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Central Bedfordshire Local Transport Plan: Appendix A

Journey to Work Evidence Base

April 2011

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1. Background

This document forms the evidence base for the 'Journey to Work' theme of the Central Bedfordshire Local Transport Plan. It has informed the development of the strategy and associated priority areas for intervention in terms of managing commuting trips within the authority.

The report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 2 – Sources of Data:** Lists the various sources of data upon which the evidence base has been compiled, including Census data and the Central Bedfordshire Householder Travel Survey.

- **Chapter 3 – Journey to Work Context:** Highlights the level of economic activity, and the length, mode and ease with which trips are undertaken as part of a journey to work.

- **Chapter 4 – Employment Provision in Central Bedfordshire:** Sets out current and future employment projections both in terms of actual jobs and land supply.

- **Chapter 5 – Employment Provision in Neighbouring Authorities:** Quantifies the scale of employment provision in neighbouring authorities and London, with indications as to how this is projected to increase in coming years.

- **Chapter 6 – In Commuting:** Examines the make up of trips into the authority in terms of the main locations from which employees are drawn.

- **Chapter 7 – Out Commuting:** Highlights the locations to which Central Bedfordshire residents commute, and the comparison between urban and rural areas of the authority.

- **Chapter 8 – Internal Commuting:** Assesses the movement of local residents accessing local jobs.

- **Chapter 9 – Through Commuting:** Seeks to draw out the scale of through commuting and the main infrastructure upon which these trips are focused.

- **Chapter 10 – Accessibility of Employment:** Looks at the infrastructure and service provision for alternative modes of travel and the issues associated with each depending upon the location of specific employment provision.

- **Chapter 11 – Benchmarking:** Benchmarks the travel to work context and patterns of Central Bedfordshire residents with other similar authorities.

- **Chapter 12 – Summary of Key Issues:** Provides a summary of the key issues drawn out within the Report.

2. Sources of Data

A number of sources of data have been used in the development of the evidence base and these are referred to throughout. A mix of primary and secondary data has been sourced to ensure that the findings are robust and provide a sound basis upon which to take forward the Local Transport Plan. The main sources of information are detailed below.

2.1 Householder Travel Survey

A telephone based householder travel survey was undertaken by the authority in April 2010 to develop an in-depth understanding of the travel patterns of residents across Central Bedfordshire, including journeys to work. This detailed the mode of transport used and the rationale behind the choice of travel together with postcode data on the location of respondents' home addresses and places of work. The survey of some 2,000 households provides a statistically reliable source of information and previously unavailable evidence base depicting travel behaviour for journeys to work and access to services.

2.2 Census

The 2001 Census data provides a comprehensive source of information on the total number of people within the authority, the proportion which are economically active, the industries within which they are employed and the mode of travel to work used by residents. It forms the most comprehensive source of data available across the whole authority.

2.3 Neighbouring Authorities

Central Bedfordshire has worked closely with other local authorities to piece together details of the patterns of movement across the authorities' borders in terms of employment related trips. As a result of the rural nature of the authority and the proximity of large employment centres on the fringes of Central Bedfordshire, there are a significant number of cross border trips, and the information derived from surrounding authorities has added to the understanding of longer distance commuting trips.

2.4 Local Development Frameworks

The Local Development Framework Core Strategy in place for the North Central Bedfordshire part of the authority, and the Core Strategy for South Central Bedfordshire part of the authority have been utilised to determine the level and location of existing and future employment provision within the authority.

Likewise the assessment of neighbouring authorities Core Strategies has also helped to identify key employment nodes and trip generators. In addition information on future housing provision and population growth will also enable an understanding of the areas from which employees will be travelling to access employment opportunities. As part of developing their evidence bases for the Core Strategies, local authorities also produce Employment Land Reviews, and these have been considered in terms of the location and extent of future provision.

3. Journey to Work Context

This chapter details the context within which journeys to work are undertaken across Central Bedfordshire. It highlights the levels of economic activity, average distances travelled to work by local residents, the modes of travel used for work related trips, and the perceived ease of access to employment.

Two sources have been used to compile this context, the 2001 Census and the 2010 Central Bedfordshire Householder Travel Survey. The former Mid Bedfordshire and South Bedfordshire authority areas are often referred to in the data sets to highlight differences and commonalities in context, and also to provide the most detailed possible insight into commuting patterns.

3.1 Economic Activity

The level of economic activity across Central Bedfordshire is set out in Table 3.1 based upon responses to the 2001 Census. It highlights that around 53% of the total population, some 125,000 people, were of an economically active age and of these some 3% were unemployed in 2001.

This compared to a figure of 50% of the national population which were classed as economically active and 48% of the population regionally. The figures also indicate only minor variation in the economic activity of the two former district authorities, and the type of employment undertaken.

Table 3.1: Level of Economic Activity

Census Data	Mid Beds	South Beds	CBC Total
Full time	42,139 (64%)	38,438 (65%)	80,577 (64%)
Part time	10,609 (16%)	9,980 (17%)	20,589 (16%)
Self employed	9,238 (14%)	7,157 (12%)	16,395 (13%)
Unemployed	1,656 (3%)	1,983 (3%)	3,639 (3%)
Full time student	1,907 (3%)	1,849 (3%)	3,756 (3%)
Economically active	65,549 (100%)	59,407 (100%)	124,956 (100%)
Total Population	121,024	112,637	233,661

Source: 2001 Census

Latest figures indicate that the number of jobs within Central Bedfordshire itself totals around 85,000, showing the size of imbalance between residents of working age and the actual number of jobs available locally. This figure represented an increase of nearly 7,000 jobs (an 8.5% increase) between 2003 and 2008, although still highlights the lack of self containment of the authority, with implications for the volume and length of trips on the transport network.

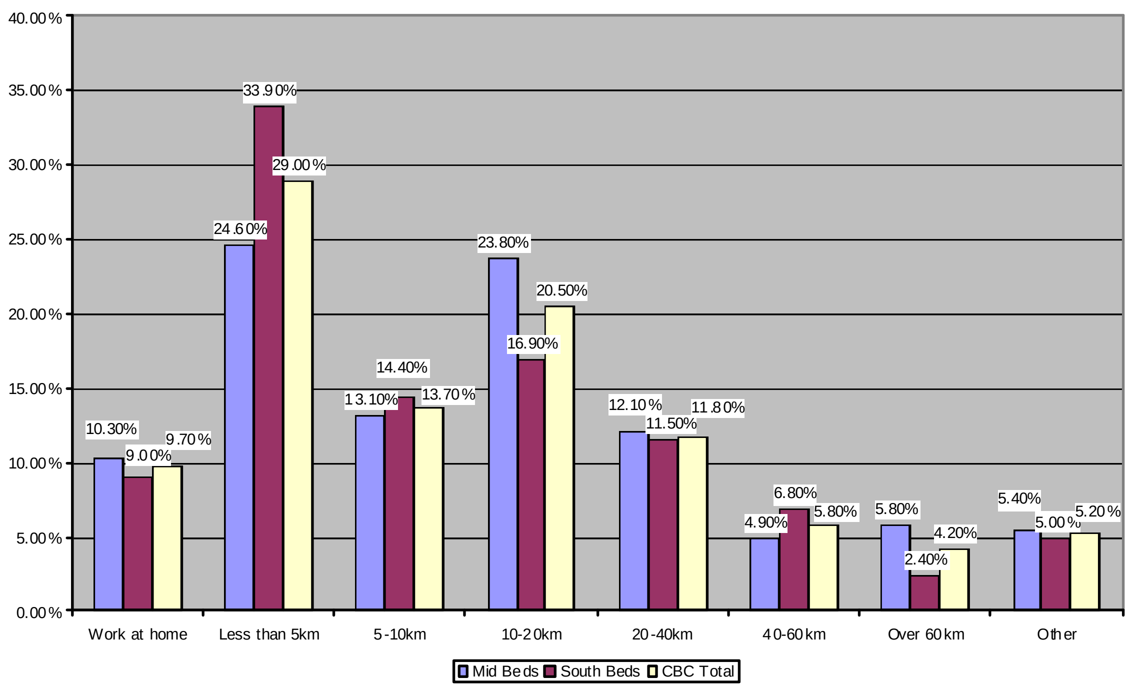
3.2 Length of Trips

Understanding the length of journeys to work helps to identify the potential for encouraging travel by sustainable modes and which alternatives to the car may be most feasible.

Figure 3.1 highlights the average journey length based upon information received through the 2001 Census, whilst Figure 3.2 highlights the comparative results obtained through the Householder Travel Survey. The key findings of both surveys highlight that:

- The average length of journey to work in 2001 in Central Bedfordshire was 10 miles (16km). This compares to a national figure of 8.5 miles in 2002, highlighting longer than average commutes for local residents[1].
- There is a wide divergence in the distances people travel to work with no one distance banding dominating. This reflects the rural nature of the authority and the lack of any one dominant urban area.
- A large proportion of respondents work within 2 miles of where they live, a distance easily walkable by most able bodied adults.
- A large proportion of the population also work within a relatively manageable cycling distance of their home, generally perceived to be anything under 5 miles.
- The number of people working from home appears to be increasing. The Householder Travel Survey found that almost 14% of residents now work from home compared to just under 10% in 2001.
- Despite this a significant number of residents travel long distances to access employment, highlighting a lack of self containment of the authority.

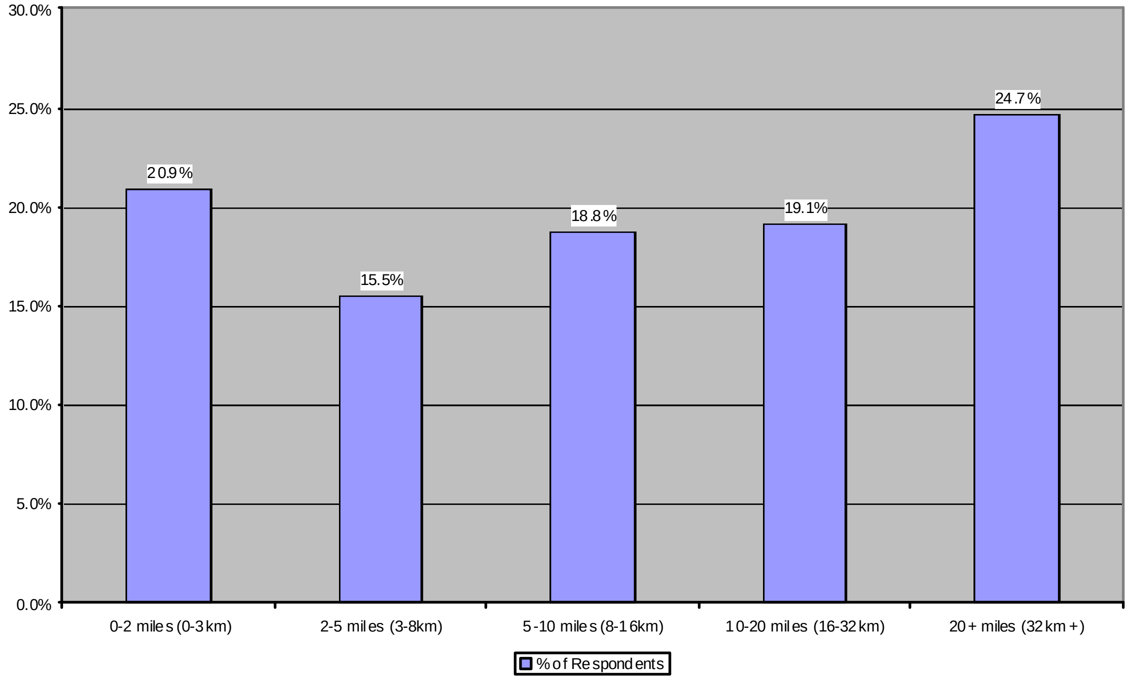
Figure 3.1: Average Distances Travelled to Work



Source: 2001 Census

[1] National Travel Survey 2008; DfT

Figure 3.2: Distances travelled to Work by Central Bedfordshire Residents



Source: Central Bedfordshire Householder Travel Survey 2010

The Householder Travel Survey also assessed the differences in the distances travelled to work by mode of transport used, and the location of residence of respondents to the survey. These differences are drawn out in Table 3.3 and Figure 3.2 respectively.

In terms of distances travelled based upon mode of travel it highlights:

- The car is used for trips of all lengths, even those under 2 miles, although it is predominantly used for longer trips, over 5 miles.
- The train is used for long distance trips only.
- Virtually all walking trips are less than 2 miles in length.
- Trips made by bike tend to be less than 5 miles in length.

