Shapingwhere you live 2035



Community Plan

Covering the parishes of Biggleswade, Edworth, Langford

Community Area 4

Final: July 2017





Foreword

Central Bedfordshire Council's aim is to maintain and enhance the quality of the area for communities, businesses and visitors to ensure we have a vibrant area that is able to grow sustainably. Community planning is a new approach which will engage local people including residents, Town and Parish Councils and interest groups to build a picture of how everyone lives, works and travels today.

In the future we want to create communities with schools, jobs, health provision and good transport links. That means we need to plan for infrastructure and services to ensure that Central Bedfordshire continues to be a great place to live and work. This is why we are working with the local community to understand what you value about where you live, where the opportunities are and where there might be current issues that need to be addressed.

Community Planning is about identifying all of these elements and giving you the opportunity to help shape the future of your community, while adding valuable local knowledge and information to future development decisions.

Cllr Nigel Young, Executive Member for Regeneration



Community Planning in Central Bedfordshire

Our vision is to start a proactive, ongoing dialogue with the local community about local needs and opportunities through community planning. By understanding the opinions of local people as to what needs improvement, along with what they love and want to keep, we can produce Community Plans which we can refer to in decisions about development in the future. These Plans will be used in a number of ways, including influencing the Local Plan which deals with the overall approach to sustainable growth for the area. Consultation and engagement are requirements of the process of developing the Local Plan. Community planning goes well beyond those requirements and in addition, we very much see that the "life" and use of community plans will extend beyond the Local Plan.

In order to structure our plans clearly, we have developed six growth themes, Local Character, Environment, Transport, Jobs & Business, Growth & Infrastructure and Homes.

Community Planning in Central Bedfordshire	1	Introduction and background to Community Planning and the Community Area itself
Community Area	7	
Local Character	9	
Transport	11	
Jobs & Business	13	Analysis of feedback from the Community Event
Environment	15	
Homes	17	
Growth & Infrastructure	19	
Future Opportunities	21	A summary of potential opportunities for the Community Area
Appendix	23	Supporting information - Feedback form - Data received from the event

A Community Plan will capture what local people believe are the key issues or opportunities under each of the themes and identify where local people want investment to be spent to improve their Community Area. Central Bedfordshire Council believe that Community Planning will build an understanding of local needs and pressures on a particular area and to ensure that existing and new communities benefit from high quality development and targeted improvements.

Community Plans will be used as evidence base for the Local Plan, but will also be used to assist Central Bedfordshire with making future planning decisions. Community Plans can also be used to feed into Neighbourhood, Parish or Town Plans.



The 6 Growth Themes

Local character



BUS

What we have we love. Our history, countryside and communities. We need to build, with care to enhance what we have.

How do we look after what you value about where you live? We need to balance development with protecting our villages, market towns and beautiful countryside. We want to use local character to inform development to ensure that we achieve the best we can.

Our environment is important. It influences how & what we create. We need quality development.

How do we balance the need for growth with protecting our environment? By having quality developments that are sensitive to the environment, to climate change and to ensure growth is dealt with responsibly for the next generation.

How do we get around? With more of us on our cycleways, roads, rail. How do we improve & maintain our transport links?

We need to plan growth that has good connections, not only to jobs and facilities, but also to recreation services and the countryside. We need to look at improving our existing transport networks and make the most of opportunities for new links.

Where will everyone work? Supporting local businesses to grow & attracting new business. We need to create jobs for all.

How do we support the economy of your community and proposed growth in your area?

We need to invest and attract business. Regenerating areas can help to attract new investment to improve job prospects.

Where to place homes & services. Supporting market towns, villages & new settlements. We need to plan places to grow communities.

Where can this growth go and how do we get the best opportunities for you and your community? We need to consider not only the locations for growth, but also what other facilities, services and infrastructure these areas will need for the next generation.

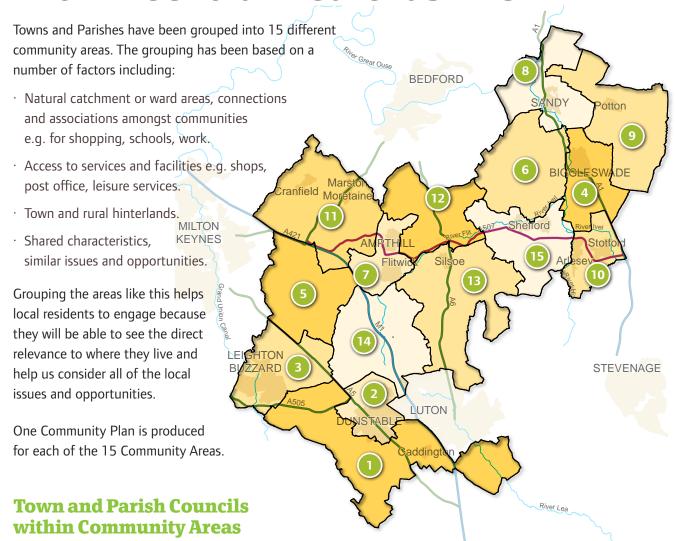
101

Homes for every stage of life. A house is not a home until it's lived in. We all need a home we're proud of.

