

Developing new homes suitable for older and disabled people

The Central Bedfordshire story...
... so far

Tim Hoyle

About Central Bedfordshire

Population: 269,100
Households: 104,400
73% owner occupied

Over half the population is rural

Generally fairly affluent

Major centres of population:
Leighton Linlode: 40,070
Dunstable: 37,880
Houghton Regis: 18,110
Flitwick: 13,180
Sandy: 12,210

Local Plan 2015-2035 identifies
growth of 39,350 dwellings with
likely more to come...



Central Bedfordshire Council's approach

- Approach to the whole market – not just those needing public support.
- Addressing the entire continuum from general needs housing to care and nursing homes.
- Keen to use Council assets where appropriate and to maximum effect.
- Keen to engage with the market and to develop partnerships.

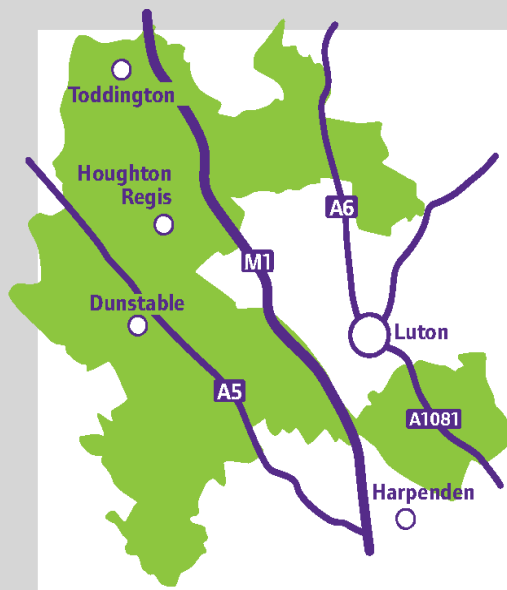
Engaging with the market

Development of Investment Prospectus for Accommodation for Older People

- Sets out Central Bedfordshire's aspirations in terms of accommodation for older people
- Seeks to attract investment into the council area...
- ...focussed on the types of accommodation that are most needed



Document available at: goo.gl/GJLnpC



Chiltern Vale

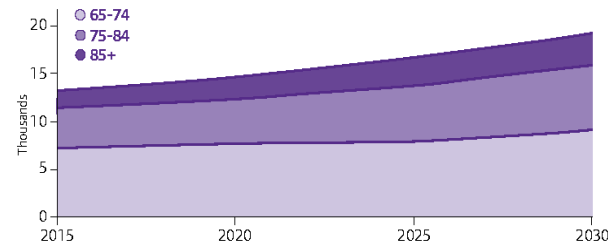
This locality has a sufficient supply of care home places and extra care accommodation in place or planned to meet local demand up to 2030. However, there is a lack of suitable mainstream housing for older people who wish to live as part of a mixed community in non-specialist housing.



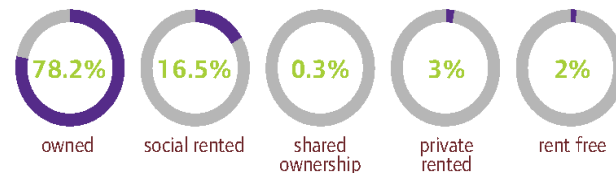
Character: A mainly urban area including the towns of Dunstable and Houghton Regis along with the surrounding villages of Toddington, Caddington and Slip End. It is our most densely populated locality.



Population: From an overall population of 71,995 the numbers of those who are aged over 65 is 11,675. The graph below shows the population of older people in Chiltern Vale from 2015 to 2030.



Housing: There are 29,646 dwellings in Chiltern Vale. The tenure mix for households only occupied by people aged 65 is shown below.



Developments: There are plans for town centre regeneration in Dunstable and Houghton Regis and around 12,000 new homes planned for Chiltern Vale up to 2035. Of this number the urban expansion areas to the north of Houghton Regis and Luton are expected to deliver 10,200 homes and associated infrastructure. Elsewhere settlement expansion is controlled by the Green Belt and despite its significant urban area the locality also benefits from beautiful countryside including the Dunstable Downs – part of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Two new care homes have recently opened in Dunstable. The Council has built an 83-apartment extra care scheme in Dunstable and plans to develop a further scheme in Houghton Regis.

