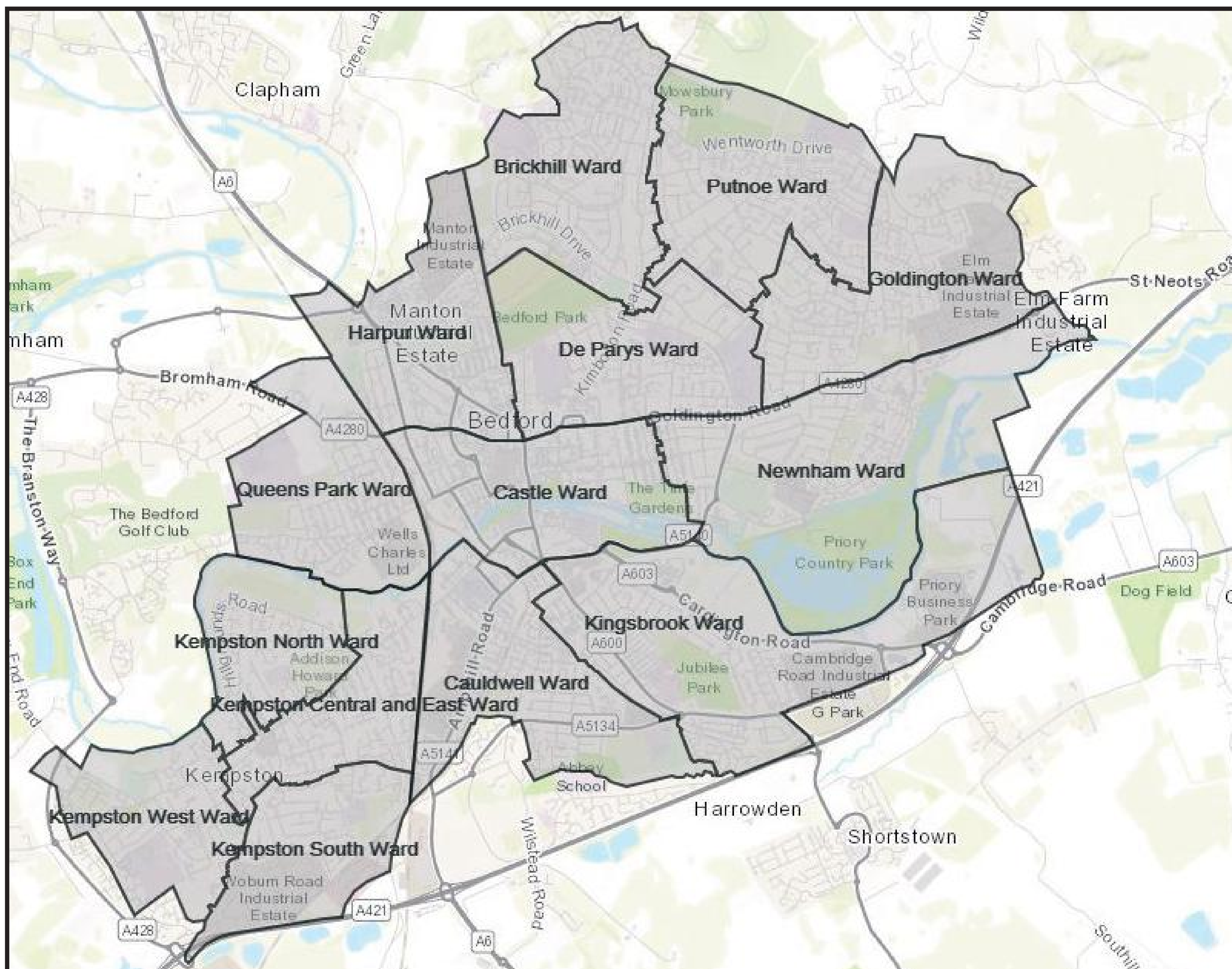


## 1. Welcome

WYG Planning and Environment have been commissioned by Bedford Borough Council to examine if there is evidence to support extra planning controls for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). The study focuses on the urban areas of Bedford and Kempston. The relevant wards are shown on the map below.



