Shapingwhere you live2035

This Community Says...

Community Plan

Covering the parishes of Barton-Le-Clay, Flitton and Greenfield, Gravenhurst, Pulloxhill, Shillington, Silsoe, and Streatley

Community Area 13

Final: July 2017

A great place to live and work.

Central Bedfordshire

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.

CONTENTS

Community Planning in Central Bedfordshire Community Area	1 7	Introduction and background to Community Planning and the Community Area itself
Local Character	9	
Transport	11	
Jobs & Business	13	Analysis of feedback from the Community Event
Environment	15	Analysis of recublek from the commanity Event
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.

Environment

INAS



what we create. We need quality development.

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 usines 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.

GrowTH & Trifrastructure

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.



Leroure Centre



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

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Cranfield Moretaine

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LUTON

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STEVENAGE

Towns and Parishes have been grouped into 15 different River Great Ouse community areas. The grouping has been based on a number of factors including:

- · Natural catchment or ward areas, connections and associations amongst communities e.g. for shopping, schools, work.
- · Access to services and facilities e.g. shops, post office, leisure services.
- · Town and rural hinterlands. MILTON
- · Shared characteristics, **KEYNES** similar issues and opportunities.

Grouping the areas like this helps local residents to engage because they will be able to see the direct relevance to where they live and help us consider all of the local issues and opportunities.

One Community Plan is produced for each of the 15 Community Areas.

Town and Parish Councils within Community Areas

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 than one category was chosen for that particular 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 poices that have arison from the

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 13, which includes the parishes of Barton-le-Clay, Flitton & Greenfield, Gravenhurst, Pulloxhill, Shillington, Silsoe and Streatley. This Community Area is located south of the centre within Central Bedfordshire, abutting the northern edge of Luton. Barton-le-Clay is the largest settlement within the Community Area, located relatively central to the Area on the A6. This Community Area is primarily rural in character with the settlements of Apsley End, Barton-le-Clay, Flitton, Greenfield, Higham Gobion, Silsoe, Sharpenhoe, Shillington, Streatley and Upper Gravenhurst found within. The A6 crosses through the centre of the Area running north to south with the B655 connecting Barton-le-Clay with Hitchin to the east. Most of the southern part of the Area falls within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and around half of the Area is also designated Green Belt.

The Community Area population is 13,470^{*}. This area has an age demographic consistent with rest of Central

Bedfordshire. In terms of dwelling types, this area has a higher proportion of detached dwellings when compared to the rest of Central Bedfordshire

Shillington and Silsoe published their Parish Plans in 2009 and 2008 respectively. The former also has a Village Design Statement published in 1999. Flitton & Greenfield, Pulloxhill, Silsoe and Barton-le-Clay are currently developing their individual Neighbourhood Plans. The parishes of Gravenhurst and Streatley do not currently have a Parish or Neighbourhood Plan published or in development.

Who attended the event?

In total, 83 people attended the drop-in event on Wednesday 26th October 2016 which was held at St Nicholas Church Hall, Barton-le-Clay from 2.30pm until 7.30pm. The people who attended mainly shop at Barton-le-Clay, Hitchin, Luton and Flitwick. Those who are in employment, primarily work in the Community Area with the remainder scattered within and outside of Central Bedfordshire.

Plan of Community Area



Where participants from the area live, work & shop

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



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



The people who visited the event went to work in the areas shown on the map above, with 2 people in London and 1 person in St Albans (off the map).



The people who visited the event mainly shopped in the areas shown on the map above, with 1 person shopping in London (off the map).

Local Character

% •

Feedback

87% of the people who attended the event answered the questions on Local Character. One person felt that there were no improvements to be made in relation to Local Character, with a further two indicating they had no issues.

From those who responded, by far the most popular response for Local Character, which people would like to see protected or improved, was natural open space such as the countryside (at 66%). Landscape Heritage such as historic parks, Man-made Open Space such as village greens, and Built Heritage such as old buildings all scored similarly (at 10-12%).

Analysis

Open Space - Natural 600

The two main areas where people felt strongly that Local Character needed to be protected were Barton Hills and Thomas's Meadow in Shillington.

