

# Harborough District Council

## Settlement Profile: Billesdon

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May 2015

## General Introduction

This settlement profile has been prepared as part of the evidence base for the preparation of the new Local Plan. The new Local Plan, which will cover the period 2011 – 2031, will review and replace existing Core Strategy policies.

New evidence in the [Strategic Housing Market Assessment](#) (2014) shows that the number of new homes needed annually across the District to 2031 is substantially higher than the figure set out in the Core Strategy. The new Local Plan will set out a strategy to meet these higher housing numbers, whilst ensuring that sustainable economic development is supported, infrastructure is delivered, local communities are protected, environmental capacity is respected, the quality of the built environment and heritage assets are protected and the level of development is not disproportionate to the size of the settlement and the level of services.

This profile seeks to summarise currently available evidence in relation to the settlement which, along with other evidence, will be used in determining the appropriate amount of development to be directed to the settlement to 2031. The profile does not seek to set out future policy as this will be done through the new Local Plan and any reference to Core Strategy policies is to provide context only.

Section D of the profile sets out the findings of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) for the settlement. It should be noted that the sites shown are not allocations and their inclusion in no way implies that planning permission for housing will be granted. Information in the SHLAA regarding potential sites will be part of a range of evidence used in deciding the appropriate scale of housing development for the settlement.

It is important to note that the profile only provides a snapshot of the evidence available for the settlement at a point in time. Every effort will be made to incorporate new evidence as it becomes available.

The settlement profile is split into the following sections:

- Introduction
- A) Transport and Communications
- B) Local Services and Facilities
- C) Natural Environment
- D) Built Environment
- E) Local Employment and Economic Activity
- Emerging Findings
- Appendix 1 (Maps)

# Billesdon Profile

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## Introduction

**General Location:** The village of Billesdon is located just off the A47, 9 miles east of Leicester city centre. Thurnby & Bushby is the closest part of the Leicester urban area and lies just 4 miles from Billesdon. The Parish is in the northern part of Harborough District and the B6047 which leads south to Market Harborough (12 miles) and north to Melton Mowbray (14 miles) forms its eastern boundary.

Billesdon is a large compact village which was formerly on the main Leicester - Uppingham Road, until it was by-passed by the A47 in 1986. Although effectively a cross roads village, several roads, routes and lanes converge at the Market Place. Within the core area with its crossing roads, the Market Place in the north and the small green by the Church to the south are two important focal spaces. The existence of the market place is indicative of the former central importance of Billesdon within the surrounding countryside.

The village is identified as a Rural Centre in the Core Strategy for the District and as such is a focus for rural housing, employment, retail and service provision. It is therefore important to understand how the settlement functions and any constraints to further development that may exist as well as the local community's aspirations for their village. Rural Centres were selected on the basis that they have at least 4 of the 6 key services (general practitioner, library, public house, primary school, food shop, post office).

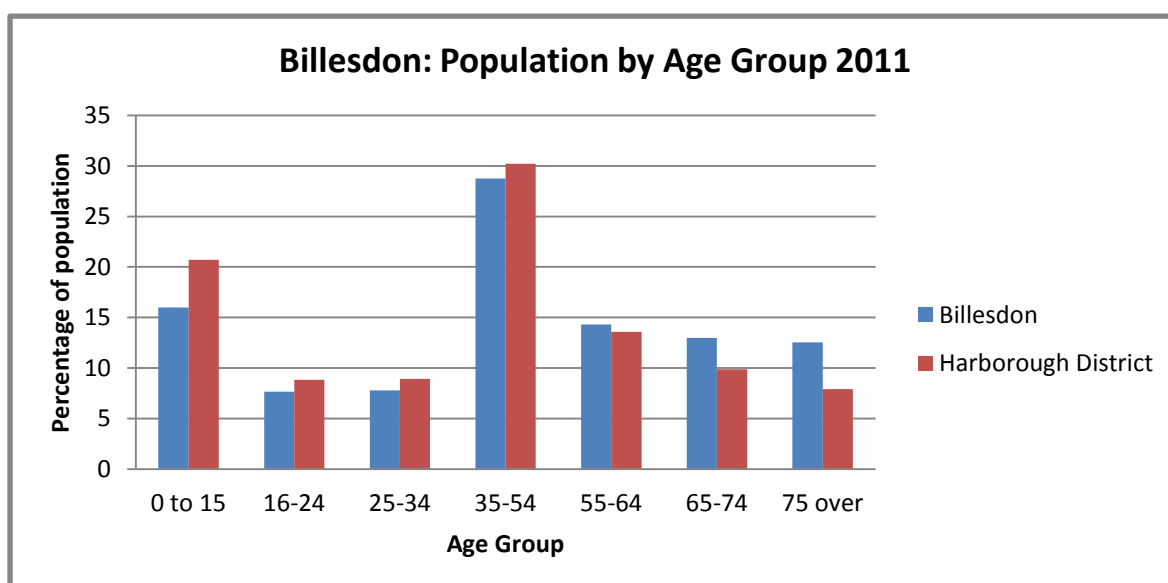


## Key Statistics for Billesdon Parish (Census 2011):

- Population of 901 (increase of 156 or 20.9% since 2001 compared to an increase of 11.5% across the District over same period);
- 16% of population is in 0–15 age group whilst 25.5% of population is 65 or over;
- Number of dwellings is 445 (an increase of 16.8% since 2001) of which 25 had no usual residents;