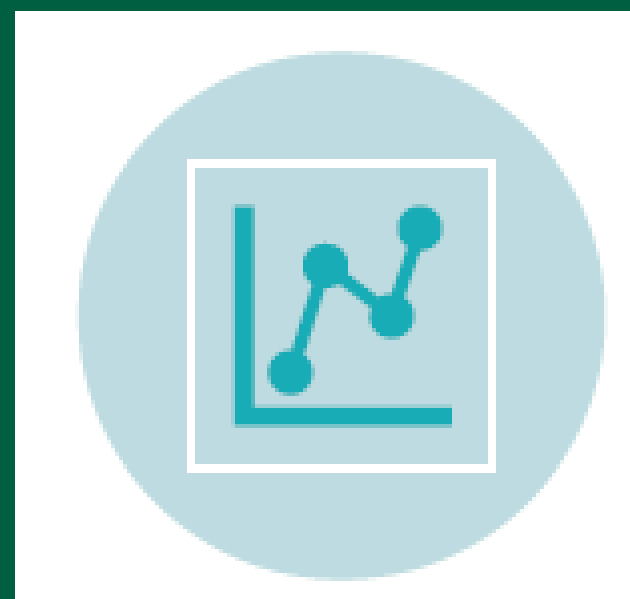
### Exhibition Content



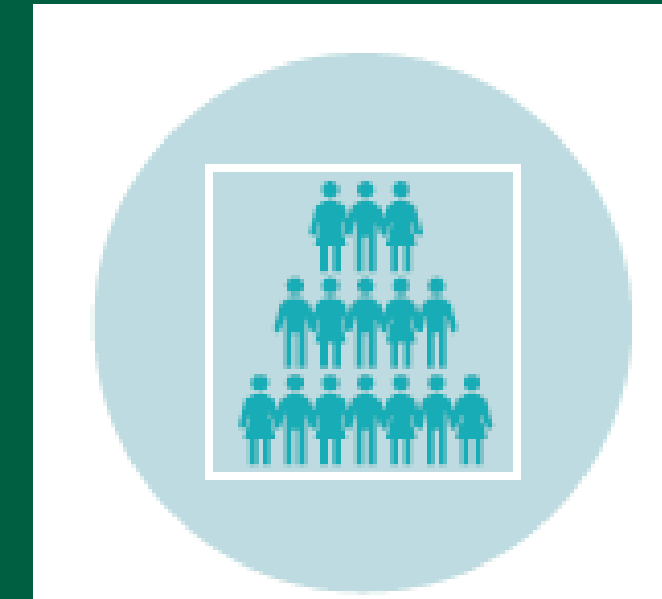
Why the study is being undertaken



What is a House in Multiple Occupation



Data collected to date



Understanding your views



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## 2. Study Background

### Aims and Objectives

At present, family homes can be converted into HMOs for up to 6 persons without the need to apply for planning permission. The study will investigate whether there is enough evidence to support the removal of this permitted development right through the use of an Article 4 Direction.

Article 4 Directions are intended to be used in exceptional circumstances and where there is evidence that permitted development harms local amenity or prevents the proper planning of an area.

This study investigates these matters through looking at existing data the council holds, undertaking site visits across Bedford and Kempston visiting areas with known HMOs and no known HMOs, surveys and conversations with local stakeholders.

### Why is the study being done now?

Local concerns have been raised regarding the impact of increasing numbers of HMOs and the consequences this has on character and amenity of the local area and areas of Bedford Town Centre.

Elected members have requested that a study be undertaken to look at if there are planning tools that could be used to help manage HMOs.

WYG were commissioned in April 2019.

Evidence gathered through today's drop-in will also be used to gather the views of communities and see if there are additional topics we need to research.