Several people indicated that Barton Hills, along with the associated springs, should continue to be protected (it is Green Belt, part of the Chilterns AONB and a National Nature Reserve). People indicated that they enjoyed being able to walk over hills and felt that the Hills are important in providing separation between Barton-le-Clay and Luton. Suggested improvements included better parking and toilet facilities, expansion of the existing chalk downland and better promotion of the literary connections between Bunyan's 'The Pilgrim's Progress' and this landscape.

Some people were of the opinion that Thomas's Meadow in Shillington should be protected from development. People felt that it should be made an 'Important Open Space' to retain ancient meadows and hedgerows, which form part of the character of the field. Recent proposals for development on the Meadow were highlighted as being inappropriate.



Categories that people felt should be protected or improved under Local Character Map showing the places where particular protection of, or improvements to, Local Character should take place



Other open spaces and features that were identified by local residents include Barton Hills Recreation Ground, Flitwick Moor, Wrest Park, Sharpenhoe Clappers, protection of green spaces/countryside/ Green Belt/gaps between settlements, Barton Watermill, the village ambiance in Flitton and the architecture of Silsoe.

Trends

People value open countryside in close proximity to where they live and the separation it provides between settlements. This should be protected.

Improvements to Barton Hills for recreation and tourism.

Thomas's Meadow to be designated an 'Important Open Space'.

Transport

Feedback

89% of the people who attended the event answered the questions on Transport. Three people considered they currently have no transport related issues in the Community Plan area.

From those who responded, the most popular Transport mode that people would like to see improvements made to was Buses (at 56%) with Vehicular second (at 24%).

Analysis

There were three main areas where people felt strongly about Transport, which in order of popularity were an east-west bus route through the Community Plan area, within Barton-le-Clay and within Shillington. Other smaller concentrations of responses included Harlington Station, Wrest Park access and Silsoe.

Several people specifically answered that there should be an east-west bus route that runs between Hitchin and Harlington or Leighton Buzzard, via Barton-le-Clay and some of the smaller villages. A few people indicated that there was a need for a continued but improved bus service from and to Shillington. Further people would like to see improvements to bus services more generally, with buses to Harlington Station and to allow mobility of elderly residents also highlighted.

Other issues specifically identified in Barton-le-Clay included requirements for better surfacing of footways, wider paths and improved lighting. Parking in the village centre and associated with new developments were raised as concerns, as was the need for traffic calming.

Some people responded that there was a need to improve the access to Wrest Park, particularly during events, to avoid congestion on the A6 and knock on effects in Silsoe.

Further comments included improvements to footpaths and cycle route between villages, particularly away from busy roads; improving train routes, investment in trains and stations and improved journey times to London; the need for a Luton bypass to improve traffic congestion on the A6 and traffic calming in villages.



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





Trends

Buses - improvements east-west, linking villages, interchange with trains in Harlington.

Trains - general improvements to trains, stations and journey times.

Cycleways/footpaths - network of safe, preferably off road, links between villages.

Vehicular - improved junction for Wrest Park.

Jobs and Business

Feedback

82% of the people who attended the event answered one or both questions on Jobs and Business. Nine people indicated that they do not consider there are any issues related to jobs and business in the area.

Of those who responded, the most popular Jobs and Business category that people would like to see investment in within their Community Area was Small Start-up offices/centres (at 40%), followed by Business Parks (at 22%) and High Street Development (at 18%).

Analysis

There are four main areas where people felt strongly about Jobs and Business, which in order of popularity were Faldo Road Industrial Estate, existing Business Parks in Shillington, Silsoe and Bedford Road, Barton-le-Clay.

Several people responded that the existing Faldo Road Industrial Estate was a good location to concentrate most types of businesses, but particularly start-ups. The ability to offer local employment within walking distance of Barton-le-Clay was specifically highlighted by a few people.

Some people indicated that expansion of existing small scale business parks in Shillington would be acceptable. Comments included that this was a good use of redundant farm buildings, has less impact on the local environment and allows small businesses to employ local people.

