



# 2015/16 Capital Programme – Year End Review

July 2016

## Introduction

For the 2015/16 financial year, Central Bedfordshire Council planned to invest a combined total of £ 160 million via the capital programmes of the General fund and the Housing Revenue Account, (£ 139 million and £ 21 million respectively). Capital projects are delivered from all over the organisation, using both internal and external resources. Funding is sourced via grants, Section 106, Section 278, partner contributions, capital receipts and borrowing.

This report will reflect the capital projects approved at the point of setting the budget in February 2015. The purpose of this report is to provide a review of the deliverables and benefits articulated in the Business Cases associated with these projects. Financial reporting takes place elsewhere.

The 2015/16 capital programme was set against the six priorities of the Medium Term Plan:

- Enhancing Central Bedfordshire
- Improving educational attainment
- Promoting health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable
- Delivering better Infrastructure
- Offering great universal services
- Giving our customers value for money.

The individual projects within the capital programme each contributed to one or more of these priorities.

## Enhancing Central Bedfordshire

### Market Town Regeneration Fund

The Market Town Regeneration Fund (MTRF) a £4M capital fund, was launched in November 2015 for Town Councils to bid for on the basis of providing 50% match funding. The aim of the fund is to deliver improvements and enhancements in our market towns that achieve economic growth and investment. We received 11 bids in total (one from each of the town councils) and at the June Executive, approval was given to go ahead with 8 bids - Flitwick, Dunstable, Leighton Linlade, Ampthill, Shefford, Houghton Regis, Potton. This totals a MTRF investment of £2.46M and will lever approximately £2.9M in match funding from Town Councils and local partners. Business cases are currently under development and Grant Agreements are due to be signed with each Town Council in August 2016. Delivery will then commence with completion by March 2018.

### Returning Empty Homes to Occupation

Capital was accessed for work to some of the 64 empty homes that were returned to occupation. This work has provided much needed additional housing for Central Bedfordshire and relates to a key action of the Empty Homes Strategy 2010-15 Action Plan. Final Empty Dwelling Management Orders were also approved for two properties and the works necessary to bring them back into use went out to tender. The works will be completed during 2016/17 and the Council will have management rights over the properties enabling them to be let to those in housing need.

### Improving our Green Environment

Houghton Hall Park is a key priority in accordance with the Outdoor Improvement Plan, landscape restoration works commenced on site in early 2016 to start delivery of the Parks for People (Heritage Lottery Fund & BIG Lottery) Renaissance and Renewal Project. Initial works involved the clearance of scrub and diseased/damaged/non native trees to enable the creation of the walled kitchen and formal garden along with easy access paths around the site. This is part of a bigger project which will see a new visitor centre on site.

The historic tree avenue at Rushmere Country Park was replaced, due to the original horse chestnut trees succumbing to disease. It was replanted using a mix of small-leaved lime, which will mature into magnificent avenue trees, alternated with rowan trees to bring early structure and autumn colour to the main entrance route for visitors. A new sculptural feature was added to the existing and extremely popular sculpture trail.

The restoration of Sundon Landfill site continues with the site expected to fully open as public access land by 2021, with managed access proposed before this date. Soil importation was almost completed, with the haul road removal commencing in March 16. The first two phases were sown and planted and have established well. Phases three, four, five and six were profiled ready for seeding.

## Improving Education

The capital projects which make a substantial contribution to this priority are primarily focused on the delivery and improvement of school buildings. This includes the delivery of new school places in existing schools, the design and construction of new schools and the capital maintenance of existing school buildings.



**St Andrew's Lower Schools East**



**Russell Lower School**



**Robert Bloomfield Academy**



**Roecroft Lower School**

### **New School Places Programme**

The New School Places Programme continued with projects to expand schools and build new schools to create additional pupil places across Central Bedfordshire. This enabled CBC to create spaces designed and equipped to help inspire great educational outcomes. Some projects continue (as planned) into the 2016/17 financial year and the programme will continue to deliver benefits as further school places are brought on stream. Projects funded with an implementation date of September 2015 were as follows:

Etonbury Academy was expanded to increase middle school places from 480 to 600 places and upper school places increased from 1750 to 2050 places. Robert Bloomfield Academy

was expanded from 720 to 840 places. Clipstone Brook Lower School and Leedon Lower School were both expanded by 1FE to provide an additional 150 places at each school. Holywell Middle School was expanded from 540 to 600 places. Roecroft Lower School and Russell Lower School were expanded by 1FE to provide an additional 150 places at both schools. St Mary's Lower School was expanded from a 1.5FE to a 2FE school providing an additional 75 places. A brand new 2FE lower school was built on the Kings Reach site for St Andrew's Lower School, this was the first build of the Sunesis Paxton model and a time lapse camera was installed so that images of the site could be viewed as the build progressed.



