



have
your
say...

...on our Parking Strategy

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www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/parkingstrategy

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**Central
Bedfordshire**

Parking Strategy

Overview

Car parking is an important issue when considering transport topics. The car is the main mode of travel for most people and all those cars need to be parked.

A well planned and managed approach to parking can help us to achieve our economic, social and environmental objectives. The effective management of parking can have a positive impact by enabling more productive use of spaces, making towns and local communities more attractive to visitors so thereby improving their economic viability.

We do not currently have an adopted Parking Strategy and there is no comprehensive approach to managing on and off street parking, provision, control and enforcement. This consultation sets out our plan for developing a comprehensive Parking Strategy for Central Bedfordshire. This consultation includes the background and reasoning for having a Parking Strategy and proposes an Aim and Objectives for our Parking Strategy based on current and future need.

This document also explains the types of policies and actions we want to introduce that would improve parking for our residents and visitors while providing an affordable and cost effective service benefiting everyone.

1. Why produce a Parking Strategy?

As a transport authority we have a legal obligation to manage the highway network appropriately and parking is part of this.

Parking is an issue of significant concern for local residents. Councillors and members of the public often raise issues about residents parking, inconsistency, obstructions and parking violations.

Unrestricted parking leads to congestion, obstructions, pollution and spaces being occupied by the wrong users at inappropriate times all of which is a concern for local businesses which can affect the economic viability of the area.

The remit of the Parking Strategy will be broad so as to acknowledge the complex and challenging connections between parking and environmental, economic and regeneration issues.

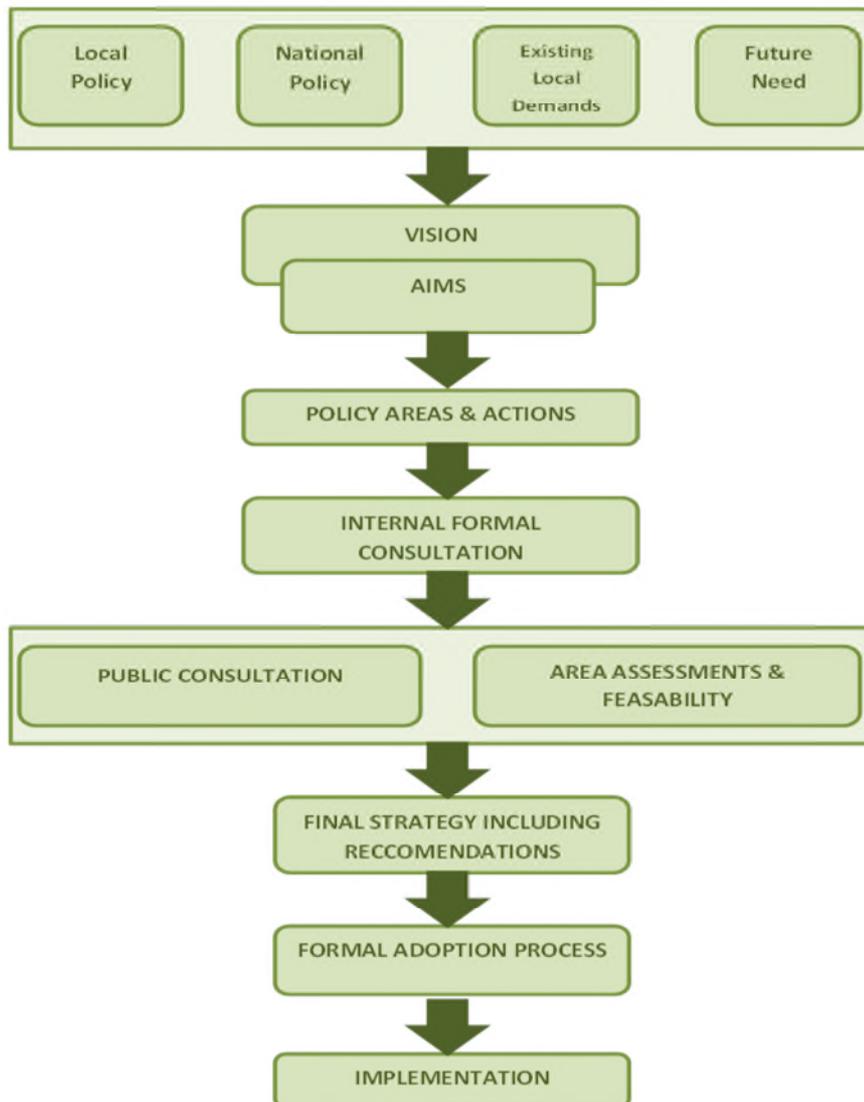
Management of parking can have a positive impact by enabling the more productive use of spaces making towns more attractive to visitors, thereby improving their economic viability. Furthermore, having a consistent Parking Strategy can also ensure that parking in local areas can be dealt with in a fair way so improving the environment and safety for our residents.