On some of the boards you will see questions. We would encourage you to answer as many as possible.





## 3. Definition of a HMO for this Study

### What is a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO)?

There are different definitions used to define what a HMO is.

In summary, HMOs are homes that are shared by more than one household. A household is defined as a single person, members of the same family (including stepfamilies and half relatives e.g. Aunts, uncles, siblings), or people who are living together as a couple.

This study focuses on the planning definition of a HMO taken from the Use Classes Order. Since the 1st October 2010, a dwellinghouse (C3) can be converted into a small HMO (C4) and back to a family home with no need for planning permission.

Planning permission is required to convert a house to a large HMO (and back to a family home).

### Definitions



A 'small HMO' (Use Class C4) is defined as:

Use of a dwelling house by not more than six residents as a "house in multiple occupation".



'Large HMOs' for 7 or more residents are a different use class known as 'sui generis'.

### Who lives in a HMO?



There is no single type of person who lives in a HMO. The research undertaken to date shows that HMOs offer a source of affordable and flexible accommodation to different groups from young professionals to those on lower incomes who may be unable to access support for other types of affordable housing.

### Would an Article 4 Direction stop all HMOs?

An Article 4 Direction removes Permitted Development Rights. It means that proposals for HMOs will need to apply for planning permission before they can be converted.

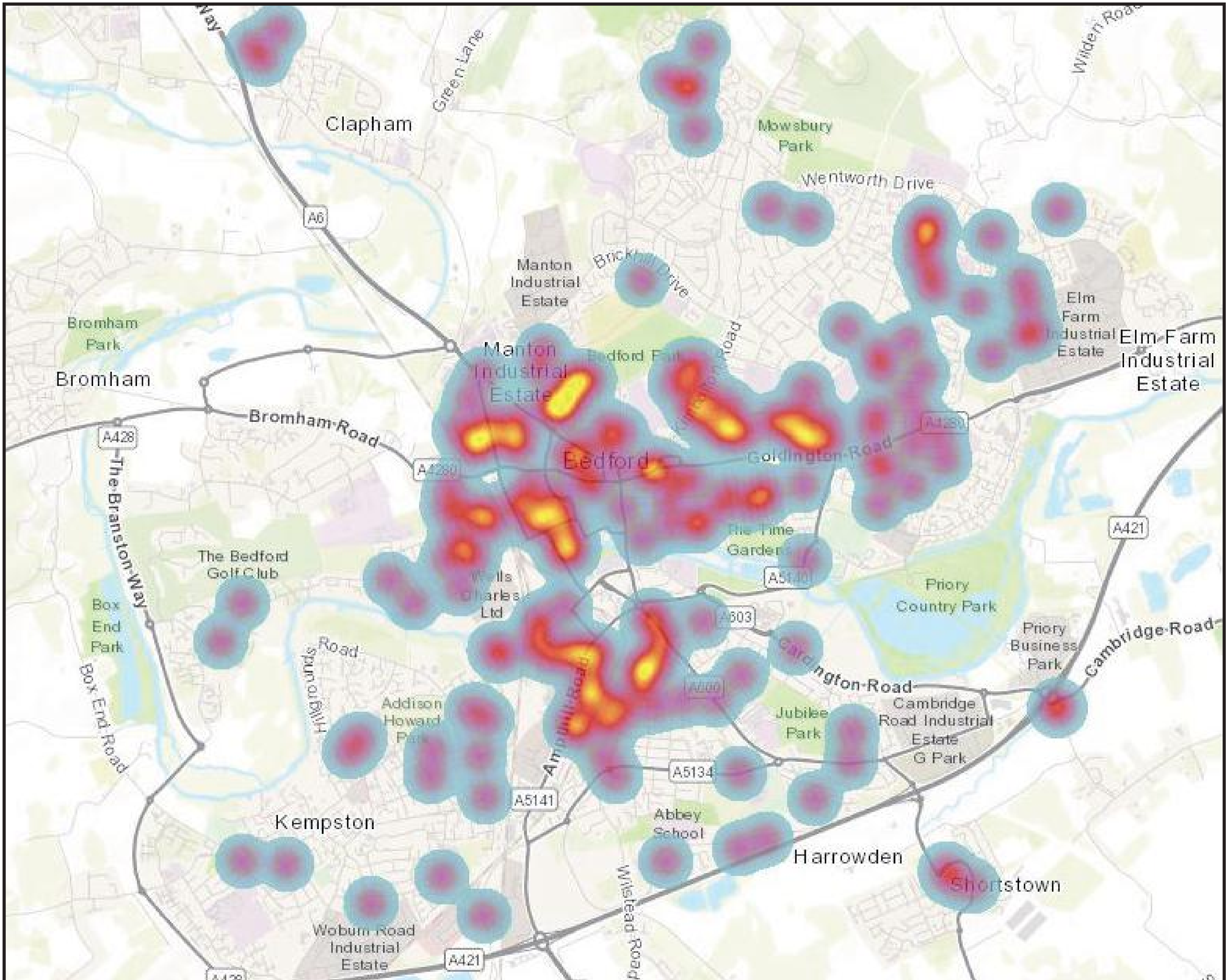
The Direction would not apply retrospectively, and existing HMOs would not need to apply for any planning permission to continue to operate.