Holywell Middle School

### **Temporary Accommodation Programme**

The Temporary Accommodation Programme includes projects to install temporary accommodation. Existing temporary classrooms were reconfigured and four additional classrooms provided at The Chiltern School on their primary site. Advance works were funded to replace temporary classrooms at Robert Peel Lower School with permanent classrooms. A double temporary unit was provided at Church End Lower School ahead of the school expansion on to a second site and was removed once the new school building was ready to open.

### **Schools Access Initiative Programme**

A number of access improvement projects were delivered in 2015/16. These included specialised equipment, visual and hearing equipment and improvements or adaptations to school buildings to allow disabled pupils access to mainstream schools. Equipment funded included an amplification system that provides an even spread of sound around a room, which is beneficial for students with hearing impairments, specialised adjustable seating, adjustable tables and standing frames. Building projects included the installation of suspended acoustic ceilings at two schools, a wet room, disabled toilets, a medical room, ramps and automatic doors. These improvements ensure that children with disabilities can attend their local mainstream school, which provides a better learning experience for all.

### **Schools Capital Maintenance**

Schools Capital Maintenance work included the upgrade of 4 school kitchen ventilation systems, electrical works (including fire alarms, emergency lighting, classroom lighting and distribution boards) at 7 schools, roof repairs at 7 schools, boiler replacements at 2 schools, window replacements at 1 school and replacing a collapsing playground at Maple Tree Lower School.

## Promoting health and wellbeing & protecting the vulnerable

### Priory View

The first residents moved into Priory View – CBC’s landmark independent living scheme in Dunstable - on 25th April 2016. Priory View consists of 83 apartments for those aged 55 and over and community communal space. All 52 affordable rent and 24 shared ownership apartments are occupied, with the remaining 7 shared ownership apartments progressing through the final stages of the legal sales process.

The provision of an onsite offer is working well to deliver both residential and community services whilst enable those residents at Priory View to live independently; these onsite offer includes care provision, café, restaurant, hair salon, treatment rooms and retail unit.



Priory View

### Creasey Park Drive, Dunstable

The Housing Service has identified land within it’s ownership that could provide new homes for the new build homes programme. Previously developed land where there are regeneration benefits to bringing the site forward have been prioritised. As part of the prioritisation of sites the Housing Service reviewed the garage blocks within it’s ownership and identified Creasey Park Drive, Dunstable for re-development. Planning permission was granted in January 2015 and following a procurement exercise involving local tenants the contractor commenced construction on the site in May 2015.

The development comprises two bungalows, one adapted for the disabled, and two apartments, each with two bedrooms. These properties have been made available to those on the CBC Housing Register. The development was completed in February 2016. The scheme was funded through the Council’s Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme.

## Development at Creasey Park:



**May 2014 – Vacant garage site and business case prepared for re-development**



**Feb 2016 – Site completed and the properties start to be occupied by residents**

## Enabling people to stay in their own homes

Also delivered by the housing service, two programmes of work which contribute to protecting the vulnerable have delivered improvements to 36 homes under 'Renewal Assistance' and 408 aids and adaptations to homes of residents with disabilities under the 'Disabled Facilities Grant Scheme'. The latter included the creation of 115 level access showers and installation of 57 stair-lifts. These programmes enable people to stay in their homes and improve their quality of life.



## Adaptations to homes of people with disabilities

### Housing Investment Works

2015/16 saw the continuation of the planned investment programme to improve social housing owned by Housing Services, exceeding the targets set for the year and receiving high levels of customer satisfaction, whilst making savings and efficiency along the way including £245k saving on External Wall Insulation from original tender prices. The Major Works Team in Housing who run the majority of the capital programme were also identified as a low cost high performing team in the Housemark Benchmarking exercise.

