



# ROCKWELL COLLINS

GROVEBURY RD, LEIGHTON BUZZARD, BEDFORDSHIRE, LU7 4TB  
WWW.ROCKWELLCOLLINS.COM

Central  
Bedfordshire



## THE BUSINESS

Rockwell Collins (formerly known as B/E Aerospace UK) is the world's leading manufacturer of aircraft passenger cabin interior products for the commercial and business jet aircraft markets. The company has a global presence, located in 30 countries and on six continents.

The US-owned company, which has revenues of \$3 billion, first came to Leighton Buzzard, in Bedfordshire, in 1992, when the firm identified and purchased local businesses working in its sectors.

Rockwell Collins UK Limited's facility, which occupies close on 100,000 sq ft of land in the Central Bedfordshire town, employs 750 people on site. Its workforce is drawn from an area as diverse as London one hour by rail to the south and Milton Keynes, which is 20 minutes by rail to the north.

A range of high skilled engineering, design and manufacturing jobs are based at the high tech Bedfordshire site. As well as permanent jobs, Rockwell Collins also uses a range of contractors and temps for specific short-term tasks.

Keith Delderfield, Rockwell Collins Vice President of Operations, said good communication links are vital to the company's ability to attract and retain talent. "The railway line into and out of London and Milton Keynes

is very important," he said. "We are very pleased to see the creation of a link direct from the new junction 11a of the M1 motorway to Leighton Buzzard and our base on Grovebury Road."

Leighton Buzzard also benefits from access to London Luton Airport, Heathrow, Gatwick and Stansted. Rockwell Collins holds key responsibilities for the all-important airline markets in Europe and especially in the Middle East.

The company's Leighton Buzzard facility designs and manufactures crew rests and galley structures for the aircraft industry, as well as providing aftermarket support.

The market town also hosts the company's Leighton Buzzard Centre of Excellence for Galley Structures, which is engaged in the development of the latest galley systems for new aircraft platforms in addition to other significant interior structures projects.

Rockwell Collins is very active within the local community, sponsoring a range of young people's sporting clubs, holding industrial days and working with schools in Central Bedfordshire to find individuals interested in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) careers.

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## THE REQUIREMENTS

Rockwell Collins most important contact with Central Bedfordshire Council concerns issues of planning and development control.

The company has invested £11 million over a recent four year period, increasing its workforce by 250 people and changing the use of two warehouse buildings in Leighton Buzzard to manufacturing.

Keith said: "We have undergone a massive expansion in the last few years and the very last thing we would have needed as a business is a council that does not understand our needs.

"I have to say that the help the Council has given us has been consistently absolutely brilliant. The planning department have been very understanding.

"I am very pleased to say that the bureaucracy has been quite painless and the planning department gave our issues a lot of resource.

"Dealing with the Council on planning issues has been much, much easier than I would have thought."

All in all, he gave Central Bedfordshire Council an impressive 9 out of 10 marks for its attitude, adding that there must always be room for improvement.

## THE OUTCOMES

Rockwell Collins UK Ltd has seen excellent growth in its business over the last few years and has plans to invest £1 million more in 2017.

Keith said: "The relationship we have with Central Bedfordshire Council over the next three to five years of our current plan is very important to the business."

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## THE FUTURE

As well as the all-important issue of planning and development control, Rockwell Collins is working directly with local schools in the Leighton Buzzard area to promote careers at the company.

A highly competitive Bedfordshire job market in design, engineering and manufacturing, combined with skills shortages in its sectors means that Rockwell Collins has focused on forging links with the education system, by way of competitions and open days, as a way of identifying potential talent.



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