Table 3.2: Distances travelled to work by Mode

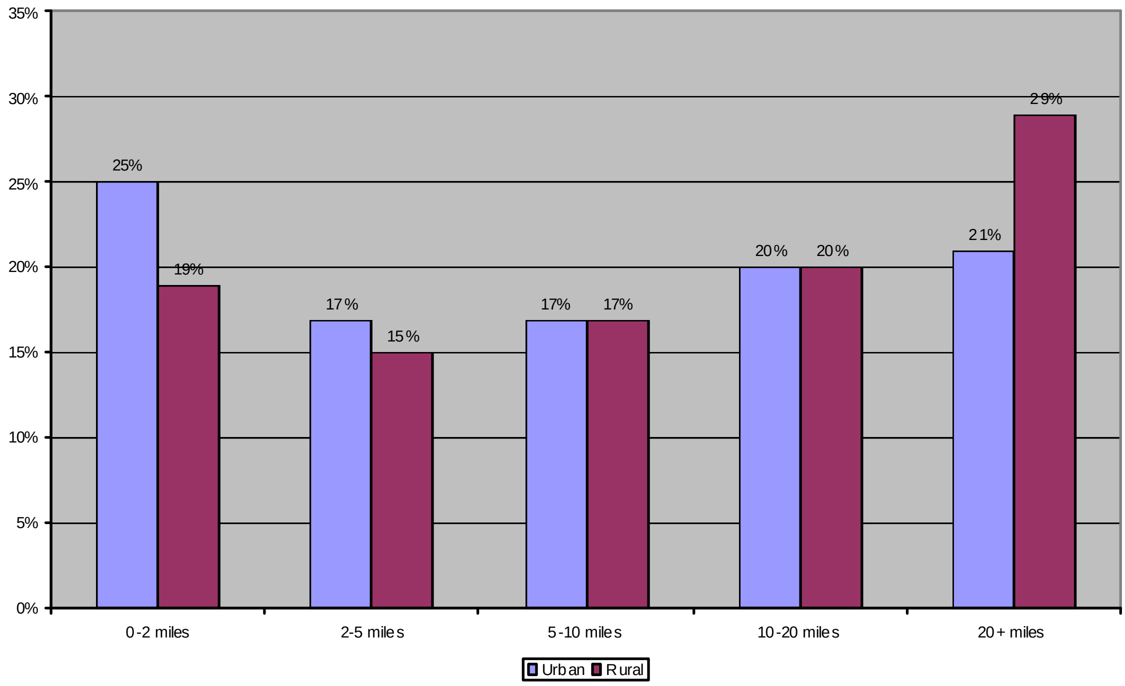
Mode	0-2 Miles	2-5 Miles	5-10 Miles	10-20 Miles	20+ Miles
Car	12%	17%	23%	23%	25%
Car (passenger)	5%	45%	20%	5%	25%
Bus	8%	20%	40%	20%	12%
Train	0%	2%	0%	14%	85%
Bicycle	52%	26%	7%	14%	0%
Walk	93%	6%	1%	0%	0%

Source: Central Bedfordshire Householder Travel Survey 2010

Differences are also readily apparent in the distances travelled to work based upon the location from which residents are commuting, in terms of urban or rural areas as follows:

- The length of commuting trips vary for both urban and rural based residents, however overall, residents in rural areas are more likely to travel further to their place of work than those in urban areas.
- Respondents living in urban areas (25%) were more likely to travel zero to two miles to work compared to those living in rural areas (19%).
- The biggest difference in travel patterns is the number of residents in rural areas which travel over 20 miles to access employment.

Figure 3.3: Distances travelled to work by Residence



Source: Central Bedfordshire Householder Travel Survey 2010

3.3 Mode of Travel

The 2001 Census and the 2010 Householder Travel Survey both provide an insight into the modal split of trips to work and how these patterns have altered in recent years. Table 3.3 and Figure 3.4 highlight the comparative share of journeys to work undertaken by each mode. In essence the key headlines are:

- The car is the predominant mode of travel to work, and is increasingly so, rising from around 71% of all trips in 2001 to 77% of journeys to work in 2010. Nationally this figure is around 69%[2] (from 61% in 2001), highlighting a greater reliance on the car locally than across the country as a whole.

- Walking to work is the second most popular choice of travel to work, and as with car use, it has also seen an increase in popularity between 2001 and 2010 rising from 8% of trips to 11% of trips to work, similar to the national average.

[2] Transport Statistics Bulletin – National Transport Survey 2008; DfT, 2009

- The number of people cycling to work has remained relatively constant at around 2.5%, slightly below the national average of 3% of all trips.

- Bus use has also remained relatively constant and also represents only around 2.5% of all trips. This is significantly below the national average for trips to work at around 7%[1].

- Rail use has increased from nearly 5% to nearly 6% of all trips to work, a figure slightly above the national average of 4% of commuting trips.

The modes of travel used to travel to work differ by the location of where residents live and this is drawn out in Figure 3.5. The key issues this cross assessment identifies are:

- Car use is more predominant in rural areas as opposed to urban areas.

- Cycling is more popular in urban areas although levels of walking are similar.

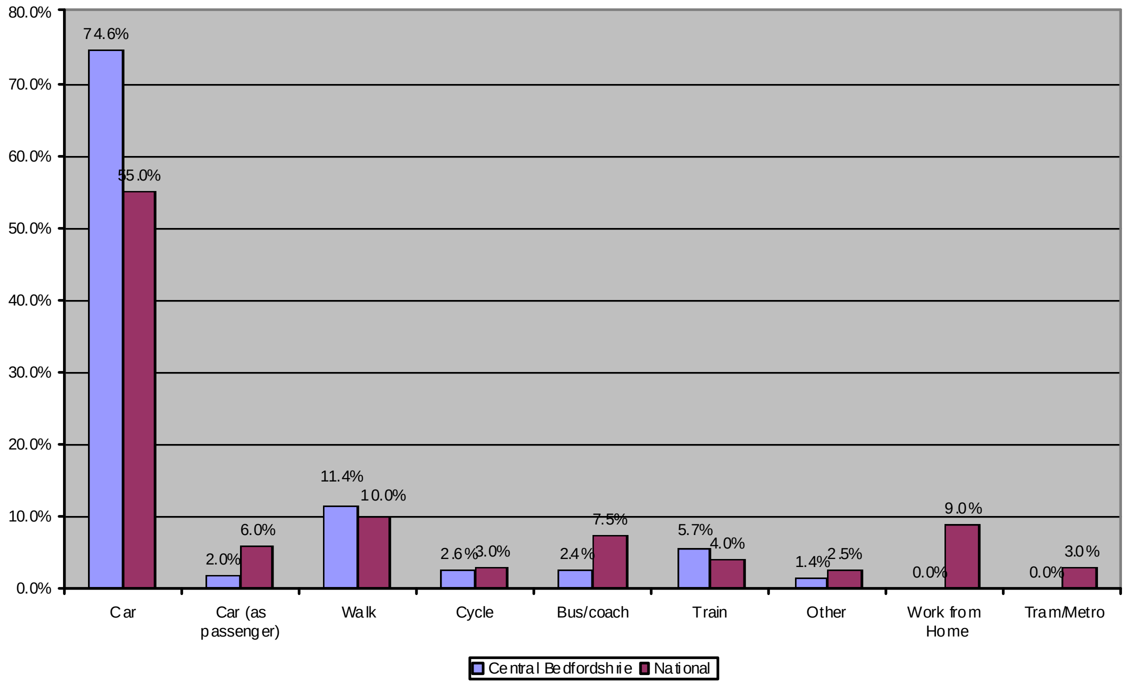
- Public transport usage is similar in urban and rural areas, a trend which is somewhat surprising given the better level of provision in urban areas.

Table 3.3: Mode of Travel for Journeys to Work

Mode	Mid Beds	South Beds	CBC Total	National
Car	45,730 (71.7%)	40,389 (70.5%)	86,119 (71.1%)	55%
Car (as passenger)	n/a	n/a	n/a	6%
Walk	4,413 (6.9%)	5,140 (9.0%)	9,553 (7.9%)	10%
Bicycle	1,588 (2.5%)	1,138 (2.0%)	2,726 (2.3%)	3%
Work at home	6,564 (10.3%)	5,180 (9.0%)	11,744 (9.7%)	9%
Train	3,496 (5.5%)	2,351 (4.1%)	5,847 (4.8%)	4%
Bus	1,065 (1.7%)	2,017 (3.5%)	3,082 (2.5%)	7.5%
Motorcycle	560 (0.9%)	595 (1.0%)	1,155 (1.0%)	1%
Other	368 (0.6%)	452 (0.8%)	820 (0.7%)	3%

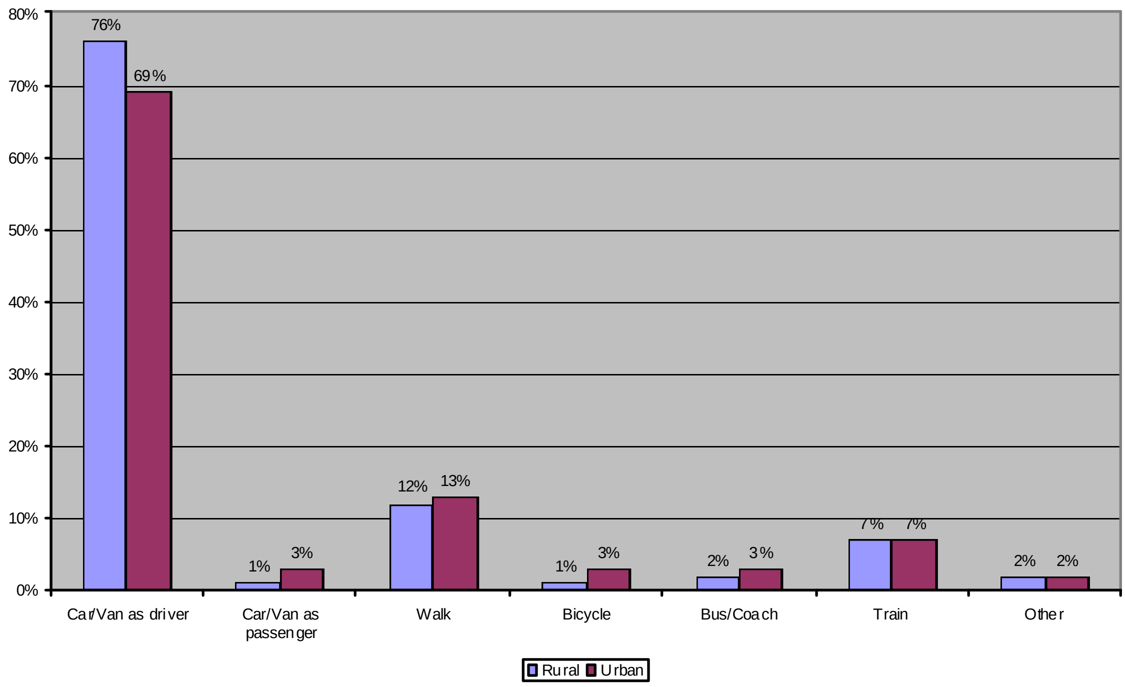
Source: 2001 Census / Office National Statistics; 2001 Key Census Statistics for Local Authorities

Figure 3.4: Modal Split of Journeys to Work



Sources: Central Bedfordshire Householder Travel Survey 2010 / Office National Statistics; 2001 Key Census Statistics for Local Authorities

Figure 3.5: Mode Split by Location of Residence



Source: Central Bedfordshire Householder Travel Survey 2010

A number of reasons were given by respondents to the Householder Travel Survey for not using alternatives to their current form of transport, and these are set out in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Barriers to using alternatives modes of Travel

Barrier to Use	Car share	Walk	Cycle	Bus/coach	Train
Do sometimes use this alternative	20.4%	6.3%	11.1%	7.7%	16.1%
Too far/short	-	73.4%	46.6%	0.7%	1.3%
Do not own a bicycle	-	-	12.1%	-	-
Need to use car for job	-	2.7%	3.2%	4.6%	3.6%
Unsafe	-	2.7%	5.5%	-	-
Varied patterns of travel	8.6%	-	-	-	-
No one to share with	38.3%	-	-	-	-
Inconvenient	4.1%	1.6%	2.4%	9.4%	6.6%
Need to transport equipment	1.4%	2.1%	2.7%	2.9%	2.8%
Travel to various destinations	5.0%	-	-	-	-
Weather	-	-	1.3%	-	-
Health	-	0.4%	1.4%	0.1%	0.1%
Unsuitable timetables	-	-	-	10.8%	2.5%
Unreliable services	-	-	-	1.8%	0.4%
No bus/coach/rail service	-	-	-	41.9%	36.9%
Would take too long	-	-	-	6.8%	4.3%
Lack of information	-	-	-	2.7%	0.4%
Cost	-	-	-	1.3%	3.2%
No stop/station nearby	-	-	-	0.6%	8.3%

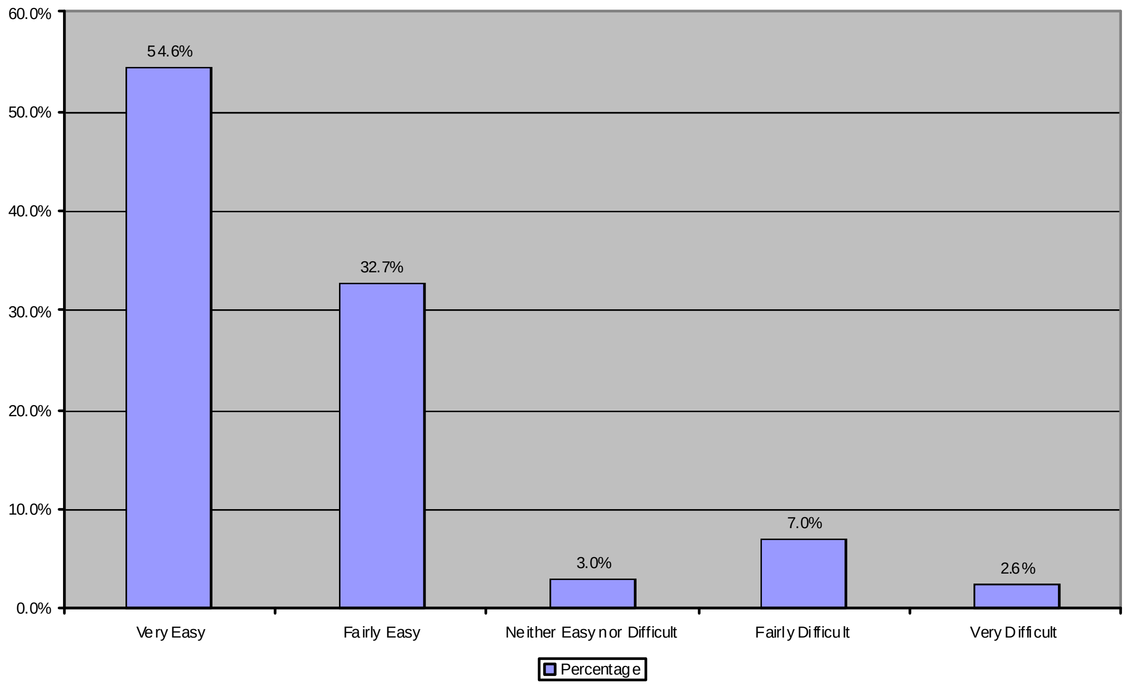
Source: Central Bedfordshire Householder Travel Survey 2010

