

Monday, 29 March 2021

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## ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

You are summoned a meeting of the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be held remotely, via Cisco Webex on **Thursday, 8 April 2021 at 6.30 pm.**



Giles Hughes  
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillors: Councillor Andrew Beaney (Chairman), Councillor Laetisia Carter (Vice-Chair), Councillor Jake Acock, Councillor Joy Aitman, Councillor Luci Ashbourne, Councillor Jill Bull, Councillor Julian Cooper, Councillor Jane Doughty, Councillor Harry Eaglestone, Councillor Hilary Fenton, Councillor Andy Graham, Councillor Nick Leverton, Councillor Neil Owen and Councillor Carl Rylett

Recording of Proceedings – The law allows the public proceedings of Council, Cabinet, and Committee Meetings to be recorded, which includes filming as well as audio-recording. Photography is also permitted. By participating in this meeting, you are consenting to be filmed.

As a matter of courtesy, if you intend to record any part of the proceedings please let the Committee Administrator know prior to the start of the meeting.

## AGENDA

1. **Minutes of Previous Meeting - 21 January 2021 (Pages 5 - 8)**  
To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2021.
2. **Apologies for Absence**  
To receive any apologies for absence.
3. **Declarations of Interest**  
To receive any declarations from Members of the Committee on any items to be considered at the meeting
4. **Participation of the Public**  
To receive any submissions from members of the public, in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.
5. **Chairman's Announcements**  
Purpose:  
To receive any announcements from the Chairman of the Committee.
6. **Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme - Verbal Update**  
Purpose:  
To receive a verbal update on the work of the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme.  
Recommendation:  
That the update be noted.
7. **Affordable Housing Revised Draft SPD Consultation (Pages 9 - 64)**  
Purpose  
To consider the revised draft Affordable Housing SPD and provide comment where necessary.  
Recommendation  
That the report be noted and a consultation response formulated.
8. **Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2019/20 (Pages 65 - 106)**  
Purpose  
To consider the Council's Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report for 2019/20.  
Recommendation  
That the content of the Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report be noted.
9. **Service Performance Report 2020-21 Quarter Three (Pages 107 - 144)**  
Purpose  
This report provides details of service performance during Q3.  
Recommendation  
That the Committee reviews, and challenges as appropriate, performance for 2020-21 Q3.

10. **Cabinet Work Programme (Pages 145 - 150)**

Purpose:

To give the Committee the opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Work Programme published on 23 March 2021.

Recommendation:

That the Committee decides whether to express a view to the Cabinet on relevant issues in the Work Programme for the period.

11. **Members Questions**

Purpose:

To receive questions from Members relating to the work of the Economic & Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In order to ensure that appropriate information is to hand at the meeting, Members may wish to give notice of any questions through the Committee Officer.

Recommendation:

That Members' questions be dealt with as appropriate.

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## WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **Economic and Social Overview & Scrutiny Committee** held via video conferencing at 6.30pm on **Thursday 21 January 2021**

### PRESENT

Councillors: Andrew Beaney (Chairman), Laetisia Carter (Vice-Chairman), Joy Aitman, Luci Ashbourne, Jill Bull, Julian Cooper, Jane Doughty, Harry Eaglestone, Hilary Fenton, Ted Fenton, Andy Graham, Nick Leverton and Carl Rylett.

Also in attendance: Councillor Duncan Enright, Merilyn Davies, Jeff Haine, Toby Morris and Geoff Saul.

Officers in Attendance: Giles Hughes (Chief Executive); Heather McCulloch (Healthy Communities Manager); Kim Hudson (Senior Policy Officer) and Amy Bridgewater-Carnall (Senior Strategic Support Officer).

### 27. MINUTES

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 19 November 2020 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### 28. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND TEMPORARY APPOINTMENTS

Councillor Ted Fenton substituted for Councillor Jake Acock.

### 29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Beaney declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 7, Developer Contributions SPD Document, as he worked for an academy.

### 30. PARTICIPATION OF THE PUBLIC

There were no submissions from members of the public in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.

### 31. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Chairman's Announcements.

### 32. CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

The Committee considered the draft Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document which had been published for public consultation late in 2020, having been considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 21 October.

The Developer Contributions SPD, attached as an appendix to the report, provided detailed guidance to developers, infrastructure providers and local communities on the likely infrastructure requirements placed on developments in West Oxfordshire.

The SPD had been available for public consultation for six weeks from 9 November to 21 December 2020 and could be accessed via the Council's website. Comments could also

be submitted using the Council's consultation portal or by emailing the Planning Policy team.

Following collation of the consultation responses, a revised SPD would be prepared and submitted to Cabinet to agree a further, final period of consultation prior to adoption.

The Senior Policy Officer introduced the report and answered questions from Members. The areas discussed by the Committee included:

- The proposed rates for residential developments and suggestion to add 'per square metre' into the table, for ease of understanding;
- Burial Ground space and the need for additional space at areas other than Eynsham as detailed at 13.40;
- The importance of play spaces being accessible for all abilities;
- CIL receipts and the proportion to Town and Parish Councils;
- Education and whether the County Council were using historic or futuristic data;
- Community facilities and the recent example by Milton Keynes where a dwelling had been provided by the developer to establish a community hub.

Having read the report and made suggestions and comments to the officers present, the Committee noted the report.

**RESOLVED:** that the comments made by Members be noted.

### 33. DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Committee had been due to receive a presentation from the Strategic Lead for Domestic Abuse at the County Council. However, due to ill health, she was unable to attend. Therefore, the committee agreed to defer her presentation to the next meeting.

In her absence, the Committee received an update from the Healthy Communities Manager. She advised that the team was due to attend a contract meeting with ODAS (Domestic Abuse Service Provider for the County, next Monday where an update would be received and any questions that Members had could be put forward for a response at that time. Mrs McCulloch also encouraged Members with queries to contact her at any time.

Mrs McCulloch provided information on liaison with community groups and how some were involved with the Oxfordshire Strategic Management Group, including St Mary's Church as well as sub groups for Rural Domestic violence. Following reference to a paper written by Mrs McCulloch for the Oxfordshire Strategic Board based on a report by the Rural Services Network relating to rural services, it was agreed to share this with members. It was noted that in rural areas, people often took longer to report domestic abuse along with other key factors relating to rurality.

Members noted that the pandemic had had a significant impact on the nature of domestic violence and the Committee was assured that officers continued to work and liaise with the police and voluntary groups across the District.

Councillor Graham flagged the importance of inclusivity for the LGBTQ community and requested that this be highlighted at future meetings.

Members noted the discussion.

34. INVESTMENT IN IMPROVED RAIL CONNECTIVITY IN OXFORDSHIRE

Arising from its request at its previous meeting, the Committee considered the above matter in the context of the report prepared for the meeting of the Oxfordshire Growth Board on 24 November 2020.

Members were provided with a link to the supplementary paper from the Growth Board and were encouraged by Councillor Cooper to take full account of it.

He reminded the Committee of the importance of keeping pressure on the Transport Minister to ensure he was aware of the importance of the line running through the area.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

35. COUNCIL PRIORITIES AND SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2020/2021 QUARTER TWO

The Committee considered the previously circulated report of the Chief Executive, which provided details of the Council's progress towards achieving its aims and priorities set out in the Council Plan 2020-2024, and service performance during Quarter Two.

Comments and queries on Annexes A and B were as follows:

- Page 10 referred to the withdrawal of funding by GLL for the 'Inclusion Officer' – Mr Hughes acknowledged the impact of Covid and agreed to check the details moving forwards;
- Page 23 indicated a spike in the time taken to process new Housing Benefit Claims – officers agreed to investigate the reasons;
- Page 30 – Planning Applications Determined and the percentage of applications agreed within agreed timescales;
- Sports England Assessment – Members felt it would be useful to see the response;
- Satisfaction rates relating to the website appeared to be low;
- Gym Memberships and the understanding that no targets had been set for 2020-21.