What type of housing does your community need? Looking at the local population, from young to old, we need to ensure that the area can accommodate changes in lifestyle, affluence or choice. Quality homes for all, for now and tomorrow.

Community Areas

within Central Bedfordshire



Community Area	Town and Parish Councils
1	Billington, Caddington, Eaton Bray, Hyde, Kensworth, Slip End, Stanbridge, Studham, Tilsworth, Totternhoe, Whipsnade
2	Dunstable, Houghton Regis
3	Battlesden, Eggington, Heath & Reach, Hockliffe, Leighton Buzzard
4	Biggleswade, Edworth, Langford
5	Aspley Guise, Aspley Heath, Bryan, Eversholt, Husborne Crawley, Milton Bryan, Potsgrove, Woburn
6	Northill, Old Warden, Southill
7	Flitwick, Ampthill, Steppingly
8	Moggerhanger, Blunham, Tempsford, Sandy
9	Dunton, Everton, Eyeworth, Potton, Sutton, Wrestlingworth & Cockayne Hatley
10	Arlesey, Astwick, Fairfield, Stotfold
11	Marston Moretaine, Cranfield, Ridgmont, Brogborough, Lidlington, Millbrook, Hulcote & Salford
12	Clophill, Haynes, Houghton Conquest, Maulden
13	Barton-Le-Clay, Flitton & Greenfield, Gravenhurst, Pulloxhill, Shillington, Silsoe, Streatley
14	Chalgrave, Chalton, Harlington, Sundon, Tingrith, Toddington, Westoning
15	Clifton, Campton & Chicksands, Henlow, Meppershall, Shefford, Stondon

Community Planning Events within Central Bedfordshire

The first stage in community planning was to hold an event with residents in their local area to find out what they wanted to raise with us. For each Community Area, a drop-in event was organised at a local venue for the public to attend. The drop-in event consisted of a number of exhibition boards providing general information on community planning and a map table illustrating an Ordnance Survey plan of the Community Area.

Upon arrival, members of the public were greeted, invited to read the available exhibition boards and given a feedback form to be completed at the map table. Each feedback form was given a unique reference number. The feedback form comprised of two questions under each of the six growth themes (twelve questions in total) and included a coloured sticker for each of the themes (feedback form is in the Appendix). These stickers were numbered with the unique reference for each feedback form. For each theme, the member of the public was asked

to select one category that they felt strongly about, then using the appropriate sticker, to locate this on the map and expand on why they chose this location on the feedback form. This meant that the numbered sticker on the map could be linked to the completed feedback form. Optional questions were also posed to help us understand who attended the event. Collected data from the event is in the Appendix.

Council officers were available at every event to talk to people, discuss local issues, answer questions and listen to concerns and opportunities. At many events, local town, parish and ward councillors were also present to talk to the community.

The following pages of the Community Plan introduce this Community Area and the feedback from its community that attended the engagement event. The methodology opposite indicates how this Community Plan has been prepared.











Our approach

1. Analysis

The feedback for each growth theme has been analysed to understand what the community felt about their area in order to fairly represent individual responses within this Plan, as well as determining whether there was a collective voice on particular issues.

2. Interpretation

Under each theme, there is an information graphic and a plan. The graphic illustrates the percentage of people that had chosen each category based on the number of people who had responded to that particular theme. The plan shows where the community located their stickers on the map table.

These are represented by coloured circles that relate to the category that had been chosen.

3. Hot Spots

Where there were multiple issues

highlighted in one location on the map or lots

of people highlighting the same issue at the
same location these were grouped into a 'hot spot'.

These are illustrated as a larger circle on the plan and
(where relevant) depicted as a pie chart if more
(where relevant) area.

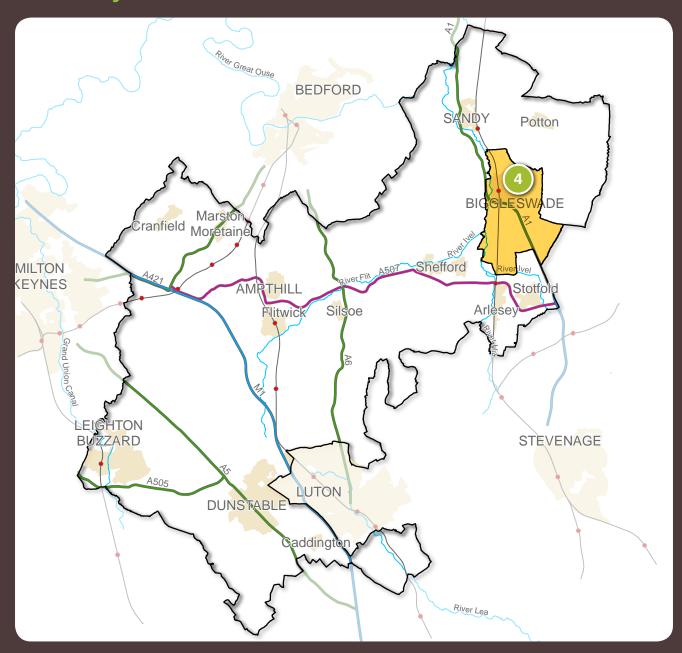
4. Trends

Following analysis of the data from
the feedback forms and the stickers on the
map, pointers regarding the themes are pulled
together based on individual and collective
voices that have arisen from the community. These trends identify
what is important or needs improvement within the Community
Area and therefore what the potential future opportunities
for the area are.

