



**BedsLife**  
Bedfordshire & Luton Biodiversity Partnership



**Mid Bedfordshire  
Planning Obligations  
for  
Green Infrastructure**

West Midlands Annual Biodiversity  
Conference

Birmingham Botanical Gardens

April 23, 2009

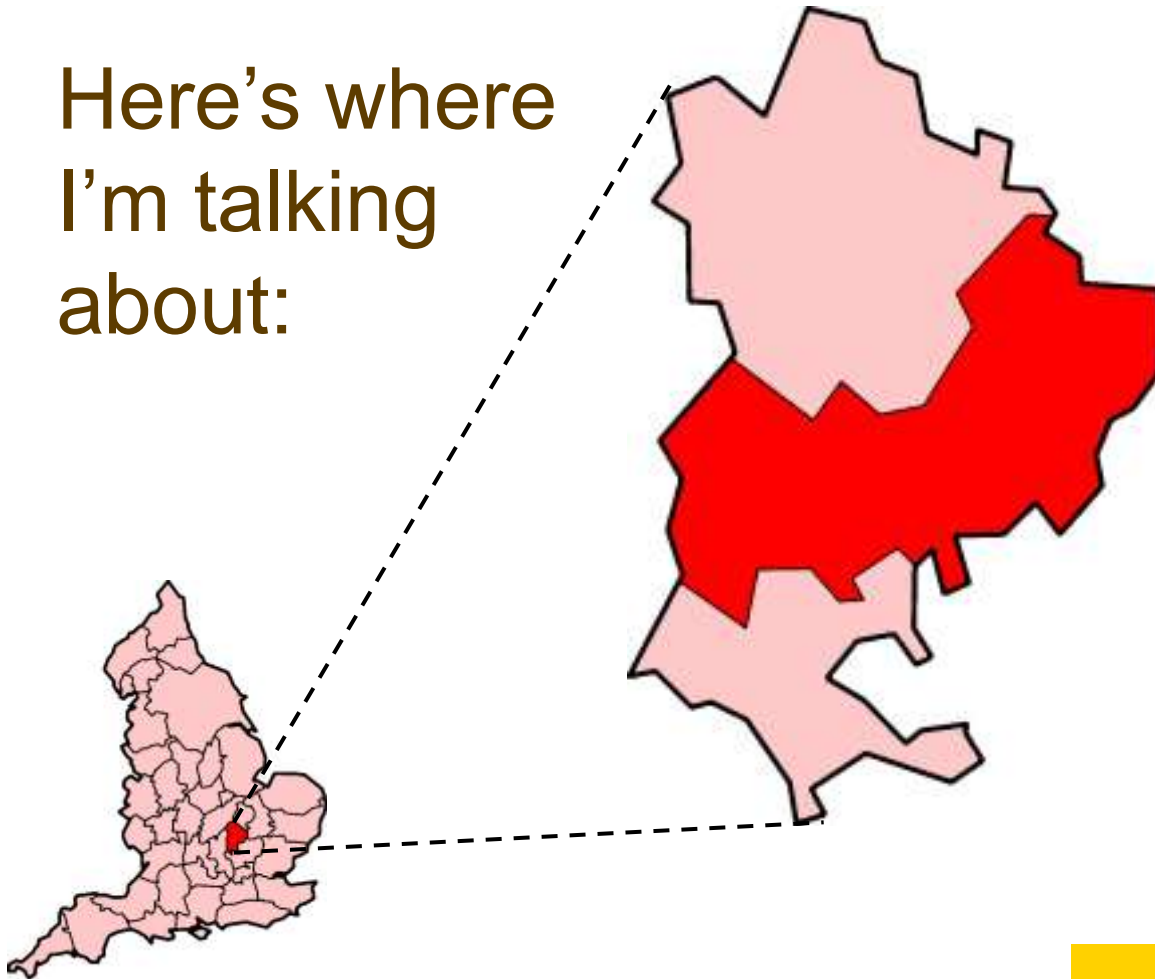
# Overview

- Background
- Green Infrastructure in Bedfordshire and Luton
- About the Mid Beds planning obligation for GI
- Example: biodiversity component of the charge



# Background

Here's where I'm talking about:



# Background

- Growth within and around the district will place more pressure on existing resources
- Most 'honeypot' recreation sites are already at or near capacity in ecological terms
- Widespread use of fragile, ecologically important habitats