Having received the report and discussed the details with officers, the Committee noted the report.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

36. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received and considered the report of the Head of Democratic Services, which updated it on progress on the 2020/21 work programme.

Members noted the desire to move the Domestic Violence presentation to the April meeting and were encouraged to put forward any questions they would like answering to Democratic Services prior to the meeting. These would then be passed to Sarah Carter prior to her attendance.

Councillor Cooper raised the issue of housing at RAF Brize Norton and queried why there appeared to be a blockage moving the market forwards. In response, the Chief Executive explained that work had been carried out on the business model but progress had been hindered by Covid. He agreed to arrange for a briefing at the next meeting.

Councillor Ashbourne noted that the CCTV item considered at the previous meeting and Council had resulted in agreement that an update would be forthcoming. It was agreed to add this to the work programme for a future date.

**RESOLVED:** That the work programme be updated accordingly.

37. CABINET WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee received and considered the report of the Head of Democratic Services, which gave members the opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Work Programme published on 15 December 2020.

**RESOLVED:** That the contents of the Cabinet Work Programme published on 15 December 2020 be noted.

38. MEMBERS' QUESTIONS


Councillor Rylett raised a query regarding EU citizens and requested an update from officers.

Councillor Graham queried the right of EU citizens to vote in the upcoming elections in light of the UK leaving the EU. The Monitoring Officer advised that EU citizens would continue to have a right to register to vote and to stand as candidates if they wished. With regards to public awareness, anyone entitled to vote would receive a poll card advising them of this.

The meeting closed at 7.46 pm

Chairman



 <p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>	<p><b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b></p>
<p>Name and date of Committee</p>	<p><b>Economic &amp; Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Thursday 8 April 2021</b></p>
<p>Report Number</p>	<p><b>Agenda Item No. 7</b></p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p><b>Affordable Housing Revised Draft SPD Consultation</b></p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Accountable member</p>	<p>Councillor Jeff Haine, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning Email: <a href="mailto:jeff.haine@westoxon.gov.uk">jeff.haine@westoxon.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>Accountable officer</p>	<p>Chris Hargraves, Planning Policy Manager Tel: 01993 861686; Email: <a href="mailto:Chris.Hargraves@publicagroup.uk">Chris.Hargraves@publicagroup.uk</a></p>
<p>Summary/Purpose</p>	<p>To consider the revised draft Affordable Housing SPD and provide comment where necessary.</p>
<p>Annex</p>	<p>Revised Draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>That the report be noted and a consultation response formulated.</p>
<p>Corporate priorities</p>	<p>The provision of new, high quality affordable homes is a key aspect of the West Oxfordshire Council Plan (2020 – 2024)</p>
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Exempt</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Consultees/ Consultation</p>	<p>Consultation on an initial draft version of the SPD took place from 10 July – 21 August 2020. Taking account of the comments received the revised draft SPD has been published for consultation from 5 March – 16 April 2021.</p>

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to consider any Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) that were out for consultation and provide comments as required.
- 1.2 The revised draft Affordable Housing SPD (attached as an annex to the report) provides detailed guidance to developers, local communities and other key stakeholders on the provision of affordable housing in West Oxfordshire, supporting and augmenting Policy H3 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.
- 1.3 The SPD has been published for a 6-week period of public consultation from 5 March to 16 April 2021 and is available on the Council's website [Planning Policy - Supplementary Planning Documents](#)
- 1.4 Following collation of the consultation responses, a final version of the SPD will be prepared and submitted to Cabinet and Council for formal adoption in accordance with legislative requirements.

## **2. MAIN POINTS**

- 2.1. The Committee is invited to consider the matter, and to agree comments/recommendations to enable these to be taken into account by Officers in preparing the final version of the SPD later in the year.

## **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. None

## **5. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1. Not applicable

## **6. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS**

- 6.1. Not applicable.

## **7. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 7.1. None

# Revised Draft Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)



February 2021

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## 1.0 Preface

### 1.1 Background

1.1.1 The District Council's current Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was published in 2007. Following adoption of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF – Feb 2019) there is now a need to revise and update the SPD.

1.1.2 The purpose of this revised draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is to provide detailed guidance to support the local authority, developers, housing providers and local communities on how West Oxfordshire District Council will meet its objective of securing the delivery of affordable housing through the application of Local Plan Policy H3 – Affordable Housing and related core objectives (including Core Objective 6 (CO6)).

1.1.3 The SPD will supplement the Local Plan and whilst this does not in itself make it policy, it will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

1.1.4 The overall objectives of the SPD are:

- To provide clear and transparent guidance on the application of Policy H3 and CO6 to assist those proposing developments to make successful planning applications and improve the delivery rates of affordable housing in West Oxfordshire.
- To deliver a better balance between the affordable housing need and the supply of affordable accommodation with particular reference to location, housing mix and tenure type proposed on developments.
- To improve the quality and range of affordable housing options available within the District.
- To ensure that new affordable housing addresses the climate change emergency.
- To secure improved housing affordability through the provision of a broad range of different forms of affordable housing.
- To promote new and innovative approaches to the delivery of affordable housing.
- To help sustain and improve the vitality, vibrancy and quality of life of local communities.

## 1.2 Scope

1.2.1 This draft SPD provides detailed guidance on how Policy H3 and Core Objective 6 of the WODC Local Plan will be implemented in order to support proposed development and help deliver sustainable communities. In particular, it contains guidance on the following:

- Developments where affordable housing will be sought – qualifying sites and thresholds
- Quantity of affordable homes needed
- Size and Mix of Affordable Homes
- Off-site provision / Financial contribution
- Viability
- Standards and Design
- Section 106 Agreements
- Nominations, Key Worker and Local connection provision
- Timing of Provision
- Occupancy
- Delivery Mechanisms
- Alternative Affordable Housing delivery routes

## 1.3 Status

1.3.1 This is the revised draft version of the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which has been published following an initial period of public consultation on an earlier draft in June 2020.

1.3.2 A number of amendments have been made to the revised draft SPD to address the comments raised. The revised draft version of the SPD will be subject to a further 6-week period of public consultation and following on from that, the Council will seek to formally adopt it having regard to the need for any further amendments.

1.3.3 Once adopted, the SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of relevant planning applications, replacing the Council's current Affordable Housing SPD (2007).

1.3.4 Please see the Glossary at the end of the document for an explanation of the abbreviations and terms used in this document.

## 1.4 Consultation

1.4.1 The revised draft SPD will be the subject of public consultation for a period of six weeks. The consultation will run from **5 March** to **16 April 2021**.

1.4.2 There are a variety of ways to respond to the consultation:

- Electronic representations should be sent by email to [planning.consultation@westoxon.gov.uk](mailto:planning.consultation@westoxon.gov.uk)
- By posting a response to:  
Planning Policy, West Oxfordshire District Council,  
Elmfield, New Yatt Road, Witney, Oxon OX28 1PB

1.4.3 All comments received will be carefully considered and taken into account in any decision to formally adopt the SPD (expected - spring 2021).

## 2.0 Legislative and Policy Context

### 2.1 The NPPF (2019)

2.1.1 The Government's National Planning Policy Framework – NPPF (most recently updated in February 2019) and associated Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) requires local authorities to deliver a sufficient number and range of homes to meet the needs of present and future generations.

2.1.2 The NPPF states:

***'Within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies – including but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes'.***

### 2.2 The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031

2.2.1 The West Oxfordshire Local Plan was formally adopted in September 2018. It seeks to provide at least 15,950 homes in the period 2011 – 2031 and identifies a significant need for new affordable housing.