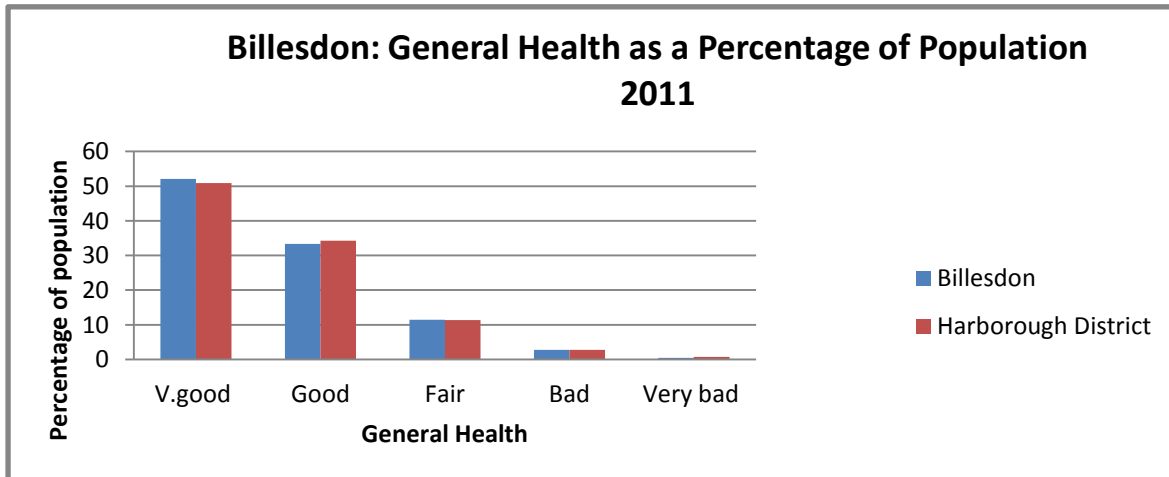
- Number of households 420 (increase of 18.3% since 2001);
- 53.1% of households have 2 or more cars/vans whilst 12.4% of households have no car/van;
- 47.1% of dwellings are detached (compared to 48.4% detached across the District);
- 70% of dwellings are owner occupied, 14% are social rented/shared ownership and 14.3% are private rented;
- 4.1% of population is black and minority ethnic (BME) compared to 1.9% in 2001;
- 71.6% is Christian and 1.4% is other religions (including Buddhist, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh).

**Age Structure:** The age structure of the population is set out below. Overall the proportion of Billesdon's population in the 55 and over age groups is almost 40% compared to the District figure of 31%. Conversely the percentage in the 0-24 age groups is 23.6%, well below the District figure of almost 30%. Proportions in the 25-54 age groups are also down on the District figures. Overall Billesdon has an older age profile than the District as a whole.



Source: ONS Census 2011

**General Health:** The Census 2011 found that 3.2% of the resident population was in bad or very bad health, similar to the Harborough figure (3.5%) but below the regional (5.5%) and national (5.4%) percentages. 5.5% of residents considered that their day-to-day activities were limited a lot through health or disability with a further 9.1% of the opinion that their activities were limited a little. Some 102 (11.3%) residents provided unpaid care according to the 2011 Census, with 26.5% of these providing more than 20 hours of unpaid care per week.



Source: Census 2011

### Billesdon Parish Council:

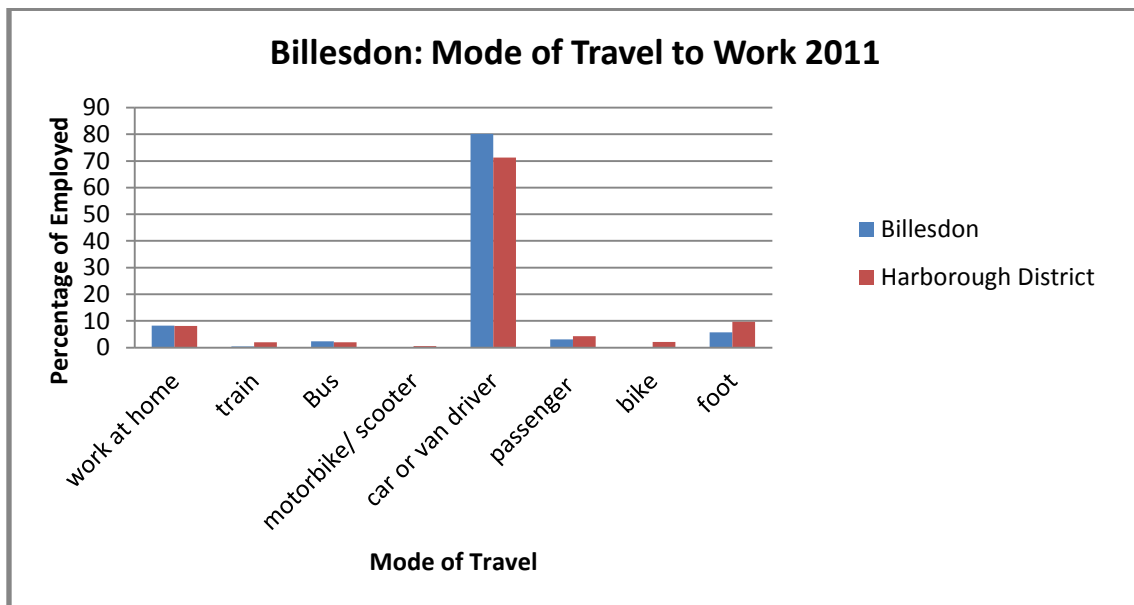
- The Parish Council meets every 6 weeks. Elections are due in 2015.
- Maximum number of councillors is 6 (5 currently serving).
- The Billesdon Neighbourhood Development Plan (2014-2028) was successful at referendum on 18<sup>th</sup> September and was subsequently 'made' by HDC on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2014. It now forms part of the development plan for the District. It has been created by the *Billesdon Neighbourhood Development Plan Group (BNDPG)*. The BNDPG was established by Billesdon Parish Council (BPC) at a Public Meeting in the autumn of 2011, following extensive advertising within the local community. The 21 members of the Group are both volunteers and representatives of the Parish community. The BNDPG began its work in February 2012, with a view to delivering a Neighbourhood Development Plan for the whole Parish. Included in the Neighbourhood Development Plan are policies which set out a minimum housing target to 2028, allocate land for housing and business development, set design standards, seek to protect local services and designate areas of Local Green Space.
- Good Neighbour Scheme in place.
- Coplow Centre Sustainability Plan.
- Issues identified by Parish Council: Speeding traffic and low level flooding.
- <http://www.leicestershirevillages.com/billesdon/billesdonparishcouncil.html>
- <http://www.leicestershirevillages.com/billesdon/>

