

Population and Social Inclusion

1.1 Population and Social Inclusion

Policy Context

Århus Convention

The Århus Convention establishes a number of rights of the public (citizens and their associations) with regard to the environment. Public authorities (at national, regional or local level) are to contribute to allowing these rights to become effective. The Convention provides for:

The right of everyone to receive environmental information that is held by public authorities. This can include information on the state of the environment, but also on policies or measures taken, or on the state of human health and safety where this can be affected by the state of the environment. Public authorities are obliged, under the Convention, to actively disseminate environmental information in their possession;

The right to participate from an early stage in environmental decision-making. Arrangements are to be made by public authorities to enable citizens and environmental organisations to comment on, for example, proposals for projects affecting the environment, or plans and programmes relating to the environment;

The right to challenge, in a court of law, public decisions that have been made without respecting the two aforementioned rights or environmental law in general.

Objectives, Targets and Indicators

The Convention creates obligations in three fields or 'pillars':

Public access to environmental information;

Public participation in decision-making on matters related to the environment; and

Access to justice (i.e. administrative or judicial review proceedings) in environmental matters.

Luton's Community Plan 2002-2012

The Plan aims to involve local people in promoting the strategic vision for the town and identifying local needs and priorities. It also aims to assist in co-ordinating services provided by public, voluntary and community sectors, local communities and private organisations and helps to ensure that the local organisations work together to meet the needs of the local community.

Objectives, Targets and Indicators

To create a dynamic and creative town;

Encourage sport, culture, leisure, arts and non-vocational learning to give people opportunities;

Focus on citizenship and cultural integration in education and employment;

Vocational lifelong learning;

Education that focuses on responsibility, understanding and appreciation;

Reduce crime and the fear of crime, through, tackling anti-social behavior, education, community cohesion, community pride and cultural understanding; and

Improve the quality of life through improved quality of housing and street scene.

Luton Local Plan (Second Deposit Draft)

The Local Plan is to guide development and the use of land. It contains policies and proposals for land use and transportation. The only leisure and recreation policies that may be directly relevant to minerals planning are:

LC1: Protection and Preservation of Green Spaces; and

LC3: Protection of Community Facilities.

Objectives, Targets and Indicators

Create adequate and appropriate provision for sport, leisure community development and green space to meet local needs.

South Bedfordshire District Council Community Strategy

The plan has split the community vision into 9 topics: Community safety, Housing and building communities, Improving the environment, Improving health, Strengthening the economy, Developing opportunities and skills, Promoting leisure, Creating better transport and Including everyone.

Objectives, Targets and Indicators

The Community Plan supports public consultation to 'involve everyone': The minerals planning process should provide appropriate, accessible and well advertised consultation events, democratic processes and evaluation activities so that all residents can have a say on local issues

Mid-Bedfordshire Council Community Strategy

The plan has split the community vision into 9 topics: Community safety, Housing and building communities, Improving the environment Improving health, Promoting leisure, Strengthening the economy, Developing opportunities and skills, Creating better transport and Including everyone-

Objectives, Targets and Indicators

Including everyone- A Mid Bedfordshire which is free from discrimination, which values the differences within our community and the contribution we can all make.

Community Plan for the Borough of Bedford 2004-2010

The production of this, the second Community Plan for the Borough of Bedford, has been co-ordinated by the Bedford Partnership Board, the Local Strategic Partnership for the Borough. The over-arching aim is "*Working Together to Improve Health and Well-Being*" and the objective is to lay the foundation stone for an improved quality of life for everyone who lives, works or visits the Borough.

Objectives, Targets and Indicators

Reduce crime;
Increase community confidence;
Tackle anti-social behaviour;
Provide sustainable sports, arts, heritage, parks and recreational facilities & activities; and
Remove barriers to access & participation to all leisure & cultural services.

Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS14) of the East of England (Draft Revision)

Bedford now lies within the East of England region for planning purposes. RSS14 is based on the principles of the UK's Strategy for Sustainable Development and sets out a strategy to guide planning and development in the East of England to the year 2021. It aims to improve the quality of life and sets out proposals which will influence where people choose to work and live and how to move about the region. The final RSS14 is due to be published in late 2006.

Objectives, Targets and Indicators

Improve access to employment and services, leisure and tourist facilities among those who are disadvantaged.
To maintain and enhance cultural diversity while addressing distinctive needs of different parts of the region.