In addition, McCarthy and Stone completed a scheme of 32 retirement units in Dunstable in 2014.



Other relevant plans and documents

- Dunstable Town Centre Masterplan
- Houghton Regis Town Centre Masterplan
- Houghton Regis North Framework Plan
- Land North of Luton and Sundon RFI Framework Plan
- Dunstable Strategic Delivery Framework
- Dunstable Delivery Management Plan



Market Opportunities in Chiltern Vale

Existing and planned extra care and care home developments will be sufficient to meet demand well into the next decade but there are opportunities to provide mainstream housing that meets the needs of older people in the urban extension areas and brownfield sites.

“Priory View in Dunstable is an 83-apartment affordable extra care scheme that was opened by the council in April 2016.”



Extra Care Supply and Demand

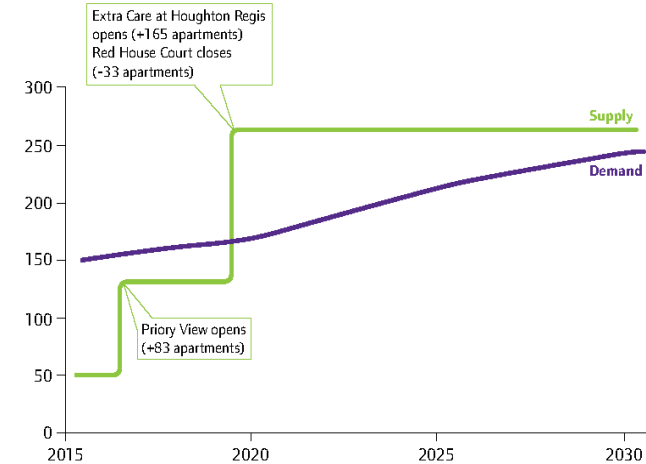
The existing Council-owned extra care scheme at Red House Court in Houghton Regis was built in 1991 and provides 33 affordable rental flats. In addition the Council’s Priory View extra care scheme in Dunstable provides 83 new affordable apartments. A further scheme in Central Houghton Regis is planned for development before 2020. This will incorporate a redevelopment of Red House Court and deliver net an additional 140 affordable and open market apartments. These should meet forecast demand up to the period to 2030.



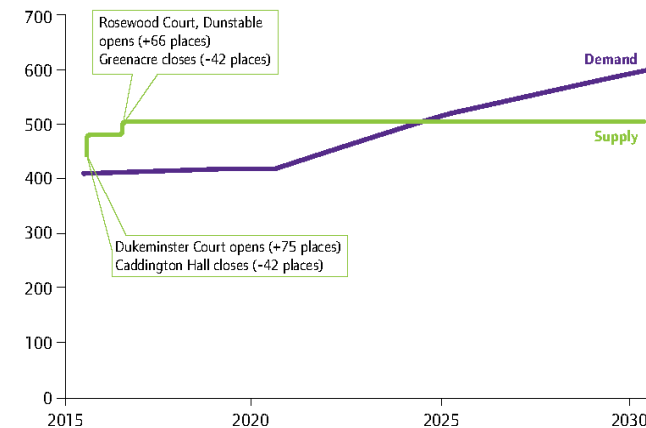
Care Home Supply and Demand

There are currently 449 care home places in 12 homes. 42 of these places are in Greenacre which is owned by Central Bedfordshire Council. Dukeminster Court in Dunstable opened in April 2015 and has added 75 places. Rosewood Court in London Road, Dunstable opened in March 2016, providing an additional 66 places. It is planned that these two new homes are used to replace capacity in the two outdated Council-owned homes and to this end Caddington Hall closed in September 2015 reducing capacity by 42 places and Greenacre is due to close during 2016 reducing capacity by 42 places.

There is planning permission for a 58-place care home at Tithe Farm in Houghton Regis but this is not currently being pursued and has not been included in the supply forecast.