2.2.2 Policy H3 relates to affordable housing and is set out in full at Appendix 1. In short, the policy requires the provision of on-site affordable housing as part of larger market housing schemes of 11 or more units varying by location from 35% - 50%.



2.2.3 Smaller market housing schemes of 6-10 units within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) are required to make a financial contribution towards the provision of affordable housing within the District. The policy also addresses the issue of housing mix and the provision of affordable housing in rural areas including through Rural Exception Sites (RES).

2.2.4 Policy H3 is supported by Core Objective 6 (CO6) of the Local Plan which seeks to:

***‘Plan for an appropriate mix of new residential accommodation which provides a variety of sizes, types and affordability with special emphasis on the provision of homes for local people in housing need who cannot afford to buy or rent at market prices including those wishing to self-build, as well as homes to meet the needs of older people, younger people, black and minority ethnic communities, people with disabilities, families and travelling communities’.***

### 2.3 The West Oxfordshire Council Plan (2020 – 2024)

2.3.1 Part of the vision of the current West Oxfordshire Council Plan is to meet the housing needs of the District’s changing population, securing the provision of market and affordable housing of a high quality for the wide range of householders making their home in West Oxfordshire.

2.3.2 Key actions of particular relevance to the revised draft SPD include:

- Ensuring an adequate overall supply of housing to meet identified needs including those in need of affordable housing;
- Measures to increase the number of affordable housing units delivered annually, including the promotion of innovative housing solutions, so that we can reduce the housing waiting list;
- The promotion and delivery of self-build and custom-build plots and opportunities to meet the needs of those on the Council’s self-build register;
- Investigating a new West Oxfordshire living rent to ensure that affordable homes are truly affordable for local people and key workers;
- Using the planning system to ensure that new developments provide a range of housing products, including low-cost home ownership models and the right size and flexibility of properties and property types to meet the current and future needs of our residents; and
- Exploring and developing new partnerships (for example the Blenheim approach) to deliver on: modern methods of construction to reduce carbon footprints, more landowner provided housing and genuine community-led housing opportunities.

## 3.0 What is affordable housing?

### 3.1 West Oxfordshire definition

- 3.1.1 There is no singular definition of affordable housing.
- 3.1.2 The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 defines affordable housing as ‘that which is affordable to those who cannot afford market priced housing locally to rent or purchase’. It is housing provided with either public or private subsidy for people who would otherwise be unable to resolve their housing requirements in the local housing market because of the relationship between housing cost and local incomes’.

### 3.2 NPPF definition

- 3.2.1 The NPPF (February 2019) provides the following, specific definition of affordable housing<sup>1</sup>:

**Affordable housing:** housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:

**a) Affordable housing for rent:** meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government’s rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).

**b) Starter homes:** is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household’s eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.

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<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that the District Council will have regard to any amendments to the definition of affordable housing as set out in any subsequent iterations of the NPPF.

**c) Discounted market sales housing:** is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.

**d) Other affordable routes to home ownership:** is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

3.2.2 A more detailed explanation of how each affordable housing tenure type works in practice in West Oxfordshire is given in the following table:

Rental Housing	
a) Social rented housing:	Social rented housing is housing owned and managed by registered providers, for which target rents are determined through the Government’s rent policy for Social Rent. It may also include rented housing owned or managed by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with Homes England as a condition of grant. Typically social rented housing costs 50-60% of market rented housing.
b) Affordable Rent housing	Let by private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable Rent housing must meet all of the following conditions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. The rent must be no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable) and not exceed the level of the Local Housing Allowance for the size of property, whichever is the lower;</li> <li>ii. the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and for Build to Rent schemes, Affordable Private Rent housing is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision.</li> </ul>

c) Rent to Buy	<p>A scheme to help first time buyers, or those returning to the market following relationship breakdown. Households are able to rent a home at an affordable or intermediate rent, providing an opportunity to build up a deposit. There are different models of rent to buy with different terms and conditions but generally households rent the property for a defined period with the expectation of purchase at the end of the period. Some rent to buy schemes include support towards purchase such as gifted deposits.</p>
d) Build to Rent	<p>Build to rent refers to purpose built housing that is 100% rented and can form part of a wider multi-tenure development scheme comprising flats or houses. Schemes will usually offer longer tenancy agreements of 3+ years and will be part of a professionally managed stock in single ownership and management control. The NPPF states that “20% is generally a suitable benchmark for the level of Affordable Private Rent homes to be provided (and maintained in perpetuity) in any Build to Rent scheme”. The guidance also stipulates that Affordable Private Rent should be at least 20% cheaper than the rest of the scheme in line with the Affordable Rent product. In addition affordable units within Build to Rent developments are not expected to be managed by a registered provider, but should be under common management control by the private operator managing the whole site / block.</p> <p>Affordable units should be distributed throughout the development and physically indistinguishable from the market rent homes within the development in terms of quality and size. Build to Rent developments will be secured under a S106 agreement details of which can be found in Appendix 3.</p> <p>Build to Rent market rent assessments should be carried out by Build to Rent Developers using the definition of the International Valuation Standards Committee as adopted by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors. WODC reserve the right to benchmark this rate against evidence from a relevant local housing needs assessment and if necessary use this evidence to justify an amendment to the rate required. Equally, there is also provision for developers, in exception, to make a case seeking to differ from the benchmark.</p>

<b>Intermediate Housing</b> - Homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent but below market sale and rent levels. It includes a range of low cost home ownership products for households who are not able to access home ownership through the market:	
a) Shared ownership:	The purchaser buys a proportion of the value of the home, e.g. 50%, and the remaining share is kept by the freeholder which is usually a registered provider. A subsidised rent is paid on the remainder of the equity. The proportion offered for sale by the registered provider should not be fixed in advance, but tailored to the individual circumstances of the individual household. The initial equity share must be between 25% and 75% and the Council will seek to ensure that a good proportion of each type and size of shared ownership units are initially sold at shares at the lower end of this range in order to help ensure affordability. When they can afford to, purchasers have the opportunity to 'staircase', i.e. to buy further equity shares until they own 100% of the property.
b) Shared equity	The purchaser acquires the whole of the property but effectively only pays a proportion of the value, e.g. 75%. The remaining 25% is secured by an equity loan without any rental obligation.
c) Discount market sale	Discount Market Sale is a low cost home ownership product where a new build property is purchased at a discounted price, usually around 20% of the market value, and aims to help low and middle earners get onto the property ladder.
d) First Homes <sup>2</sup>	In February 2020, the Government consulted on a new 'First Homes' policy designed to help first time buyers by offering a discount of at least 30% from market values. In August 2020, the Government published a summary of the consultation responses and the Government's view on the way forward. The response demonstrates a clear commitment to taking the proposals forward with further detail to be taken forward through revisions to the NPPF and associated Planning Practice Guidance. The intention is that First Homes will be delivered as a proportion of Section 106 affordable housing contributions (at least 25%). Further consultation on the technical detail is to follow.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/first-homes>

- 3.2.3 The NPPF 2019 definition of affordable housing outlined above makes it clear that most forms of affordable housing should remain affordable in perpetuity (i.e. for future occupants). Affordable housing for rent (affordable rent and social rent) for example must include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. Similarly, in respect of discount market sales housing, provisions should be in place to ensure that housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.
- 3.2.4 Other affordable routes to home ownership such as shared-ownership, where public grant funding is provided, should also include provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.
- 3.2.5 In accordance with the NPPF, the Council will seek to ensure that where relevant and appropriate, affordable housing is secured as such for the benefit of future eligible households (for example by remaining at an affordable price or with subsidy/sale proceeds being recycled into alternative affordable housing provision).
- 3.2.6 Prospective developers are recommended to contact the Council’s planning and housing services at an early stage for more detailed advice on the provision of affordable housing in connection with particular development proposals, prior to submission of a planning application. Early discussion with planning officers helps ensure better quality applications are submitted.
- 3.2.7 Full details on pre-application advice include the application form and details of costs can be found on the Council website.<sup>3</sup>
- 3.2.8 The provision of affordable housing also requires consultation with the council’s affordable housing development team. The team works closely with planning officers and registered providers to ensure new communities are sustainable and will input into the delivery, tenure mix, location and transfer arrangements with the chosen provider. Contact details for the team can be found in Appendix 2.
- 3.2.9 Where the affordable housing is to be transferred to a Registered Social Landlord (RSL) or Registered Provider (RP) detailed discussions should be held with them on the layouts and specifications e.g. Space standards. Any RSL / RP must be able to meet the Council’s eligibility criteria, full details of which are available from the Council’s Housing Services.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-permission/get-advice-on-your-application/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/housing/>