<b>Works Type</b>	<b>Achieved</b>	<b>Target</b>
Communal Rewires	106	106
Domestic Rewires	23	No Target Set
New Roofs	67	67
Kitchens	233	200
Bathrooms	120	112
New Boilers / heating systems	358	336
EWI	36	36
CWI	12	12
New Composite Doors	593	No Target Set
New Parking spaces for residents	40	30
Refurbished Garages	41	No Target Set
Communal Space / Estate improvements	28	No Target Set
New Gypsy and Traveller Plots	2	2
New PVCu Windows	14	14



Newly refurbished Kitchen, Westminster Gardens HR



New Roof Covering, Southwood Road, Duns

### **The Ivel Medical Centre**

The Ivel Medical Centre, a redevelopment scheme to provide a new Primary Care / GP facility in Biggleswade was completed on time and budget; opening January 2016. CBC retains the property as an income generating investment which will also host staff from CBC's Social Care Team alongside the medical staff, facilitating wider integration of Health, Wellbeing and Social Care in Biggleswade.



Ivel Medical Centre

## Delivering better infrastructure

### Woodside Link

A critical piece of infrastructure to create access from the new M1 junction 11a to the industrial heart of Dunstable and the expansion of Houghton Regis, the Woodside Link will improve traffic flows and reduce pollution in these areas as it takes traffic from the High Streets of the two towns.

A contract was awarded to Balfour Beatty to build the 2.9km road in April 2015, and construction commenced in May 2015. In preparation for the road, drainage was installed, a borrow pit was set up to provide fill material for the road, and UK Power Networks placed a line of overhead electricity cables underground and removed the pylons. Towards the end of 2015 year, the Woodside Link's four major structures were very well progressed: Parkside Bridge, Houghton Brook Bridge, a box culvert for the brook, and sheet piling for the retaining wall on Sandringham Drive. In early 2016 a section of Houghton Brook was diverted and road and roundabout construction and surfacing commenced.

Completion by October 2016 is expected.



### A421

Central Bedfordshire Council, Milton Keynes Council and SEMLEP (South East Midlands Local Enterprise Partnership) continued to work together on unlocking DfT funding to dual the A421 between M1 junction 13 and the new Eagle Farm Roundabout. This would improve journey times along and traffic flow, removing a pinch point and improving east-west travel in the region. Work has been carried out on initial designs, land acquisition, vegetation clearance and transport modelling.

### M1 to A6 Link Road

The M1 – A6 Link Road will provide a 4.4km connection north of Luton, facilitating the provision of 4,000 dwellings and creation of 2,000 new jobs once in place. Progress towards the implementation of the scheme in 2015/16 has involved the revised design of the scheme. We now have a more accurate understanding of the design speed of the road and a revised cost estimate of £55m, significantly less than the £100m previously envisaged. Progress has been made towards the completion of a Strategic Outline Business Case to secure £11m of funding from Central Government towards the scheme. The Strategic Case is in place and the Economic Case has also been drafted, the latter of which identifies a Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR) of 5.3:1.