Not only will a Parking Strategy help to address current parking issues, we also need to consider future need. Central Bedfordshire is an area for significant housing growth, new infrastructure (e.g. East West Rail), and new employment sites. It is important that town centres, train stations, schools and other residential areas can respond to this growth in terms of parking.

2. Approach and strategy structure

The following chart summarises the proposed approach to delivering the final Parking Strategy and details the different elements required that will shape and develop a comprehensive Parking Strategy for Central Bedfordshire.

This process will form a sound and robust evidence base to justify investment, ensure value for money and provide effective schemes on the ground that will contribute towards the overarching objectives of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) and the priorities within the Five Year Plan.



3. Proposed aim

Our draft aim for the future of parking in Central Bedfordshire is as follows:

‘The Parking Strategy aims to support the effective and safe operation of our roads as well as delivering solutions which enable our town and district centres to grow and helps residents and businesses access services’.

The aim means creating a Parking Strategy that helps Central Bedfordshire deliver, as far as is possible, what our current road network needs in order to function, plus what it needs in order to grow.

The Parking Strategy will contribute to the Council’s vision to secure sustainable economic growth. Growing the local economy provides the resources for individuals, and the Council as a whole, to deliver those criteria which constitute a great place to live and work, whilst the sustainability dimension ensures that it is not done so at the expense of future generations’ ability to meet the same needs and desires.

4. Proposed objectives

The overarching aim can be broken down into nine proposed objectives which will guide the development of the Parking Strategy. These objectives have been created to reflect the issues which have been identified as important locally, while at the same time reflecting wider national and local policy context.

These objectives reflect the main impact that transport can have on the wider community, rather than being linked to particular schemes or measures. They form the basis upon which the policies and programs contained in this document have been developed and are detailed in the following table.

Parking Strategy Objectives	
1	Make Central Bedfordshire and its town centres as accessible to residents, businesses and visitors as possible to ensure growth and prosperity
2	Ensure that parking schemes for residents, businesses and visitors are well managed
3	Promote the safety of all road users
4	Ensure that there is sufficient and appropriate parking for new developments
5	Fulfil our statutory requirements for the parking we provide
6	Help ensure that our roads are well managed
7	Provide alternative travel choices that are sustainable

8	Provide effective enforcement of parking restrictions
9	Work in partnership with other off-street parking providers so that we can provide the best service possible

By having a focus of where we need to direct our attention we can develop robust policies for parking in Central Bedfordshire which are informed by and reactive to our residents needs as far as is practicable.

5. Proposed policy areas and actions

The draft policy areas and actions in the following table show how we propose to deliver the aim and objectives of the Parking Strategy. We intend to assess the viability and impact of implementing these policies and actions as part of the final Parking Strategy. This assessment will include consideration of feedback from public consultation and local studies through a number of area assessments.

There are three distinct areas of assessment which are:

- a. **Quantity** - how well does the supply of parking spaces relate to the level and type of demand in an area both at present and in the future.
- b. **Quality** – relating to location, level of service and the design of parking facilities
- c. **Parking control and pricing** – mechanisms required for influencing who has access to parking spaces and when.

The draft policy areas have been informed by the work undertaken to date and will enable us to address some of the issues related to parking within Central Bedfordshire.