The next sections consider Billesdon's:

### A) Transport and Communications

- **Transport**
  - Rail: Nearest railway stations are Leicester (9 miles), Market Harborough (12 miles) and Melton Mowbray (13 miles).

- Bus services/frequency:
  - Centrebus 747 from Leicester – Houghton on the Hill – Billesdon - Uppingham service runs Mon-Sat every 60 minutes. No Sunday or Bank Holiday Service. Bus stops:
    - Opposite Church Street (Uppingham); and
    - Adjacent to Church Street (Leicester).
- Billesdon is covered by the Community Transport Initiative which can provide transport for shopping, visiting friends & relatives, social activities and health appointments for the elderly, the mobility impaired/disabled, the rurally isolated and those who find it difficult to use public transport.
- Travel to work: 80% of people use a car or van to get to work, compared to District figure of 71%. A further 3% are passengers. 8% work from home at present, similar to the District figure. However, only 6.% walk to work and is reflective of the limited employment opportunities in the village. Only 2.4% use the bus service to get to work.



Source: ONS Census 2011

- Road connections: There is direct access on to A47 to Leicester and Peterborough (32 miles). 15 miles to M69 and M1.
- **Broadband connectivity/coverage:** Current broadband speeds are poor (lower than 2Mbps). The village is due to get fibre broadband from summer 2015 to end of March 2016 as part of the Superfast Leicestershire project. <http://www.superfastleicestershire.org.uk/when-and-where/>
- **Movement around village/parking issues:** The Neighbourhood Plan identifies 3 key issues in relation to traffic and transport:
  - improve the management of traffic through the Village, including the additional traffic flows that will be generated by new housing;
  - improve the management of car parking in the Village, so as to absorb the additional pressure on parking to be generated by new housing;
  - and

- ensure that new housing development has adequate footpath provision and cycle way access to the village centre and the countryside.
- **Car Ownership:** Whilst the majority of households have access to at least one car or van, over 12% of households do not have a car or van available for use, slightly down from the 2001 percentage (15.3%) and similar to the comparable District percentage of 11.8%. During this same period the percentage of households with 3 or more cars has fallen from 10.8% to 7.4%. The total number of cars/vans in Billesdon parish rose from 514 to 653 (27% increase) between 2001 and 2011.

## B) Local Services and Facilities

Billesdon currently has Rural Centre status in the Harborough District Core Strategy (2011). This means that it is identified as a sustainable location for rural housing and additional employment, retail and community uses to serve the settlement and the surrounding area. Rural Centres were selected on the basis of the presence of least four of six relevant services (food store, GP surgery, library, post office, primary school and pub). This section looks at the range of services and facilities available in the village to see if Billesdon can function as a Rural Centre going forward.

- **Key services present:**
  - GP surgery and Dispensary (Billesdon Surgery, 4 Market Place);
  - Post Office (Billesdon Post Office, 7 Church Street);
  - Convenience store (M A Hoare, 1 Market Place);
  - Primary school (Billesdon Parochial Primary School); and
  - Pubs (Queens Head, New Greyhound Inn).
- **Other services/community facilities present:**
  - Library (mobile only);
  - The Coplow Centre (multi-purpose venue/village hall/tennis courts);
  - Churches (St John the Baptist, Billesdon Baptist Chapel);
  - Allotments (under construction);
  - Cricket club/ground;
  - Cemetery;
  - Mobile fish and chip van;
  - Local newsletter (Billesdon and District Parish News and Views).

### Infrastructure Capacity Issues:

Early consultation with infrastructure providers identifies specific issues regarding:

- Impact on Billesdon GP practice in terms of equipment required. S106 contributions would be sought towards the provision of additional equipment required to meet growth;
- Capacity of primary school, 11-16 and post 16 educational establishments. No capacity identified to meet dwelling growth. S106 contributions towards a primary school extension and other school extensions would be sought;

- Shortfall in types of open space. Appropriate S106 contributions would be sought where a shortfall in certain types of open space is identified.

Billesdon has 5 out of 6 of the key services identified in the Core Strategy. Based on the Core Strategy definition, the services and facilities in Billesdon support its continued designation as a Rural Centre. No insurmountable infrastructure constraints have been identified to date given that schools can be extended.