## 4.0 Existing Affordable Housing Need and Provision in West Oxfordshire



Figure 1: Recently completed affordable housing in West Oxfordshire

### 4.1 Affordable housing need

4.1.1 The provision of new housing in West Oxfordshire is a critically important issue and a recurring theme in the Local Plan. The Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) whilst published in 2014, at the current time, remains the most recently published countywide assessment of housing need for Oxfordshire. For West Oxfordshire, the SHMA identified the need for 660 homes per year over the plan period to 2031, of which 274 should be affordable. Increasing delivery of the number, type and distribution of affordable housing for both rent and subsidised sale is therefore a key priority for West Oxfordshire.

4.1.2 Policy H3 of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 seeks to secure an increase in the supply of affordable homes by increasing the number of developments which support affordable housing and increasing the number of affordable homes on those developments.

4.1.3 The Council also aims to widen the choice of dwelling size and tenures available to redress the imbalance in the housing market. Local Plan Policy H4 – Type and Mix of New Homes is a particularly relevant consideration in this respect seeking to ensure that a good, balanced mix of new homes are provided within all new residential developments.

4.1.4 In addition to the level of affordable housing need identified in the SHMA, the Council’s housing register provides a more up to date indication of affordable housing need in the District. The graph below shows the total number of applicants as of 27 Jan 2020 broken down by preference for particular property sizes. It is relevant to note that the main need is for 1 and 2-bed properties. The issue of affordable housing size requirements is further considered in Section 5.2 below.

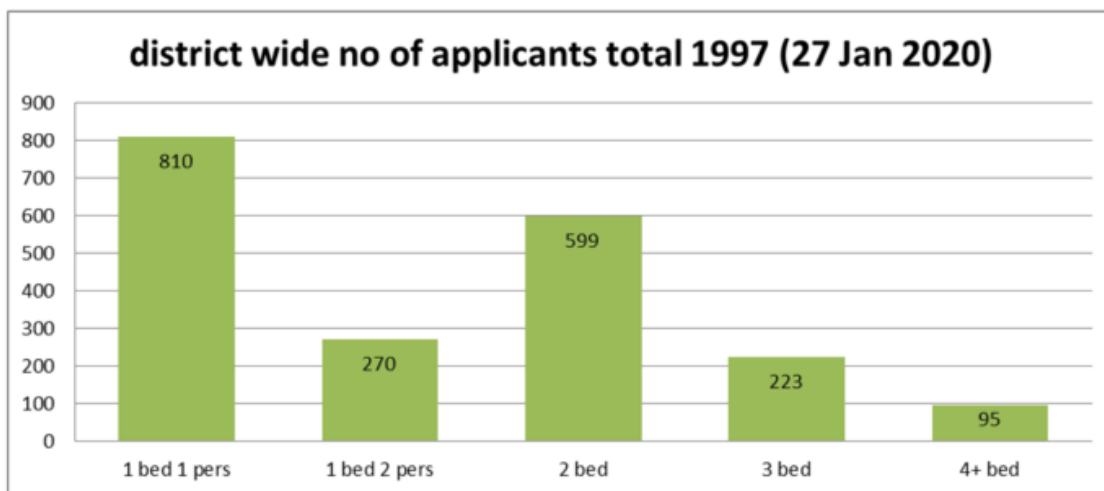
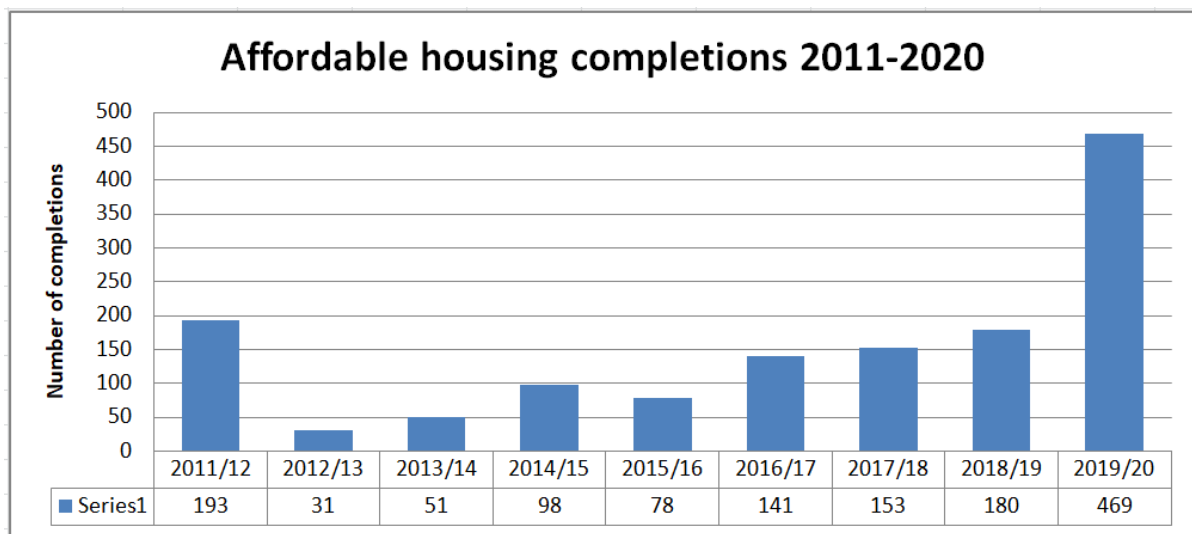


Figure 2: Affordable housing under construction



## 4.2 Current affordable housing provision – supply and type by location

4.2.1 Delivery of both affordable and market housing in West Oxfordshire has fluctuated since the start of the Local Plan period 2011. The lower rates of affordable housing delivery in the early years can be attributed to a number of factors including wider economic conditions, development viability and national policy changes. WODC has continued to work closely with developers to accelerate delivery of housing in the district and there has been a steady increase in the number of affordable housing completions since 2012/13 as shown below. This is expected to continue.