The Management and enforcement of parking have been greatly impacted by the restricted use of CCTV cameras and any proposals made will have to take this constraint into account.

No	Objective	Policy area	Actions	How we will deliver this
A. Quantity - One of the most important considerations is to determine how well the supply of parking spaces relates to the level and demand in an area, both at present and in the future and to decide whether more or less space should be provided.				
1.1	1.	Car Parking Provision: Town Centres	In town centres, we will work with our partners to provide and manage capacity to cater for the needs of shopper and visitor parking.	Area assessments taking into account the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short stay shopper and visitor parking • Required turnover of spaces throughout the day • Makes better use of existing capacity • Commuter parking should be located in more peripheral areas where it will not impact upon availability for shoppers and visitors • Current and future traffic levels and associated targets split in the LTP • Capacity and environmental sensitivity of the roads within and leading to the area • Planned future activity growth for the area • Growth in car ownership • Planned housing and commercial growth in Central Bedfordshire • Ensuring that parking from new development does not worsen on-street conditions.
1.2	1	Car Parking Provision: Train Stations	At stations, we will work with partners, to try to ensure parking capacity meets current and future demand. Additional provision will be supported where evidence highlights.	Area assessments.

No	Objective	Policy area	Actions	How we will deliver this
1.3	1	Car Park Provision: Interchanges	At appropriate locations we will advocate and support, where appropriate, the development of Interchange facilities to enable parking provision for all modes of transport.	Area assessments. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specifically looking at train stations and other multi transport areas Includes improvements to cycle parking and public transport facilities Appropriate level and type of car parking
1.4	4	Car Parking Standards: New Residential Developments	Parking Standards as stipulated in our Design Guide will be implemented and reviewed as appropriate.	Our Design Guide sets out the key principles and standards to ensure all new development is of the highest quality. The councils design guide can be found by accessing www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/planning/design/info.aspx
1.5	4	Car Parking Standards: New Commercial Developments	Parking Standards will be developed in line with the emerging Local Plan and Local Transport Plan 4.	Policy to follow in the final strategy and will cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any none residential development other than schools i.e. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Retail, restaurants, warehousing and logistics.
1.6	4.	Parking Standards and Capacity: Schools	New schools or schools which are expanding will be expected to demonstrate how parking will be accommodated so as to minimise any detrimental affect upon the surrounding neighbourhood or safety of the pupils.	Policy to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a minimum standard which would see a recommendation for refusal if not adhered to. School travel plan Drop off points (where deemed necessary). Appropriate facilitation at peak times

No	Objective	Policy area	Actions	How we will deliver this
1.7	1,7	Parking Provision: Park & Ride (Strategic)	We will support the provision of both bus-based and rail-based Park and Ride facilities where it can be proven that there is a demonstrable need.	Policy with criteria to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The facility is commercially viable • It can be supported by bus priority measures • Wanting to provide additional access for car users to a centre or location i.e. train station without increasing parking in the centre. • To allow for the reduction in parking within the centre i.e. allowing for a different land use or retail/commercial expansion • To provide for car users not using the centre for recreational or shopping i.e. commuters. • To reduce traffic on roads leading to the centre specifically at peak times.
1.8	1,7	Parking Provision: Park and Ride (Local)	We will support the provision of “pocket” Park and Ride sites which use existing car parking provision.	Policy with criteria to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The car park owners are in agreement • It would not adversely affect the safe and efficient operation of the road network • It complies with planning requirements.
1.9	1,6	Parking Provision: Freight (Lorry Parks)	We will assess the requirement for the provision of overnight lorry parking facilities within Central Bedfordshire.	Area Assessments and Freight Strategy. This will be explored as part of the emerging Local Transport Plan 4.
1.10	4	Parking Provision: Freight (in	New developments should ensure that sufficient space is allocated for the accommodation of vehicles with	Policy to be included for commercial development.