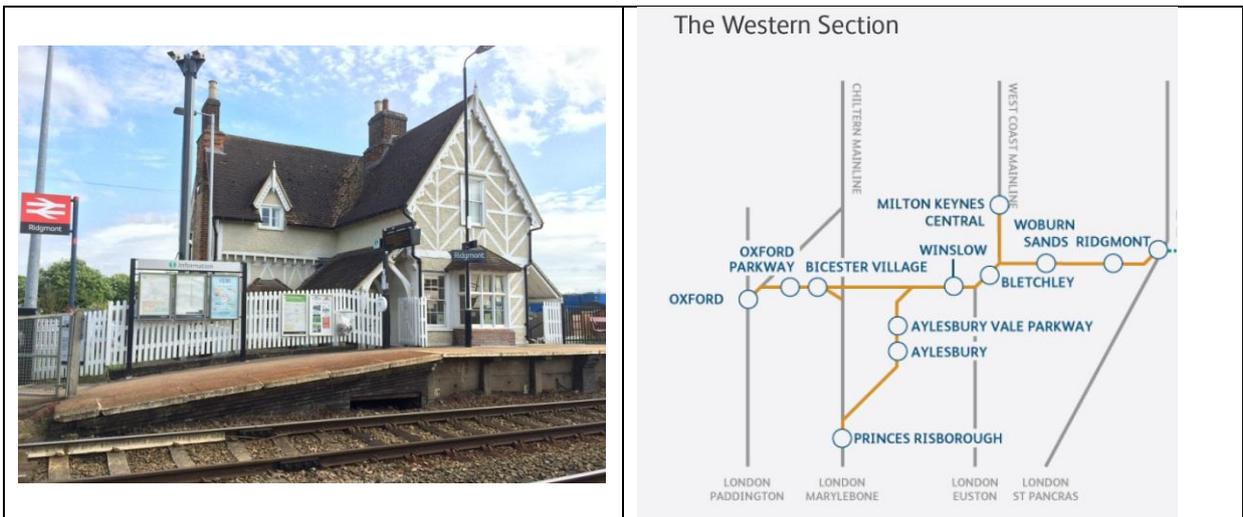


**M1 – A6 Proposals**

### East West Rail

Central Bedfordshire has continued to play an important role through 2015/16 towards the development of the new East West Rail link between Oxford and Cambridge. Delivery of East West Rail will dramatically improve transport connectivity for Central Bedfordshire. Work is continuing to deliver infrastructure improvements along the route in Central Bedfordshire including developing a new transport interchange at Ridgmont Station.

A Feasibility and Business Case has been commissioned by CBC which provides the evidence for investment at Ridgmont to provide a new interchange. The interchange will have excellent road connections and provide direct rail services to Oxford, Bicester and beyond.



### **Rights of Way improvements**

Improved access to Central Bedfordshire's rights of way enables better physical and mental wellbeing, providing access to the countryside and more sustainable travel, on foot and by bicycle. Projects delivered in 2015/16 included 25 new or replaced bridges and culverts on footpaths and bridleways across the authority. Around 2200 metres of surface improvements have been undertaken and over 200 new items of signage, gates and other furniture erected that improve access for all legal users of the public path network.

### **HWRC Redevelopment**

During 15/16 the construction phase of the Household Waste Recycling Centre redevelopment project began. This Project is being delivered by Assets on behalf of Waste Services and business case objectives include:

- Reduce the risk to Health and Safety
- Improve user experience
- Allow greater capacity for bins, delivering increased separation (performance).
- Improved site security

The first site to be delivered was Biggleswade. The site was closed for 6 months and opened to the public on time, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of February 2016. The site is now a modern split level facility where customers deposit their recycling from an elevated position, making it safer and quicker to use. The customer area has been increased by over 65%, allowing CBC to provide more customer parking and access to a greater number of containers. This also enables CBC the opportunity to recycle an increased number of materials and achieve our aim to improve recycling performance.

CCTV with ANPR has been installed to monitor for safety and security and a dramatic improvement on flow and queuing is already evident.

Following the completion of Biggleswade the construction team immediately moved on to the Ampthill site.

### **Thorn Turn Waste Park and Highways Depot**

In order to deliver excellent universal services Central Bedfordshire Council is investing in the facilities it needs. Activities in 15/16 were largely centred around the completion of design, achieving planning permission and undertaking enabling works on site. Enabling works included the creation of an access road facilitating enabling plant and excavation vehicle access to the site, and the first 2 phases of the top soil strip. Over 2 hectares of trees were felled and removed from site contributing to the preparation of the site for the Earthworks phase.