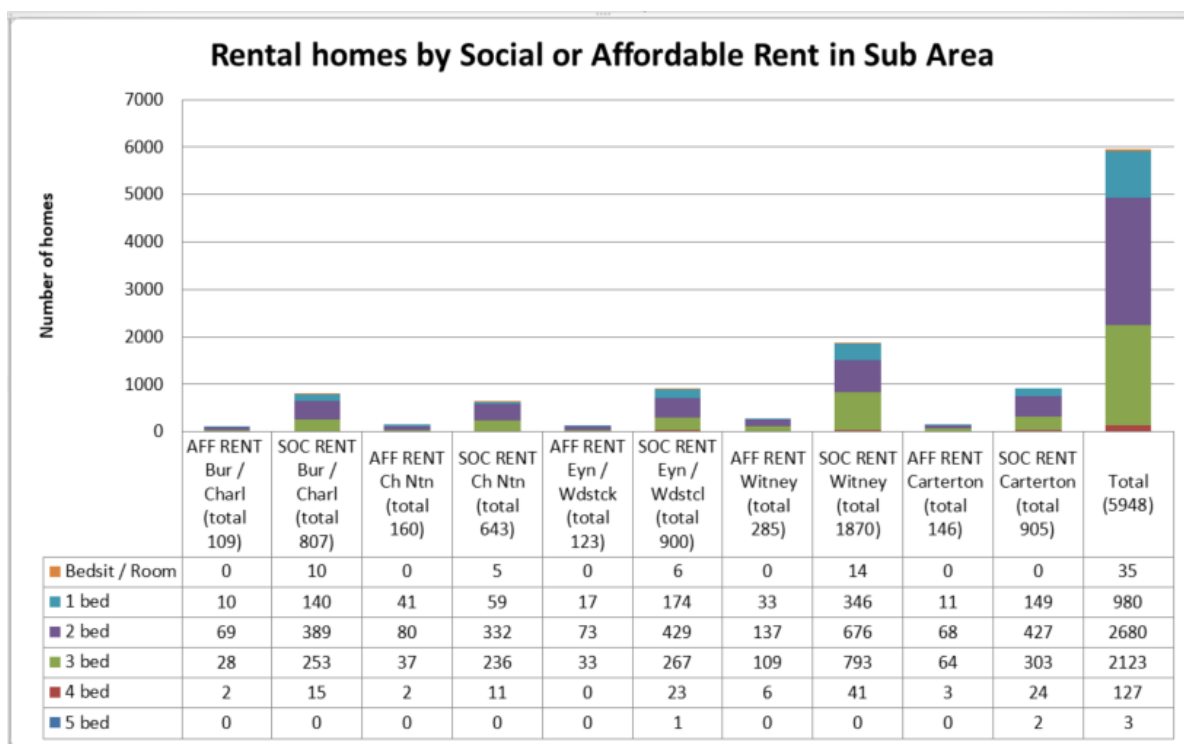


4.2.2 This increase in housing delivery demonstrates the positive approach to affordable housing by WODC and we will continue to seek innovative ways of working with developers to increase both the number and speed of affordable homes delivered across the District.

4.2.3 The table below shows the current levels of Social and Affordable Rental properties available in West Oxfordshire based on the five Local Plan sub-areas:

- Witney sub-area
- Carterton sub-area
- Chipping Norton sub-area
- Eynsham – Woodstock sub-area
- Burford – Charlbury sub-area

4.2.4 It can be seen that in terms of the current affordable housing stock, there is a predominance of social rented properties across all areas, in particular within the Witney sub-area.



## 5.0 Future Affordable Housing provision in West Oxfordshire

### 5.1 'Qualifying' sites – when will affordable housing or a contribution towards affordable housing be required?

#### *On-site provision of affordable housing*

5.1.1 In accordance with the Local Plan, the Council will seek between 35% and 50% affordable housing on all qualifying sites except within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), where a financial contribution in lieu of on-site provision applies.

5.1.2 Policy H3 states that housing schemes of 11 or more dwellings, or which have a maximum combined gross floor space of more than 1,000m<sup>2</sup> will be required to provide affordable housing on-site as a proportion of the market homes as follows:

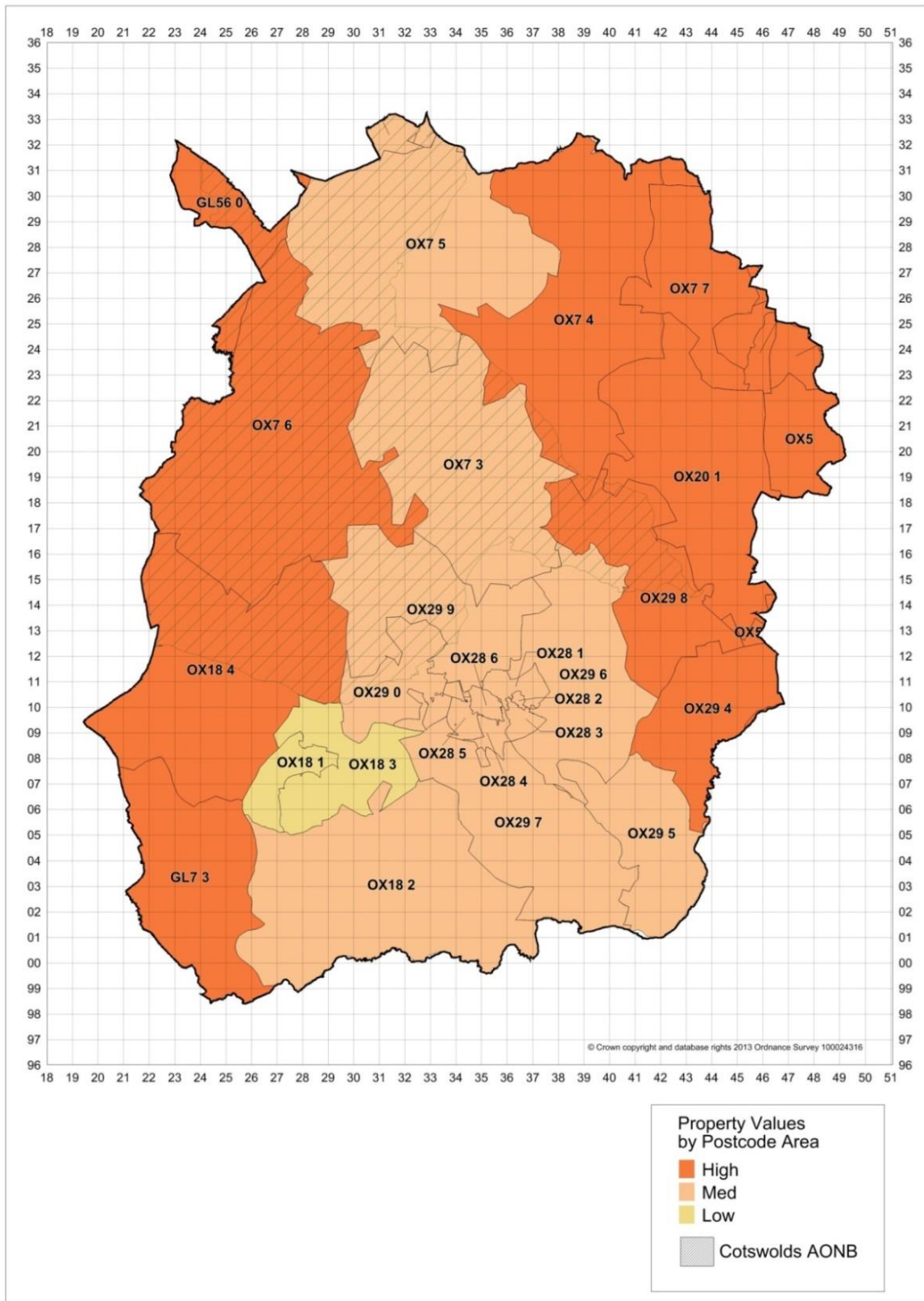
- High value zone – 50%
- Medium value zone – 40%
- Low value zone – 35%

5.1.3 The above requirement also applies to sheltered housing but a reduced level of provision will be sought in respect of extra-care housing as follows:

- High value zone – 45%
- Medium value zone – 35%
- Low value zone – 10%

5.1.4 The lower requirement for extra-care housing was determined as part of the Local Plan examination and is based on the typical development viability of such schemes which tend to have large areas of communal space (i.e. non-saleable).