No	Objective	Policy area	Actions	How we will deliver this
		new developments)	the movement of freight associated with the operation of the site.	
B. Quality - issues relate to location, level of service and design of parking facilities.				
2.1	1	Location: On and off street provision	Parking provision will be appropriate to the journey purpose within our Town and District Centres.	Area assessments with recommendations for on street and policy for new off street car parks i.e. short stay parking in the centre of towns and long stay on the outskirts.
2.2	1	Accessibility and Choice: Public off street parking	We will seek to improve the overall quality and standard of the car parking provision provided where practical and affordable.	Assessment with car park improvement plan to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smarter and electronic payment methods • Lighting and security controls • Information provision • Directional signage • Provision of motorcycle parking • Secure cycle provision • Electric Vehicle charging points • Disabled parking bays • Parent and child bays • Car club bay provision.
2.3	1, 7	Accessibility and choice: Bicycles	We will seek to improve the provision and security of cycle parking in towns, schools, local centres, health centres and key public transport stops in support of the emerging cycling strategy.	We will develop a cycling and walking strategy.

No	Objective	Policy area	Actions	How we will deliver this
2.4	1,7	Accessibility and Choice: Taxi ranks	We periodically monitor demand for taxi bays and spaces that are under used that could be reallocated for other uses.	Area Assessments and future policy to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responding appropriately where there is evidence of over/under demand.
2.5	1,4,7	Accessibility and Choice: On Street Car clubs	We will support the use of car clubs by enabling the provision and enforcement of on-street car club bays where there is evidenced demand.	Policy to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specified locations and linked to new developments. • Accommodating bays in centres and train stations financed through the developer.
2.6	5	Social Inclusion and Equality: Mobility Impaired	We will support the introduction of shop mobility facilities where appropriate and where there is evidenced demand.	Car park improvement plan.
2.7	5	Social Inclusion and Equality: Disabled Bays Town and District Centres	We will ensure that on street disabled bays are located close to facilities so as to enable mobility impaired people to reach these areas with ease.	Area assessments and policy with the following considerations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whether the restricted use of the kerb side is wholly necessary to meet statutory requirements • Whether the scale of use would outweigh other road users needs • Whether the introduction of a disabled bay would incur serious difficulties to other road users.

No	Objective	Policy area	Actions	How we will deliver this
2.8	6	Environment and Street design	We will periodically review the effectiveness of existing 'lines, signs and bays' in order to minimise street clutter and ineffective restrictions.	<p>Policy to include the following considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within conservation areas • That are traffic sensitive • That form part of our resilient network • We will review traffic regulation orders and associated lines and signs on a five-year cycle, making changes as appropriate following a process of consultation. <p>For all other roads, we will review Traffic Regulation Orders TROs when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a structural maintenance scheme that requires the lining to be replaced • A petition has been received that has the support of the ward member and town/parish council • Where there is evidence of obstructive verge/footway parking • Where additional parking has been provided/will be provided in the vicinity that will affect demand levels.
2.9	6	Environment and Street Design	When designing and revising any parking equipment (lines, signs or machines) they will be designed and installed with the aim of minimising any negative impact to the existing streetscape.	<p>Policy to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applying conservation area guidelines when installing or replacing lines/signs.

No	Objective	Policy area	Actions	How we will deliver this
2.10	1,4	Environment and Street Design	We will ensure that any new parking provision minimises any negative impact on the local environment.	<p>Policy to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All new parked areas will be constructed in line with guidance on Sustainable Urban Drainages systems (SUDs) • Using the most sympathetic type of construction and materials where appropriate.
2.11	1,4	Environment and Street Design: Conversion of front gardens for parking spaces	We will take into account the wider considerations when assessing applications for the conversion of gardens into off-street parking areas.	<p>Policy to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The conversion does not unreasonably reduce parking on the highways available for public use and where possible increases the net parking capacity. • The conversion does not adversely impact the street scape and context of the area. • There is no unreasonable risk to any surrounding wildlife. • Appropriate measures are in place to reduce security implications • The creation of a crossover does not pose a risk to pedestrians.
2.12	1	Environment and Street Design: Footway and verge parking	We will apply a graduated approach in each instance where a verge or pavement issue is reported.	<p>Policy to include the following graduated approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution of letters to offending vehicles • Installing lining as appropriate • Installing physical barriers as appropriate i.e. raised kerbs, bollards, bunds or rocks etc. • Erect signs and apply enforcement.