### C) Natural Environment:

**Landscape:** Billesdon is located within the High Leicestershire Landscape Character Area which overall is assessed as having low-medium capacity to accommodate new development in the Harborough District Landscape Character Assessment (2007). High Leicestershire is one of the most sensitive landscapes in the District.

The recent Rural Centres Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Capacity Study 2014 has looked in detail at the capacity of the landscape around Billesdon to accommodate additional development. The study found that the historic village core centred round the designated Conservation Area and the features of the local landscape are of a relatively high sensitivity. Therefore, the study concluded that there are limited areas considered to have a high capacity to accommodate development. Kates Hill to the south east of the village and part of the area to the north of the village adjacent to the A47 (including the cricket ground) are identified as having particularly low capacity to accommodate development. The landscape capacity map is included at Appendix 1.

#### Natural Environment Constraints in and around Billesdon:

Constraint	Commentary
<b>Area of Separation/Green Wedge</b>	No. There is no threat of coalescence with neighbouring settlements
<b>Tree Preservation Orders</b>	3 group TPOs at The Coplow Centre 1 individual tree on Brook Lane
<b>SSSI</b>	None in vicinity
<b>Protected Species and Local Wildlife Corridors</b>	Bats Badgers (need local input re: local wildlife corridors)
<b>Local Wildlife Sites</b>	4 areas of mesotrophic grassland designated as LWS to north of A47: Harebell Meadow and Pond Sedgebed Meadow Ash Grassland Horseshoe Field  Billesdon Pool – Gaulby Rd



<b>Areas at risk of flooding</b>	None identified from Environment Agency maps. (Any local issues?)
<b>Footpaths and Bridleways</b>	Settlement is well served by RoWs in all directions.
<b>Other settlement/local features</b>	Kates Hill Billesdon Coplow

**Green House Gas Emissions:** Billesdon has a significant number of off-gas properties, mainly reliant on oil for fuel. Reliance on oil for heating can lead to an increased risk of fuel poverty, particularly in older hard to treat homes. The carbon emissions across Billesdon ward due to domestic electricity and gas consumption is 2 Tonnes of CO<sub>2e</sub> per annum. This is one of the higher levels and would be even higher if the contribution from oil use was included. Transport contributions will also be high, as most journeys are by private car.

## D) Built Environment

The majority of the village is included in the Billesdon Conservation Area which was originally designated in 1974. The boundary was revised in 2005. A Village Design Statement was prepared in 2001 and this has been updated and integrated into the Billesdon Neighbourhood Plan. The aim of this is to describe the distinctive character of the village and ensure that the qualities valued by residents are used to guide future development in the village.

**Number of Dwellings:** In 2011 the number of dwellings in Billesdon was 445 representing an increase of 16.8% since 2001 when there were 381 dwellings recorded. This is well above the level of growth for the District as a whole which saw an increase of just over 12% over the same period.

The number of properties in the parish liable for council tax is 448 (2014).

**Completions, Commencements and Planning Permissions:** From 2011 to March 2014 the Council has recorded 4 completions. As at March 2014 there was 1 dwelling under construction and 22 units with planning permission. It should be noted that some of the completions may have been included in the Census figure.

**Housing Land Supply:** The recently completed 2014 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment forms part of the evidence base for the new Local Plan and supports the delivery of sufficient land for housing across the District. The study identifies sites with potential for housing, assesses their housing potential and assesses when they are likely to be developed (next 5 years, 6-10 years, 11 -15 years and 16+ years). It should be noted that the sites identified are not allocations and sites still need to be taken through the normal planning application process for full consideration. The SHLAA 0-5 year figure includes the housing sites allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan for a minimum of 45 dwellings.

The following table summarises the SHLAA findings in relation to developable sites in Billesdon (a map of the sites is included at Appendix 1). The full document is available at:

[http://www.harborough.gov.uk/directory\\_record/571/strategic\\_housing\\_land\\_availability\\_assessment\\_20132014](http://www.harborough.gov.uk/directory_record/571/strategic_housing_land_availability_assessment_20132014)