5.1.5 A map showing the extent of the three value zones is shown below:



### *Off-site Provision / Financial Contributions*

- 5.1.6 There are a number of circumstances in which the Council will or may accept a financial contribution towards affordable housing in lieu of on-site provision.
- 5.1.7 Under Policy H3, within the Cotswolds AONB, market housing schemes of 6-10 units and which have a maximum combined floor space of no more than 1,000m<sup>2</sup> will be required to make a financial contribution for off-site affordable housing provision within the District. This amount is £100 per m<sup>2</sup> based on the Gross Internal Area (GIA) of the proposed market units.
- 5.1.8 Policy H3 also recognises that in some instances, it may not be possible, even on larger market housing schemes, to deliver affordable housing on-site e.g. it is not physically possible or feasible, or there is evidence that a separate site may be more suitable to meet local need and contribute to the creation of mixed communities.
- 5.1.9 In such circumstances, a financial contribution in lieu of on-site provision (or a combination of on-site provision and a financial contribution) may be appropriate. This will be determined on an individual site basis. In accordance with Local Plan Policy H3, affordable housing mix and tenure will be responsive to identified local needs and site-specific opportunities.
- 5.1.10 Financial contributions received from developers will be held in a specific affordable housing fund to support the provision of new affordable homes which will be administered by the Strategic Affordable Housing Team.
- 5.1.11 The financial contributions will be ring fenced to enable the Local Authority to provide stimulus to the affordable housing market by:
- local authority development including estate renewal; WODC is currently developing a parcel of land at Langford for affordable housing and funding can be used to increase the % of affordable units delivered on the site.
  - support of a registered providers development; WODC is working with registered providers to promote small sites in rural locations to meet local need. In general these rural exception sites will be to meet local need and would not normally be considered for development. Commuted sums can be used to increase the % of affordable units delivered and will reviewed on a case by case basis.
  - housing purchased on the private market to be transferred to a registered provider; additionality is being sought from developers with funding through either the Growth Board or commuted sums.
  - vacant properties bought back to use; WODC is interested in securing vacant properties to provide additional affordable housing particularly in the main service centres of Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton.
  - other housing schemes that qualify under planning policy.

## 5.2 The size of affordable homes needed

5.2.1 The existing housing stock in West Oxfordshire is dominated by larger properties and the Council's aim is to redress this imbalance by providing smaller family homes for younger households and those wishing to downsize.

5.2.2 The Oxfordshire SHMA (2014) remains at the current time, the most recent assessment of housing need in West Oxfordshire and provides an indication of the size of affordable homes needed (by bedroom size) in the period 2011 – 2031. The indicative mix of dwelling sizes is as follows:

- 1-bedroom 28.4%
- 2-bedroom 34.7%
- 3-bedroom 30.4%
- 4+ bedroom 2.6%

5.2.3 This is reflected in the West Oxfordshire Local Plan which includes the following indicative size mix for affordable housing:

- 65% one and two-bedroomed homes
- 35% three and four-bedroomed homes

5.2.4 More recent evidence prepared by ICENI<sup>5</sup> in support of planned growth at Eynsham, identifies a similar indicative affordable housing size mix as set out in the table below.

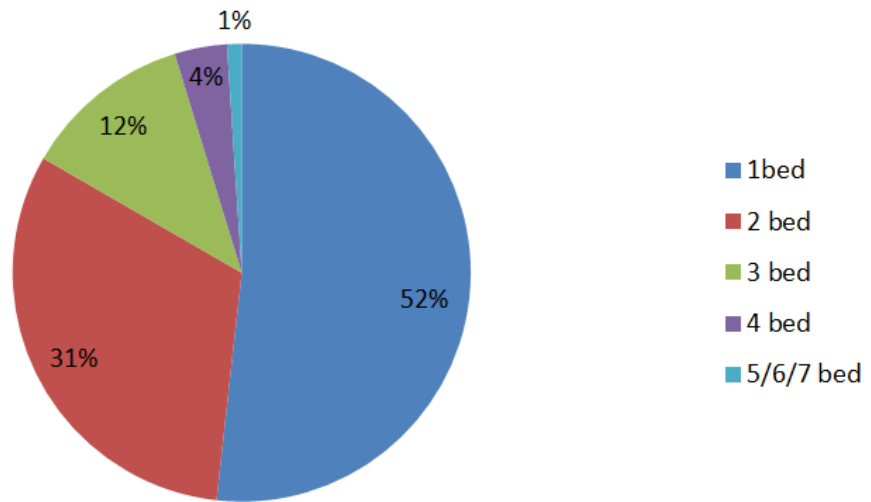
	1-bed	2-bed	3-bed	4-bed
Social/affordable rent	30-35%	30-40%	30-35%	5%
Affordable home ownership	20-25%	40%	25-30%	5-10%

5.2.5 Further intelligence on the size of affordable homes needed in West Oxfordshire is provided by the Council's Choice Based Lettings database<sup>6</sup> which shows that of those registered in need of affordable rented accommodation, the greatest requirement is for 1-bed properties (52%) and 2-bed properties (31%) as shown in the chart below.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/mbwnzsw2/housing-strategy-advice-west-oxfordshire.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Homeseeker Plus data May 2020

## Choice based letting applicants reported bedroom need av. Jun 2018 - May 2020



1 bed	52%
2 bed	33%
3 bed	12%
4 bed	4%

- 5.2.6 In determining the most appropriate mix of affordable property sizes in any qualifying development, the District Council will have general regard to the indicative guidelines provided by the SHMA (2014) and in the case of growth in the Eynsham area, the more recent housing evidence prepared by ICENI.
- 5.2.7 Alongside this, the Council will consider registered property size requirements from the Council's Choice Based Lettings database as well as any other specific evidence of local need, the nature of the development and any relevant practical management considerations.

### 5.3 Preferred Tenure Mix

- 5.3.1 WODC welcomes a mix of tenure for affordable housing to ensure a balanced community is delivered on each development. Developers are encouraged to commence discussions with Registered Providers at the earliest opportunity to understand the affordable housing type and tenure required for their proposed development to achieve this aim.

5.3.2 As an indicative starting point, the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 highlights a significantly greater need for rented accommodation than for the various forms of intermediate housing, with a ratio of 2:1 in favour of affordable rented homes. This is however a general guide only and the precise mix will be determined on a case by case basis. Further guidance is provided below.

#### *Rented Affordable Products*

- 5.3.3 Due to the high property values in West Oxfordshire, access to affordable housing is a key challenge with the highest level of need being for rented accommodation. There are several forms of rented affordable products as outlined earlier, including affordable rent, social rent and affordable private rent (in the context of Build to Rent schemes).
- 5.3.4 The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 and evidence which supports it, is predicated on the basis of new affordable housing schemes in the District comprising two-thirds affordable rent to one-third intermediate housing (shared ownership etc.).
- 5.3.5 The District Council will therefore continue to seek the provision of a high proportion of affordable rent as part of all affordable housing proposals although the precise proportion will be a matter for negotiation on a case by case basis, having regard to all relevant circumstances including identified needs, the specific characteristics and location of the site and where applicable, any issues of development viability.
- 5.3.6 Where affordable rent is provided, Affordable rent levels should be set with reference to Local Housing Allowance levels and at no more than 80% of market rental taking into account the local context for the rent levels. Full details can be found on the MHCLG Policy statement on rents for Social Housing<sup>7</sup>.
- 5.3.7 The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 makes no specific reference to the provision of social rent in West Oxfordshire, however as it represents the most 'affordable' type of rented affordable housing, the District Council is keen to facilitate the provision of social rent wherever possible within the District to provide a balanced mix of options and to increase affordability. The pre-submission draft Area Action Plan for Salt Cross Garden Village for example, seeks to ensure that social rented homes are provided as part of the overall mix of affordable homes.
- 5.3.8 Elsewhere, developers will be encouraged to include a proportion of social rent as part of the overall mix of affordable homes in other schemes, particularly larger schemes which provide the opportunity for a greater mix of different tenure types.