Exceptions to this process occurred which were dealt with as follows:

- Placing stickers on the map without ticking a category. Where this occurred, stickers are recorded as 'Location only'.
- Ticking more than one category. Where this occurred, their choices are divided evenly across the categories within the analysis process.
- No category selection or sticker but a written response provided. Where this occurred, comments were considered at the analysis and interpretation stage.
- Sticker to represent the whole of Community Area. Where this occurred, it has been recorded in a statement box next to the map.

Community Area within Central Bedfordshire



Community Area

This Community Plan relates to Community Area 4, which includes the parishes of Biggleswade, Edworth and Langford. This Community Area is located in the north-east of Central Bedfordshire and with the exception of Biggleswade, is rural in character. The Area is divided by the A1 which runs from north to south, bypassing Biggleswade. There are few local roads towards the south of the Area. However, Langford and Edworth can both be accessed from the A1. The East Coast Mainline railway runs through the Area, with a station at Biggleswade.

The Area population is approximately 19,640*. The age demographic of this Area is consistent with the rest of

Central Bedfordshire. The Area has a diverse range of dwelling types that is consistent with the rest of Central Bedfordshire.

Biggleswade currently has a Town Plan published. None of the parishes within the Community Area have a Neighbourhood Plan in development.

In total, 71 people attended the drop-in event on Wednesday 16th November 2016 which was held at Biggleswade Town Council offices from 2.30pm until 7.30pm. People who attended were primarily from Biggleswade. The people who attended mainly shop in Biggleswade and those who were in employment, primarily work inside the Community Area with the majority working in Biggleswade.

Plan of Community Area



Where participants from the area live, work & shop

Dot size represent the amount of people, e.g. the larger the spot, more people.



The people who visited the event lived in the areas shown above.



The people who visited the event mainly worked in the areas shown above, with 1 person shopping in St Albans and 3 in London (off the map).



The people who visited the event shopped in the areas shown above.

Local Character

Feedback

92% of the people who attended the event answered one or both questions on Local Character. Nobody considered that no improvements are needed to Local Character. Two people answered that they have no issues regarding Local Character in the Area.

From those who responded, the most popular category of Local Character that people would like to see protected or improved is Natural Open Space (at 51%) followed by Man Made Open Space (at 26%).

Analysis

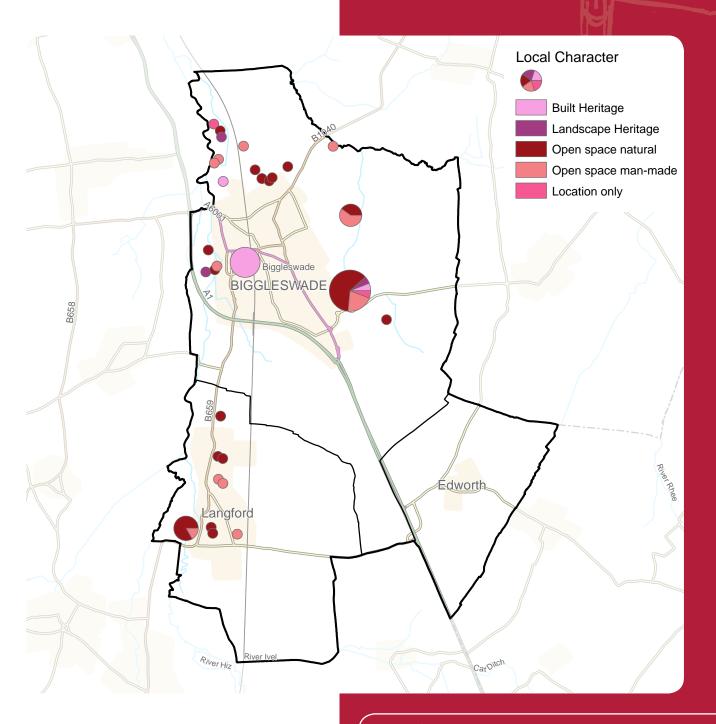
There were two main areas where people felt strongly about Local Character which in order of popularity were Biggleswade and its surrounding countryside, and Langford.

Many people answered that they would like to see the open countryside surrounding Biggleswade protected. Several people highlighted the importance of Biggleswade Common and its protection, whilst others answered that they would like to see the surrounding footpaths, bridleways and cycleways retained.