Of the people that indicated locations in Silsoe where there were opportunities for growth in jobs and businesses, there was a split between those wanting high street development and those wanting a business park or start-up units away from the high street.

In Barton-le-Clay, some people indicated that there was a need for high street improvements, including local retail units and start-ups. Comments included the need to keep local businesses on the High Street and offer more choice.



Where people felt investment should be targeted under Jobs & Business categories

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



Further comments included increasing opportunities for tourism, including links with the Pilgrim's Progress; and encouragement for traditional retail e.g. butcher, greengrocer, post offices.

Trends

Expansion of existing business parks, to offer a range of different types of employment, but particularly start-ups.

Conversion of redundant farm buildings for start-ups.

High street retail and business improvements in Shillington and Barton-le-Clay.

Environment

Feedback

90% of the people who attended the event answered the questions on Environment. Only one person indicated that they have no environmental issues within the Community Plan area.

From those who responded, the most popular category of Environment that people indicated was the most valuable asset to look after for the future within their Community Area was wildlife habitats (at 63%) followed by Renewable Energy (at 17%).



Analysis

There were three main areas people felt were valuable attributes to look after for the future, with a further two locations getting multiple responses. The most popular of these were land to the north of Barton-le-Clay, Thomas's Meadow in Shillington and Barton Hills.

Numerous people responded that an area of land to the north of Barton-le-Clay is important to protect, with many of these considering it valuable as open space. Renewable energy and flood risk were also mentioned in relation to this area. Several people indicated that Thomas's Meadow in Shillington should also be protected as a local open space for future generations, for its wildlife habitats and conservation value.

Some indicated that Barton Hills should be looked after for the future, predominantly as open space, although renewable energy was also mentioned. It was considered that Barton Hills are of national importance and should be protected for wildlife as well as their value as open spaces.

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



A few people for both Beacon Hill and Flitwick Moor felt that these were also important open spaces to protect and that there was a need for sites such as Flitwick Moor and Flitton Moor to be linked together.

Further comments included preserving the countryside around villages; renewable energy is needed; flooding issues have been caused by excessive building and poor gulley maintenance; and reduction in traffic through villages (to reduce air pollution).

Trends

Open space near settlements should be protected for future generations and recent development proposals on Thomas's Meadow in Shillington are inappropriate.

Renewable energy should be promoted.

Homes

Feedback

88% of the people who attended the event answered the questions on Homes. Three people indicated that they currently have no issues related to Homes in the Community Plan area.

From those that responded, the most popular category of Homes that people considered were needed within their Community Area was dwellings for the Older Generation (at 46%). This was followed by Affordable Homes (at 26%) and New Starter Homes (at 14%).

Analysis

There were four main areas where people felt there was a real need for Homes: north east of Barton-le-Clay, southern Barton-le-Clay, Silsoe and Shillington.

Numerous people indicated an area north east of Barton-le-Clay, adjacent to Arnold Academy, where housing could be provided. The type of housing varied, although homes for the older generation was the most popular response. This was often indicated as a way of freeing up larger homes for families. Affordable homes for younger people were also mentioned, as well as planned expansion of villages in easy reach of shops and transport.

Several people indicated a variety of locations within and adjacent to southern Barton-le-Clay as suitable for the provision of new homes. Homes for the older



generation were again a popular option, to allow downsizing. Affordable homes on small infill sites in and adjacent to Barton-le-Clay were also mentioned.

Some people indicated locations in Silsoe for housing, half indicated this should be for the older generation to downsize. The remainder of the responses were more varied but included the importance of having starter homes, no known capacity for single living in Silsoe, and a need for affordable housing.

The responses relating to Shillington were varied in the type of provision suggested but generally related to residents of the village being able to continue to live there throughout their lives. This could be done through the provision of affordable starter homes and smaller properties for elderly people to move in to. An area to the east of the village was identified by all respondents as the most appropriate location for future housing.



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



Further comments included a need to prevent the conversion of smaller properties to larger properties; suggestions that a retirement village or similar should be provided; and small sympathetic developments rather than larger developments.