**SHLAA – Summary of Billesdon Findings (see map of sites at Appendix 1)**

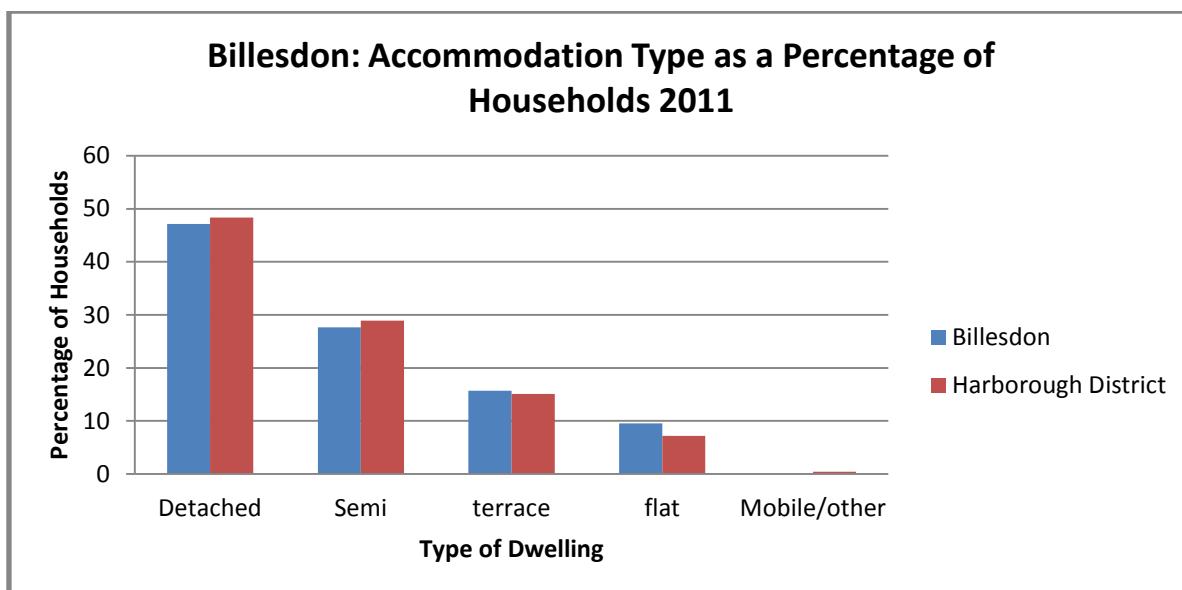
No. developable sites identified in SHLAA 2014	Total area of developable sites	Estimated yield of developable sites (dwellings)	Estimated timeframe for development of developable sites (no. of dwellings)			
			0 - 5 years	6 - 10 years	11 – 15 years	16+ years
11	14.48ha	285	82	164	-	39

A new call for sites for potential development took place early in 2015 and a SHLAA update is underway.

**House Prices:** Zoopla.co.uk estimates the average value of a property in Billesdon to be £345,771 (Nov 2014). The average price paid for a property over the past 5 years is £314,967 representing an increase of 11.74% over the same period.

**Tenure:** In terms of the housing stock in 2011, 70% was owner occupied, 14% social rented/shared ownership and 14.3% private rented. The owner occupier rate was below the District percentage (78%) and has fallen since 2001 when it was 75%. The proportion of private rented dwellings has risen from 10% to over 14%.

**Type:** In 2011 the number of households living in detached dwellings in Billesdon was 198, representing just over 47% of households. This is similar to the District level of 48%. The proportion of households living in semi-detached or terraced houses/bungalows rose slightly from 42% in 2001 to 43% in 2011. The type of dwelling as a percentage of the total stock for the village is set out in the table below.



Source: ONS Census 2011

**Quality:** The 2011 Census found that only 1% of households are without central heating which is slightly lower than the District figure of 1.4%. The proportion found to be living in overcrowded conditions (fewer bedrooms than required) was 1.2%, similar to the Harborough level (1.5%). Under occupancy (2 or more bedrooms than needed) stood at 49% same as the Harborough figure.

**Households:** Of the 420 households in Billesdon:

- 137 (33%) are one person households (compared to 32% to 2001 and 26% across the District);
- 118 (28%) are pensioner only households (compared to 31% in 2001 and 23% across the District);
- 61 (15%) are single pensioner households (compared to 17% in 2001 and 13% across the District);
- 24 (6%) are lone parent with dependent children households (compared to 3% in 2001);
- 97 (23%) have dependent children (compared to 30% across the District);
- Average household size is 2.14 persons (compared to 2.11 in 2001).

### Built Environment Features/Heritage Assets/Designations

The following table sets out assets/features that need to be taken into account in considering development in and around the village. Some of these features are shown on map at Appendix 1.

Settlement feature:	Occurrence
<b>Conservation Area</b>	The Billesdon Conservation Area covers majority of the village.
<b>Scheduled Monuments</b>	Market Cross on west side of Market Place

<b>Listed Buildings/Features:</b>	
<b>Grade I</b>	None
<b>Grade II*</b>	2 - School, Church Street and Church of St John the Baptist, Church Street
<b>Grade II</b>	41
<b>Ridge and Furrow</b>	Unknown
<b>Archaeological sites</b>	Unknown
<b>Recreation/Play Grounds</b>	Coplow Centre Outdoor Sports Pitch
<b>Open Space, Sport and Recreation</b>	See Map at Appendix 1
<b>Proposed Local Green Space</b>	The following are proposed Local Green Space designations which will be taken forward as part of the New Local Plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Old Clay Pits Woodland Billesdon</li> <li>• Muddy Lane, Billesdon</li> <li>• Billesdon Brook</li> </ul>

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## E) Local Employment and Economic Activity