# 4. Location of Licensed HMOs

WYG have analysed where licensed HMOs are located across Bedford and created maps to illustrate this. The heat map shows that there are concentrations around the Town Centre, Amptill Road and Goldington Road. Other areas also have HMOs, although they are more mixed.



**?** Does this pattern match what you expected? Please stick a dot next to Yes or No below. If there are other areas where you think there may be a HMO concentration please stick a dot on the map, so we can look into it.

**YES**

**NO**

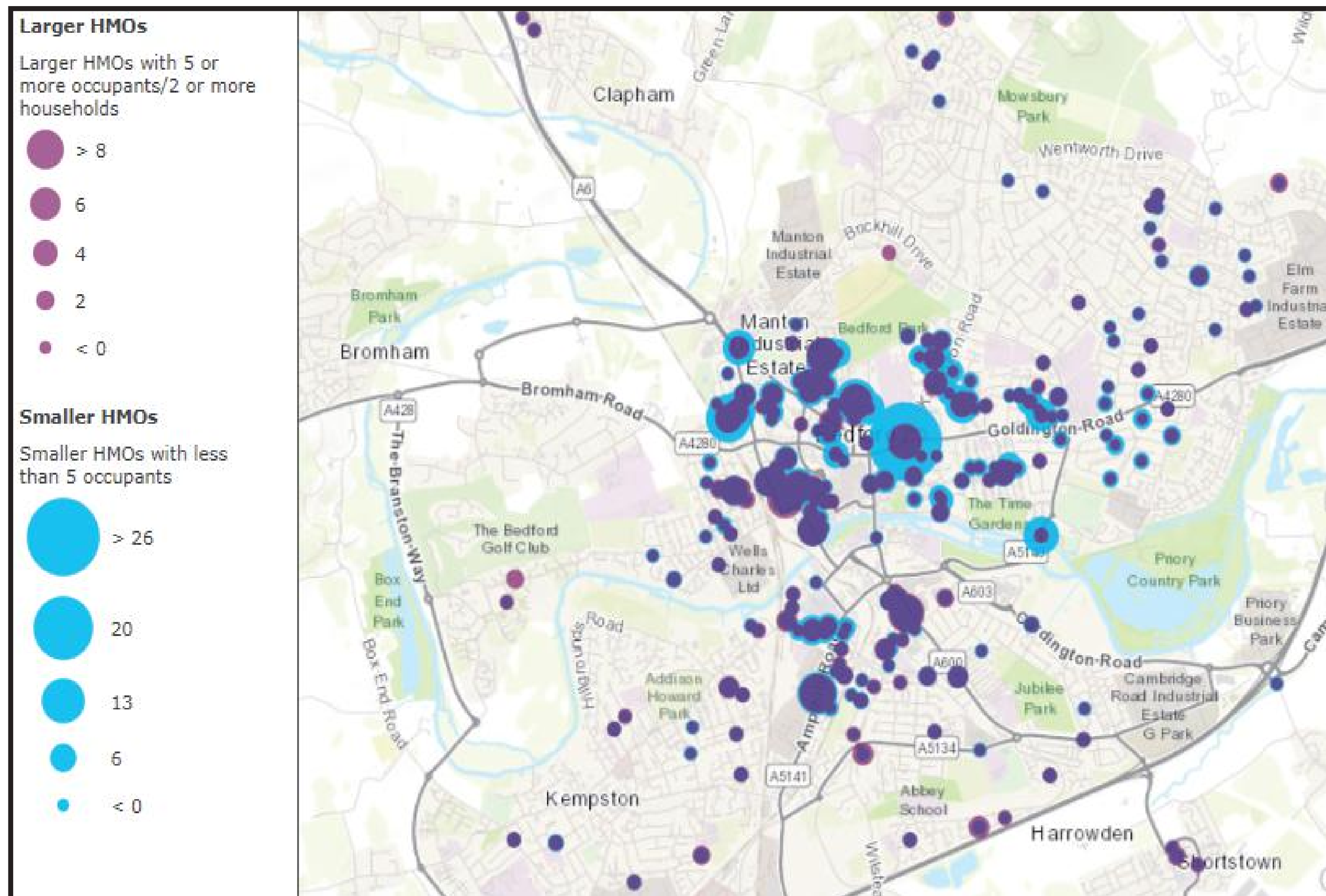


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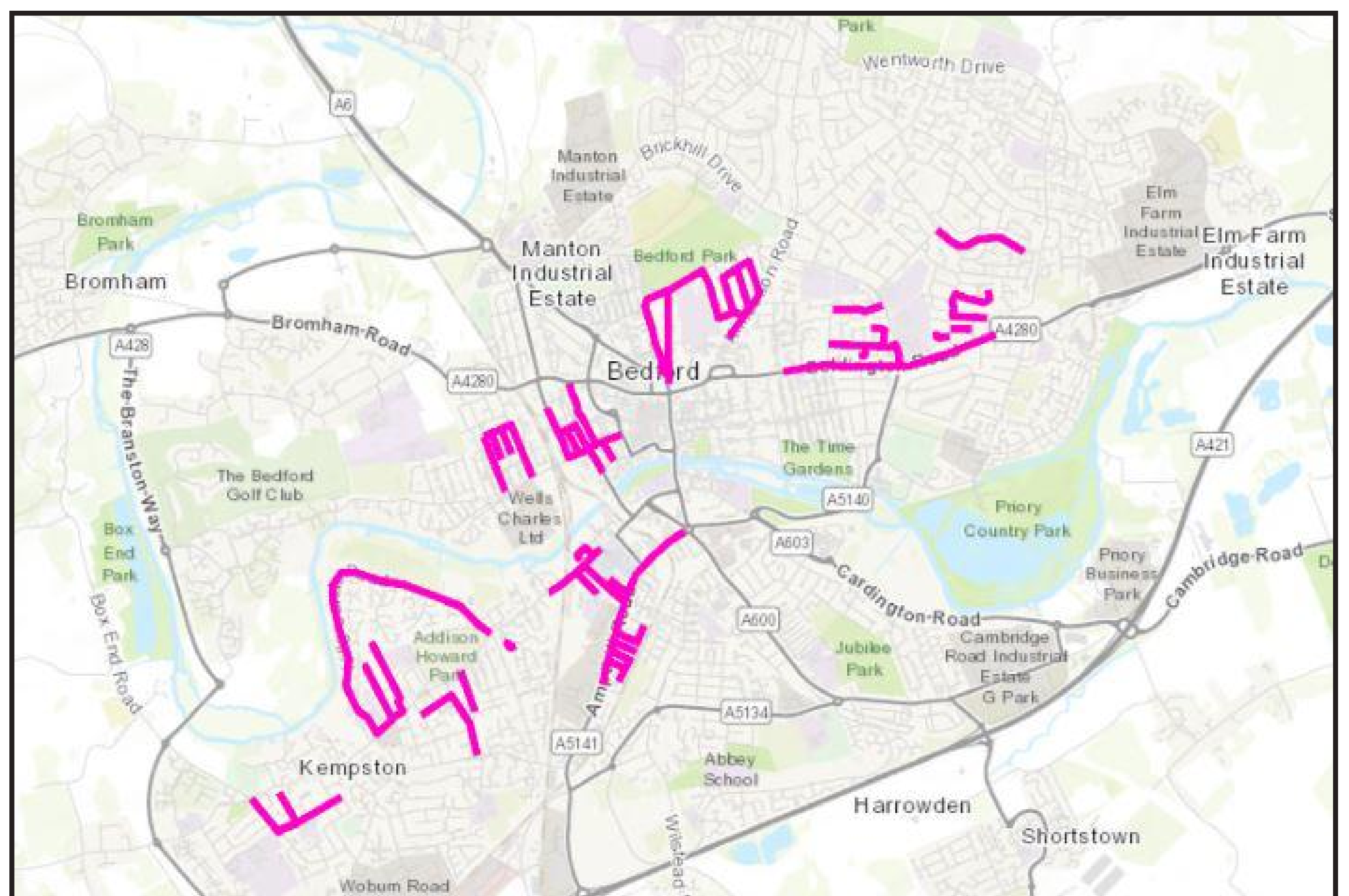
## 5. Location of Licensed HMOs & Site Visits