A number of people answered that they would like to see the historic character of Biggleswade and its market square protected, with the Maltings, Crown Hotel and old Fire Station being mentioned. A couple of people answered that there is a need for a better park with play facilities.



Map showing the places where particular protection of, or improvements to, Local Character should take place



In Langford, a number of people answered that they would like to see the open countryside surrounding the village protected. A few people mentioned upgrading the local nature reserve (Henlow Common and Langford Meadows) as well as improving the surrounding footpaths, bridleways and cycleways.

Trends

People want to maintain, protect and enhance Biggleswade Market Square and associated historic buildings.

Generally, people want to maintain and protect the surrounding countryside of Biggleswade and Langford.

Transport

Feedback

96% of the people who attended the event answered one or both questions on Transport. One person answered that they have no issues regarding Transport in the Area.

From those who responded, the most popular category of Transport that people would like to see improvements made to is Buses (at 34%) followed by Vehicular (at 30%).

Analysis

There were two main areas where people felt strongly about Transport, which in order of popularity were Biggleswade and Langford.

Several people indicated that they would like to see improvements made to bus services in Biggleswade. A few people answered that they would like a shuttle bus from the retail park into town. A couple of people questioned the removal of a bus shelter on Baden Powell Way.

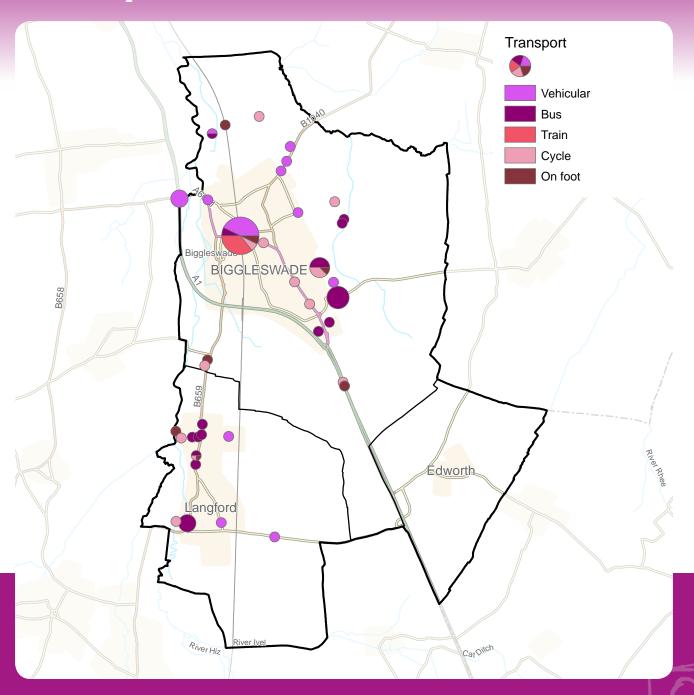
A number of people answered that there is a desperate need for parking in the town centre and around new housing developments and that a lack of parking is currently 'hurting business'. Several people commented on poor disabled access at the train station and others called for an improved train service. Some people highlighted cycleway improvements including a need for a better A1 crossing to extend the Green Wheel.

Other comments included better traffic control at the A1 roundabout; improved pavements for wheelchair users; improved road layouts; a need to keep pathways clear of vegetation and parked cars; and the widening of Potton Road.

In Langford, people answered that there was a need for bus service improvements with a couple of people stating that they would like to see buses running later in the day. Some people answered that the roads in the area need repair and others highlighted parking issues due to commercial vehicles being parked overnight in Langford. Other comments included a need for cycle links to other nearby villages and improvements to Kingfisher Way.



Map showing the places where particular improvements to Transport should take place



Trends

Buses - More frequent services and a broader range of local destinations within the Area.

Vehicular - Increased car parking in the centre of Biggleswade to support local retail on high street and improvements to A1 roundabout to reduce congestion.

Trains - Increased train service at Sandy station and improved disabled access.

Cycleways/Footpaths - Network of footpath/cycle links between nearby villages and towns, along with extending Biggleswade's Green Wheel across the A1.

Jobs and Business

Feedback

92% of the people who attended the event answered one or both questions on Jobs and Business. Eight people answered that they have no issues regarding Jobs and Business in the Area.

From those who responded, the most popular category of Jobs and Business that people would like to see investment made within their Community Area is High Street Development (at 54%).