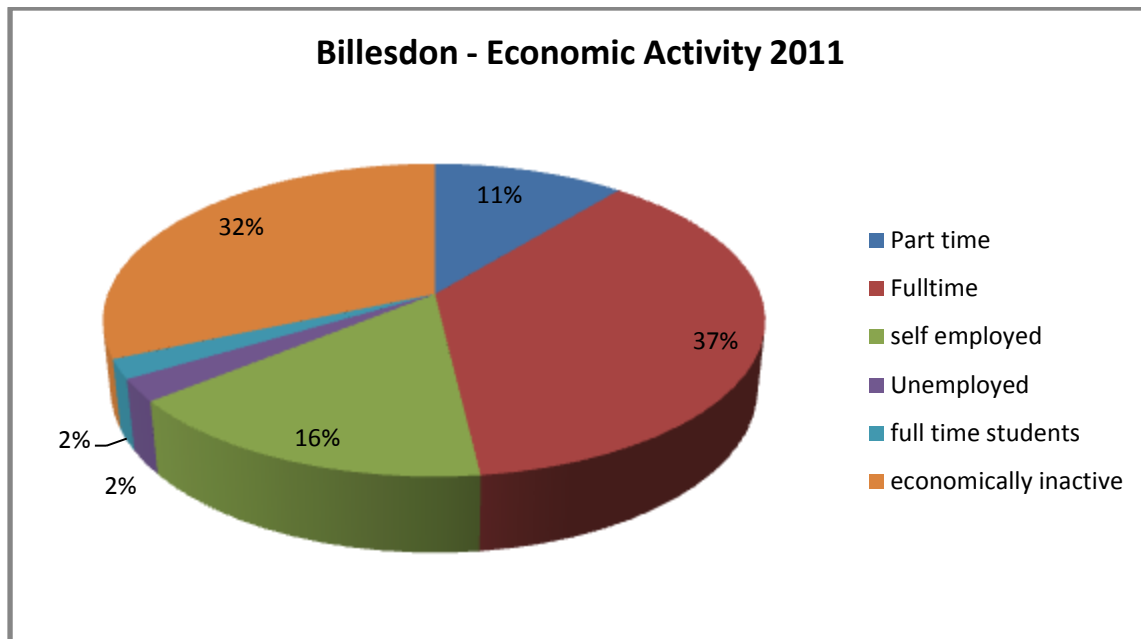
**Employment sites:** There are a number of small businesses, shops and services currently operating in Billesdon which offer a limited number of employment opportunities. The Census reported that 24 people (5.7% of those employed) walk to work and 35 people (8.3%) work at home (or mainly from home). However, there are no purpose built employment premises in the village. Not surprisingly, given that the village has only an hourly bus service, the vast majority of people travel to work by car. Only 2.4% of those in employment use the bus.

Given its location just off the A47 and the B6047, access to Leicester, Peterborough, Market Harborough and Melton is relatively easy. Access to the M1 and the M69 is less straightforward given Billesdon's location to the east of Leicester and the lack of effective radial route.

The Council's Existing Employment Areas Review (2012) carried out an assessment of whether the main existing employment areas in the District are 'fit for purpose'. No existing employment areas were identified in Billesdon. However, as a Rural Centre, Billesdon is identified as a focus for additional employment to serve the settlement and its surrounding area (Policy CS17). Policy BP10: The LCC Depot (Gaulby Road) of the Neighbourhood Plan allocates 1.5ha of land for business development through the redevelopment or re-use of the Highway Depot site.

**Economic Activity:** In 2011, 68% of the population aged 16 – 74 in Billesdon was economically active, compared to the District figure of 74% and the national level of 70% and the regional level at 69%. The Census found that 2% were unemployed in

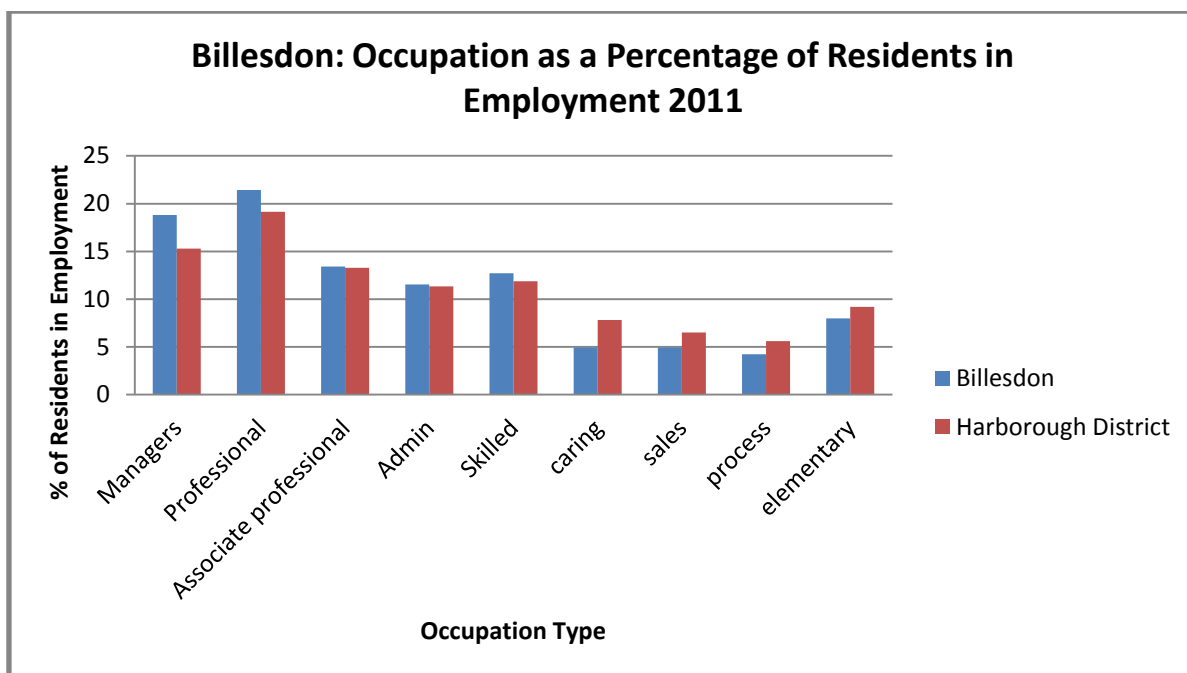
Billesdon compared to 2.5% across the District. Of the economically inactive, 64% were retired, higher than the District level of 59.4%. The level of self employment is 16% above the District rate of 13%.The chart below gives a breakdown of economic activity.