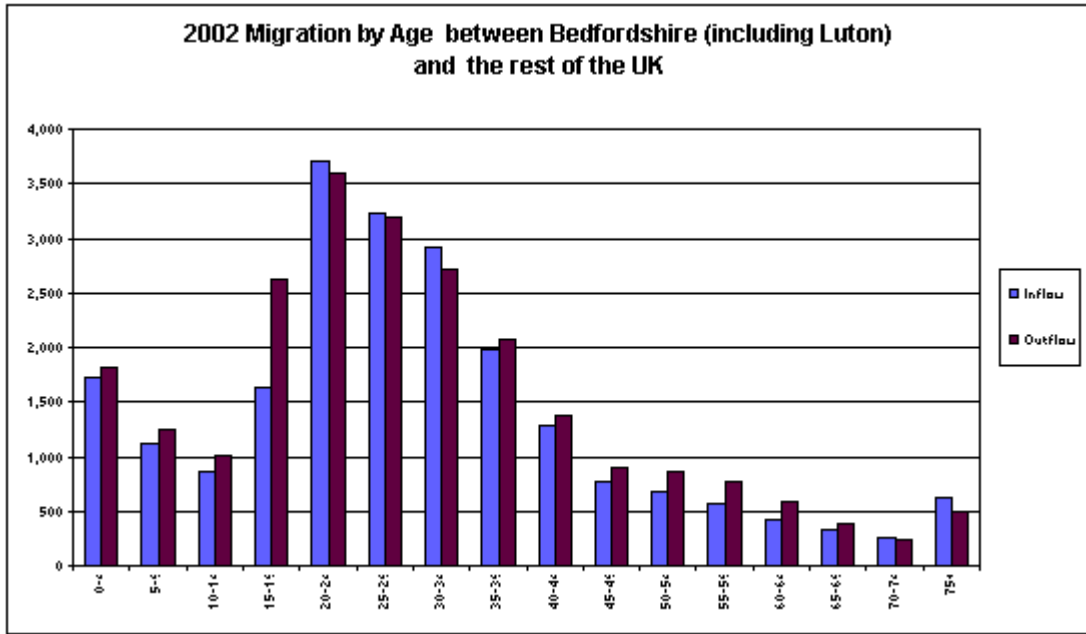
Baseline Review

- 1.1.1 For the purposes of the baseline data on population, information has been collected for South Bedfordshire, Mid Bedfordshire, Bedford and Luton and is summarised at the county level. It is important to distinguish between the different areas as they have differing demographic profiles.
- 1.1.2 Social inclusion is about reducing inequalities between the least advantaged groups and communities and the rest of society by closing the opportunity gap and ensuring that support reaches those who need it most. The most common indicators relating to social inclusion are the indices of multiple deprivation which combine information relating to income, employment, education, health, skills and training, barriers to housing and services and crime to produce an overall measure of deprivation.