3.4 Ease of Access to Employment

Some 60% of the 2,000 respondents to the Householder Travel Survey commute and the vast majority of these find it easy to access their place of work as can be seen in Figure 3.6. Less than 10% of all respondents find it difficult. However the main difficulties experienced were highlighted as:

- Distances involved (67.5%)
- Traffic congestion (20.5%)
- Poor public transport / lack of own transportation (9.4%)

Figure 3.6: Ease of Access to Employment



Source: Central Bedfordshire Householder Travel Survey 2010

The relative ease of access to work differs by type of mode of travel used and the location of residence of the respondents to the survey. Table 3.6 and Figure 3.6 demonstrates that:

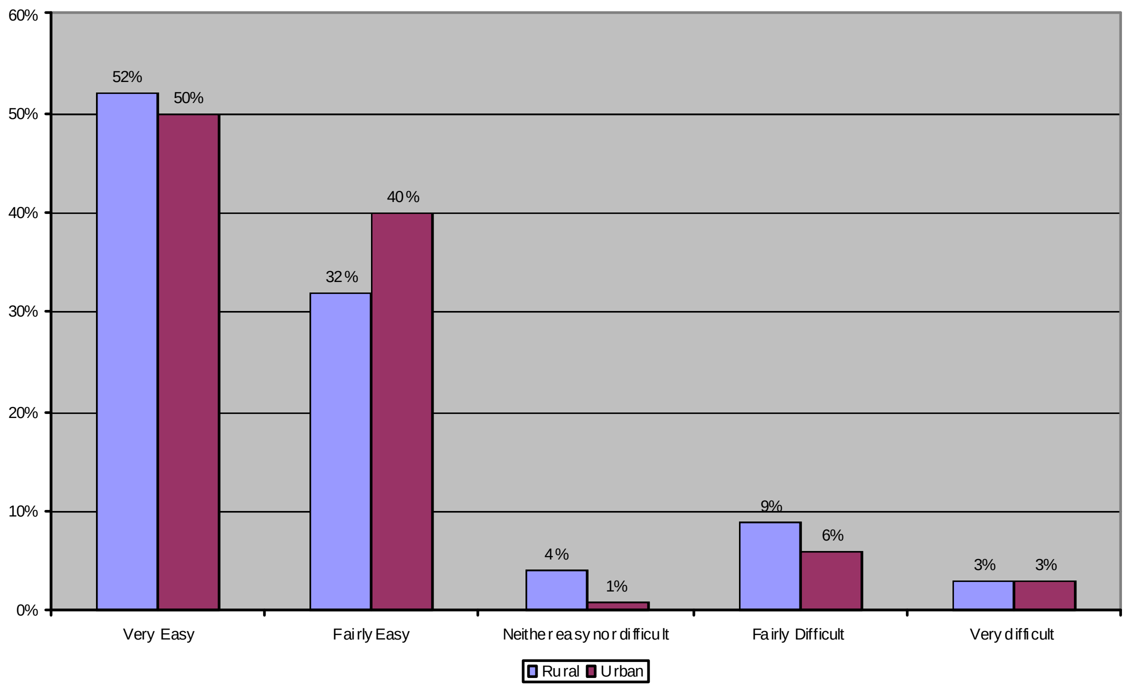
- The majority of car drivers find it easy to access employment. This is not necessarily the case for car passengers however with around 1 in 3 finding their commute difficult to some extent.
- All respondents who walked to work found it easy to do so, a trend also experienced by cyclists.
- Around 20% of both bus users and those commuting by rail found their journey to work fairly or very difficult.
- The majority of both urban and rural based residents find it very or fairly easy to commute to work. However slightly more residents in rural areas find it difficult or fairly difficult.
- Ease of access appears to be more dependant on the mode of travel used as opposed to the location from which residents are commuting.

Table 3.5: Ease of Access to Employment by Mode

	Very Easy	Fairly Easy	Neither easy nor difficult	Fairly Difficult	Very difficult
Car / Van as driver	49%	35%	4%	9%	3%
Car / Van as passenger	19%	43%	0%	24%	14%
Walk	86%	15%	0%	0%	0%
Bicycle	73%	27%	0%	0%	0%
Bus / Coach	28%	48%	4%	16%	4%
Train	29%	46%	5%	14%	7%

Source: Central Bedfordshire Householder Travel Survey 2010

Figure 3.7: Ease of Access to Employment by Location of Residence



Source: Central Bedfordshire Householder Travel Survey 2010

3.5 Summary

The broad assessment of the context within which journeys to work are undertaken by Central Bedfordshire residents raises a number of key issues which will be taken forward and addressed through the development of the journey to work theme and areas of intervention.

These can be summarised as:

- **Length of trips:**
  - Central Bedfordshire residents travel further than the national average in accessing employment opportunities.
  - There is a wide divergence in the distances people do travel to work.
  - A large proportion of residents live within relatively easy walking or cycling distance to work, but this is not reflected in a similar modal share.
  - An increasing number of residents are working from home.
  - The majority of residents walking to work travel under 2 miles, and cycling under 5 miles.
  - Train users tend to travel the furthest to work with 85% of users commuting over 20 miles. Car users however tend to travel a wide variety of distances to work from under 2 miles to over 20 miles.

- **Mode of travel:**
  - The car is increasingly the predominant mode via which people travel to work, and there is greater reliance on the car locally when viewed in the national context.
  - Walking is the second most popular modal choice, whilst cycling and bus use are used by relatively few commuters. Rail use accounts for 6% of all trips and this is slightly above the national average.
  - Car use is more predominant in urban areas as opposed to rural areas although use of public transport is similar. Cycling is also more popular in urban areas.
  - There are a number of barriers to encouraging car users to switch to alternative modes of travel including ability to find car share partners, the distance of trips making it unfeasible to walk or cycle and the lack of direct public transport services between destinations.

- **Ease of access to employment:**
  - The vast majority of residents find it easy to get to work.
  - This differs significantly by mode. Commuters who walk or cycle to work find their journey the easiest, whilst those who travel by bus, rail or as a passenger in a car experienced the greatest amount of difficultly.
  - There is little difference in the ease of access to work depending upon the location of residents, whether they be based in urban or rural Central Bedfordshire.
  - The main difficulties experienced in accessing employment are citied as the distances involved, congestion and a lack of public transport provision, or ownership of alternative modes of travel.

4. Employment Provision in Central Bedfordshire

This chapter details employment provision across Central Bedfordshire, together with future allocations identified through the Local Development Framework planning process. The identification of employment provision will enable key trip generators to be identified and specific areas to be targeted for improvements in transport provision and accessibility.

4.1 Employment Provision in Urban Areas

There are a number of key urban centres within Central Bedfordshire which contain the vast majority of employment opportunities in the authority. These are detailed below in terms of both their current and anticipated future levels of provision, and summarised in Table 4.1.

The Core Strategy for North Central Bedfordshire indicates that there is a need to provide an additional 17,000 jobs within the area between 2001 and 2026[3]. The Strategy is seeking to increase the supply and range of sites available for employment provision and improve the alignment between jobs and housing to help reduce levels of out commuting.

The Core Strategy produced for the south of the authority, in conjunction with Luton Borough Council, was subject to a Public Inquiry at the time of publication of the LTP and it was not clear as to the future levels of employment growth to be catered for.

Dunstable & Houghton Regis

- **Current Provision:** Employment opportunities are predominantly focused within large industrial clusters to the north east of Dunstable town centre, which benefit from easy access from the A5 and A505. These areas include the Woodside Industrial Estate which provides significant numbers of manufacturing jobs.

  Together with the adjacent employment areas, the Woodside Industrial Estate accounts for approximately 80% of the employment land in Dunstable employing 5,000 people. Dunstable's role as a retail and service centre also provides employment in the town centre for a significant number of people.

[3] Core Strategy and Development Management Policies; Central Bedfordshire Council, November 2009

Leighton Linslade

- **Current Provision:** There are a number of concentrations of employment provision in Leighton Linslade. Standbridge Road Industrial Estate forms the bulk of provision to the east of the town, the Grovebury Road Industrial Estate to the south of the town is accessible directly from the A505 which forms its southern boundary, and as with Dunstable, Leighton Buzzard town centre forms a focus for retail and service provision and the associated employment opportunities this provides.

Biggleswade

- **Current Provision:** There is a broad mix of employment opportunities within the town with a focus on one or two key sites including Stratton Business Park to the south of the town at the junction of the A1/A6001. Albone Way and Eldon Way also provide a range of smaller industrial units to the south of the town centre, which as the largest centre of retail and service provision in North Central Bedfordshire, also provides a range of employment opportunities for local residents.

- **Future Allocations:** Some 15 hectares of land has been allocated for new employment provision in the town through the North Central Bedfordshire Core Strategy, located to the east of the existing Stratton Business Park.

Sandy

- **Current Provision:** Sandy occupies a strategic position on the A1 corridor in the east of the authority and the employment opportunities provided within the town benefit from a wide catchment area for those able to travel by car. Middlefield Industrial Estate and Sandy Business Park to the east and north east of the town respectively, form the largest concentration of employment provision with a mix of office and warehouse units. Smaller areas of employment exist to the south, close to the train station and to the west, adjacent the A1.

- **Future Allocations:** The Site Allocations Document of the North Central Bedfordshire LDF makes provision for 5 to 10 hectares of employment use within the town. This is envisaged to be accommodated on land to the north of Beamish Close on the edge of the existing Sandy Business Park.

Ampthill

- **Current Provision:** The two main areas of employment provision within Ampthill comprise office and warehouse facilities based around the Huntings Engineering site around 1km to the north of the town itself, and an industrial estate to the west of the town between the A507 bypass and the Midland Mainline rail line.

- **Future Allocations:** Future allocations of employment provision are proposed to be provided adjacent to these existing sites, and total between 5 to 10 hectares of land.

Flitwick

- **Current Provision:** The largest centre of employment provision in Flitwick is centred on an industrial estate to the north east of the town. This is supplemented by a number of other individual trading units within the centre of town alongside the railway line.

- **Future Allocations:** Between 3 and 5 hectares of additional employment provision are to be provided through the Local Development Framework, incorporated as part of new residential developments and through a specific allocation to the north of the town alongside the railway line and A507.

Wixams

- **Current Provision:** Wixams is a new settlement being built straddling the boundary of Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough, for which planning permission has been granted for around 4,500 new dwellings. As a consequence no employment is located on the site at present.

- **Future Allocations:** As part of the development of the settlement, a minimum of 5 hectares of employment land is set to be provided. This will not necessarily be accessed via new residents of the settlement and so thought will have to be given to the changes in commuting patterns this creates.

Table 4.1: Current / Future Employment Provision in Urban Areas

Location	Current Employment Provision	Future Provision
Dunstable	225ha	80ha
Leighton Linslade		20ha
Biggleswade	No figures currently available	10-15ha
Sandy		5-10 ha
Ampthill		5-10 ha
Flitwick		3-5 ha
Wixams	None	5 ha

Source: North Central Bedfordshire Site Allocations Document; Central Bedfordshire Council, January 2010

4.2 Employment Provision within Rural Areas

A large proportion of jobs are based in the more minor service centres and rural parts of the authority. A total of 166 separate employment sites have been identified in North Central Bedfordshire, above 0.25ha in size. Of these sites 39% have been converted from a non B1-B8 use, often agricultural buildings, highlighting the rural nature of much of the provision. Locations of significant current and future provision of employment opportunities are set out in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Current / Future Employment Provision in Rural Areas

Location	Current Employment Provision	Future Provision
Cranfield	Cranfield University and Cranfield Technology Park provide a hub for high technology and research industries within the authority.	**5ha:** Land west of University Way and Wharley End.
Marston Moretaine	Limited provision.	**7ha:** Land at Moreteyne Farm as part of a mixed use development.
Potton	Operates as a minor service centre.	**1ha:** Land east of Biggleswade Road as part of a mixed use development.
Shefford	South of centre at Old Bridge Way and to the west at Chicksands.	**2-4ha:** Land at Bridge Farm, Ivel Road in the centre of the town.
Stotfold	Limited provision.	**5ha:** Land south of the A507 to the south of the town.
Arlesey	Small number of industrial units to the south of the settlement.	**10ha:** Land at to the west and north east of the town as part of mixed use developments.
Silsoe	Limited provision.	**1.2ha:** Redevelopment of former Cranfield University site.
Brogborough	Storage and distribution hub due to proximity to the M1 and Milton Keynes.	**8ha:** Land between the A421 and Marston Gate Distribution Park.
Maulden	Limited provision.	**1.8ha**: Land adjacent to Clophill Road

Source: North Central Bedfordshire Site Allocations Document; Central Bedfordshire Council, January 2010

4.3 Summary

The key issues highlighted from the assessment of current and future employment provision are:

- **Economic powerhouse:** The authority is seeking to focus job creation in the main settlements so that employment is within easy reach of local residents, as part of proposals to become an 'economic powerhouse'.