Analysis

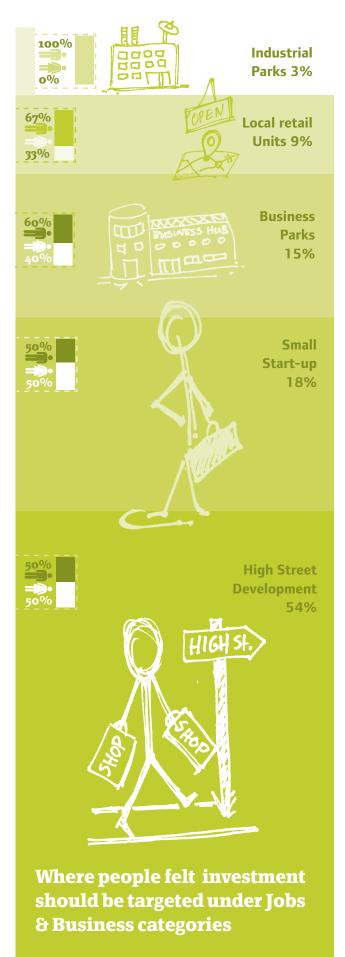
There were two main areas where people felt strongly about Jobs and Business, which in order of popularity were Biggleswade and Langford.

Many people answered that they would like to see regeneration made to Biggleswade High Street.

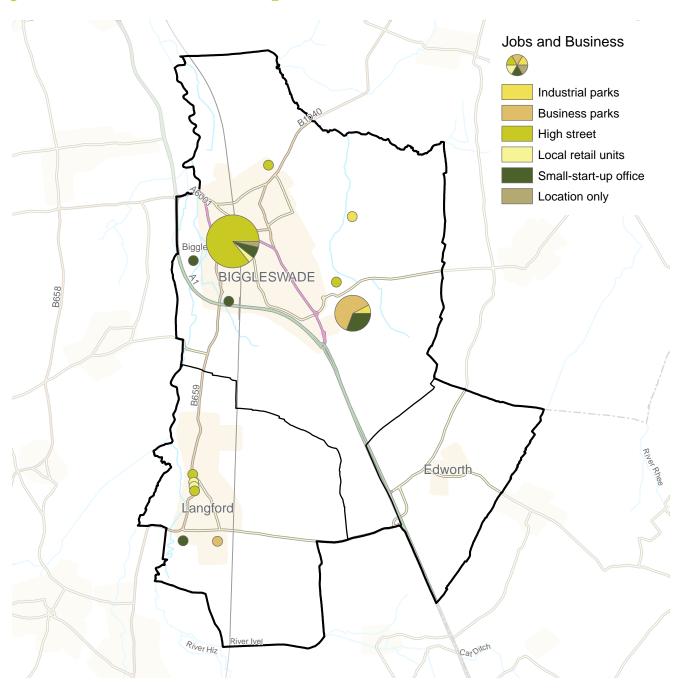
Generally, people felt that small local businesses and 'character shops' needed to be incentivised and encouraged to set up in Biggleswade town centre and that a greater provision of retail space is needed. Several people answered there is a lack of suitable office space as well as appropriate parking for shoppers in and around the High Street. Some people answered they would like to see Bond Lane improved for retail and business as well as Shortmead Street.

Several people's answers referred to the expansion of Biggleswade's Stratton Business Park. People agreed that the Park should be developed and refurbished especially given its access to the A1. Some people highlighted that businesses need to be encouraged to come to Biggleswade and one person suggested that an 'Innovation Hub' might help to encourage small start-ups into the Area.

People who placed their stickers in Langford answered they would like to see greater amenity provision to deal with extra housing in the village; a greater variety of retail and business; improvements made to the the high street; and a suggestion of a business park to the south, especially given its access to the A1.



Map showing the places where particular investment to improve Jobs & Business should take place



Trends

Investment in Biggleswade town centre to revitalise the High Street so that it is more attractive to retail and office businesses to ensure its long-term future for the local community.

Maximise the potential of Stratton Business Park through expansion and improvements to facilities.

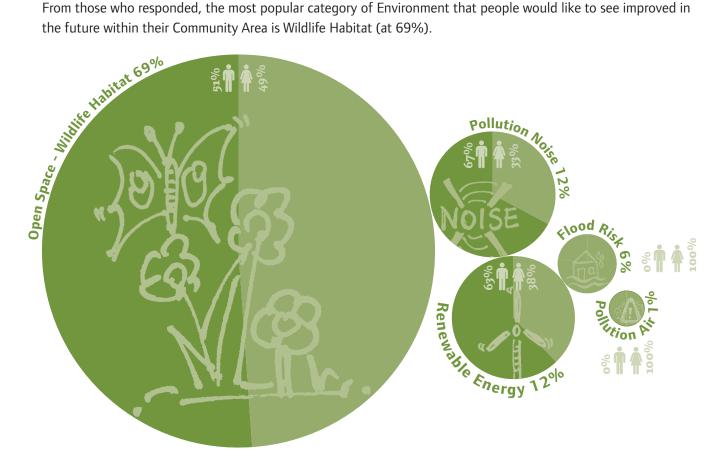
Improved local convenience facilities in Langford to support the local community.

Environment

Feedback

92% of the people who attended the event answered one or both questions on Environment. One person answered that they have no issues regarding Environment in the Area.

From those who responded, the most popular category of Environment that people would like to see improved in the future within their Community Area is Wildlife Habitat (at 69%).