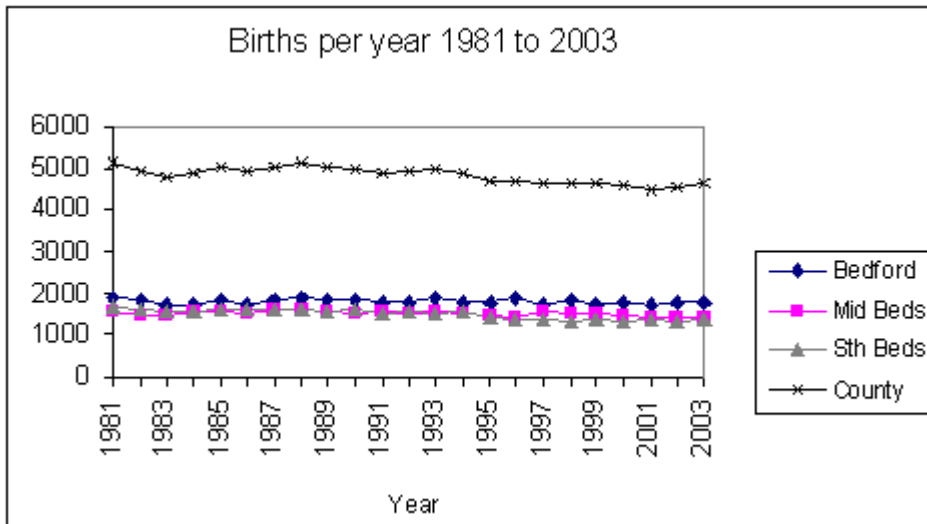
Bedfordshire

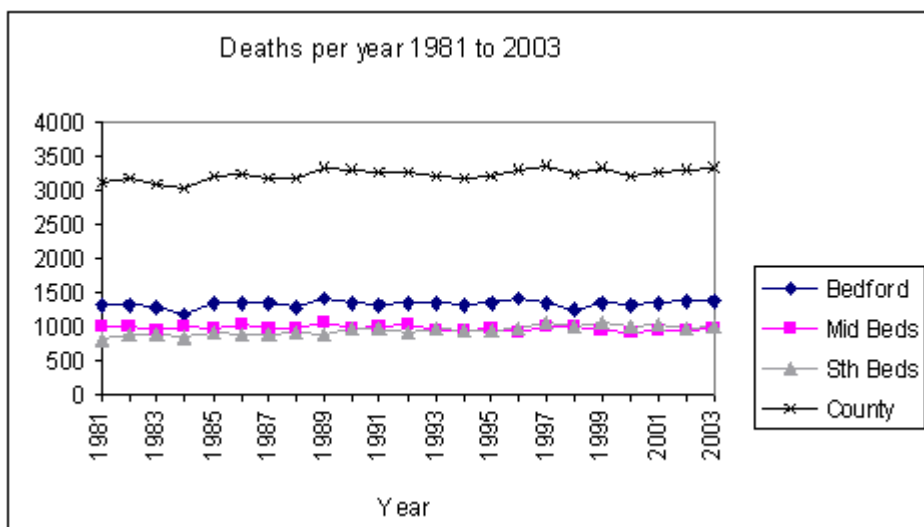
- 1.1.3 The resident population of Bedfordshire is recorded as 381, 572¹ with the highest population recorded for Bedford. The total resident population for the county comprises 7% of the total population for the region of East of England. Of the resident population 49.5% are male and 50.5% are female, this corresponds with the average for England and Wales. The percentage change in population for the county since 1991 is recorded as 7.21%. Bedford shows the greatest increase in population with a percentage change of 9.21% with South Bedfordshire recording a percentage change of 3%. The percentage change recorded for the East of England region is 5.22%, so Bedfordshire is exceeding the average rate of growth for the region. The East of England region is a region of population growth, as the percentage change for England and Wales is recorded as 2.55%. The density of the population is 3.20 people/hectare.
- 1.1.4 The age structure for the county indicates that the mean age of the population is 37.76 years, with the greatest percentage of the resident population falling within the 30-44 age category, the next age category with the next highest percentage is 45-59. The average age for the region of East of England is 39.12 years. Of the total resident population in Bedfordshire, 72% are considered to be of working age (16-74 years) which equates to the percentage for the region.
- 1.1.5 The migration of population can be a significant factor in the growth of an area. In 2001 4.71% of the population of Bedfordshire had migrated into the county (4.16% from other areas of the UK) and out migration was indicated as 4.03%. Therefore there is a net increase in population in the county as a result of migration. Figure 1 indicates that the greatest loss of population through migration in 2002 occurred in the 14-19 age category. This is considered to correlate with students leaving to study at Universities outwith the county. In general, the East of England region has a higher net increase of population, 0.88%, compared with Bedfordshire, but there is a smaller percentage of people moving in and out of the region as a whole.

▪ ¹ 2001 Census



1.1.6 The birth rate for the county has been relatively stable since 1991, with the General Fertility Rate (number of live births per 1000 women aged between 15-44) for 2002 recorded as 57.9. This is lower than the regional rate of 58.1 but higher than the rate for England and Wales at 56.9. The death rate has also stayed relatively constant since 1991. The birth rate is higher than the death rate leading to a net increase in population.





1.1.7 The county of Bedfordshire suffers from pockets of deprivation with wide variations between wards. Bedford has the lowest multiple deprivation index (IMD) and is ranked² as 167. In relation to income the area is ranked lower at 112, and for employment it is ranked as 131. The unitary authorities of Mid Bedfordshire and South Bedfordshire are relatively highly ranked at 334 and 253 respectively. In relation to income and employment these are ranked lower but are still relatively high in relation to other local authorities. The scattered nature of the rural deprivation creates issues in terms of identifying and targeting disadvantaged communities. 34% of all households in the County have an income of £15,000 or less per year. The Wealth of the Nation 2004 report indicated that the average income of Bedfordshire was £34,590 (the UK average was £29,374). Due to the geographical location of the county in close proximity to London a significant number of the population commute to work outside the county.

1.1.8 Crime statistics for Bedfordshire and Luton indicate that the most common crimes committed relate to burglary, criminal damage, vehicle and other theft and violence against a person, with the highest rate being in criminal damage. The total number of offences recorded (all crime types) in Bedfordshire (including Luton) between April 2003 and March 2004 was 62,380, which equates to 27.3 offences per 1000 of the population. For England and Wales the number of offences per 1000 of the population for the same period was 28.2. Therefore Bedfordshire has a lower crime rate than England and Wales. Within Bedfordshire, Luton has the highest crime rate with the total number of offences recorded as 27,054 equating to 36.5 offences per 1000 of the population. This rate is higher than the rate for England and Wales. Within Bedfordshire, Bedford has the highest rate (27.7 offences per 1000 of the population), followed by South Bedfordshire (25.3 offences per 1000 of the population) and Mid Bedfordshire (15.1 offences per 1000 of the population). It should be noted that when considering crime statistics that not all crime is reported.