No	Objective	Policy area	Actions	How we will deliver this
				Monitoring will take place at each stage.
C. Parking control and pricing - Policies and mechanisms are required so they can be used for influencing who has access to parking space and when.				
3.1	1	Tariffs and Pricing: On and Off Street	Any future charges for parking will be developed to ensure there is a reasonable balance between the demand for parking and the supply while also ensuring that parking revenues cover costs.	<p>Policy to include: Methodology based upon the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The service role of the area • The use of existing parking spaces • Traffic conditions on the local highway network • The availability of sustainable transport modes • The need to avoid 'searching' traffic • Parking charges in neighbouring areas • The convenience and quality of parking locations • Local environmental conditions • The requirement to provide an efficient Council parking service • Relevant LTP objectives and targets, including support for council transport services. <p>To reflect its greater convenience, charges for on-street parking will be set at a premium over the equivalent off-street parking charge.</p> <p>Sunday parking charges will be considered where there is an identified traffic congestion or air quality issue, or where there is a strong and established parking demand from shoppers or visitors.</p>

No	Objective	Policy area	Actions	How we will deliver this
				We will set the actual parking charges following consultation with the public, stakeholders and partnership boards.
3.2	2	Tariffs and Prices : Permit schemes (General rule for all i.e. business permits)	We will ensure all permit schemes are priced to cover their whole-life costs and set at a level that covers all associated costs incurred us.	Policy to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs include administration, enforcement and maintenance • Modelled over a 10 year period and reviewed on the anniversary and 5 years thereafter.
3.3	1	Tariffs and Pricing: Off street (Free Parking)	In the case of 'Special Events' we will only operate/endorse free parking in those car parks owned and operated by itself or by town/parish councils, where specific criteria are met.	Policy to cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Christmas holidays and special events • It is clearly evidenced that there is local economical benefit • If the administration of operating a pay system is disproportionately costly to the council.
3.4	1	Tariffs and Pricing: On street	We will consider introducing pay and display for on-street parking where appropriate.	Policy and area assessments to include the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand for short-duration parking is high and spaces are being taken by long stay vehicles • Peak time congestion or inappropriate parking adversely impacts the local community • Policy delivered as an area wide scheme and not in isolation.

No	Objective	Policy area	Actions	How we will deliver this
3.5	1,3	Restricting and managing parking: Freight (laybys)	Restrictions will be applied to limit long stay parking in laybys across Central Bedfordshire where there is a demonstrated need.	Policy to cover: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lorry parking resulting in safety concerns • Public order offences are being committed • There is sufficient dedicated parking within a reasonable distance.
3.6	2,3	Restricting and managing parking: Road Safety and traffic flow (Schools)	We will apply a graduated approach in each instance where issues are received about school related parking problems.	Policy criteria to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yellow zig-zag 'school keep clear' markings outside the school entrances, supported by appropriate signage • Communication with the school to promote awareness with parents • Use of bollards, barriers and other physical restrictions to 'design out' abuse.
3.7	2,3	Restricting and Managing Parking: Disabled Bays (On-Street)	We will assess requests for Disabled bays on an individual basis to ensure that the most suitable and cost effective solution is achieved. Interventions will thereafter be reviewed on a five year basis.	Policy criteria to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy for disabled persons parking place, personalised disabled bays and advisory signs for disabled drivers. • Advisory or H bars are demonstrated to be ineffectual • Cost met by the applicant • Reviewed every year/5 year as appropriate..
3.8	2	Restricting and managing parking: New	We will only consider petitions requesting a residential parking zone where a specific criterion has been met and the full costs of the	Policy to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It has the support of the ward member and town/parish council • That a minimum of 66% of residents are in favour,