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[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/781746/Policy\\_Statement.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/781746/Policy_Statement.pdf)



5.3.9 As a matter of principle, the Council will support the provision of purpose built, build to rent properties in sustainable, accessible locations. In accordance with national policy, affordable housing for rent (referred to as affordable private rent) will be the expected form of affordable housing provision.

#### **A West Oxfordshire 'Living Rent'**

5.3.10 In August 2020, the District Council commissioned Oxford Brookes University to undertake a study on the merits of introducing a 'Living Rent' scheme in West Oxfordshire.

5.3.11 A Living Rent is one which is linked to a tenant's income, meaning that more disposable income is left after paying housing costs for household essentials or, for example, saving for a deposit for a mortgage. The term is not new, it has been around since about 2015, but it has gained currency in recent years as house and rental costs have spiralled, particularly in the private sector, and new forms of 'affordable' rent for social housing have been introduced. Different rent thresholds are used but it is generally accepted that spending between 28% and 33% of median income on housing costs is seen as a 'living' rent.

5.3.12 The aim of the research was to provide recommendations on whether a Living Rent initiative is required with particular reference to those residents in the rent/buy gap and, if so, the structure and implementation methodology of such a model(s).

5.3.13 The main conclusions reached are as follows:

1. In WODC affordable rents are generally within a Living Rent range (28-33% of median wage) but not low enough to allow families in the private rental sector to save for a deposit in a reasonable timeframe.
2. There are significant geographical differences within the District in terms of both rent levels and house prices.
3. Introduction of a Living Rent would make accessing home ownership easier however this would be a long term process due to the high cost of houses in the district making saving for a suitable deposit still out of reach for many.
4. Unaffordability across the District may be driven more by high house prices than rent levels.
5. Availability of accurate data for WODC is a significant issue when calculating a suitable Living Rent level and further localised earning data is required.

5.3.14 The key recommendations from the report are:

1. In the review of the Local Plan in 2021 WODC should look to re-evaluate the current value zones applied to seeking affordable housing across the district.
2. WODC may also want to consider the amount of affordable housing sought on new developments based on the house prices and incomes differences highlighted in the report
3. WODC need to consider whether a Living Rent should be targeted at low-cost home ownership or more broadly across the rented sector
4. WODC to consider a pilot partnership with a developer / landowner /RP to test a Living Rent model.
5. WODC might look to secure a better rental product e.g. Build to Rent and look at affordable rent level differences across the district

5.3.15 On this basis, the Council proposes to take forward a pilot study as a next step forward in investigating the applicability of a living rent policy in West Oxfordshire.

#### *Affordable Home Ownership*

5.3.16 In addition to rented affordable products, there are various existing and emerging forms of affordable home ownership options including starter homes, discount market housing, shared ownership, relevant equity loans, rent to buy and other low cost homes for sale. As outlined earlier, in February 2020, the Government consulted on a new 'First Homes' policy designed to help first time buyers by offering a discount of at least 30% from market values and in a response to the consultation published in August 2020, the Government confirmed that this proposal will be taken forward through revisions to the NPPF and associated Planning Practice Guidance.

5.3.17 Of these affordable home ownership options, WODC favours the provision of Shared Ownership as it provides a clear route to home ownership with occupants having the opportunity to increase their equity share over time. Typically, a person acquires a 25% share initially (with rent paid on the remaining 75%) and can eventually 'staircase' up to 100% ownership.

5.3.18 Other Shared Ownership models at 40% initial purchase levels have been supported on some developments in West Oxfordshire and developers are encouraged to consider shared ownership in their viability modelling as WODC consider it is the most accessible route to home ownership.

- 5.3.19 Whilst the Council's preference is for shared-ownership properties, WODC recognises the need to offer a balanced mix of tenures on all developments and welcomes early discussions between developers and RP's to ensure a suitable blend of tenures is provided to attract the widest mix of residents.
- 5.3.20 This will include consideration of all relevant options including shared equity, discount market sale properties, rent to buy and when formally introduced, First Homes in line with national policy and associated planning practice guidance.
- 5.3.21 At the current time, the future of Starter Homes is rather unclear given the proposed introduction of First Homes and the Council will therefore keep under review whether or not Starter Homes (as defined in the Housing and Planning Act 2016) should comprise part of the agreed mix of affordable developments in West Oxfordshire moving forwards.

## 5.4 Rural Exception sites and Entry Level Exception Sites

### *Rural Exception Sites*

- 5.4.1 The NPPF describes rural exception sites as follows:

***'In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs, and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this'.***

- 5.4.2 The WODC Local Plan defines rural exception sites as land whereby affordable housing is provided in locations that would not normally be allowed for new housing and recognises that such sites may come forward as speculative 'windfall' development.
- 5.4.3 The Council will continue to identify suitable sites for affordable housing through rural exception sites (RES). This is reflected in Policy H3 – Affordable Housing which states that West Oxfordshire District Council and its partners will work with parish councils, registered providers of affordable housing and local housing, community land and self-build trusts to identify additional suitable rural sites for small scale affordable housing schemes to meet specific local housing needs which cannot be met in any other way.
- 5.4.4 Evidence of the scale and quantum of need for individual Rural Exception Sites will be drawn from a variety of relevant sources including where available, local/parish housing needs surveys, parish and town neighbourhood plans, and the WODC choice

based letting systems which can provide details on those on the housing waiting list with a local connection or who are key workers with accommodation requirements.

- 5.4.5 In accordance with national policy, all new homes on these sites will remain affordable in perpetuity to people in housing need who have a local connection with the parish or appropriate adjoining parishes. Sites will be well-related to the existing built-up areas of towns and villages. Where family homes are proposed priority will be given to locations within a reasonable walking distance of a primary school.
- 5.4.6 In accordance with the NPPF, Policy H3 recognises that an element of market housing may be appropriate as part of the overall mix within a rural exception site. In such cases, it will be for the developer or landowner to demonstrate not only why the site is suitable for housing, but also why a traditional rural exception site approach (i.e. 100% affordable housing) is not appropriate or achievable. Any market housing will be expected to be a subsidiary element of a predominantly affordable housing scheme.
- 5.4.7 Any such proposal will be considered against the relevant policies of the Local Plan including in particular Policy OS2: Locating development in the Right Places and Policy H2: Delivery of new homes.
- 5.4.8 Neighbourhood Plans provides a further opportunity to identify small-scale affordable housing sites again potentially with an element of market housing. The District Council will work proactively with local communities to identify any such opportunities.

#### *Entry-Level Exception Sites*

- 5.4.9 The NPPF states that

***‘Local planning authorities should support the development of entry-level exception sites, suitable for first time buyers (or those looking to rent their first home), unless the need for such homes is already being met within the authority’s area.***

***These sites should be on land which is not already allocated for housing and should: a) comprise of entry-level homes that offer one or more types of affordable housing as defined in Annex 2 of this Framework; and***

***b) be adjacent to existing settlements, proportionate in size to them, not compromise the protection given to areas or assets of particular importance in this Framework, and comply with any local design policies and standards.***

***Entry-level exception sites should not be larger than one hectare in size or exceed 5% of the size of the existing settlement. In addition they should not be permitted in Areas of Outstanding National Beauty or land designated as Green Belt'.***

5.4.10 To date, the Council has had no such proposals put forward, but in accordance with the NPPF, the Council will support the development of entry-level exception sites subject to relevant policy considerations within the NPPF and West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

## **5.5 Self-build and custom-build housing**

5.5.1 The NPPF defines self-build and custom-build housing as 'housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual'.

5.5.2 The NPPF also states that such housing can be either market or affordable housing.

5.5.3 The Government is supportive of custom build housing which it sees as a more affordable route to home ownership and an opportunity to create bespoke, well-designed and sustainably constructed new homes. It also offers the opportunity for small local builders and contractors creating local jobs and contributing to the local economy.