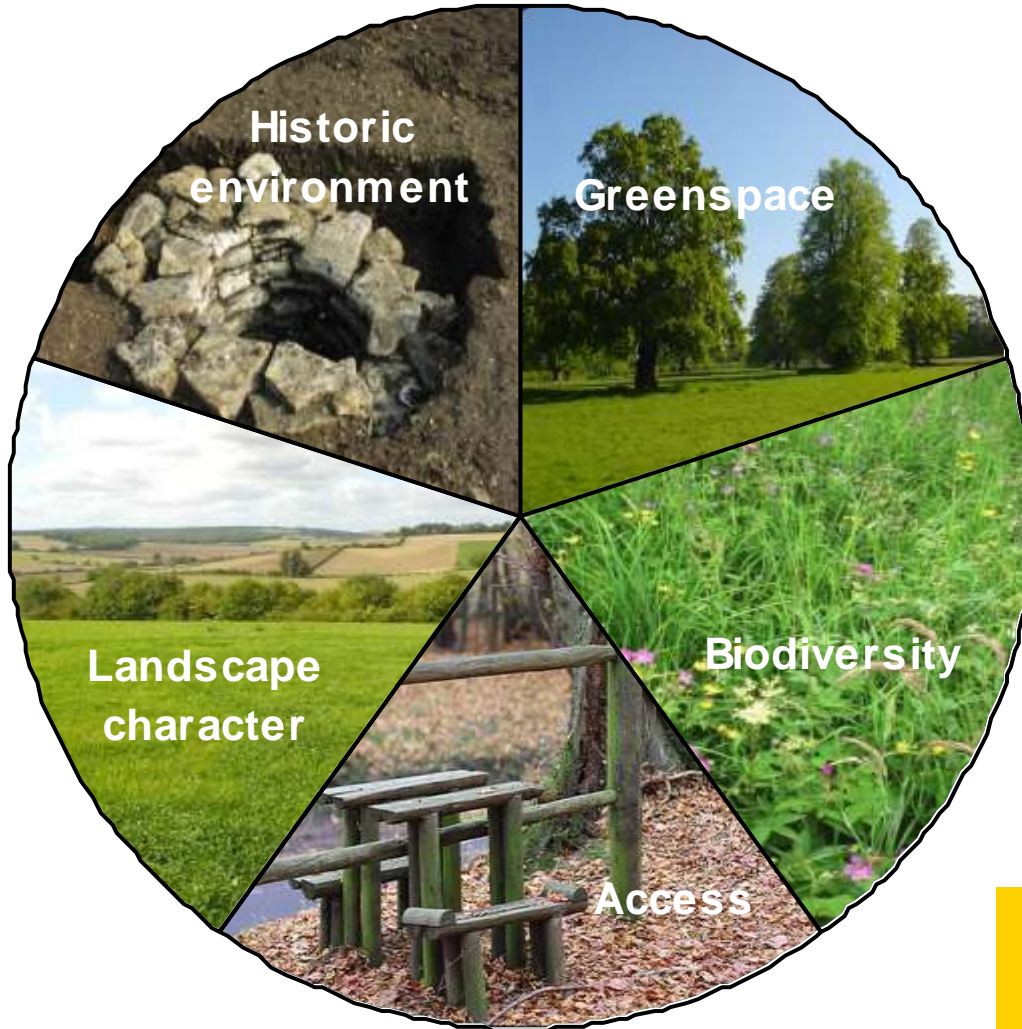
# Background

- Mid Bedfordshire District Council had no standard for countryside recreation space or green infrastructure provision
- Needed to determine cost to deliver green infrastructure network in the district