To provide further detail, the map to the left illustrates how small and large licensed HMOs are distributed across Bedford and Kempston. Generally, the HMO concentrations are comprised of a mix of both small and large HMOs. Although, there are a greater proportion of smaller HMOs along Goldington Road and near to Bedford Midland train station.

Using Bedford Borough Council data, WYG undertook site visits across Bedford and Kempston to understand the areas where HMOs are more highly concentrated.

Whilst on the site visits we took notes on the condition of the street overall. The main factors assessed relate to character and appearance of the area.



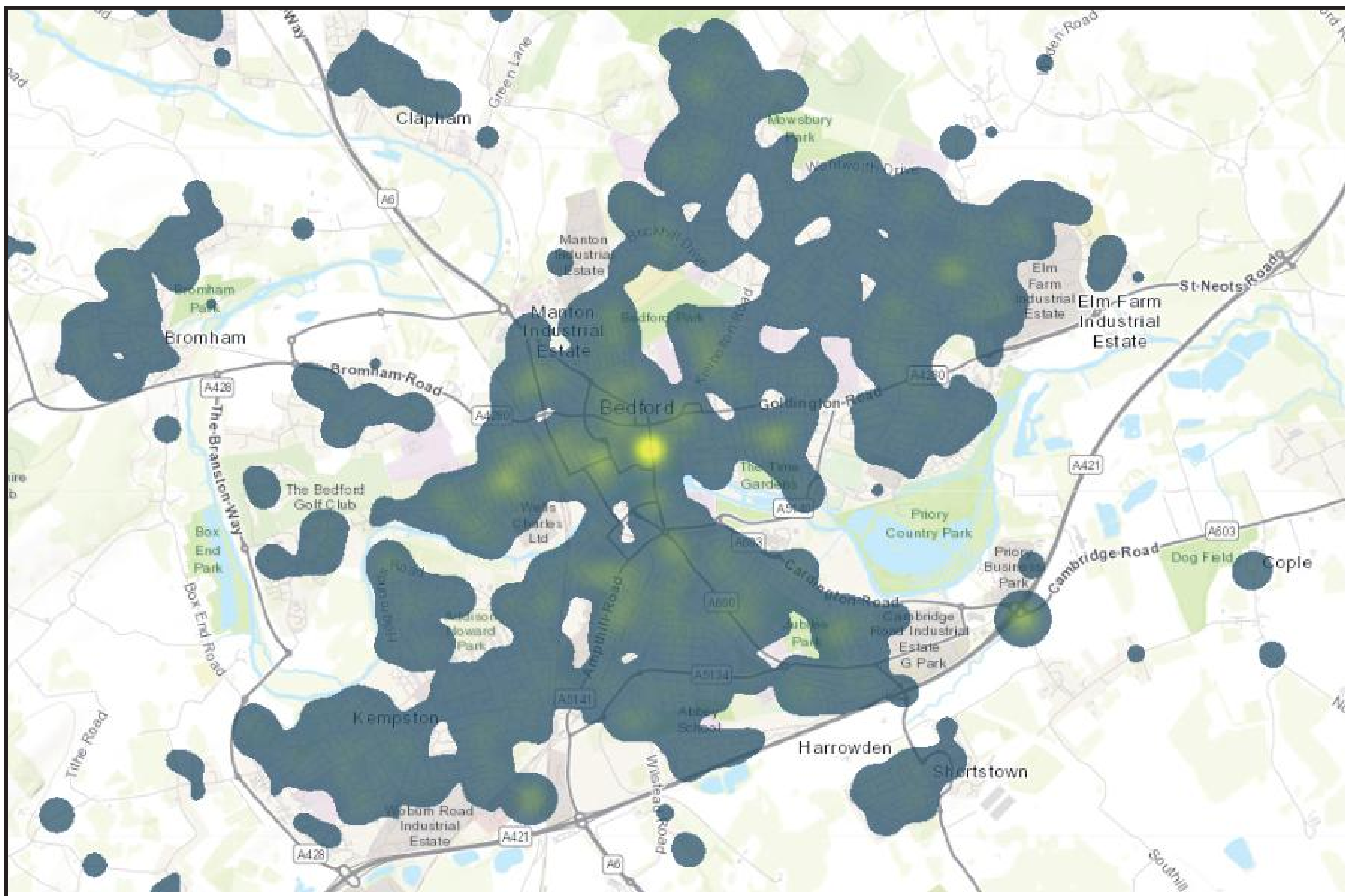


# 6. Environmental Complaints

Environmental complaints include those received by the council about noise, waste (including fly tipping) and pests.

For noise, we have removed complaints about events and commercial buildings to help ensure that the maps reflect noise in residential areas. Similarly, for pests we have removed reports relating to public and commercial buildings.

The maps show that on the whole there are environmental complaints across the whole of the town with an increase in the town centre area.



**?** Does this pattern match what you expected? Please stick a dot next to Yes or No below. If there are other areas where you think there may be environmental issues (e.g. waste or noise) please stick a dot on the map.

**YES**

**NO**



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## 7. Perceptions of HMOs

It would be useful to understand what factors those attending this drop-in associate with HMOs. **Please put a dot in each category that you think applies to HMOs.** This information will be used to help us finalise our report and make recommendations. There are no right or wrong answers.