Extra Care Housing Supply and Demand Forecast for Chiltern Vale



Care Home Supply and Demand Forecast for Chiltern Vale

Achievements so far...

- Programme of replacement care and nursing homes
- Programme of new and replacement extra care and sheltered housing
- Developing programme to deliver new and replacement accommodation for adults with learning disabilities

But...

- Little progress in the delivery of new homes suitable for older people
- Progress in specialist housing mainly concentrated at the affordable end of the market

Our response

We wanted to get a clearer understanding of the needs and aspirations of older people and use this to:

- Guide the Council's priorities
- Understand how to make best use of the Council's assets and resources
- Influence others

Research

Used national research:

- [Future of an Ageing Population](#)
- [HAPPI 1](#), [HAPPI 2](#) & [HAPPI 3](#)
- [Designing with Downsizers](#)

Commissioned our own independent research in Central Bedfordshire of a representative sample of older people

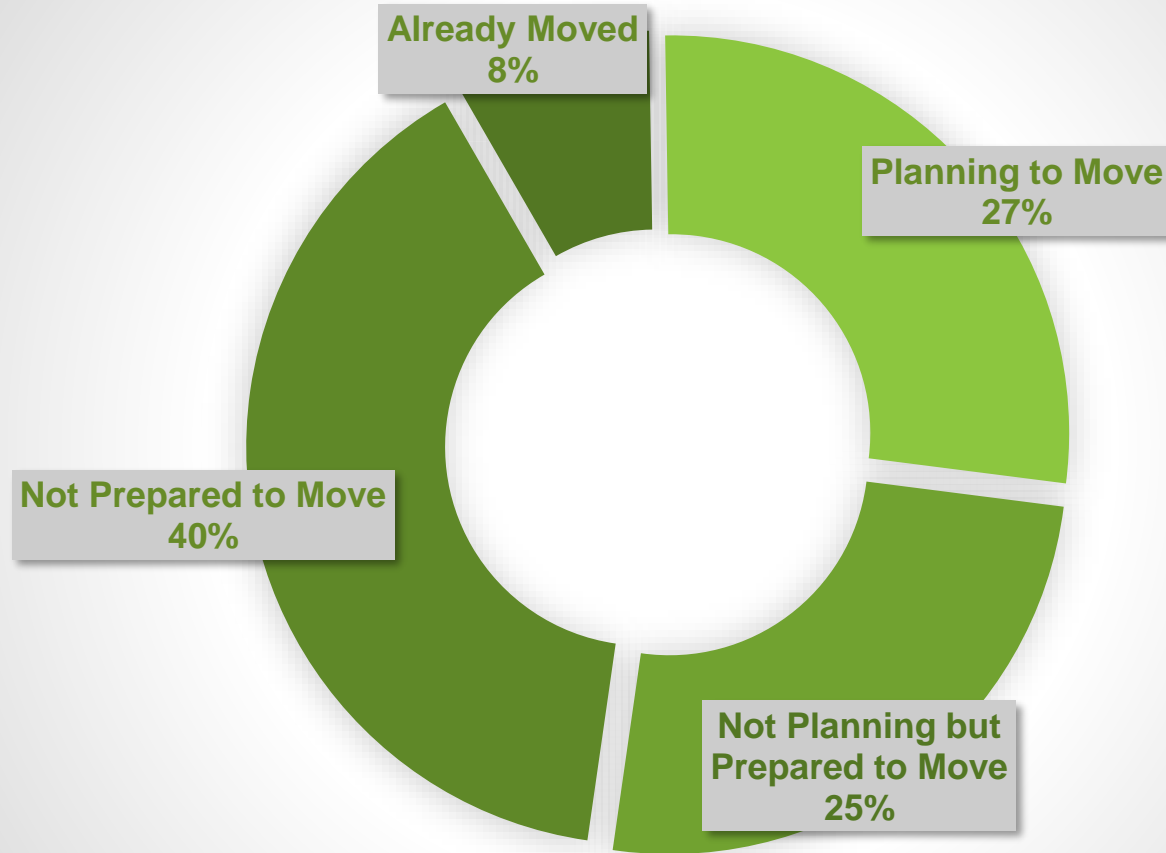
- 600 short interviews
- 80 in-depth interviews
- Stakeholder focus groups