- **Dispersed provision:** There are a wide range of employment destinations, both in terms of urban centres and rural locations.

- **New employment centres:** Large, new employment centres are set to be created at Wixhams, Arlesey and in the Marston Vale (at Cranfield, Brogborough and Marston Moretaine), locations which currently provide limited employment opportunities.

- **Uncertain growth:** The level of employment growth in is unclear due to uncertainties in the national economic climate.

5. Employment Provision in Neighbouring Authorities

There are a number of neighbouring urban areas which have a strong draw for residents from Central Bedfordshire in terms of the provision of employment. As such the authority is subject to high levels of out commuting, and this is drawn out in Chapter 7 of this Report. This section details the scale of current and future provision in these neighbouring authorities.

The 2001 Census highlights that the main employment destinations outside of Central Bedfordshire for local residents are Bedford, Milton Keynes, Luton, London and Hertfordshire and as such these form the focus of this Chapter. The number of jobs provided in each of these areas is set out in Table 5.1.

5.1 London

London is located only 40 miles from the south of Central Bedfordshire and is the largest economic centre within the country. On this basis it forms a significant draw for commuters from across the authority, taking advantage of excellent transport connections via the M1 and A1 and the three mainline rail connections. Around 6-8% of Central Bedfordshire residents commute to the capital as a result of the job opportunities and transport links in place.

Current Provision

The number of jobs in London increased by around 700,000 between 1996 and 2008, to over 4 million in total, with large numbers based in health and social work, retail, financial services, education and hotels amongst other sectors. Manufacturing has declined in recent years however, and only accounts for 5% of total employment. Of the 4.7 million jobs provided it is estimated that the majority of these are located within Inner London (57%) with the remainder in Outer London. Around 1 in 5 of the jobs provided in London are taken by people commuting into the capital on a daily basis[4].

Future Provision

The Mayor's Economic Development Strategy anticipates job growth of 750,000 between 2008 and 2031, which would take the total number of jobs to 5.45 million. The growth areas for employment are set to focus on financial services (almost 40% of all new jobs), leisure and personal services (around a third of new jobs), and in hotels and restaurants, which would comprise a fifth of all new jobs. The Mayor's aim is to maximise the number of new jobs which go to Londoners themselves.

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[4] The Mayor's Economic Development Strategy for London; London Development Agency, May 2010

5.2 Bedford

Bedford has strong economic links with the northern parts of the authority and in particular the towns of Sandy, Ampthill and Flitwick with around 10% of residents of each town commuting across the border to Bedford, as set out in Chapter 7. This is off set by a similar number of jobs within North Central Bedfordshire being taken by Bedford residents, although such economic links with South Bedfordshire are more limited.

Current Provision

In 2008 there were approximately 70,800 jobs in Bedford Borough (not including self employed), a figure which has increased by 9.6% since 2001, equating to 6,200 jobs in real terms[5]. The Borough has a lower proportion of people working in manufacturing industries and in banking and insurance than both the East of England and England as a whole, but larger proportions in public administration, education and health and in construction.

Future Provision

In terms of jobs growth, the Joint Economic Development Strategy for Bedfordshire and Luton seeks to provide 16,000 new jobs in Bedford Borough between 2001 and 2021. Some 6,200 new jobs had been generated by 2008 leaving a further 9,800 to be provided up to 2021. Much of the employee jobs growth between 2001 and 2008 was in the public administration, education and health sectors (4,800).

The resident workforce in the Borough and the number of workplace jobs in the Borough are in approximate balance with the Borough having net out-commuting of only 2,160 at the time of the 2001 Census.

5.3 Luton

Luton is closely related to the southern part of Central Bedfordshire and has strong physical, cultural and economic ties with the towns of Dunstable and Houghton Regis in particular and there are significant flows of residents which commute between these neighbouring centres. This equates to some 16% of South Central Bedfordshire residents looking to Luton for employment, a figure which rises to over 20% for Dunstable and Houghton Regis.

Current Provision

It is estimated that there were around 87,000 jobs located within Luton in 2007. A significant proportion of these are located at London Luton Airport and the associated industries which serve the airport, which acts as a major economic driver for the region as a whole.

[5] Annual Business Inquiry, Bedford Borough Council, 2008

Future Provision

It is unclear as to the future level of employment provision in Luton at present. This will be established as part of the development of the Core Strategy for the area. Notwithstanding uncertainty over total growth, London Luton Airport will play a large role in future job creation within the area. An anticipated 10,000 new jobs are envisaged within the master plan for the airport in the period up until 2021 with a further 5,000 in the decade thereafter.

5.4 Milton Keynes

Milton Keynes is located on the western edge of Central Bedfordshire and exerts a strong influence over the southern and western parts of the authority not just in terms of employment provision, but as a retail and cultural centre for the sub-region. The town has experienced significant growth in recent years as a result of its Growth Area status. Some 5-8% of residents work within the conurbation.

Current Provision

There are around 116,000 jobs currently provided within the Milton Keynes area across a wide range of different industries. The current level of provision is as a result of rapid expansion in employment from 1994 when there were around 95,000 jobs within the town. There are around 5% more people working in Milton Keynes than actually live there of working age, which indicates the draw of the centre as an economic hub across the surrounding area[6].

Future Provision

The now shelved Milton Keynes and South Midlands Sub-Regional Strategy stipulated a requirement for almost 45,000 new jobs to be provided within Milton Keynes itself between 2001 and 2021. This equates to one new job created for every new dwelling provided. Whilst a significant proportion of the jobs will be located within Central Milton Keynes addition provision will be delivered as part of the expansion areas on the outskirts of the town to the south east and south west.

5.5 Hertfordshire

The districts which comprise Hertfordshire exert a considerable influence over the southern and eastern parts of Central Bedfordshire. The authorities of North Hertfordshire, Stevenage, St Albans, Welwyn Hatfield and Dacorum contain a number of centres of provision which all draw residents from Central Bedfordshire for employment. Around 10-12% of Central Bedfordshire residents work across Hertfordshire.

[6] Milton Keynes Employment Land Study; Milton Keynes Partnership, May 2007

Current Provision

Between the Hertfordshire authorities within closest proximity of Central Bedfordshire there are around 300,000 jobs, with large concentrations in St Albans, Stevenage and Watford. This provision has fluctuated in recent years although the general trend from 1991 has seen large increases in employment across each authority[7].

Future Provision

Studies which have been commissioned by individual authorities state that there is some degree of uncertainty over future employment trends and requirements for land supply. However, with the exception of St Albans, each authority within Hertfordshire anticipates a growth in the number of locally available jobs, an important issue in areas such as North Hertfordshire, which like Central Bedfordshire, is subject to high levels of net out commuting.

Table 5.1: Current / Future Employment Provision in Neighbouring Authorities

County	Authority	Current Jobs	Future Provision
Greater London:	- Greater London	4,700,000 (2008)	750,000 (2031)
Bedfordshire:	- Bedford	70,800	16,000 (2001-2021)
	- Luton	87,000 (2007)	Not available
Buckinghamshire:	- Milton Keynes	116,000 (2006)	44,900 (2001-2021)
Hertfordshire:	- North Hertfordshire	46,000 (2007)	2,400 (2008-2026)
	- Stevenage	42,400 (2007)	4,700 (2008-2026)
	- St Albans	70,000 (2006)	None (2006-2026)
	- Welwyn Hatfield	73,000 (2006)	13,000 (2006-2026)
	- Dacorum	69,000 (2006)	13,000 (2006-2026)

Sources: The Mayor's Economic Development Strategy for London; London Development Agency, May 2010 / Milton Keynes Employment Land Study; Milton Keynes Partnership, May 2007 / Employment Land Review Update – Table 2.1; North Hertfordshire District Council, September 2009 / Employment Land Review Update – Table 7.2; North Hertfordshire District Council, September 2009 / Hertfordshire London Arc Jobs Growth and Employment Land Study; Roger Tym & Partners, March 2009

[7] Hertfordshire London Arc Jobs Growth and Employment Land Study; Roger Tym & Partners, March 2009

6. In Commuting

This chapter reviews the pattern of commuting flows to jobs located within Central Bedfordshire. It details the origin of people commuting into the authority and how this has changed in recent years. To highlight the differences in commuting patterns the information is presented based upon the former authority boundaries of Mid Bedfordshire and South Bedfordshire.

6.1 Origin of Commuters into Mid Bedfordshire

The majority of local jobs are taken by local residents in the former Mid Bedfordshire part of Central Bedfordshire, a factor which has increased between 2001 and 2008. However, of those local jobs taken by employees residing outside of the authority the figures highlight that:

- Bedford residents comprise nearly 1 in 10 of the employees travelling to the area, although the proportion has declined between 2001 and 2008.
- There are sizeable flows of commuters into the authority from the east in terms of Huntingdonshire and North Hertfordshire.
- Milton Keynes to the west and Luton to the south also contain elements of the Mid Bedfordshire travel to work population.
- There are very few South Bedfordshire based employees working within the former Mid Bedfordshire area, highlighting a lack of inter relationship between the two areas.

Table 6.1: Origin of People Employed within Mid Bedfordshire

No.	Authority of Residence	2001 Flow	2008 Flow
1	Mid Bedfordshire	57.7%	61.9%
2	Bedford	11.7%	9.2%
3	North Hertfordshire	4.9%	4.1%
4	Huntingdonshire	3.3%	3.6%
5	Milton Keynes	3.5%	3.2%
6	Luton	2.8%	1.5%

Sources: Local Labour Force Survey, 2001 & Annual Population Survey, 2008; Office of National Statistics

6.2 Origin of Commuters into South Bedfordshire

As with Mid Bedfordshire, the majority of jobs available in South Bedfordshire are also taken by local residents, with around 2 out of 3 jobs filled locally. In terms of employees residing elsewhere the key issues highlight that:

- There is a strong relationship with neighbouring Luton with a significant number of Luton residents travelling to South Bedfordshire to work, although as a proportion of the total number of people employed, this has declined since 2001.
- Aylesbury Vale and Milton Keynes to the west and north west both contain sizeable numbers of commuters into the area.
- The number of Mid Bedfordshire residents commuting to South Bedfordshire has declined from 2001 and the inter relationship between the two areas is somewhat tenuous in employment terms.

Table 6.2: Origin of People Employed within South Bedfordshire

No.	Authority of Residence	2001 Flow	2008 Flow
1	South Bedfordshire	62.1%	65.4%
2	Luton	16.2%	13.1%
3	Aylesbury Vale	3.5%	4.6%
4	Milton Keynes	3.7%	3.6%
5	Mid Bedfordshire	5.7%	2.5%

Sources: Local Labour Force Survey, 2001 & Annual Population Survey, 2008; Office of National Statistics

6.3 Overview

In looking at the two sets out information on travel patterns to the former Mid and South Bedfordshire areas, a number of overarching trends can be identified:

- **Local people in local jobs:** The majority of local jobs are taken by local people and this is increasingly the case in both Mid and South Bedfordshire.

- **Lack of integration:** There is a lack of integration between the two former authority areas in terms of movement of residents between authorities for employment purposes.

- **Limited catchment areas:** Neither of the areas attract commuters from beyond the immediately surrounding authority areas in significant numbers.

- **Interdependence:** South Bedfordshire jobs market is interdependent with that of Luton with significant numbers of commuters in each direction, whilst Mid Bedfordshire has a similar relationship with Bedford, although not to the same extent.

7. Out Commuting

This chapter details out-commuting flows from Central Bedfordshire. It assesses the destination of journeys to work outside of the authority's boundaries and how this differs across Central Bedfordshire.