**Noise**

**Rubbish**

**Affordable  
Housing**

**Loss of  
Character**

**Poorly  
Maintained**

**Flexible  
Accommodation**

**Safe**

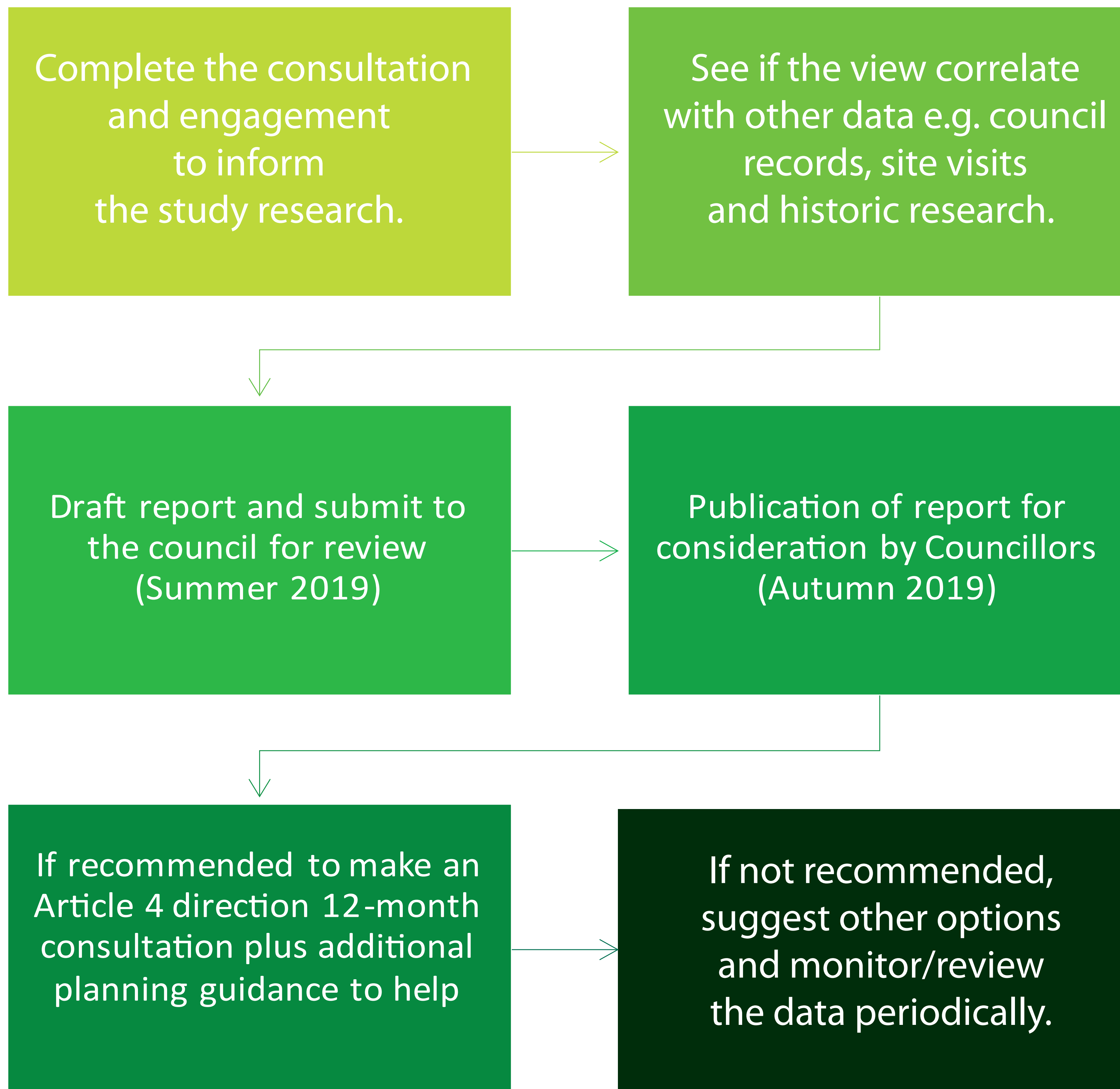
**Overcrowded**





# 8. Your Input and Next Steps

Thank you for attending today. The next steps are summarised below.



Feedback forms are available should you have any further questions or comments. Please note comments and personal details (if given) may be shared with Bedford Borough Council. If you have provided personal information, this will only be used and stored as part of the Study and in accordance with WYG and Bedford Borough Council's GDPR policy.

To view the consultation webpage and download an electronic feedback form, please scan the QR code below.