No	Objective	Policy area	Actions	How we will deliver this
		Residents parking scheme requests	scheme can be met by the residents.	<p>following a process of consultation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The full cost of implementing a scheme can be met by the residents. • Consideration and mitigation is in place to manage the movement of vehicles • The scheme is considered as part of an area wide issue and the impacts on the wider are assessed.
3.9	2	Restricting and managing parking: Residents parking	We will carry out periodic reviews of existing schemes and seek to rectify any schemes that are ineffectual.	<p>Policy and area assessments.</p> <p>In general residents parking schemes will be reviewed on a 10 year and subsequent 5 year timeframe.</p>
3.10	6	Restricting and Managing parking New Restrictions (Yellow lines, Loading Bays, Bans)	We will apply for Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO's) to restrict parking or loading at locations such as junctions or where parking would cause safety or congestion problems. Requests will be assessed on an individual basis and prioritised based on Cost/Impact/Congestion/Safety ratio.	<p>Policy and area assessment: Criteria to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban areas where the flow of traffic is required. • Signaled junctions – length of restrictions roundabout and priority junctions • Requests for new regulations will be assessed and prioritised based on a cost/impact/congestion safety ratio. • Zig zag markings, double yellow lines predominantly at pedestrian crossings. • Working with the Emergency Services to ensure inconsiderate parking does not create obstructions.

No	Objective	Policy area	Actions	How we will deliver this
3.12	1	Restrictions and managing parking: Advisory lines (parking cages, h-bars)	We will consider requests for installing non enforceable advisory lines where the full cost can be met by the resident. We will also review periodically and remove any ineffectual or redundant markings as deemed appropriate. .	Policy to include At cost to resident and reviewed periodically.
3.13	5	Restricting and managing parking : Town centre new residential developments	We will consider permitting residents of new residential properties, or conversions in town centres to purchase a residents permit for use within the town centre long stay car parks, where feasible.	Policy criteria to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They do not have access to off street parking • The car park operates 24/7 • The car park has spare capacity • Annual review • Costs of associated maintenance and capacity linked to development.
3.14	9	Partnerships	We will work in partnership with other parking providers and stakeholder partners to ensure that the best service is being delivered for our customers.	By having a Parking Related Working Group that will meet to discuss issues and potential solutions.

6. Area assessments

A comprehensive parking assessment has recently been conducted in Biggleswade and the recommendations are now being implemented. A similar study has been carried out in Leighton Buzzard.

We intend to use these examples as best practice for other areas within Central Bedfordshire. The studies looked at the specific local parking issues and proposed detailed and financial options that would help to address the parking problems in those towns.

When undertaking the assessments the issues were considered on an 'area wide' approach rather than in isolation, taking into account the different causes of parking problems which enabled measures to be developed that would alleviate the danger of one solution causing further issues elsewhere.

The proposals were supported by detailed analysis of the impact financially and operationally which enabled all partners to make an informed decision about what measures would be most appropriate.

So that people can make an informed choice with regards to the impact of some of the proposed policy areas and actions we intend to conduct some further localised studies in:

- Dunstable
- Flitwick
- Sandy

As Train Stations account for a large proportion of traffic in these areas there will also be smaller assessments made at the following locations:

- Harlington
- Arlesey (To a lesser extent so as to support work already being undertaken through the Highways Contract).

These assessments will enable an area wide approach to be taken to places where there are known issues with parking or that will be impacted by parking in the future.

It is intended the studies within each of these areas will assess the parking related issues associated with; town centres, train stations, schools, workplaces as appropriate to the particular town.

The assessments will produce detailed and evidenced recommendations that will then inform what changes we make in each area following this a long list of schemes and an implementation programme for councillors to consider in the final Parking Strategy.

The public and other stakeholders will have an opportunity to have their say on the individual changes before they are made.

7. How to have your say

The draft Parking Strategy consultation is open until **XXX 2016**.

You can read the full draft strategy and have your say by answering a questionnaire on our website www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/consultations

Paper copies of the consultation will be available in all Central Bedfordshire libraries.

The Executive Committee will consider all of the feedback before making a decision.



Central Bedfordshire

A great place to live and work

Contact us...

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