**Thorn Turn site clearance**

### **Broadband**

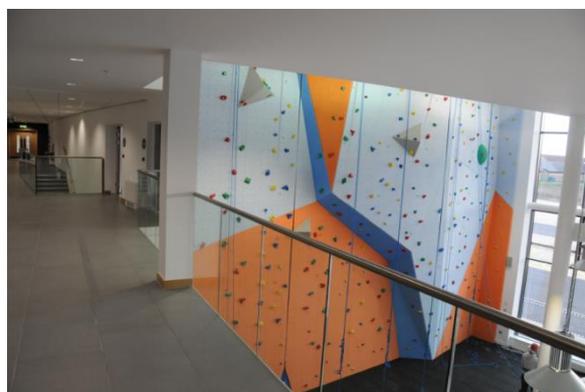
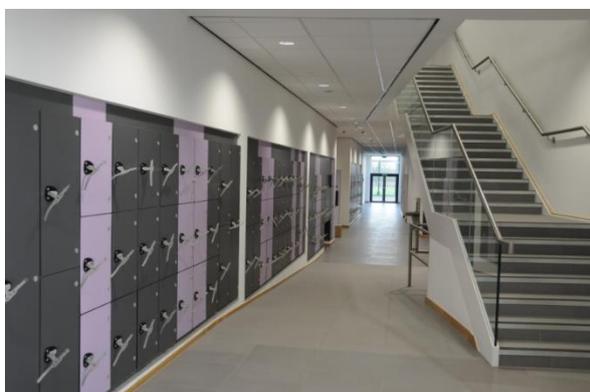
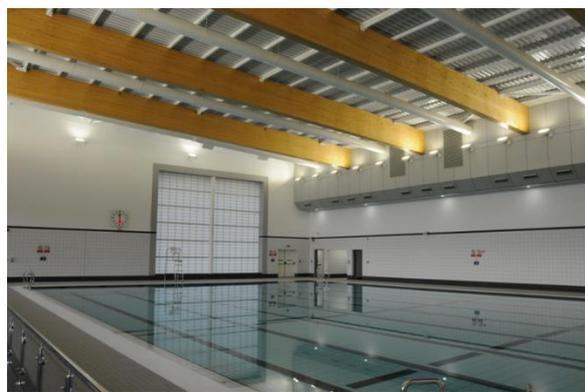
Following the completion of the first phase of the Superfast Broadband project coverage in Central Bedfordshire reached 90% in 2015/16. The project enabled connections to over 15,500 premises, previously without coverage, in our area in 2015/16. Connection to a fast broadband service is essential to make sure Central Bedfordshire remains a great place to live and work, as modern flexible working patterns and online communities become the norm.

Contracts were signed for the next phases of broadband rollout in 2015, which will see coverage extended to around 96.5% of premises in Central Bedfordshire.

## Great Universal Services

### Flitwick Leisure Centre

During 2015/16 we delivered a key priority of the Leisure Facilities Strategy; the new Flitwick Leisure Centre, which opened to the public in February 2016. It provides an eight-lane swimming with learner pool, a 120 station health and fitness suite, a 10-meter indoor climbing wall, dance/exercise studios, sports hall, 2 squash courts, a bigger café and more. It has attracted an average of 750 additional casual swimmers each month, increasing monthly. The member numbers have also increased from 1800 to 3461. This facility will contribute to active lifestyles, and thereby health and wellbeing in Flitwick and the surrounding area.



### Flitwick Leisure Centre

#### Dunstable Leisure Centre & Library

Continuing with the programme to improve our service offer, design and surveys work has been undertaken for the Dunstable Leisure Centre & Library project with the expected completion in September 2018. Other projects delivered improvements to the Leisure Facilities including a new lighting desk at the Grove Theatre and new air handling equipment at Saxon Pool and Leisure Centre.

### Highways maintenance

2015/16 saw the continued commitment of CBC to maintain its highway network to a high standard, with public satisfaction in highways reaching its highest level, and exceeding the MTP target for the first time. Excellent roads and footpaths are critical to making Central Bedfordshire and attractive place to live, work and invest.

The following work was carried out in 2015/16

Activity	Planned	Completed
Road resurfacing	14.8 km	15.8 km
Road surface dressing	0 km	10.1 km
Footpath resurfacing	8.4 km	10.8 km

NHT road condition survey results identified CBC as having the second best road conditions in the UK.

Four structures were strengthened or replaced comprising Broughton Road Culvert Cranfield, Church Bridge Stotfold, Kings Bridge Northill and West Hyde Road Bridge Caddington, one structure, the Redborne School Footbridge on the A507, had new bearings installed to extend the life of the asset.

2900 street-light lanterns were replaced with energy efficient LED units and 260 columns were replaced.

A number of schemes to relieve persistent carriageway flooding were completed including:

Recurring severe carriageway flooding severing Hexton Lane in Shillington to passing traffic during periods of heavy rainfall and following flash flooding of the adjacent stream. Provision of an environmentally friendly innovative scheme using recycled materials to raise the carriageway profile successful achieved effective surface water run off drainage, keeping the lane open to traffic and reducing ongoing revenue maintenance liability.