Categories people considered to be the most valuable **Environment attribute to look after for the future**

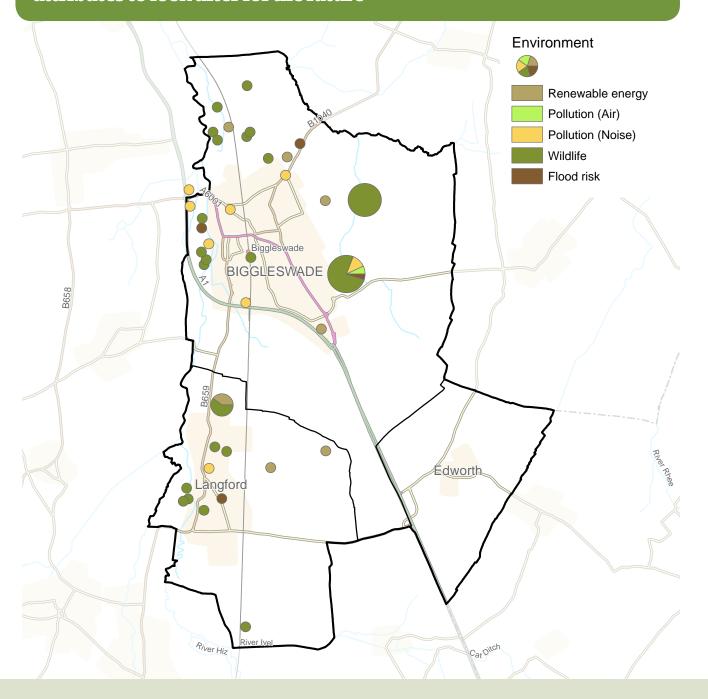
Analysis

The two main areas where people felt strongly about Environment were the open spaces surrounding Biggleswade and Langford.

A large number of people answered that they would like to see the open countryside surrounding Biggleswade protected from development and that there is a need for more wildlife habitat. These open spaces included Biggleswade Common with one person highlighting that the Green Infrastructure plan and Green Wheel masterplans demonstrate a need to buffer Furzenhall Common against new developments. Several people mentioned that they would like to see the footpaths and cycleways protected and maintained.

A few people commented on noise pollution from the A1 as well as concerns over flood risk in the area, especially to the east of Biggleswade. Other comments included a need for more solar and wind power, with some people answering that solar panels could be placed on new developments and local supermarkets. However, one person answered that wind turbines should not be erected on Biggleswade Common. One person asked for a bird watching area.

Map showing the places that were considered the most valuable attributes to look after for the future



In Langford, people showed concern for the effects of new developments on flood risk in the area. Several people answered that they would like to see the open countryside protected. A few people answered that they do not want Biggleswade and Langford to coalesce. Other comments included the addition of more wind turbines.

Trends

Wildlife habitat associated with open countryside to be protected.

Noise pollution arising from A1 to be resolved, particularly where close to settlements.

Renewable energy to be promoted in the Area, but not on Biggleswade Common.

Flood risk needs to be addressed in the Area especially when considering new development.

Homes

Feedback

89% of the people who attended the event answered one or both questions on Homes. Nine people answered that they have no issues regarding Homes in the Area.

From those who responded, the most popular category of Homes that people considered needed within their Community Area is Older Generation Homes (at 34%) closely followed by Affordable Homes (at 32%).

Analysis

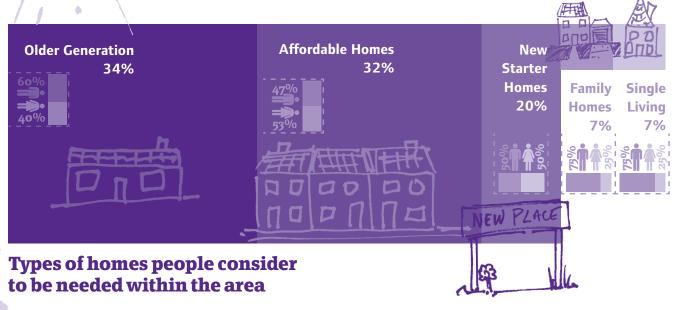
The two main locations where people felt strongly that there is a need for Homes, in order of popularity, were Biggleswade and Langford.

The provision of Older Generation Homes and Affordable Homes in Biggleswade were the primary concerns from several people. A number of people answered that there is a need for bungalows and downsizing accommodation. It was highlighted that new housing for the elderly should be located near to local facilities. Other people answered that there is a need for a greater provision of affordable homes and starter homes suitable for the younger generation. A few people also answered that there is a need for family homes, shared ownership properties, homes for estate workers and single living homes. A couple of people questioned whether Biggleswade needed more housing development.