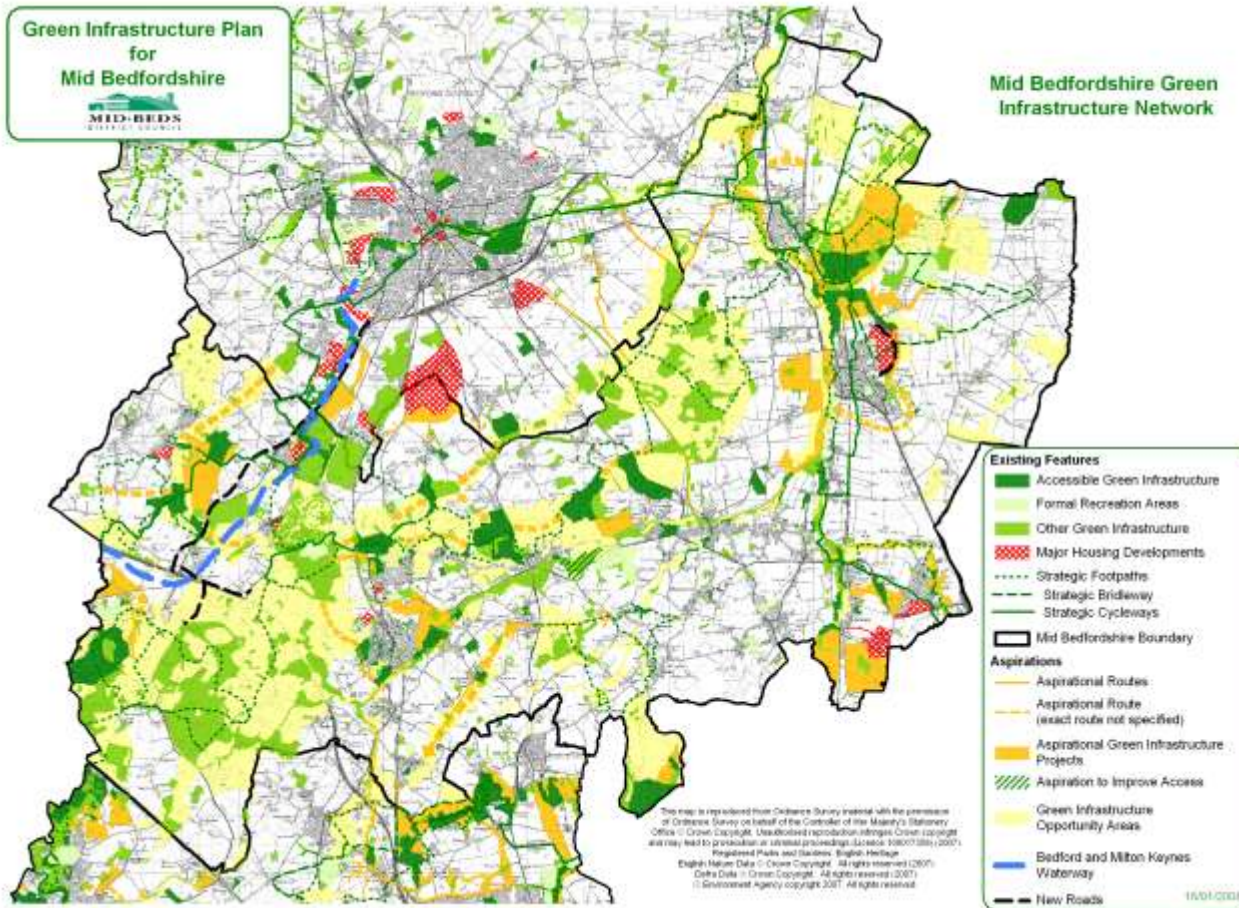


# GI in Bedfordshire

- Consists of five 'themes':



# GI in Mid Bedfordshire



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# The Mid Beds GI charge

- Part of a new Planning Obligations SPD
- Applies with no minimum dwelling threshold
- Applies to new development proposals received since April 2008



# The Mid Beds GI charge

- Designed to simplify and improve current Council practice of negotiating planning obligations with developers
- Does not replace but supplements case-by-case negotiation for on-site mitigation



# Biodiversity component of the charge

- Rationale consisted of priority work needed to:
  - Address current biodiversity deficiencies in the district
  - Create a functional ecological network
  - Achieve BAP habitat targets in the district



# Biodiversity component of the charge

- Case for the charge:
  - Biodiversity is a core element of green infrastructure
  - Policy: PPS9, RSS14
  - Impoverished biodiversity: <1% of Mid Beds is SSSI, compared to 7% average in England
  - Development pressures likely to exacerbate the situation



# Biodiversity component of the charge

- Intended results:
  - Network of viable wildlife habitats
  - Conserving, buffering and/or expanding key sites
  - Improved quality and functioning of natural systems
  - Key landscape and heritage (e.g., archaeology) aspirations



# Biodiversity component of the charge

- Figures are based on:
  - Detailed model used by the local community forest, adapted for other habitats
  - Costs projected out over 20 years
  - Total cost divided by the total number of current and proposed dwellings over the 20-year period



# Biodiversity component of the charge

- Not included:
  - Localised on-site habitat mitigation
  - Truly agricultural habitats (e.g., arable margins)
  - Habitat maintenance and monitoring, outreach, education
  - Species-specific BAP items



# The result

- Mid Beds Executive approved a planning obligations charge that includes £1529 for green infrastructure
- Of this, £770.54 is specifically for biodiversity



# The result

- Tentative plan is for the money to be put into a central pot:
  - Overseen by a dedicated group/consortium
  - Agencies would be able to bid for funds to deliver on the projects covered by the charge



# For more information

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