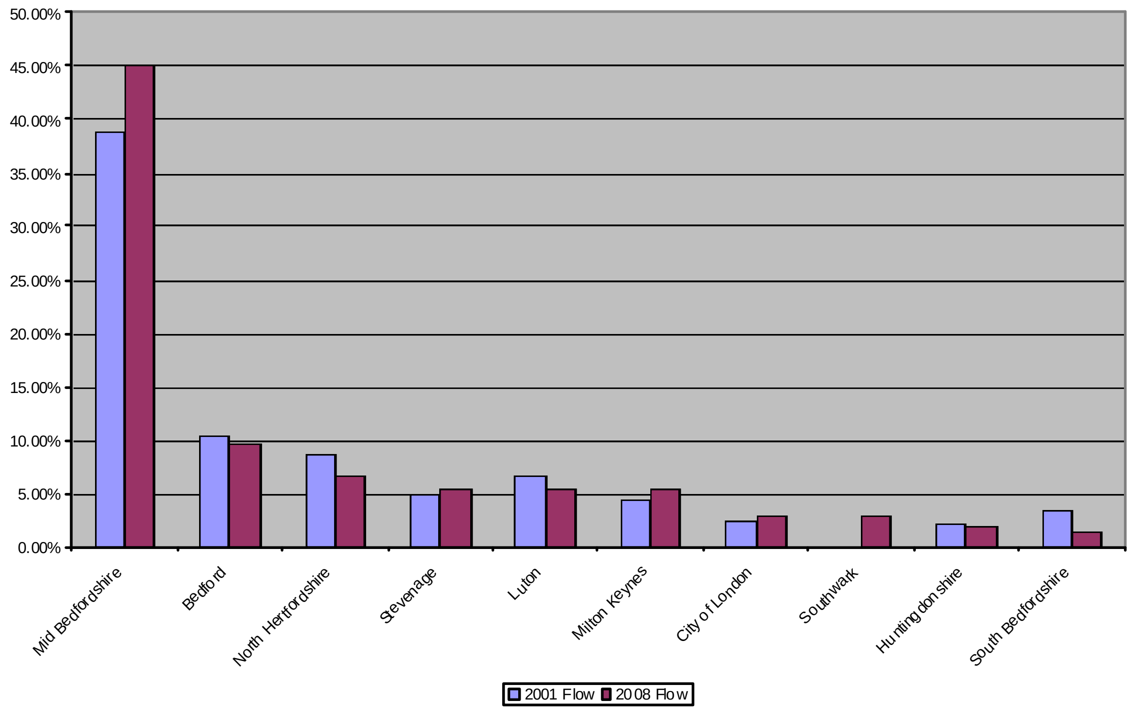
The level of out-commuting has long been identified as a weakness in the local economy and is mainly due to its rural nature, lack of a large urban area and the close proximity of major employment centres such as Bedford, Milton Keynes, Luton, Stevenage and London.

To again highlight the differences in commuting patterns, the information is presented in relation to the former districts of Mid Bedfordshire and South Bedfordshire.

7.1 Mid Bedfordshire Out Commuting Patterns

This section details the employment destinations of residents within the former Mid Bedfordshire part of Central Bedfordshire, which are outside of the authority itself. It highlights broad destinations for residents from the area as a whole, and also in terms of the destination of residents from individual towns and the surrounding rural areas. Figure 7.1 highlights the location of employment for Mid Bedfordshire residents.

Figure 7.1: Location of Employment for Mid Bedfordshire Residents



Sources: Local Labour Force Survey, 2001 & Annual Population Survey, 2008; Office of National Statistics

The key issues in relation to out commuting from the former Mid Bedfordshire authority areas as a whole highlight that:

- The majority of Mid Bedfordshire residents commute out of the authority for employment although the former authority area has increased its level of self containment since 2001.
- There is little relationship between Mid Bedfordshire and South Bedfordshire in terms of journeys to work.
- Local authorities within Hertfordshire account for some 12.1% of jobs occupied by Mid Bedfordshire residents.
- Luton and London also draw significant numbers of residents away from Mid Bedfordshire as key sub-regional and national employment centres.
- Bedford is the single biggest draw of commuters from Mid Bedfordshire with almost 1 in 10 of Mid Bedfordshire residents travelling to Bedford for employment.

Urban Areas

In terms of the commuting patterns of residents from the main towns within Mid Bedfordshire the key issues demonstrate that:

- Significant numbers of residents in Ampthill commute out of the area to Bedford, Luton, Milton Keynes, Hertfordshire and London.
- Biggleswade residents predominately commute to Hertfordshire, London and elsewhere in Central Bedfordshire in the cases where they work outside of the town itself.
- Luton, Bedford and London are all popular destinations for residents of Flitwick in terms of places to work. The town has the lowest level of self containment within Central Bedfordshire, a fact which may be a result of the quality of the local road and rail links.
- In terms of Sandy, Hertfordshire, Bedford and neighbouring Biggleswade are the main areas to which residents commute out of the town.
- Bedford is a significant provider of jobs to residents within Ampthill, Flitwick and Sandy, with over 10% of residents in each instance employed in the town. Biggleswade is a surprising exception with only 1% of residents commuting to Bedford.

Table 7.1: Out Commuting Destinations of Mid Beds Urban Area Population

Workplace	Town of Residence			
	Ampthill	Biggleswade	Flitwick	Sandy
Bedford	12.9% (437)	0.8% (66)	10.1% (721)	11.3% (672)
Luton	10.5% (355)	1.4% (116)	12.6% (898)	1.8% (107)
Milton Keynes	7.4% (250)	1.0% (83)	6.5% (463)	1.6% (93)
Greater London	8.1% (275)	6.8% (562)	9.9% (703)	7.1% (419)
Buckinghamshire	1.0% (33)	0.3% (21)	0.9% (66)	0.2% (9)
Cambridgeshire	0.7% (24)	5.1% (420)	0.8% (54)	6.0% (358)
Hertfordshire	5.0% (168)	21.3% (1,760)	6.5% (452)	15.3% (908)
Northamptonshire	0.7% (24)	0.4% (30)	0.6% (45)	0.7% (39)
Rest of the UK	2.7% (90)	3.1% (250)	2.6% (186)	3.9% (230)
Central Beds Based	51.1%	60.1%	49.6%	52.1%
Total	100% (3,392)	100% (8,274)	100% (7,134)	100% (5,928)

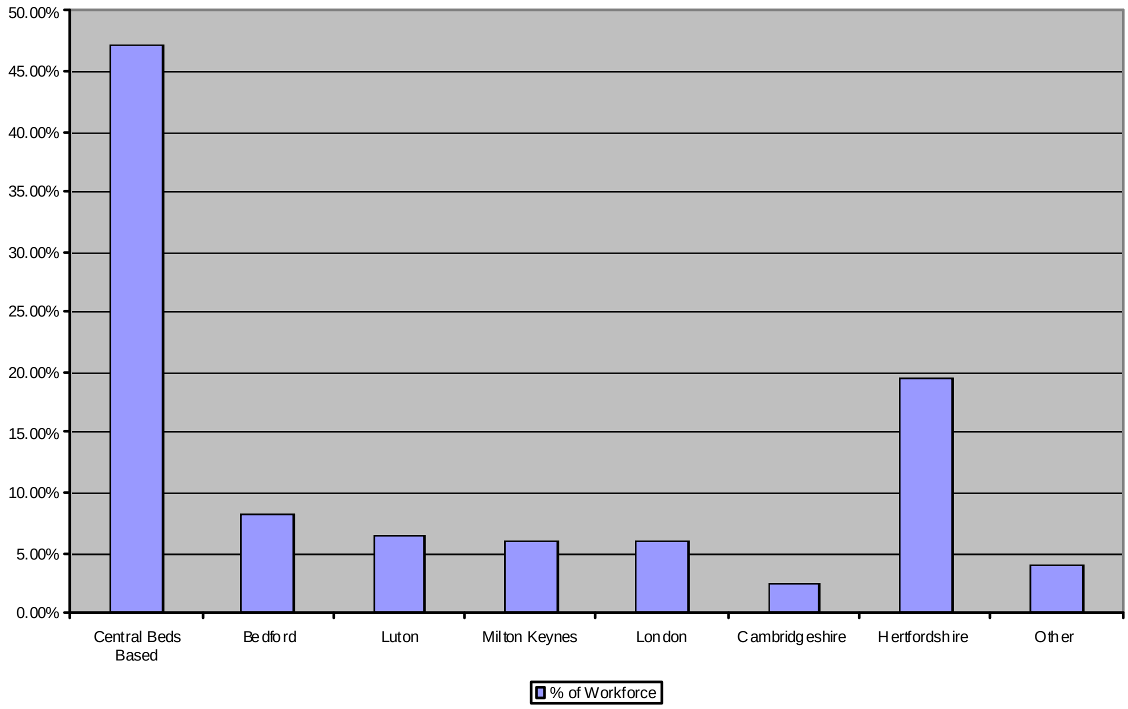
Source: 2001 Census

Rural Areas

There are 18 rural parishes in Mid Bedfordshire and the commuting patterns of residents within these areas are set out in Figure 7.2. The key findings highlight:

- Over half of the working age population in the rural areas of Mid Bedfordshire work outside of Central Bedfordshire.
- Hertfordshire is the most popular destination by far for commuting trips, with almost 1 in 5 residents travelling to the neighbouring authority for work.
- Bedford, Luton, Milton Keynes and London all attract significant numbers of trips.

Figure 7.2: Mid Bedfordshire Rural Areas Out Commuting Destinations



Source: 2001 Census

7.2 South Bedfordshire Out Commuting Patterns

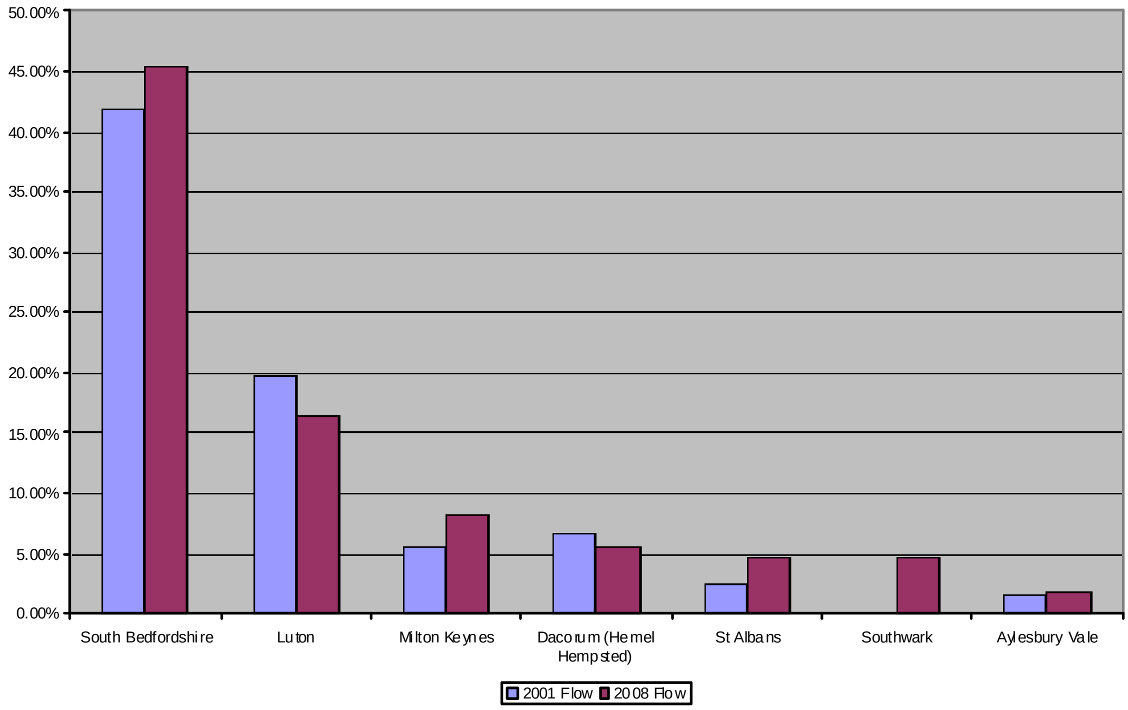
This section details the employment destinations of residents within the former South Bedfordshire part of Central Bedfordshire, which are outside of the authority itself. It highlights broad destinations for residents from the area as a whole, and also in terms of the destination of residents from individual towns and the surrounding rural areas.

The key issues in relation to out commuting from the former South Bedfordshire authority areas as a whole highlight that:

- The majority of South Bedfordshire residents commute out of the authority.
- As with Mid Bedfordshire, the former authority area has increased its level of self containment since 2001.

- There is a strong relationship with neighbouring Luton with around 1 in 7 residents commuting over the local authority boundary, although this has declined from 1 in 5 residents in recent years.
- Milton Keynes is exerting a growing influence with an increasing number of residents commuting to the town.
- There is little if any commuting to the former Mid Bedfordshire authority area.

Figure 7.3: Location of Employment for South Bedfordshire Residents



Sources: Local Labour Force Survey, 2001 & Annual Population Survey, 2008; Office of National Statistics

Urban Areas

A more detailed breakdown for each of the main towns is set out in Table 7.2 and highlights that:

- A significant proportion of both Dunstable and Houghton Regis residents commute out of the authority to Luton, with more than 1 in 5 residents employed within the town.
- Hertfordshire and London also both form significant draws for commuters from Dunstable and Houghton Regis.
- Milton Keynes is the largest attractor of work related trips from Leighton Linslade with Hertfordshire and London also drawing residents from the town to employment opportunities.