Trends

A range of different housing types to be provided to prevent locals having to move out of the area as their housing requirements change.

Smaller developments preferred in keeping with the local area.

Growth & Infrastructure

Feedback

88% of the people who attended the event answered the questions on Growth and Infrastructure. Five people indicated that there were not currently any issues related to Growth and Infrastructure in the Community Plan area.

From those that responded, the most popular category of Growth and Infrastructure that people considered was needed within their Community Area was for Healthcare (at 45%) followed by Leisure facilities (at 17%) and Utilities Improvements (at 16%).

Analysis

There were five main areas where people felt strongly that there were issues relating to Growth and Infrastructure. The most significant of these was southern Barton-le-Clay but other areas with multiple responses include northern Barton-le-Clay, west of Shillington, south Silsoe and east of Shillington.

Numerous people indicated locations within or close to the southern part of Barton-le-Clay as an area in need of infrastructure related improvements. More than half of these responses related to the need for an increase in doctors within Barton, with a wider range of facilities to prevent the need to travel to Luton and Dunstable for some services. Leisure facilities were also mentioned by a large proportion of these people but particularly a swimming pool and facilities for older children.

Several people indicated locations in or adjacent to northern parts of Barton-le-Clay as needing improvements. Expansion of GP facilities, demand on sports facilities, mobile phone/internet connections and regular power cuts were all highlighted as concerns in this area.

Of the people that indicated locations in the west of Shillington as locations with infrastructure issues, the majority referred to the need for a community centre, to replace an old village hall. Expansion of the village school and increased leisure facilities were also mentioned. Of the the few people that indicated locations in the east of Shillington, three of them referred to utilities improvements, specifically broadband and issues with smells. An improved community centre was also mentioned in this part of the village.



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



A few people indicated issues with healthcare provision in Silsoe, as there is currently no doctor's surgery in the village and residents have to travel to Barton-le-Clay.

An increase in retail services was also mentioned.

Increased school space provision to prevent overcrowding/improve parking at schools.

General improvements to broadband/high speed internet throughout the Area.

Trends

Healthcare facilities should be a priority, given that the only doctor's surgery in the area is currently in Barton-le-Clay.

Leisure facilities should be improved in Barton-le-Clay.

Increase in school places would be welcomed.

A new community centre should be provided in Shillington.

Replacement of cesspits with mains sewers.

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

- To retain and protect the Green Belt and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- To maintain and protect the rural character of the villages and surrounding countryside within the area.
- Protection of and improvements to Barton Hills for recreation and tourism.
- Thomas's Meadow to be designated an 'Important Open Space'.

Transport

- Creation of an east-west bus route that links villages and ideally interchanges with trains in Harlington.
- General improvements to trains, stations and journey times.
- Development of a network of safe, preferably off road cycleways and footpaths that provide links between villages.
- Improved junction for Wrest Park to reduce congestion in Silsoe and on the A6.

Jobs & Business

- Expansion of existing business parks, to offer a range of different types of employment, but particularly start-ups.
- Conversion of redundant farm buildings for start-ups.
- High street retail and business improvements to Shillington and Barton-le-Clay.





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

- Protection of open space near settlements for future generations.
- Protection of Thomas's Meadow in Shillington to prevent inappropriate development.
- Renewable energy should be promoted.

protected

local Traffic green

water Barton

energy farm

building

flooding

wildlite Koad

vill

Homes

- A range of different housing types to be provided to prevent locals having to move out of the area as their housing requirements change.
- Smaller developments preferred in keeping with the local area.

sheltered Barton

bungalow local young

affordable small

houses

downsize community

properties

elderly

afford

living

family

Growth and Infrastructure

- Healthcare facilities should be a priority, given that the only doctor's surgery in the area is currently in Barton-le-Clay.
- Increased leisure facilities, such as a swimming pool and facilities for older children, should be provided in Barton-le-Clay.
- An increase in school places would be welcomed.
- A new community centre should be provided in Shillington.

ocal leisure broadband current healthcare services Silsoe

22

Shapingwhere you live2035



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... 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.

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