

# Basildon

Essex

'Mark One' New Town – Designated 4 January 1949

When designated to regulate the scattered settlements of the existing Plotlands and to assist in the decentralisation of London's population, Basildon was the most ambitious New Town in size and population. Compared with earlier-designated New Towns, initially Basildon experienced little local opposition, with under 1% of all land purchases resulting in objections (despite 13,000 negotiations with plot-holders). But there were significant levels of objection during construction as people felt their rural idyll was being swept away. Basildon's proximity to London and location on main radial transport corridors has contributed to positive economic and industrial growth. The town is considered to have aged well, but a major, multi-site regeneration programme is under way to ensure competitiveness in the future.



## Key facts:

- **Location:** 50 kilometres east of London.
- **2011 Census population:** 110,762, in 45,558 households.<sup>1</sup>
- **Local authority:** Basildon Borough Council.
- **Local Plan status:** Emerging Basildon 2031 Local Plan, with saved policies from Basildon District Local Plan (adopted 2007).

## New Town designation:

- **Designated:** 4 January 1949.
- **Designated area:** 3,165 hectares.
- **Intended population:** 80,000, revised to 86,000 in 1960, and to 140,000 in 1965 (population at designation: 25,000).
- **Development Corporation:** In line with Government policy to encourage food production, 40% of the designated area was allocated for agricultural use. Development Corporation wound up 31 March 1986.

## Housing, deprivation and health:

- The proportion of homes in Basildon that are owner-occupied (57.0%) is low and the proportion of socially rented homes high (30.7%) in comparison with other UK New Towns and the UK as a whole.
- Basildon has comparatively higher levels of deprivation than the English New Towns and England averages. The number of households that are not deprived in any dimension is 7% lower than these averages.
- The 2011 Census reported that Basildon residents have health levels similar to the UK New Towns and UK averages.

## Employment/economic profile:

- Basildon is the largest employment centre in Thames Gateway South Essex and is home to the A127 Enterprise Corridor, the largest concentration of employment in Essex.
- Ford Motor Company is currently the biggest employer, alongside Case New Holland, Selex Galileo, and International Financial Data Services.

- Within the South East LEP.

## Development Corporation legacy:

- There is a positive legacy of planning for open space.
- 1950s/1960s estates are still working well and remain popular, but are in need of some renewal. Most later (1970s) estates are being redeveloped at lower densities.
- The success of design experimentation varies across the town. There is some local resentment at loss of heritage.
- The New Town was built without a railway station – which was added with private sector funding in 1976.
- The 'Right to Buy' and increased car ownership have affected the success of estates and put pressures on land use.
- An innovative network of man-made washlands effectively manages urban drainage.
- Many pre-New Town residents now distrust the compulsory purchase process.
- The town benefits from mixed housing tenure – Basildon still has 11,000 council houses, and owner-occupied estates have become places in their own right.
- Strategic planning of highway infrastructure delayed the emergence of significant congestion.
- Restrictive covenants on land transferred from the CNT has hindered proactive management by Basildon Council.

## Key issues for the future:

- Town centre regeneration and estate renewal.
- Housing and employment land supply – Basildon (including Lainton and Pitsea) is expected to accommodate 9,000-11,000 homes and 49 hectares of employment land in the period up to 2031. Spatial options are being explored in the Local Plan process, but will need Green Belt release.
- Transport, social and environmental infrastructure upgrades, delivered in tandem with development.
- Increasing costs of maintaining the public land estate to a good quality.

<sup>1</sup> Totals for the following wards: Crouch, Fryerns, St Martin's, Pitsea North West, Vange, Lee Chapel North, Lainton Park, Langdon Hills, Nethermayne, Pitsea South East. A figure of around 101,800 in the emerging Core Strategy ([www.basildon.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=5363&p=0](http://www.basildon.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=5363&p=0), para. 2.2.12) is for Basildon itself and discounts the populations of surrounding villages that lie within the local authority area but are not in former New Town area

## Did you know?

Architects Richard and Su Rogers designed terraced housing for sale in Raphaels and Rise Park in the Lee Chapel North neighbourhood as a result of a competition organised by the Development Corporation in 1971-1973.