Key Research Areas

- Propensity to move
- Drivers for those considering a move
- Preferred tenure type
- Preferred housing types
- Downsizing

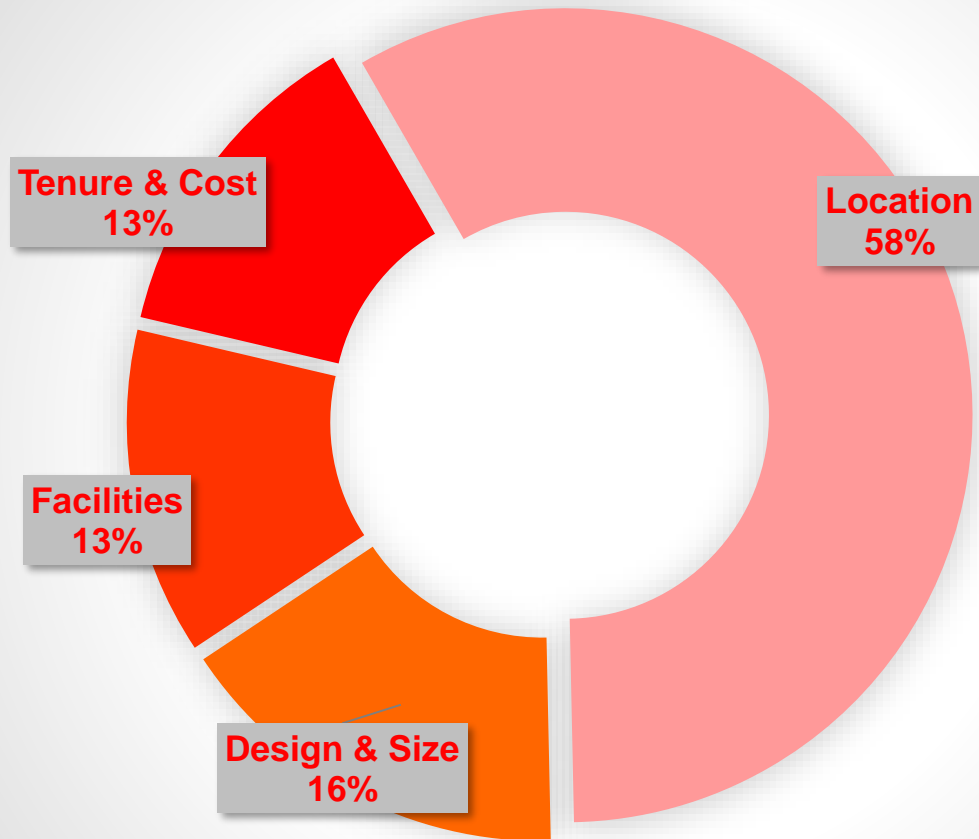
Full report published online at: goo.gl/P37QJ8

Propensity to Move



Source: Assessment of the Housing Needs of Older People in Central Bedfordshire – ORS / Central Bedfordshire Council March 2017