Table 7.2: Out Commuting Destinations of South Beds Urban Area Population

Workplace	Town of Residence		
	Dunstable	Leighton Linslade	Houghton Regis
Bedford	1.2% (211)	1.2% (210)	1.1% (90)
Luton	21.1% (3,638)	4.1% (708)	22.8% (1,923)
Milton Keynes	3.3% (563)	13.0% (2,252)	3.3% (279)
Greater London	6.8% (1,165)	8.5% (1,470)	7.1% (601)
Buckinghamshire	1.6% (275)	7.0% (1,217)	1.4% (118)
Cambridgeshire	0.2% (36)	0.2% (33)	0.2% (18)
Hertfordshire	12.6% (2,168)	9.3% (1,621)	11.6% (984)
Northamptonshire	0.4% (75)	0.6% (99)	0.4% (30)
Rest of the UK	2.5% (400)	2.7% (465)	2.2% (183)
Central Beds Based	50.7%	53.6%	50.0%
Total	100% (17,241)	100% (17,351)	100% (8,452)

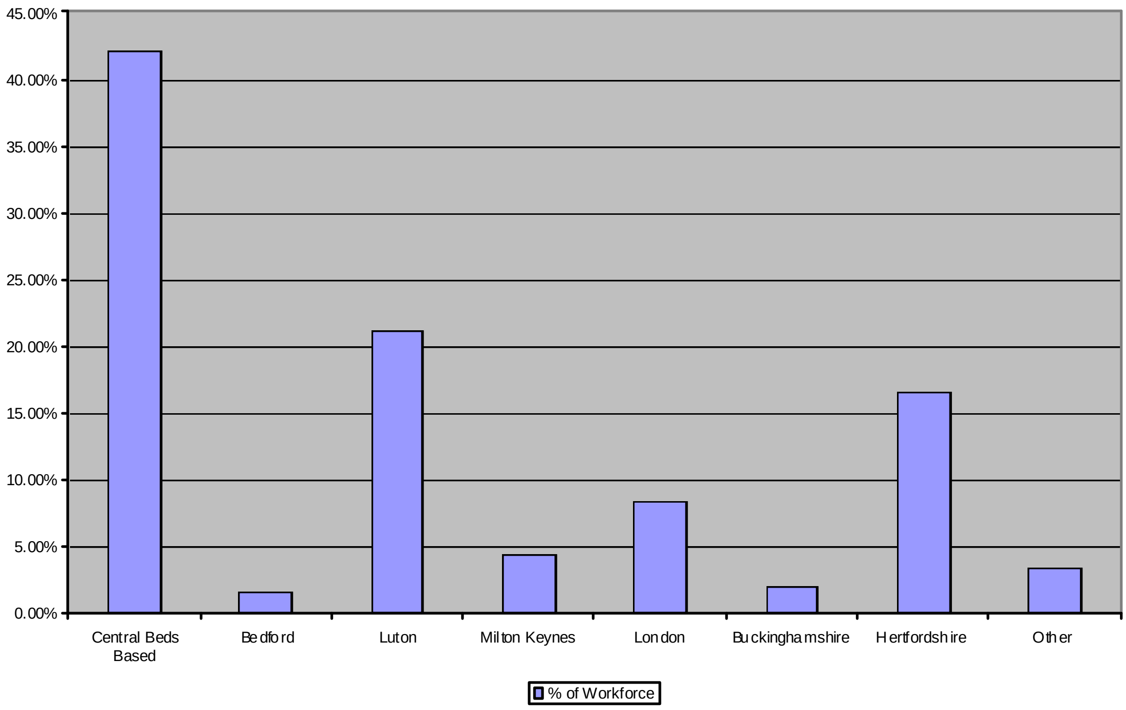
Source: 2001 Census

Rural Areas

There are 8 rural parishes which make up the rest of the former South Bedfordshire area, and the commuting patterns of residents within these areas are summarised in Table 7.6, the key trends being:

- A greater proportion of residents in the rural areas work outside of the authority as opposed to those in the urban areas
- Luton and Hertfordshire are the main destinations outside of Central Bedfordshire itself to which residents commute to work.
- London and Milton Keynes also attract a large number of commuters out of the area.

Figure 7.4: South Bedfordshire Rural Areas Out Commuting Destinations



Source: 2001 Census

7.3 Overview

In looking at the two sets out information on travel patterns from Mid and South Bedfordshire a number of overarching trends can be identified:

- Hertfordshire provides 10-12% of all jobs occupied by local residents and as such is the largest provider of jobs to Central Bedfordshire residents of any neighbouring authority.
- Bedford is the biggest provider of jobs to the former Mid Bedfordshire authority area, whereas Luton is the predominant provider of employment to South Bedfordshire residents, outside of Central Bedfordshire itself.
- London accounts for 1 in 20 of all jobs taken by Central Bedfordshire residents. Dependence on the capital as a jobs provider is greater in the rural areas of the authority than the urban areas.

8. Internal Commuting

This chapter assesses the journeys to work of residents who both live and work within Central Bedfordshire. Whilst it is generally recognised that the authority has a net out flow of commuters, the majority of local jobs are taken by local people. This chapter examines these trips and draws out key relationships between individual towns.

This chapter reviews the number of residents within each of the main towns across Central Bedfordshire in terms of their respective level of self containment and the destination to which residents travel for employment opportunities, together with similar trends for rural areas.

8.1 Internal Commuting in Mid Bedfordshire

The key issue in relation to internal commuting trips from the main towns within Mid Bedfordshire highlight that:

- Between 21% - 31% of residents within each of the main towns live and work in the same town.
- Only around 1 in 3 of residents residing in Ampthill actually work in the town, whether that be working from home or travelling elsewhere in the town for employment.
- Biggleswade has the lowest proportion of residents working from home but enjoys the highest percentage of local residents working within the town of all of the centres within the authority.
- Flitwick has the smallest proportion of residents based within Central Bedfordshire itself, potentially due to the quality of local rail links and access to the motorway.
- Sandy has a relatively high proportion of residents who commute to Biggleswade for employment.

Table 8.1: Internal Commuting Destinations for Mid Bedfordshire Residents

Workplace	Town of Residence			
	Ampthill	Biggleswade	Flitwick	Sandy
Ampthill	22.2% (753)	0.3% (26)	5.5% (391)	0.3% (18)
Biggleswade	0.4% (12)	31.1% (2,573)	0.4% (31)	7.3% (435)
Flitwick	5.3% (180)	0.2% (18)	21.7% (1,549)	0.4% (21)
Sandy	0.6% (22)	4.1% (335)	0.3% (21)	26.0% (1,544)
Rest of Mid Beds	8.4% (282)	10.7% (885)	7.8% (557)	8.5% (505)
South Beds	4.2% (143)	6.1% (500)	5.7% (409)	0.6% (37)
Work from Home	10.0% (344)	7.6% (632)	8.2% (588)	9.0% (533)
Total Central Beds Based	51.1%	60.1%	49.6%	52.1%
Total employed	100% (3,392)	100% (8,274)	100% (7,134)	100% (5,928)

Source: 2001 Census

In terms of the pattern of internal commuting trips from rural areas, there is no one specific centre to which residents commute. In each instance it is the parish within which residents reside which provides the bulk of local employment, often as a consequence of residents working from home.

8.2 Internal Commuting in South Bedfordshire

The key issues in relation to commuting trips within South Bedfordshire are:

- Between 15% - 37% of residents within each of the main towns live and work within the same town.
- Leighton Linslade has the greatest level of self containment of all of the towns within Central Bedfordshire with some 37%, as well as nearly 9% working from home.
- Houghton Regis has the lowest level of self containment within the authority, with more residents working in neighbouring Dunstable than Houghton Regis itself.
- Around half of all Dunstable residents work within Central Bedfordshire and of these the vast majority are based within the town itself.

Table 8.2: Internal Destinations for South Bedfordshire Residents

Workplace	Town of Residence		
	Dunstable	Leighton Linslade	Houghton Regis
Dunstable	32.1% (5,542)	2.9% (495)	19.9% (1,685)
Leighton Linslade	2.2% (385)	37.0% (6,422)	2.8% (239)
Houghton Regis	4.1% (709)	0.9% (154)	15.7% (1,324)
Rest of South Beds	3.2% (560)	2.7% (460)	3.4% (284)
Mid Beds	1.3% (231)	1.3% (226)	1.3% (109)
Work from Home	7.8% (1,353)	8.8% (1,519)	6.9% (585)
Total Central Beds Based	50.7%	53.6%	50.0%
Total Employed	100% (17,241)	100% (17,351)	100% (8,452)

Source: 2001 Census

As in Mid Bedfordshire rural based residents tend to be employed within the parish within which they reside. However Dunstable and Leighton Linslade account for 6.3% and 4.2% of all jobs occupied by rural based residents respectively.

8.3 Overview

In considering the internal commuting trips within Central Bedfordshire the overarching trends highlight:

- **Significant local employment:** Whilst a high proportion of residents commute out of the authority, large numbers are employed locally within the towns in which they live. This presents opportunities for encouraging travel by sustainable modes as all of the towns are of a size conducive to walking and cycling.

- **Working from home:** Rural based employees tend to be employed within the parishes within which they live, and due to a lack of employment provision in a number of these locations indicates that a large proportion will be working from home.

- **Interdependence:** In terms of longer distance internal commuting trips, it is evident that there is a lack of strong relationships between towns, with the possible exception of Dunstable and Houghton Regis. In particular there is little if any reliance of South Bedfordshire residents on Mid Bedfordshire for employment provision.

9. Through Commuting

Central Bedfordshire is strategically located between a number of large centres of employment provision in the form of Bedford to the north, Luton to the south, Cambridge and Stevenage in the east and Milton Keynes in the west.

In addition the authority is dissected by numerous strategic corridors linking London with the Midlands and the North. As a result there are significant levels of commuting through Central Bedfordshire, of people neither living nor working within the authority.

9.1 Through Commuting Corridors

The nature of through commuting lends itself to journeys of longer than average distance, with commuters utilising strategic as opposed to local transport corridors as the fastest and most direct means of getting from their origin to destination.

There are a number of strategic transport corridors which run through Central Bedfordshire and it is the presumption that these are the focus for through commuting trips. The authority does not possess statistical evidence to enforce this perception but it forms a logical conclusion when considering the management of such trips through the area.

The strategic corridors within Central Bedfordshire are summarised in Table 9.1.

Table 9.1: Strategic Transport Corridors in Central Bedfordshire

Road	Route	Rail	Route
M1	London to Leeds via East Midlands	**East Coast Mainline**	London to Scotland via North East and Yorkshire
A1	London to Edinburgh via North East and Yorkshire	**Midland Mainline**	London to Sheffield via East Midlands
A5	St Albans to North Wales via East and West Midlands	**West Coast Mainline**	London to Glasgow via West Midlands and North West
A421	St Neots to Brackley via Bedford and Milton Keynes		

More detailed information on the stress levels of these road links and the frequency of strategic rail services are contained in Chapter 10 on Accessibility of Employment

The management of the strategic road network which incorporates the M1, A1, A5 and A421 within Central Bedfordshire is the responsibility of the Highways Agency, whilst the maintenance of the strategic rail network infrastructure and services rests with Network Rail and the DfT respectively. The authority therefore has limited scope of influence over the management of the through commuting corridors.

9.2 Origin and Destinations of Trips

It is difficult to detail all of the various permutations in terms of the origins and destinations of commuting trips starting and finishing outside of Central Bedfordshire. However Table 9.2 and Table 9.3 highlight the workplace of residents from neighbouring authorities and their places of work which would require them making a trip through Central Bedfordshire itself, based upon the 2001 Census. The totality of trips through the authority is in excess of 37,000 per day.

Table 9.2: Top 10 Through Commuting Trips (two-way)

Flow		Route Options	To	From	Total
London	**Milton Keynes**	▪ M1 ▪ West Coast Mainline	1,478	4,893	6,371
Bedford	**Milton Keynes**	▪ A421 ▪ Marston Vale Line ▪ X5 Bus	3,480	1,613	5,093
Luton	**St Albans**	▪ B653 ▪ Midland Mainline ▪ 321 Bus	2,952	1,671	4,623
Bedford	**London**	▪ A421, M1 ▪ Midland Mainline	2,961	372	3,333
Luton	**Milton Keynes**	▪ A505, M1, A421, A505, A5, A6, A507, A421 ▪ 70 Bus	1,489	1,377	2,866
Bedford	**Luton**	▪ A6 ▪ S1 Bus	1,893	866	2,759
London	**Northampton**	▪ M1 ▪ West Coast Mainline	715	1,566	2,281
London	**Peterborough**	▪ A1 ▪ East Coast Mainline	189	1,611	1,800
London	**South Northants**	▪ M1 ▪ Midland Mainline	120	1,074	1,194
Bedford	**North Hertfordshire**	▪ A600, A507, A1(M), A600, A507, A600 ▪ M1 and M2 Buses	488	381	869

Source: 2001 Census

Table 9.3: Top 10 Through Commuting Trips Excluding London (two-way)

Flow		Route Options	To	From	Total
Bedford	**Milton Keynes**	▪ A421 ▪ Marston Vale Line ▪ X5 Bus	3,480	1,613	5,093
Luton	**St Albans**	▪ B653 ▪ Midland Mainline ▪ 321 Bus	2,952	1,671	4,623
Luton	**Milton Keynes**	▪ A505, M1, A421, A505, A5, A6, A507, A421 ▪ 70 Bus	1,489	1,377	2,866
Bedford	**Luton**	▪ A6 ▪ Midland Mainline ▪ S1 Bus	1,893	866	2,759
Bedford	**North Hertfordshire**	▪ A600, A507, A1(M), A600, A507, A600 ▪ M1 and M2 Buses	488	381	869
Aylesbury Vale	**Luton**	▪ A505, A5, A505, B489, A505 ▪ 61 Bus	590	233	823
Milton Keynes	**St Albans**	▪ A421, M1, A5	263	390	653
Bedford	**Stevenage**	▪ A600, A507, A1(M), A600, A507, A600	337	140	477
Luton	**Northampton**	▪ A505, M1, A6	119	320	439
Milton Keynes	**North Hertfordshire**	▪ A421, A507, A600, A421, A507, A1(M), A421, M1, A505, A5, A505	108	278	386

Source: 2001 Census

9.3 Overview

It is hard for Central Bedfordshire to influence the travel choices of commuting through the authority. In addition the authority has a lack of control of the strategic networks within Central Bedfordshire itself. The key is therefore to work closely with neighbouring authorities, and the transport infrastructure and service providers to best address the more strategic journeys to work through the authority. This is particularly relevant for trips to London which accounts for a number of the top 10 commuting through flows.