Source: ONS Census 2011

**Qualifications:** The proportion of residents without any qualifications in the 16+ age group was 17% (130 persons), just below the District level of 18% and well below the regional and national levels, 24.7% and 22.5% respectively. The percentage of residents (16 and over) with a degree or higher degree was 22.2%, compared with the District figure of 19.3%.

**Occupation:** Over 51% of the residents in employment work in managerial/professional/ associate professional roles, well above the District figure of 48%. The caring/sales/process and elementary occupations are under represented compared to the District.



Source: ONS Census 2011

## Emerging Findings:

### Opportunities

Billesdon benefits from a reasonable bus service to Leicester/Uppingham and direct access to the main road network via the A47. Broadband speeds are currently poor and sporadic but an upgrade to fibre optic broadband is due by end of March 2016. The village has 5 key services and Leicester provides the nearest extended range of services, facilities and employment opportunities.

Billesdon has an ageing population profile. The percentage of households with dependent children is well below the District level and the percentage in 0-15 age group is low. House prices are very high and well above other Rural Centres.

The economic activity rate is well below the District level and reflects the ageing population. Self employment is relatively high but there are limited employment opportunities in the village. However, a site has been allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan for business development.

A substantial amount of developable housing land across 11 sites has been identified through the SHLAA. Sites for at least 45 dwellings have already been allocated in the Billesdon Neighbourhood Plan.

### Constraints

In terms of landscape, there are areas of low landscape capacity around the village (Kates Hill to the south east of the village and part of the area to the north of the

village adjacent to the A47, including the cricket ground). There is some medium capacity land but no unallocated medium/medium high capacity land.

Development would need to respect the scheduled monument, the Conservation Area and the very high number of listed buildings (and their setting) through sensitive siting and design.

The primary school has no capacity to meet dwelling growth and an extension will be required.

Local Green Spaces are designated in the Neighbourhood Plan. Further 3 potential designations are being taken forward through the new Local Plan.

### **Overall Summary**

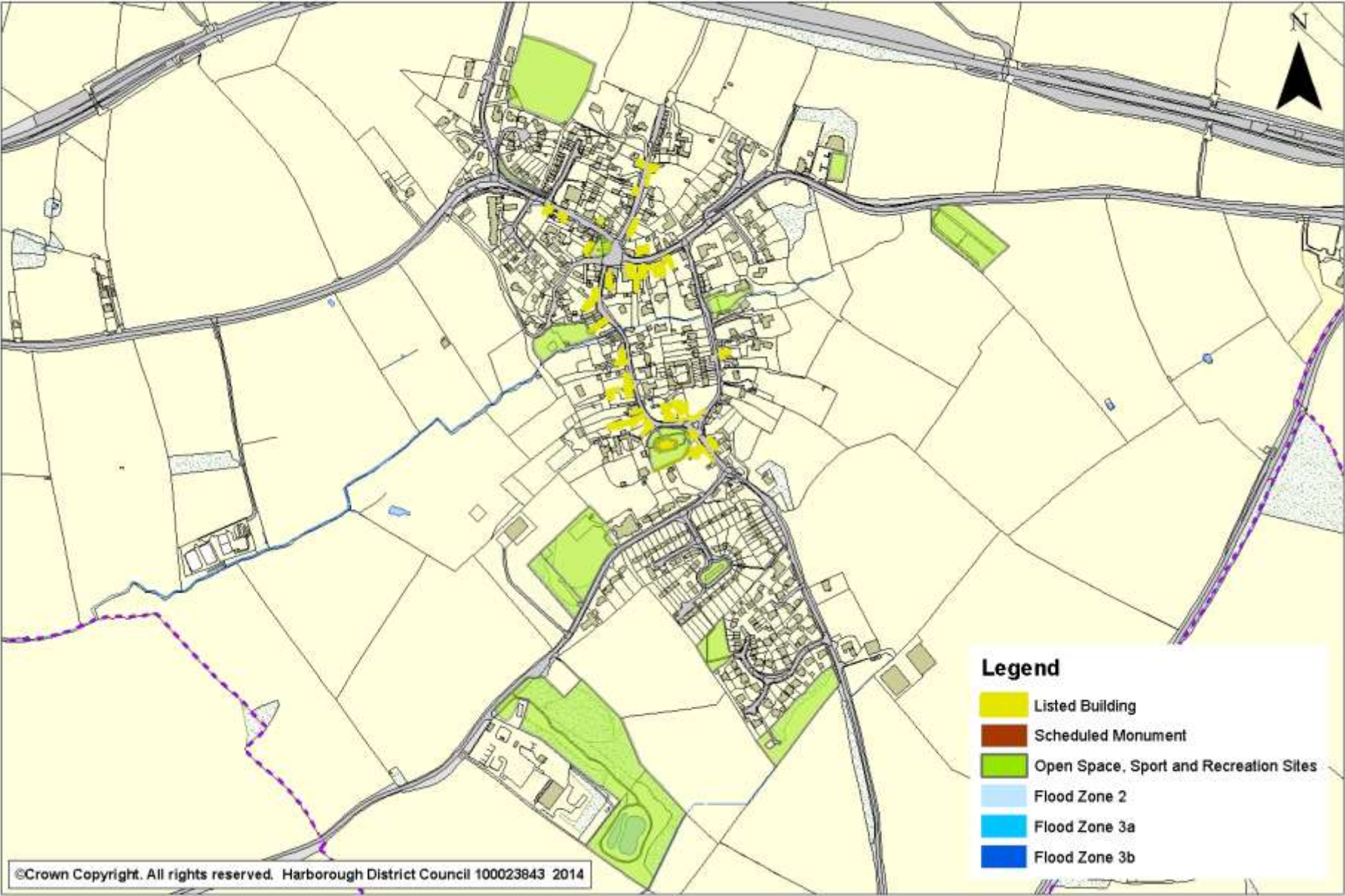
Billesdon has services to support its continued designation as a Rural Centre. It has substantial housing land availability and the capacity to accommodate limited additional growth providing development is sympathetic to the village's high number of heritage assets, landscape setting, local green spaces and any specific local housing needs.