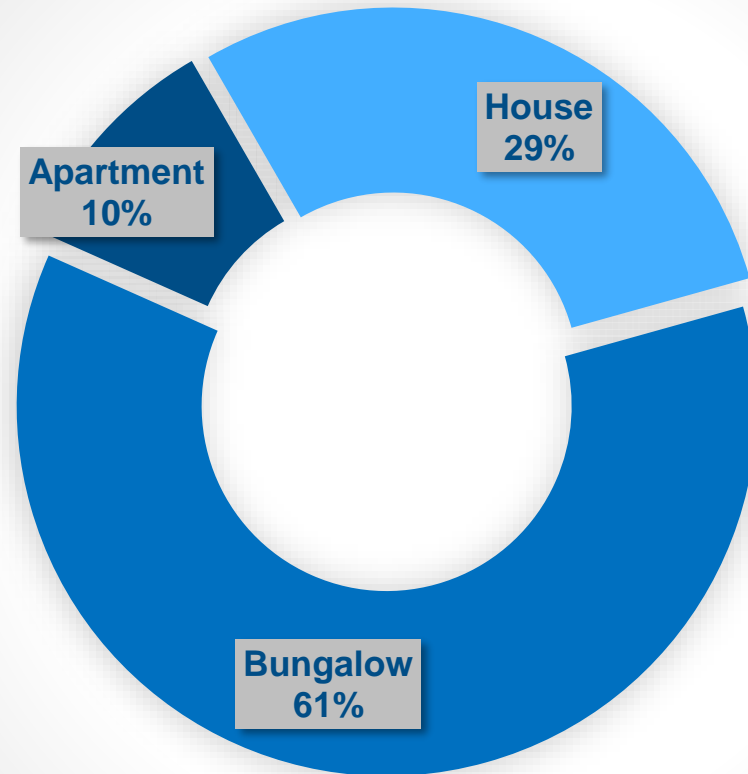
Drivers for those planning or prepared to move



Most Important Factor When Choosing a Home

Source: Assessment of the Housing Needs of Older People in Central Bedfordshire – ORS / Central Bedfordshire Council March 2017

Type of property preferred by those planning or prepared to move



Source: Assessment of the Housing Needs of Older People in Central Bedfordshire – ORS / Central Bedfordshire Council March 2017

Downsizing

Looking at the 'planning to move' group:

- 85% are in homes with 3 or more bedrooms
- 50% are in homes with 4 or more bedrooms
- 60% are looking for 2 bedrooms or fewer
- They have a strong preferences for bungalows (62%) or houses (33%) over apartments(5%)

If we can meet demand with the right range of products then we can release at least 5,400 houses with 3 or more bedrooms

Other key findings

- Strong desire by owner-occupiers to retain this status...
- ...including a reluctance to consider leasehold purchase
- The majority would prefer mainstream housing but about half would consider specialist housing
- Even in schemes where there is guest space there was a strong preference for two bedrooms over one
- Some respondents reported that they had already looked unsuccessfully for somewhere to downsize to

Summary from the research

- There is a clear untapped market for all types of accommodation for older people
- The biggest shortfall is of mainstream housing
- Many older people have a desire to downsize...
- ...but it has to be the right product:
 - Location
 - Design
 - Price
 - Tenure
- If this is not available most people will stay where they are.

Implications for Central Bedfordshire

In the period to 2035:

- Need for 3650 specialist homes (50-75 new housing-with-care and housing-with-support schemes)
- Need for 5400 mainstream housing downsizer homes
- The total (9050) represents 23% of planned housing growth
- Around 75% of these are for owner-occupation
- Delivering these would release an equivalent number of mainly larger family homes

Local Plan 2015-2035

Have proposed clear policies that:

- Define dwellings suitable for older people
- Require a percentage (c.23%) of any new development (over 10 dwellings) to be suitable for older people
- This increases to 100% for developments within existing settlements (with some caveats)
- Require larger developments (over 100 dwellings) to have suitable housing-with-care and/or housing-with-support schemes where possible

Moving to delivery...

- Trying to influence local planning policies to promote suitable developments
- Reviewing and commenting on all planning applications for more than 10 dwellings
- Continuing to develop specialist housing directly and through other social landlords
- Planning to deliver 'exemplar' downsizer homes directly for sale and rental

The Key Challenges

- National planning guidance is not strong enough
- Little interest from volume housebuilders
- Many homes to Category 2 of Part M are not particularly attractive to downsizers
- Currently few good examples of downsizer homes and the market is largely untested

Some thoughts about developing a national voice...

What should we be seeking? Better planning guidance?

An overhaul Part M of the Building Regulations?

Diversion of central government resources into this area (away from Help to Buy)?

How should we go about this?

Seek consensus amongst key organisations representing both end users and providers?

Engagement with government at all levels

Challenge current government policy from a human rights perspective?