10. Accessibility of Employment

This chapter details the accessibility of employment provision both within the authority and within neighbouring authorities to which significant numbers of Central Bedfordshire residents commute. It considers the availability and quality of different modes of transport provision for each employment hub, gaps in this provision and other issues which form barriers to local residents accessing employment.

10.1 Commuting by Car

Car based commuting accounts for a significant proportion of all commuting trips undertaken by Central Bedfordshire residents and is the most common form of travel to work. Around 85% of the local population has access to a car, a figure higher than the national average of 75%[8]. Notwithstanding the levels of ownership, there remain a number of barriers to accessing employment provision via car based commuting, and these are drawn out within this section along with the extent of provision for motorists in the sub-region.

Strategic Road Network

The Strategic Road Network (SRN) is the responsibility of the Highways Agency and comprises the routes of national or regional importance across the country. There are a number of such routes within Central Bedfordshire and these comprise:

- **M1:** Links London to the Midlands and the North passing through Central Bedfordshire between Junction 10 and Junction 14. Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) flows exceeding 100,000 on sections through the authority.

- **A1:** Provides an alternative link between London and the Midlands and North within the east of the authority, with an AADT flows of between 50,000-60,000 vehicles.

- **A5:** Comprises a north/west – south/east link serving the west of the authority, and running through the centre of Dunstable. Traffic flows are in the region of 25,000 vehicles per day.

- **A421:** Provides an east-west link between the A1 and M1 via Bedford, and on towards Milton Keynes. The route passes through only a small section of Central Bedfordshire but still forms a key link in the local network with around 25,000-35,000 vehicles using it a day.

Whilst the authority is well placed to take advantage of the SRN, a number of these routes suffer from high levels of stress, particularly on the approaches to London. Stress is a measure of the SRN's strategic capacity and relates to the daily flow divided by the daily capacity on each route.

The capacity is then calculated by the maximum sustainable traffic flow in the peak hour, and where roads are congested for longer than the peak periods, it results in 'stress' levels which are more than 100%.

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8 http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/statistics/datatablespublications/nts/driving-availability/nts0205a.xls

Current and predicted future levels of stress on the SRN in Central Bedfordshire are detailed in Table 10.1, with stress levels on the wider network in the sub-region also set out in Table 10.2.

Table 10.1: Stress Levels on the SRN in Central Bedfordshire

SRN	Level of Stress	
	2006	2026
M1 (north of Luton)	130-150% (northbound)	130-150% (northbound)
	110-130% (southbound)	130-150% (southbound)
A1 (north of Stevenage)	0-90% (northbound)	90-100% (northbound)
	0-90% (southbound)	0-90% (southbound)
A5 (Dunstable to Milton Keynes)	100-110% (northbound)	150+% (northbound)
	110-130% (southbound)	150+% (southbound)
A421 (Bedford to M1)	110-130% (northbound)	0-90% (northbound)
	110-130% (southbound)	90-100% (southbound)

Source: Regional Network Report for the East of England 2008; Highways Agency

Levels of stress on areas of the network such as the M1, are also set to deteriorate by 2026 despite the Highways Agency investing in an Active Traffic Management scheme between Junction 10 and Junction 13, which will increase capacity along the corridor through the use of hard shoulder running.

Opportunities are being explored looking into the possibility of widening the A421 to dual carriageway status to the west of the M1 on its approaches to Milton Keynes from the south west. Such work would compliment the dualling of the same road between the M1 and Bedford.

A scheme to de-trunk the A5 through Dunstable and thereby place it under the control of Central Bedfordshire Council, as the local highway authority is being developed and would provide increased opportunities to manage levels of stress.

Table 10.2: Stress Levels on the SRN surrounding Central Bedfordshire

SRN	Level of Stress	
	2006	2026
M1 (south of Luton)	150+% (northbound)	150+% (northbound)
	150+% (southbound)	150+% (southbound)
M1 (south of M25)	90-100% (northbound)	110-130% (northbound)
	90-100% (southbound)	110-130% (southbound)
M25 (M1 to A1)	130-150% (eastbound)	110-130% (eastbound)
	130-150% (westbound)	130-150 (westbound)
A1 (south of Stevenage)	0-90% (northbound)	110-130% (northbound)
	0-90% (southbound)	100-110% (southbound)

Source: Regional Network Report for the East of England 2008; Highways Agency

As a result of these high levels of stress, car based travel to the capital in particular, can be subject to wide variations in travel time, which impacts upon the ease of accessibility by car.

Local Road Network

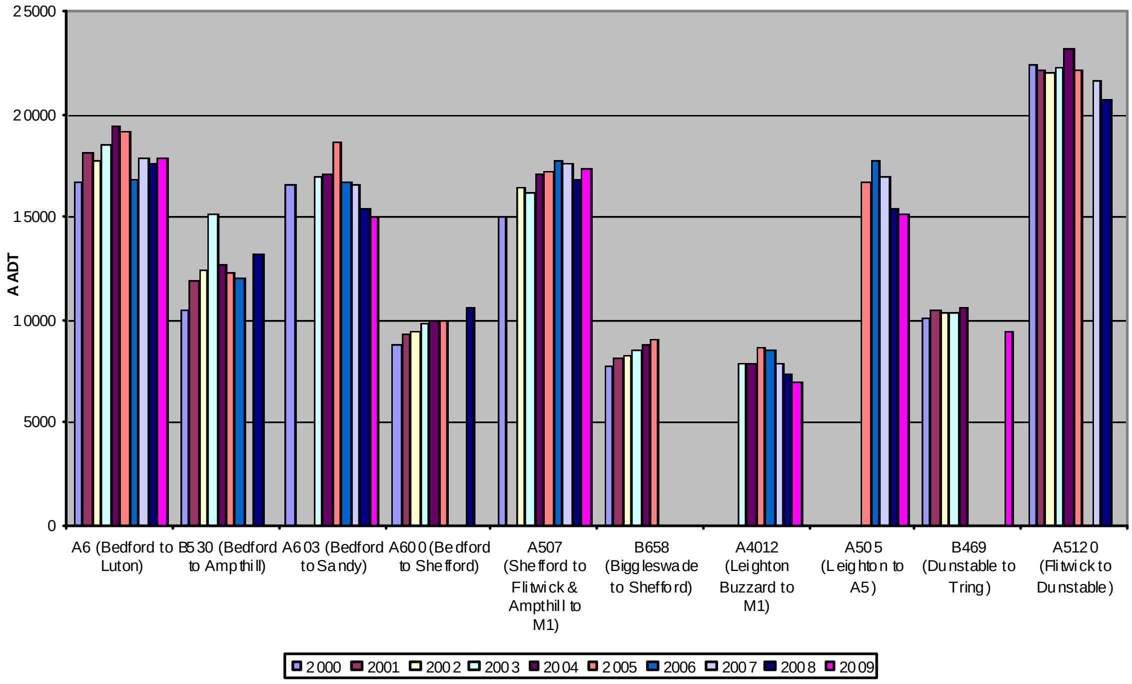
The local road network comprises all of the other roads within the authority which are not under the control of the Highways Agency. Flows of traffic on the flow network are measured by the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT). Table 10.3 and Figure 10.1 demonstrate the change in flows on selected corridors.

Table 10.3: Changes in Traffic Flow on the Local Road Network

Route	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
A6 (Bedford to Luton)	16,693	18,179	17,788	18,544	19,400	19,147	16,843	17,831	17,688	17,902
B530 (Bedford to Ampthill)	10,429	11,862	12,450	15,200	12,658	12,277	12,080	0	13,252	0
A603 (Bedford to Sandy)	16,564	0	0	17,031	17,152	18,712	16,740	16,656	15,397	15,074
A600 (Bedford to Shefford)	8,759	9,261	9,408	9,827	10,024	10,000	0	0	10,575	0
A507 (Shefford to Flitwick)	15,011	0	16,503	16,252	17,047	17,269	17,719	17,597	16,821	17,382
B658 (B'wade to Shefford)	7,770	8,181	8,252	8,544	8,807	9,039	0	0	0	0
A4012 (Leighton Buzzard to M1)	0	0	0	7,850	7,877	8,595	8,494	7,913	7,332	6,971
A505 (Leighton to A5)	0	0	0	0	0	16,731	17,809	16,934	15,476	15,172
B469 (Dunstable to Tring)	10,109	10,479	10,399	10,348	10,657	0	0	0	0	9,471
A5120 (Flitwick to Dunstable)	22,434	22,153	22,072	22,283	23,245	22,161	0	21,690	20,715	0

Source: http://www.c2trafficdata.co.uk/c2.asp

Figure 10.1: Changes in Traffic Flow on the Local Road Network



Car Parking

On-street and off-street car parking is available in each of Central Bedfordshire's town centres to serve the needs of both shoppers and visitors and commuters. Likewise, there is significant car parking provision associated with each of the mainline rail stations within the authority, which is utilised by members of the public for accessing employment provision further afield.

Parking forms an important tool in travel demand management, encouraging sustainable travel and also in ensuring the attractiveness of the authority as a place to invest. As a result of the important role it plays in this regard, a detailed Car Parking Strategy has been produced to inform the Local Transport Plan to ensure the correct balance is achieved in terms of:

- The volume of parking
- The location of parking
- The cost of parking

Accessing Neighbouring Authorities

The road network provides links to employment provision outside of Central Bedfordshire and Table 10.4 highlights the corridors to key neighbouring centres to which local residents travel for work.

Table 10.4: Road Corridors to External Employment Centres

Employment Centres	Key Road Links	Comments
Bedford	A421 A6 A600 A603 B530	Number of alternative routes into the town from the east and south which all intersect with the recently upgraded A421 Southern Bypass at some point.
Luton	M1 A6 A505 B579	Links into and through Luton suffer from congestion at peak periods, both on the SRN and local road network.
Milton Keynes	M1 A5 A421 A4146 A5130	Link capacity of routes into Milton Keynes is being considered for improvement in the form of the dualling of the A421.
London	M1 A1	Limited number of high capacity strategic routes into the capital.
Hertfordshire	M1 A1 A5 A4146 A507 A600 B655	Polycentric pattern of employment centres within the county results in a number of different road corridors along which to access employment provision.

10.2 Commuting by Rail

Commuting by rail represents some 6% of all commuting trips undertaken by Central Bedfordshire residents, a figure slightly below the national average. It is a particularly important mode however for those residents travelling further afield, to locations outside of the authority, as London and Luton in particular, and in terms of the through commuting of employees who do not live or work within the area.

Strategic Rail Services

There are three strategically important rail lines which run through Central Bedfordshire, notably:

- **East Coast Mainline:** Between London and Scotland via the North East and Yorkshire.
- **Midland Mainline:** Between London and Sheffield via the East Midlands.
- **West Coast Mainline:** Between London and Glasgow via West Midlands and North West.

Services between London and the provincial towns and cities these lines serve do not stop within Central Bedfordshire. However passengers can interchange with services on the East Coast Mainline at Peterborough or Stevenage, on the Midland Mainline at both Bedford and Luton, and on the West Coast Mainline at Milton Keynes Central.

Local Rail Services

There are three mainline railway routes connecting Central Bedfordshire with London, allowing local residents fast and direct access to Central London. First Capital Connect operates between London Kings Cross and Peterborough on the East Coast Mainline and serves the towns of Sandy, Biggleswade and Arlesey.

The franchise also operates along the Midland Mainline between London St Pancras and Bedford, serving Flitwick and Harlington. London Midland operates along the West Coast Mainline between London Euston and Birmingham, incorporating stops at Leighton Buzzard.

Two rail lines provide links between Bedford and Central Bedfordshire. The services are detailed in Table 10.5. London Midland and First Capital Connect are the operators of the two services and link Flitwick, Harlington, Aspley, Ridgmont, Lidlington and Millbrook with Bedford to the north along the Midland Mainline and Bedford to Bletchley Line.

Luton is located along the Midland Mainline and as such is served by frequent high speed service between London, Bedford and the Midlands. These services do not stop in Central Bedfordshire itself but First Capital Connect services which operate along the same line provide a regular link from all the Luton stations (Luton Parkway, Luton, and Leagrave) to Harlington and Flitwick. .

The operation of these local rail services are managed by the DfT whilst the maintenance of the track and associated facilities are the responsibility of Network Rail. The ability of Central Bedfordshire Council to influence the frequency of provision or journey times between centres is therefore limited.

In increasing access to rail provision the focus will therefore be on access to the Stations themselves, as all rail based journeys involve other 'legs' by other forms of transport, and these are more within the scope of the authority's influence.

