

# Corby

Northamptonshire

'Mark One' New Town – Designated 1 April 1950

Increased demand for iron and steel in the late 1940s led to the expansion of steelworks at Corby as a 'matter of national importance'. Corby was initially designated to provide homes for the expanded workforce, but there was an intention to encourage new industries to diversify the employment offer.

The designated area was subsequently expanded to accommodate some of London's overspill, despite being located over 100 kilometres from the capital. The modern Corby has an ambitious programme of regeneration and growth, working towards doubling the population with a complementary increase in jobs, prosperity and the quality of local public services. Major development, including town centre regeneration, has already begun to transform the area, which, in percentage terms, has the fastest-growing population in the country.



## Key facts:

- **Location:** 129 kilometres north of London. A recently opened railway station offers access to London in just over an hour.
- **2011 Census population:** 59,563, in 28,520 households.<sup>1</sup>
- **Local authority:** Corby Borough Council.
- **Local Plan status:** North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy (adopted 2008 – the first joint Core Strategy in the country).

## New Town designation:

- **Designated:** 1 April 1950.
- **Designated area:** 1,083 hectares, revised to 1,971 hectares.
- **Intended population:** 40,000, revised to 55,000 in 1965, with natural growth to 80,000 by the year 2,000 and 63,600 by 2006 (population at designation: 16,880).
- **Development Corporation:** Aimed to provide not only housing but also social, commercial and amenity services. The Development Corporation also aimed to diversify from the existing steelworks industrial base. Green Belt was to ensure 'an independent existence'. Development Corporation wound up 31 March 1980.

## Housing, deprivation and health:

- The proportion of homes in Corby that are owner-occupied (59.5% – up from 4.5% in 1961) is in line with the UK New Towns average (58.7%) and slightly below the UK average (63.5%). The proportion of socially rented homes (23.0%) is 1.4% and 4.8% below the UK New Towns and UK averages, respectively. Corby has achieved the highest proportion of new home sales in England and Wales over the past 20 years.
- Corby has a higher proportion of deprived households than the English New Towns and England averages.
- The 2011 Census reported that average health levels in Corby are broadly in line with UK New Towns and UK averages (2% or less difference on all averages).

## Employment/economic profile:

- Self-containment is particularly high in Corby, with over 74% of its residents working within the district. There are strong employment relationships between the neighbouring growth towns, particularly between Kettering and Corby (and Wellingborough and Northampton).
- Over 40% of Corby employees work in manufacturing. Corby has strengths in manufacturing and in sports provision.
- Corby is leading the way in supporting the use of electric vehicles, with more electric vehicle charging-points per capita than anywhere else in the UK.
- In early 2003, Catalyst Corby published its *Regeneration Framework*, which provided a visionary programme for the transformation of the Borough.
- Within Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership LEP and South East Midlands LEP.

## Development Corporation legacy:

- There is still a large Scottish population in Corby – workers came to Corby from the 1930s (and in larger numbers as the New Town was developed) to work in the steel plants.
- The imbalanced focus on manufacturing in the New Town and the lack of a retail and commercial in the centre (partly a result of population projections not being reached) have led to a need for town centre regeneration today.
- The poor layout of some areas is considered to have contributed to poor bus services.

## Key issues for the future:

- Continued regeneration of the town centre.
- Sustaining high levels of growth.

<sup>1</sup> Totals for the following wards: Weldon and Gretton, Stanion and Corby Village, Oakley Vale, Great Oakley, Danesholme, Kingswood, Tower Hill, Beanfield, Exeter Central, Lodge Park, Shire Lodge, Rowlett East. In 2013 the population of the Primary Urban Area stood at 64,200 (Corby labour market profile. NOMIS – Office Labour Market Statistics. Office for National Statistics. [www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157155/report.aspx#tabrespop](http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157155/report.aspx#tabrespop))

## Did you know?

Large numbers of Scottish workers and their families came to Corby to work in the steel industry (it is affectionately known as 'Little Scotland'). Corby steelworks were once the largest in Europe and still produce over 500,000 tonnes of steel a year.