Hexton Lane, Shillington

The U C 147 Lane through Old Warden suffered from severe recurring carriageway flooding. An innovative drainage scheme was promoted comprising; baffle wall installation to road side ditches to facilitate natural percolation into the ground, supplemented with 2 linked

Soakaway installations in the verges either side of the road. This scheme has successfully alleviated recurring road flooding and severance of the carriageway, reducing future revenue expenditure including previous emergency site attendance, erecting flood warning boards and pumping away standing flood water in the road.



UC147 Old Warden

Frenches Ave, Dunstable

Provision of soakaway in adjacent verge to resolve recurring ponding on the carriageway at the access to 2 heavily used commercial / industrial sites.



Frenches Avenue, Dunstable

## Libraries

The library service continues to offer a wide range of opportunities for the community to learn and access information in a safe and supported setting. We have continued to invest in the service as a cornerstone to improving community resilience.

In 2015/16, Flitwick Library was refurbished including a new layout; increasing the size of the children's library; new computer benching and furniture for the public PCs and electrical and data work; new lighting and benching in meeting room.

New IT benching was also installed in a number of other libraries including Potton and Ampthill. Potton also had works to improve access/safety improvements. A new library counter alongside data and electrical works were completed at Leighton Buzzard Library

## Delivering value for money

### Energy Efficiency Programme

In 2015/16, due to a significant change in the Feed in Tariff (FiT) returns forecast for 1<sup>st</sup> January, the energy efficiency programme was significantly amended to deliver all Solar Photo Voltaic (PV) installations ahead of this date. This change saw PV schemes brought forward from 2016/17 and non PV schemes slip from 15/16 to 16/17 to balance the budget. A total of 10 corporate PV schemes were delivered ahead of the deadline, ensuring that the maximum income was achieved by CBC. This has provided 183kWh of capacity, saving the Authority money on its energy bills and generating revenue from the FiT.

Alongside the PV Projects, a number of other energy efficiency schemes were delivered including the installation of LED lighting throughout Priory House and the installation of Automated Meter Reading technology at a number of sites.



### Farms Condition Surveys

In order to meet our duty as a landlord, all farm sites (44 in total) under the ownership of CBC were surveyed to determine their condition. These surveys took account of the latest standards applicable to living accommodation and included separate detailed roofing and mechanical and electrical surveys as well as the standard building defects surveys. The information produced was then analysed to create a prioritised list of works required. A programme of essential maintenance work has been established for the next two years. The programme of condition surveys worked well and received good feedback from the tenant farmers. A number of small farm projects that had been identified during the condition surveys were immediately addressed including repair work to walls at several sites and the delivery of a lambing tunnel.

### Corporate Rolling Programme / Health & Safety Programme

Keeping our buildings fit for purpose and taking action to prevent more expensive deterioration in our built assets is key to efficient use of our investment in these facilities.

Improvements and essential repair works to the Councils estate take place through the Corporate Rolling and Health and Safety Programmes. In 2015/16, these programmes delivered around 40 individual projects across more than 25 sites. These ranged from the installation of a biomass boiler at Silsoe Horticultural Centre to a new system in the Council Chamber to enable meetings to be broadcast live over the internet. Across a number of other sites more minor works have taken place to upgrade electrical and fire alarm systems to ensure compliance with the latest regulations. This work ensures the safety of those using CBC buildings and allows continued utilisation of assets for the delivery of services.

### **Enhancement Work to prepare for disposals**

During 2015-16, work was carried out to prepare sites for disposal with the primary objective was to enhance surplus and underused CBC assets and properties to maximise increased capital receipts and income opportunities and wider in-kind benefits to the Council.

A number of schemes were worked on including:

Land East of Arlesey; residential development site and associated employment land – promotion agreement completed with Telereal Trillium to deliver masterplan objectives and minimum capital receipt of £18m.

Stratton Business Park Phase 5; employment development site – planning consents secured, two contracts exchanged with existing occupiers (Liebherr and Jewers) conditional on delivery of infrastructure. Promotion of three further deals agreed subject to contract. Total potential receipt in excess of £10m.

Land at Hitchin Road, Fairfield; land brought forward in accelerated timeframe to deliver a new lower school and residential development.

Predominantly residential land use sites have been brought forward at Northwood End Road Haynes, Caddington Hall and Village Farm Sutton.