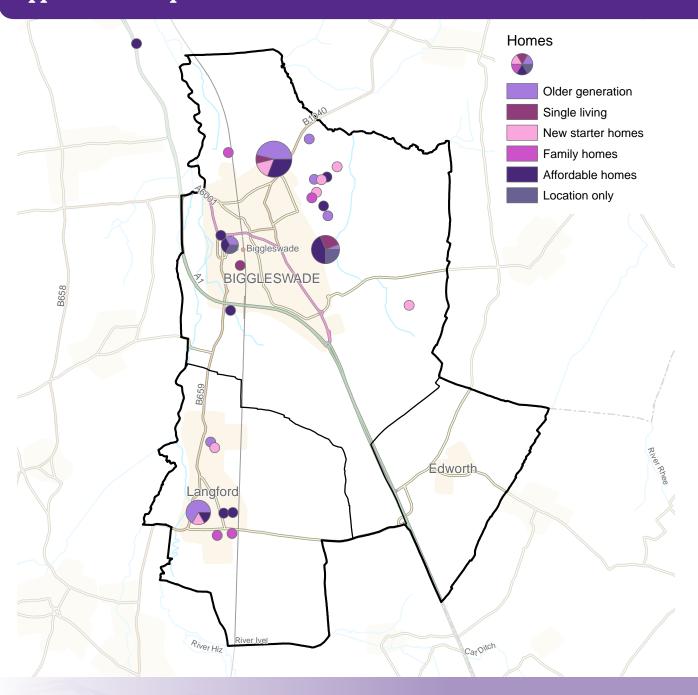
Other comments included a need for more homes to rent; too many houses being built in flood plain areas; and concern that brownfield land should be used for housing development, not green field sites.

In Langford, people answered that there is an insufficient number of family homes and that many properties are small and overcrowded. A number of people pinpointed Langford Triangle as a site for older generation homes and others answered the availability of affordable homes being an issue.





Map showing the places where there were considered to be opportunities to provide new homes



Trends

Provide homes for the elderly in the form of downsizing properties such as bungalows, sheltered accommodation and care homes near to local facilities.

Provide affordable housing (whether rent or part-purchase) so that families and young people can stay in the Area.

Provide family homes in Langford, along with affordable homes and homes for the older generation, potentially on Langford Triangle.

Growth & Infrastructure

Feedback

92% of the people who attended the event answered one or both questions on Growth and Infrastructure. Four people answered that they have no issues regarding Growth and Infrastructure in the Area.

From those that responded, the most popular category of Growth and Infrastructure that people considered needed within their Community Area is Leisure Facilities (at 29%), closely followed by Healthcare (at 28%) and Schools (at 27%).

Analysis

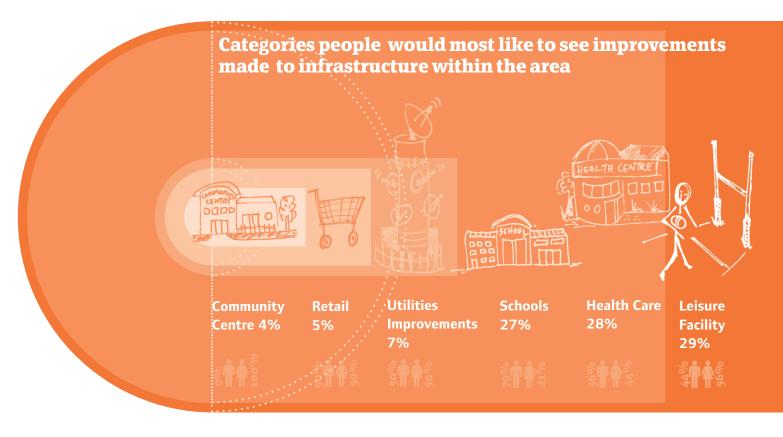
The two main locations where people felt strongly that there is a need for Growth and Infrastructure, in order of popularity, were Biggleswade and Langford.

A number of people answered they would like to see a better provision of leisure facilities in Biggleswade, especially for younger people. Several people suggested they would like a cinema in the Area, with other suggestions including a bowling alley, improved nightlife and more restaurants. Others highlighted a need for developing the healthcare provision in the Area, stating that the current system will not cope with the potential growth of the town. It was

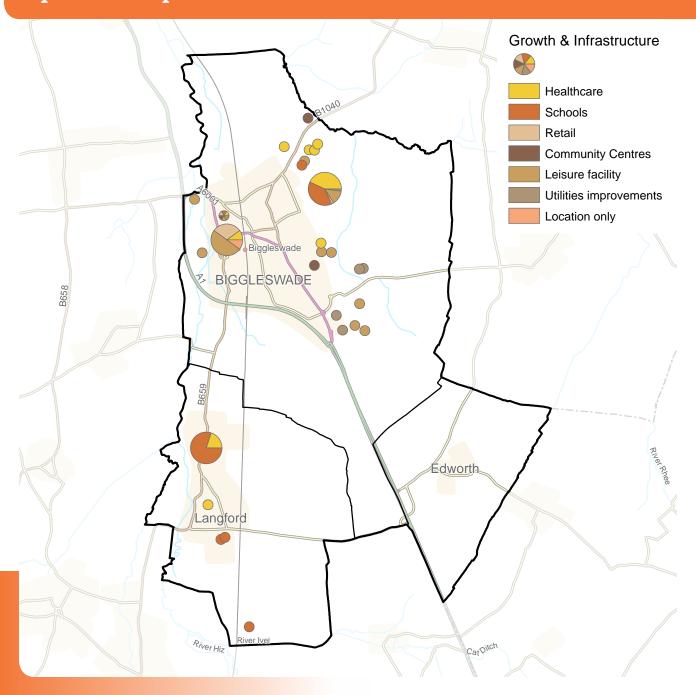
also suggested that a unit that deals with minor surgery and diagnostics might be beneficial and that Biggleswade hospital should remain. A few people answered they would like to see improvements made to local schools to cope with an increasing population and one person highlighted a need for improved schooling for children with special needs in the area.