## **Appendix 1: Maps showing**

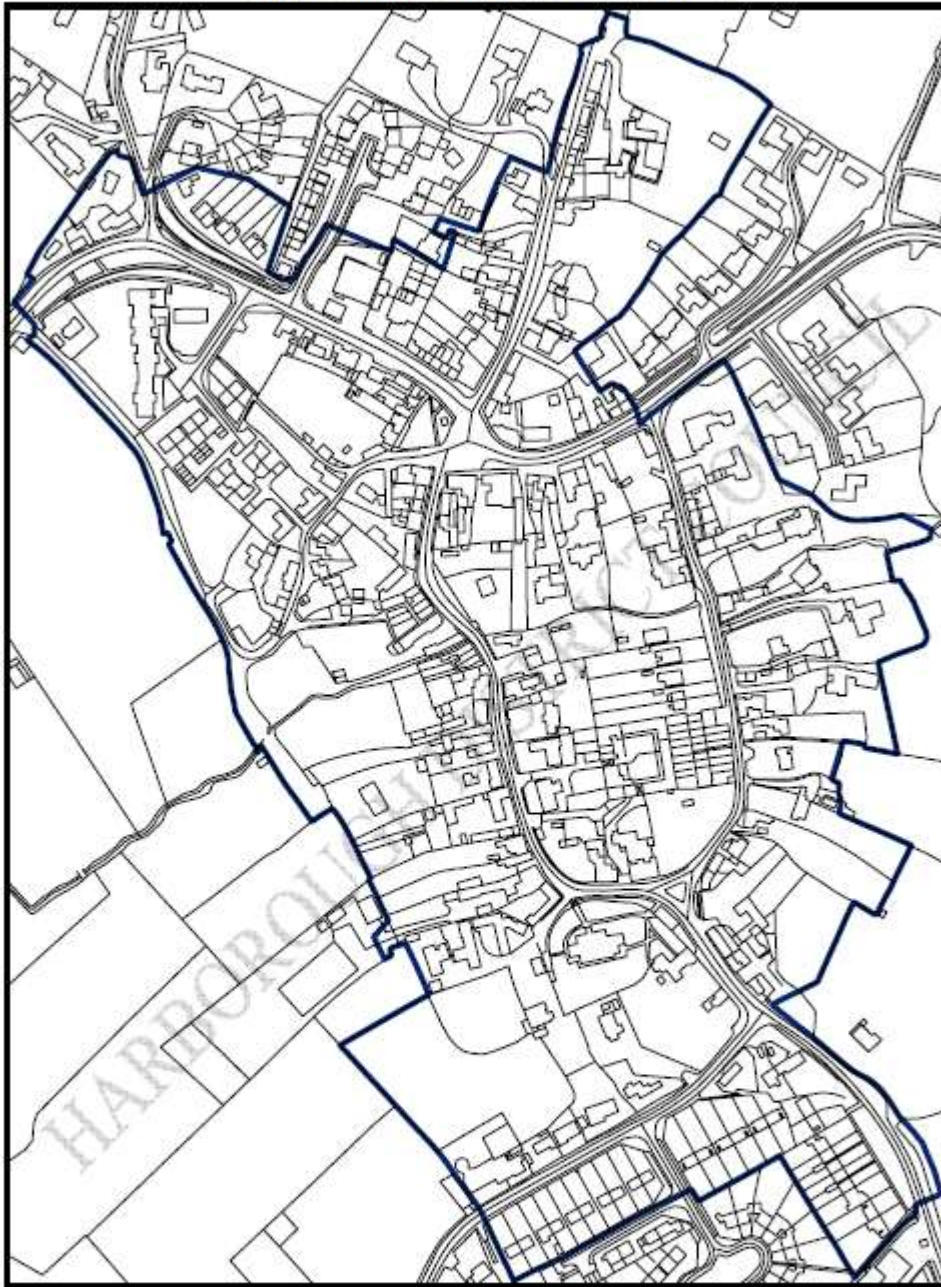
- **Billesdon Listed buildings/scheduled monuments/open space, sport and recreation sites/flood zones**
- **Billesdon Conservation Area**
- **Billesdon Landscape Capacity**
- **SHLAA 2014 Billesdon Sites (please note that the map does not show all commitments – only those on sites submitted for consideration as part of the SHLAA)**



# Billesdon



# Billesdon Conservation Area



— Conservation Area Boundary 0 35 70 140 210 280 Meters

Designated 1974  
Boundary Revised 9<sup>th</sup> March 2005

1:2,913



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## SHLAA 2014 Billesdon Sites

The SHLAA does not allocate sites or pre-empt future plan making or related decisions by Harborough District Council.  
The SHLAA will inform the new Local Plan together with other evidence documents.