▪ ² A score is calculated for each area; a low score indicates greater deprivation - the most deprived Lower Layer Super Output Area or Local Authority is indicated by a rank of 1. The highest ranked Local Authority is 354.

- 1.1.9 In relation to households, the average number of people residing in a household in Bedfordshire is 2.4, which equates to the average for England and Wales and the region. Luton has a slightly higher average at 2.6. There is a high percentage of owner occupiers within Bedfordshire county, 75.58 %, this is higher than the percentage for both East of England (72.20%) and England and Wales (68.22%). Luton has the lowest percentage (70.28%) of owner occupiers, and as a result has the highest percentage of renters. Of people renting 16.43% are renting from the Council or Housing Associations/RSL. The percentage for East of England is 16.25% which is significantly lower than the percentage for England and Wales, which is 19.19%. The split between renting from the Council and Housing Associations/RSL differs greatly between the different unitary authorities. South Bedfordshire and Luton have a much higher percentage of people renting from the Council compared to Bedford and Mid Bedfordshire who have a higher percentage renting from Housing Association/RSL.

Luton

- 1.1.10 The population of Luton is recorded as 184,371¹ which comprises 3.42% of the total resident population for the region of East of England. Of the resident population 50% are male and 50% are female. The percentage change in the population for Luton since 1991 is recorded as 6.17%, which is higher than the regional rate of growth. The density of the population is 42.53 people/hectare which reflects the urban character of the authority.
- 1.1.11 The age structure for Luton indicates that the mean age of the population is 34.92 years, which is younger than the average for the region. There is a higher percentage of 20-24 year olds and lower percentage of 45-59 years olds in comparison to Bedfordshire and the East of England region, which is considered to be the reason for the lower average age. The percentage of the working population is also lower at 71.4%, in comparison to that for the region.
- 1.1.12 In 2001, 4.13% of the population of Luton had migrated into the area, 3.28% from other areas of the UK, and out migration was indicated as 4.03%. Therefore there is a net increase in population as a result of migration (0.75%), which is higher than that for Bedfordshire.
- 1.1.13 Luton has the lowest ranking IMD at 101, 69 for income and 82 for employment. An annual household income analysis carried out in 2002 indicated that the average income in Luton in 2000 was £24,600 (compared with a UK average of £23,273) and by 2002 this had increased to £29,100 (UK average £26,275) which indicates an 18.1% increase.

Sources of data

- Bedfordshire County Council – www.bedfordshire.gov.uk (accessed 26th August 2005)
- Office for National Statistics, Neighbourhood Statistics – www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk (accessed 30th August 2005).
- www.crimereduction.gov.uk (accessed Tuesday 30th August 2005)
- Annual Household Income Analysis 2002. Luton Borough Council.

- Wealth of the Nation 2004. Information Solutions CACI.

Trends

- The population of Bedfordshire has increased between 1991 and 2001 by 7.21% which is greater than the regional increase.
- The population of Luton has increased between 1991 and 2001 by 6.17%, which is greater than the regional increase.
- Birth and death rates have remained relatively static since 1991.
- There is a net increase in population for Bedfordshire and Luton as a result of migration.

Data Gaps

- The data gathered is from the 2001 Census. There is no current population information available.

Implications for minerals planning and SA in Bedfordshire

Key issues arising from the policy context:

How the Minerals Local Development Framework should address social inclusion:

- 1.1.14 The MDPDs should pay due regard to the targets set for housing and help provide and contribute towards making Bedfordshire an economically prosperous place, without detracting from its environment.

Relevant objectives for the SA:

- The MLDF should ensure that the public has access to environmental information and opportunity to participate in decision-making on matters related to the environment: provision.
- The MLDF should seek to contribute to the improvement in access to services and facilities to disadvantaged people.
- The MLDF should seek to contribute to the improvement in the quality of life within Bedfordshire and Luton, particularly through the provision of sustainable sports, arts, heritage, parks and recreational facilities & activities.
- To improve citizenship and cultural integration;

Key issues arising from the baseline review:

- The trends indicate that there are no significant issues identified in relation to population. The population is showing a steady rate of growth. Birth and death rates show no dramatic increases or decline.
- The trends indicate that there is a potential issue associated with rural deprivation. Although the county scores relatively highly on the multiple deprivation index this does

not consider the spread of deprivation between wards. Rural deprivation can often be masked.

Key issues arising from the scoping consultation:

- Potential for mineral workings to affect those who are less able to communicate objections (i.e. those who are less able to form action groups, make formal representations etc)
- Local liaison groups have already been set up – need to encourage greater participation
- New populations/communities will come into being
- People are living longer