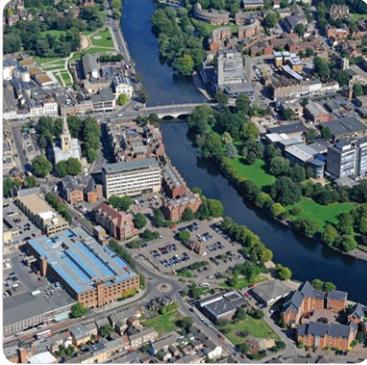


# Retail Factsheet



## Bedford Demographics

- 157,479 residents live in Bedford Borough, of which 85,200 make up the workforce.
- The age structure in Bedford is in line with the national average for England with 18% of the population aged 0-14, 13% are 15-24, 27% are 25-44, 25% are 45-64 and 16% are 65 years+.
- Bedford contains a significantly above average population of adults categorised within the most affluent AB social groups (those in managerial and professional occupations).
- Bedford has a large number of students within the heart of the town centre. Bedford College has more than 18,000 students, with around 800 full-time undergraduates and there are 3 private Harpur Trust (secondary) schools that have 3,600 pupils. The University of Bedford Campus also has over 2,500 students who are 15 minutes walking distance away.
- Nearly 38% of residents are qualified to degree level (or higher).
- Gross weekly pay earning by residence is £538.10 in Bedford compared to £520.80 for GB.



	Bedford	Retail PROMIS average (200 centres)
AB Social Structure (most affluent - % of population)	26	22
DE Social Structure (least affluent - % of population)	21	26
Car ownership – 2 cars (% of households)	42	33
Home Owner Occupiers 2011 (% of households)	70	66

## Footfall

Footfall has yet again increased in 2015 compared to 2014 and 2013, bucking the national trend in all years. In 2015, Bedford town centre saw footfall of almost 14.2 million which is a 2% increase on 2014 and a 2.6% increase on 2013.

This is set against the national trend which is seeing footfall decline. Bedford town centre plays host to a large number of events throughout the year and has a Business Improvement District (Bedford BID) in its third term which has a sole focus on encouraging visitors and promoting the town centre.



## Bedford Town Centre

Bedford has a vibrant Town Centre and is the principal centre in the Borough for shopping, tourism, arts, leisure and culture. The pedestrianised retail centre has a good diversity of uses and has a strong mid-market comparison (non-food) retail offer, hosting over 300 shops, a historic open-air market and a shopping mall. The main anchor stores are Debenhams, Marks and Spencer's and Beales.

In addition to the main anchor stores, Bedford has good representation from national fashion retailers including River Island, New Look, Primark, Miss Selfridge, Top Shop, TK Maxx, Next and BHS. Other established national retailers located in the primary retail frontage include Boots, JD Sports, The Body Shop, WH Smith and Pandora. Bedford makes an excellent choice for shopping that attracts millions of people a year, however, recent survey results indicate that there is consumer demand for a better range of quality shops including more national retailers.



	Bedford	Retail PROMIS average (200 centres)
Per capita in-store comparison expenditure 2014	<b>£2,603</b>	<b>£2,366</b>



The town centre has attracted significant inward investment over the last 10 years to redevelop key sites with the latest being the eagerly anticipated Riverside North mixed use scheme where construction work began this year. This scheme will feature a new 100 bed hotel, cinema, residential apartments, a large river-fronted public square and numerous restaurants which are now pre-let by names such as Wagamama, Zizzi and Chimichanga. This development will open in 2017.

## Catchment Size & Growth Prospects

- Bedford is easily accessible and on a growth drive, championed by Elected Mayor Dave Hodgson who has made town centre regeneration one of his top priorities. Bedford has great accessibility via the road and train network and more importantly cheaper property prices, rents and wage costs than neighbouring locations.
- The total population within the Bedford primary catchment area is 314,000.
- Reflecting the demographic profile and spending habits of the catchment population, per capita retail spending levels are significantly above the PROMIS average (*source: CACI*).
- 8% population growth for Bedford is predicted in 2013-2021 with approximately 7,000 new homes to be built in the Borough – in particular, Bedford is predicted to see significantly above average growth in population over the period 2016-19.
- 2013-2037 will see 23% growth. The Borough Council's Local Plan requirement for new dwellings up to 2032 is 17,367 of which 2,479 have been completed and just over 10,000 already have planning permission. Bedford currently has approximately 70,000 dwellings.