Other comments located in Biggleswade included the creation of a 'Town and Country Park'; improved retail in the town centre; improved parking; more sports facilities; the introduction of a community centre and a need for better internet services to benefit residents who work from home.

People whose answers referred to Langford were mainly concerned with the local schools. People highlighted there were no pre-school spaces and that improvements needed to be made to the pre-school and lower school. One person suggested that a middle school on the Boot End Site might be beneficial and another answered that they would like to see nursery schooling to prevent having to drive long distances. Other comments included a need for improved healthcare facilities and associated car parking.



Map showing the areas where there were considered to be opportunities to provide or improve infrastructure facilities



Trends

Improve leisure facilities within Biggleswade, particularly for families and younger people.

Improve and expand healthcare facilities within the Area.

Provide a nursery at Langford, with improvements to pre-school and lower school provision.

Event: Findings

The people who attended the drop-in event for this Community Area identified the following Future Opportunities to protect or improve their locality under the growth themes:

Local Character

- People want to maintain, protect and enhance
 Biggleswade Market
 Square and associated historic buildings.
- Generally, people want to maintain and protect the surrounding countryside of Biggleswade and Langford.

Transport

- Buses More frequent services and a broader range of local destinations within the Area.
- Vehicular Increased car parking in the centre of Biggleswade to support local retail on high street and improvements to A1 roundabout to reduce congestion.
- Trains Increased train service at Sandy station and improved disabled access.
- Cycleways/Footpaths Network of footpath/cycle links
 between nearby villages and
 towns, along with extending
 Biggleswade's Green Wheel
 across the A1.

route Tangford
town
traffic
Cycle
park
park
Wheel
DUS
Road

link parking

Biggleswade

Jobs & Business

- Investment in Biggleswade town centre to revitalise the High Street so that it is more attractive to retail and office businesses to ensure its long-term future for the local community.
- Maximise the potential of Stratton Business Park through expansion and improvements to facilities.
- Improved local convenience facilities in Langford to support the local community.



character
park

Biggleswade

Wheel
Common

Space
space
town area
building
field open
local protect
development

The WordCloud diagrams illustrate the top twenty words used by the people who attended the drop-in event within their commentary for each growth theme. The size of the words reflect the number of people who wrote them.

Environment

- Wildlife habitat associated with open countryside to be protected.
- Noise pollution arising from A1 to be resolved, particularly where close to settlements.
- Renewable energy to be promoted in the Area, but not on Biggleswade Common.
- Flood risk needs to be addressed in the Area especially when considering new development.

Homes

- Provide homes for the elderly in the form of downsizing properties such as bungalows, sheltered accommodation and care homes near to local facilities.
- Provide affordable housing (whether rent or part-purchase) so that families and young people can stay in the Area.
- Provide family homes in Langford, along with affordable homes and homes for the older generation, potentially on Langford Triangle.

Growth and Infrastructure

- Improve leisure facilities within Biggleswade, particularly for families and younger people.
- Improve and expand healthcare facilities within the Area.
- Provide a nursery at Langford, with improvements to pre-school and lower school provision.







Shapingwhere you live 2035



What happens next?

Community Planning is a continuing process and this Community Plan, which collates all the information gathered at the event, is the first time this type of information has been collected. There will be a series of actions arising from the Community Plan which are likely to influence or shape planning policy in the Local Plan, decisions on planning applications, and decisions on where money arising from development should be spent. These actions are identified in total within the 'Overview Statement of Community Planning' which details how they will be dealt with. Central Bedfordshire Council will seek to work in partnership with organisations including Town and Parish Councils, developers and other agencies to deliver on these actions.

For more info on community planning...

www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/community-planning

More information on the Local Plan can be found here...

\delta www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/localplan

Disclaimer Central Bedfordshire Council is the statutory Planning Authority for the area and therefore is bound by legislation and must have regard to government guidance on planning matters.

Community Plan produced in consultation with Central Bedfordshire Council supported by www.lda-design.co.uk

This document contains:

Contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2016 Contains Royal Mail data © Royal Mail copyright and Database right 2016 Contains National Statistics data © Crown copyright and database right 2016

Central Bedfordshire Council:

© Crown Copyright and database right. 2016 Ordnance Survey 100049029

