides adequate public open space within the outline permission site as a whole.

and a locally equipped play area with informal amenity green space – collectively sufficient to meet the policy requirements: informal and amenity green space (700 square metres) and equipped / natural play space (300 square metres).

6.194 In addition, outline planning applications (23/01600/OUT at land off Manor Way, Cotton End and 23/02494/MAO at Oakley Neighbourhood Plan allocation ONP HG1 (Land north of High Street) were granted during the monitoring year. Full details of the open space will be submitted as part of the reserved matters applications and reported in future monitoring reports as applications are approved.

6.195 During 2024/25, £54,841 of planning contributions were secured towards off-site outdoor sports space and off-site equipped/natural play space. The total includes £9,756 towards off-site outdoor sports space secured through the section 106 agreement to change the use of 3 and 5 The Crescent, Bedford from education and supporting facilities (class F1) to 9 dwellings (24/01421/FUL). Financial contributions of £11,473 towards off-site outdoor sports space off-site equipped/natural play space was secured through the section 106 agreement to change of use of 9 and 11 The Crescent, Bedford from education and supporting facilities (class F1) to nine dwellings (23/00810/FUL). Financial contributions (£33,612) towards off-site sports space and off-site equipped/natural play space was secured through the section 106 agreement to erect 12 dwellings at the site of former 111 Warwick Avenue, Bedford (23/01629/MAO), which was signed during the monitoring year.

Monitoring indicator	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	No permission	BBC

6.196 Policy 99 of the Local Plan 2030 aims to prevent the loss of existing leisure, sports and community facilities to other types of development and ensure continued community access.

6.197 During the monitoring year, planning permissions were granted to allow the partial loss of a place of worship to retail use at Unit E River Street, Bedford (23/02441/FUL) and partial loss of a place of worship to residential use at 62 Kimbolton Road, Bedford (24/00838/FUL). As the existing place of worships would still retain enough floorspace to remain viable, the officer report considered the proposals would not result in the loss of the existing community use and that there was no policy conflict. Planning permission was also granted at Interchange Retail Park, Polo Field Way, Kempston to change the use to a gym or warehouse (24/01010/COU). As a flexible use, the permission does not mean that the gym would definitely be lost. A condition has been imposed to restrict the use of the building to a class E(d) indoor sport, recreation or fitness/B8 warehouse use.

6.198 No planning permissions involving the loss of leisure, sports or community facilities were granted during 2024/25. This is down from one permission last year.

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