Table 10.5: Rail Service Provision

Operator / Service	Towns Served	Frequency of Provision	Travel times
First Capital Connect London to Peterborough	Sandy	2 trains / hour	Peterborough – 35 mins Stevenage – 20 mins London (Kings Cross) – 56 mins
	Biggleswade	2 trains / hour	Peterborough – 39 mins Stevenage – 16 mins London (Kings Cross) – 52 mins
	Arlesey	1 train / hour	Peterborough – 44 mins Stevenage – 11 mins London (Kings Cross) – 47 mins
First Capital Connect Brighton to Bedford	Flitwick	4 trains / hour	Luton – 14 mins London (St Pancras) – 50 mins Brighton – 64 mins
	Harlington	4 trains / hour	Luton – 10 mins London (St Pancras) – 46 mins Brighton – 60 mins
London Midland Bletchley to Bedford	Woburn Sands[9]	1 train / hour	Bedford – 33 mins Bletchley – 11 mins
	Aspley Guise	1 train / hour	Bedford – 30 mins Bletchley – 14 mins
	Ridgmont	1 train / hour	Bedford – 27 mins Bletchley – 17 mins
	Lidlington	1 train / hour	Bedford – 23 mins Bletchley – 21 mins
	Millbrook	1 train / hour	Bedford – 20 mins Bletchley – 24 mins
London Midland London to Birmingham	Leighton Buzzard	3 trains / hour	Northampton – 28 mins Milton Keynes – 11 mins London (Euston) – 37 mins
Southern Milton Keynes to East Croydon	Leighton Buzzard	1 train / hour	Milton Keynes – 11 mins Shepherd's Bush – 55 mins

10.4 Commuting on Foot

Walking is the second most popular means of accessing employment within the authority with around 1 in 10 trips to work undertaken on foot, the vast majority of which are less than 2 miles in length. It also plays an important role in longer distance, public transport based trips.

[9] Woburn Sands station is located in the Milton Keynes Council area

A Walking Strategy has been produced as part of the LTP and details a network hierarchy of pedestrian routes together with a series of areas of intervention through which infrastructure for pedestrians on these routes may be improved.

10.5 Commuting by Bike

An extensive network of cycle routes have been identified across the authority which serve a variety of purposes, including acting as commuter routes to places of employment. Investment in such routes has been particularly prominent in recent years in Leighton Linslade which was awarded Cycling Town status by the DfT in 2008. The authority will look to build upon the lessons learnt in promoting cycling in the town to increase the proportion of journeys to work currently undertaken by bike.

A large number of internal commuting trips are less than 5 miles in length which makes them conducive to being undertaken on a bike and highlights the fact that cycling provides an area of significant opportunity in encouraging a shift to more sustainable commuting patterns.

10.6 Overview

Central Bedfordshire benefits from excellent strategic road and rail links which make it a very attractive place to commute to and commute from, and which in turn generates a number of issues in terms of managing commuting trips in terms of:

- Stress and congestion on the highway network
- Public transport capacity concerns
- Demand for commuter parking provision

Whilst north-south links are well established, east-west movements are more difficult with only the A421 and A507 catering for such movements by car and the Bedford to Bletchley rail line in terms of public transport provision. The latter certainly compromises the ability of the authority to encourage more sustainable forms of longer distance commuting trips.

Despite the large number of people commuting out of the authority, a large proportion of people are employed close to where they live. However this is not reflected in levels of walking and cycling and the respective strategies which have been developed as part of the LTP, seek to provide a framework through which this may be addressed.

11. Benchmarking

Benchmarking Central Bedfordshire with similar authorities enables a greater understanding of the commuting patterns evident in the authority, our comparative performance and potential scope for changing travel behaviour. This chapter details Central Bedfordshire commuting patterns in relation to such authorities.

11.1 Benchmarking Criteria

There are a number of criteria which have been utilised to identify similar authorities to Central Bedfordshire which allow fair comparisons to be made. These comprise:

1. Population range between 150,000 and 300,000 people (as of Census 2001)
2. Journey times to Central London by train within 30 – 60 minutes
3. No single large population centre within authority area
4. Major employment destinations within close proximity

11.2 Comparative Authorities

On the basis of these benchmarking criteria the areas suitable for comparison with Central Bedfordshire have been identified as:

Huntingdonshire

1. Population of 156,000
2. Huntingdon within 60 minutes of London by train
3. Largest population areas Huntingdon, St Ives, and St Neots
4. Major employment destinations within close proximity: Peterborough and Cambridge

Aylesbury Vale

1. Population of 176,000
2. Aylesbury within 60 minutes of London by train
3. Largest population areas Aylesbury and Buckingham
4. Major employment destinations within close proximity: Milton Keynes and London

West Berkshire

1. Population of 152,800
2. Newbury, Slough, Twyford, Maidenhead, Wokingham, and Hungerford within 60 minutes of London by train
3. Largest population areas Newbury, Slough, Maidenhead, Hungerford
4. Major employment destinations within close proximity: Reading

11.3 Travel to Work Statistical Comparison

Table 11.1 below details the comparative data sets relevant to the journey to work for Central Bedfordshire, Huntingdonshire, Aylesbury Vale and West Berkshire.

Table 11.1: Travel to Work Statistical Comparison

Criteria		Central Bedfordshire	Huntingdonshire	Aylesbury Vale	West Berkshire
Car ownership	**No cars**	15%	14%	14%	13%
	1 car	41%	42%	39%	40%
	2 cars	35%	35%	36%	36%
	3 cars	7%	7%	8%	8%
	4 or more cars	2%	2%	3%	3%
Method of Travel to Work	**Work at home**	10%	10%	11%	11%
	Driving a car	66%	65%	64%	62%
	Passenger in a car	6%	6%	6%	6%
	Walking	8%	8%	10%	9%
	Cycling	2%	5%	2%	3%
	Bus	3%	3%	2%	5%
	Train	5%	3%	4%	4%
	Underground	0%	0%	0%	0%
	Taxi	0%	0%	1%	0%
	Motorcycle	1%	1%	1%	1%
	Other	0%	0%	0%	0%
Distance Travelled to Work	**Work at home**	10%	10%	11%	11%
	Less than 2km	18%	19%	21%	19%
	2-5km	11%	11%	12%	16%
	5-10km	14%	14%	11%	17%
	10-20km	21%	20%	16%	14%
	20-30km	8%	9%	9%	7%
	30-40km	4%	4%	5%	3%
	40-60km	6%	3%	6%	3%
	Over 60km	4%	6%	4%	4%
	Other	5%	4%	5%	5%
Average journey time per mile in AM peak (NI167)[10]		1 min 50 secs	1 min 49 secs	2 mins 3 secs	1 min 59 secs

Source: 2001 Census

[10] Huntingdonshire and Aylesbury Vale statistics are for Cambridgeshire and Buckinghamshire respectively

11.4 Overview

A number of conclusions can be drawn from this benchmarking process, particularly that:

- **Car ownership:** Car ownership levels of the authority are similar to those of the benchmarking authorities.

- **Travel to work:** There is greater reliance on the car in Central Bedfordshire than in the other authority areas, lower levels of cycling and higher levels of rail based commuting.

- **Distance travelled to work:** Whilst a similar number of residents work from home, there are less residents within Central Bedfordshire who work within an easy walking or cycling distance from their home, considered to be under 5 kilometres, than in the comparative authorities.

- **Average journey time:** The average journey time per mile for local residents compares favourably with Aylesbury Vale and West Berkshire, and is only slightly slower than that for Huntingdonshire.

12. Summary of Key Issues

This chapter summarises the key issues drawn out within this evidence base, and which have formed the basis to the development of the policy framework and objectives that comprise the crux of the journey to work theme.

12.1 Journey to Work Context

The broad assessment of the context within which journeys to work are undertaken by Central Bedfordshire residents raises a number of key issues which can be summarised as:

- **Length of trips:**
  - Central Bedfordshire residents travel further than the national average in accessing employment opportunities.
  - There is a wide divergence in the distances people do travel to work.
  - A large proportion of residents live within relatively easy walking or cycling distance to work, but this is not reflected in a similar modal share.
  - An increasing number of residents are working from home.
  - The majority of residents walking to work travel under 2 miles, and cycling under 5 miles.
  - Train users tend to travel the furthest to work with 85% of users commuting over 20 miles. Car users however tend to travel a wide variety of distances to work from under 2 miles to over 20 miles.

- **Mode of travel:**
  - The car is increasingly the predominant mode via which people travel to work, and there is greater reliance on the car locally when viewed in the national context.
  - Walking is the second most popular modal choice, whilst cycling and bus use are used by relatively few commuters. Rail use accounts for 6% of all trips but this is still slightly below the national average.
  - Car use is more predominant in urban areas as opposed to rural areas although use of public transport is similar. Cycling is also more popular in urban areas.
  - There are a number of barriers to encouraging car users to switch to alternative modes of travel including ability to find car share partners, the distance of trips making it unfeasible to walk or cycle and the lack of direct public transport services between destinations.

- **Ease of access to employment:**
  - The vast majority of residents find it easy to get to work.
  - This differs significantly by mode. Commuters who walk or cycle to work find their journey the easiest, whilst those who travel by bus, rail or as a passenger in a car experienced the greatest amount of difficultly.
  - There is little difference in the ease of access to work depending upon the location of residents, whether they be based in urban or rural Central Bedfordshire.

- o The main difficulties experienced in accessing employment are citied as the distances involved, congestion and a lack of public transport provision, or ownership of alternative modes of travel.

12.2 Employment Provision

The key issues highlighted from the assessment of current and future employment provision to be taken forward and considered within the development of the journey to work theme are:

- **Economic powerhouse:** The authority is seeking to focus job creation in the main settlements so that employment is within easy reach of local residents, as part of proposals to become an 'economic powerhouse'.

- **Dispersed provision:** There are a wide range of employment destinations, both in terms of urban centres and rural locations.

- **New employment centres:** Large, new employment centres are set to be created at Wixhams, Arlesey and in the Marston Vale (at Cranfield, Brogborough and Marston Moretaine), locations which currently provide limited employment opportunities.

- **Uncertain growth:** The level of employment growth in the former South Bedfordshire local authority area is unclear at present and will be drawn out as part of developing the evidence base for the Luton and South Bedfordshire Joint Core Strategy.

The main employment centres in the surrounding authorities are:

• Bedford	70,800
• Luton	87,000
• Milton Keynes	116,000
• North Hertfordshire	46,000
• Stevenage	42,400
• St Albans	70,000
• Welwyn Hatfield	73,000
• Dacorum	69,000

12.3 In Commuting

In looking at the two sets of information on travel patterns to the former Mid and South Bedfordshire areas, a number of overarching trends can be identified:

- **Local people in local jobs:** The majority of local jobs are taken by local people and this is increasingly the case in both Mid and South Bedfordshire.

- **Lack of integration:** There is a lack of integration between the two authorities in terms of movement of residents between authorities for employment purposes.

- **Limited catchment areas:** Neither of the areas attract commuters from beyond the immediately surrounding authority areas in significant numbers.

- **Interdependence:** South Bedfordshire jobs market is interdependent with that of Luton with significant numbers of commuters in each direction, whilst Mid Bedfordshire has a similar relationship with Bedford, although not to the same extent.

12.4 Out Commuting

In looking at the two sets out information on travel patterns from Mid and South Bedfordshire a number of overarching trends can be identified:

- Hertfordshire provides 10-12% of all jobs occupied by local residents and as such is the largest provider of jobs to Central Bedfordshire residents of any neighbouring authority.

- Bedford is the biggest provider of jobs to the former Mid Bedfordshire authority area, whereas Luton is the predominant provider of employment to South Bedfordshire residents, outside of Central Bedfordshire itself.

- London accounts for 1 in 20 of all jobs taken by Central Bedfordshire residents. Dependence on the capital as a jobs provider is greater in the rural areas of the authority than the urban areas.

12.5 Internal Commuting

In considering the internal commuting trips within Central Bedfordshire the overarching trends highlight:

- **Significant local employment:** Whilst a high proportion of residents commute out of the authority, large numbers are employed locally within the towns in which they live. This presents opportunities for encouraging travel by sustainable modes as all of the towns are of a size conducive to walking and cycling.

- **Working from home:** Rural based employees tend to be employed within the parishes within which they live, and due to a lack of employment provision in a number of these locations indicates that a large proportion will be working from home.

- **Interdependence:** In terms of longer distance internal commuting trips, it is evident that there is a lack of strong relationships between towns, with the possible exception of Dunstable and Houghton Regis. In particular there is little if any reliance of South Bedfordshire residents on Mid Bedfordshire for employment provision.

12.6 Through Commuting

It is hard for Central Bedfordshire to influence the travel choices of commuting through the authority. In addition the authority has a lack of control of the strategic networks within Central Bedfordshire itself.

The key is therefore to work closely with neighbouring authorities, and the transport infrastructure and service providers to best address the more strategic journeys to work through the authority.

This is particularly relevant for trips to London which accounts for a number of the top 10 commuting through flows.

12.7 Accessibility of Employment

There are a number of key points which arise in the consideration of the accessibility of employment opportunities by different modes of transport notably:

- **Car based commuting:**
  Strategic Road Network is the responsibility of the Highways Agency and stress levels on part of the network are set to deteriorate by 2026 particularly on the M1 and A5.

- **Rail based commuting:**
  Strategic rail services between London and provincial towns and cities do not stop within Central Bedfordshire. However passengers can interchange with services on the East Coast Mainline at Peterborough or Stevenage, on the Midland Mainline at both Bedford and Luton, and on the West Coast Mainline at Milton Keynes Central.

12.8 Benchmarking

A number of conclusions can be drawn from the benchmarking process, particularly that:

- **Car ownership:** Car ownership levels of the authority are similar to those of the benchmarking authorities.

- **Travel to work:** There is greater reliance on the car in Central Bedfordshire than in the other authority areas, lower levels of cycling and higher levels of rail based commuting.

- **Distance travelled to work:** Whilst a similar number of residents work from home, there are less residents within Central Bedfordshire who work within an easy walking or cycling distance from their home, considered to be under 5 kilometres, than in the comparative authorities.

- **Average journey time:** The average journey time per mile for local residents compares favourably with Aylesbury Vale and West Berkshire, and is only slightly slower than that for Huntingdonshire.

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