5.5.4 West Oxfordshire District Council maintains a self-build register where those wishing to express an interest in self and custom build can register. The register allows the District to gauge the level of demand locally and the type of route they are interested in e.g. serviced plot, self-finish, custom build etc. and examine how many meet the locally applied criteria. These criteria include local connection, future occupation as sole residence, financial capability etc.

5.5.5 There is a clear level of interest in self-build and the Council is keen to promote greater diversity in the local housing stock, innovative design and more affordable and sustainable construction.

5.5.6 In addition to maintaining an accurate picture of need/demand for self and custom build within West Oxfordshire, the Local Plan 2031 outlines a number of other measures which the Council will pursue in order to encourage such provision. These include:

- Offering support and advice to those wishing to undertake a custom/self-build project in the District;
- Working with individuals and self-build groups to help identify suitable and deliverable sites including through the development of Neighbourhood Plans;

- Endeavouring to offer a suitable plot to those individuals/organisations within a reasonable period of time;
  - Utilising affordable housing commuted sums secured under Policy H3 to acquire land in order to promote affordable custom/self-build projects; and
  - Encouraging the re-use of existing buildings through custom/self-build projects.
- 5.5.7 The principal mechanism introduced by the Council through the Local Plan is Policy H5 - Custom and Self-Build Housing, which requires all housing developments of 100 or more dwellings to include 5% of the residential plots to be serviced and made available for this purpose. This can include the partial completion of units to be made available for self-finish.
- 5.5.8 The NPPF makes it clear that self-build and custom-build housing can be either market or affordable. A service plot made available for the purpose of self-build might for example be made available at a discount from market value. Similarly, a self-finish property could be provided by a housing association and sold at below market value to local people in housing need, or available on a shared ownership basis.
- 5.5.9 As such, on larger schemes of 100 or more homes, where the 5% self/custom build requirement applies, the District Council will enter into discussions with the relevant developer to agree how some or all of the 5% self/custom build requirement could contribute towards the relevant on-site affordable housing requirement for that site (which under Policy H3 of the Local Plan ranges from 35% to 50% depending on location).
- 5.5.10 As an illustrative example, on a scheme of 1,000 homes, where the requirement is for 40% affordable housing, the total number of affordable homes would be 400. The self/custom build requirement would be 5% or 50 homes.
- 5.5.11 Assuming it was agreed that 40% of the self/custom build requirement would be made available as 'affordable' this would equate to 20 homes. Total affordable provision on the site would therefore be as follows:
- 380 'standard' affordable homes (i.e. affordable rent, shared ownership etc.)
  - 20 affordable self/custom build plots/shells
- 5.5.12 The precise level of affordable self/custom build provision will be a matter for discussion on a case-by-case basis taking into account all relevant factors including the overall mix of dwellings proposed, the proportion and type of affordable housing proposed, the specific characteristics of the site and proposed development and where relevant, development viability considerations.

- 5.5.13 Where involvement of an RP is required to enable this form of delivery early consultation will be required. The Developer and RP will be required to undertake the marketing of the plots at any expenses incurred to promote self-build. Design elements will be controlled through creation of a 'plot passport' to ensure units are in keeping with the surrounding development. If after a period of 3 months advertising there is insufficient interest from the self-build register the affordable plots can be completed by the developer and form part of the RP's affordable housing provision.
- 5.5.14 The Council will also encourage the re-use of existing buildings through custom/self-build projects and welcome submissions from groups and individuals for the conversion / re-purposing of existing buildings.

## **6.0 Affordable Housing Standards and Design Requirements**

- 6.0.1 Design Standards for affordable housing should be no lower than that for market housing and should be tenure blind i.e. not distinguishable by its external appearance. Housing supplied for a Registered Provider should be constructed to the standards approved by the RP and it is critical that the design process recognises at an early stage the need to accommodate a mix of affordable tenures.
- 6.0.2 This mix must meet the needs of, and be attractive to, RP's and applicants are encouraged to undertake early discussions with RP's, considering alternative designs where necessary in order to accommodate on site the affordable housing requirement. When designing new homes, developers should adhere to the Housing Act, ensuring that designs can accommodate suitable furniture in order to avoid overcrowding.

### **6.1 Design criteria**

- 6.1.1 In order to achieve mixed and balanced communities, each development should look to meet the following design criteria:
- there should be no distinction between affordable units and market units, i.e. the development should be 'tenure blind';
  - the same level of parking provision should be made for the affordable housing units as for market units, and;
  - affordable units should be distributed evenly in clusters throughout the development where practicable to promote social inclusion and mixed communities. The exception to this is in relation to the design and provision of

housing for older people and developers will need to demonstrate why a deviation is required when seeing approval.

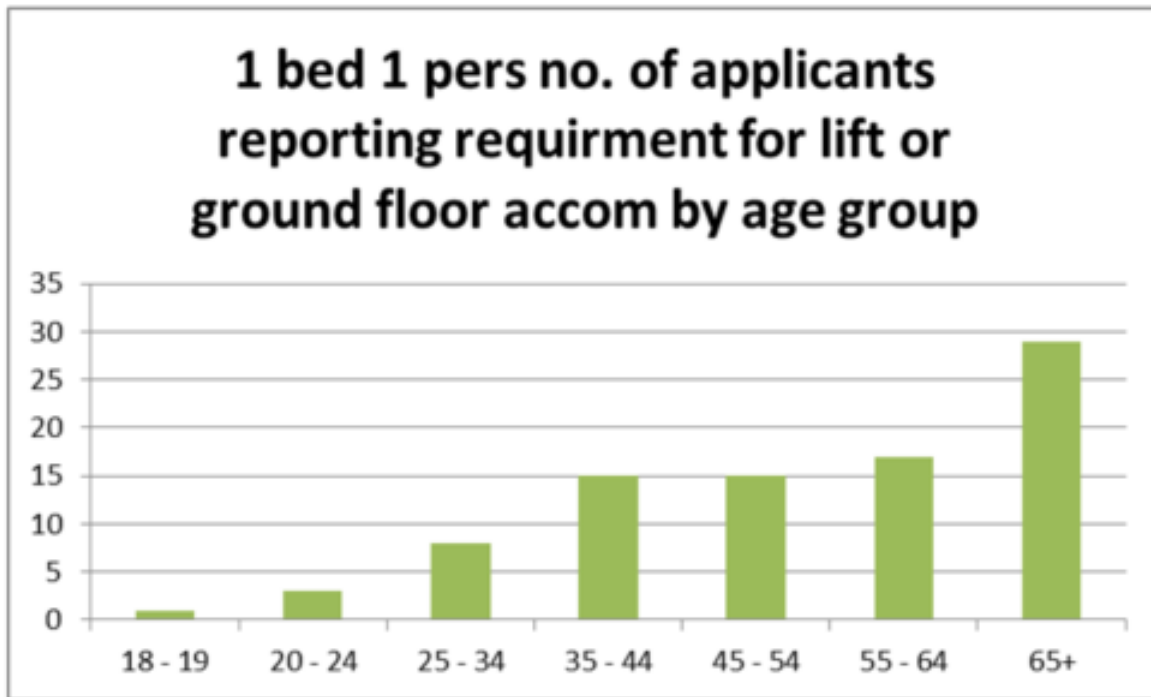
## 6.2 Accessibility and adaptability

- 6.2.1 The WODC Local Plan has identified the requirement for housing to meet the needs of different groups in the community including specialist housing provision such as housing for older people including sheltered and extra-care as well as housing for people with other specific needs including those with a disability and others who may have particular needs and requirements.
- 6.2.2 The Oxfordshire SHMA (2014) suggests that across Oxfordshire demographic trends are expected to lead to a growth in the number of households with disabilities and will seek to ensure that new homes are able to meet the changing needs of occupants as their needs change to enable them to remain in their homes as they age.
- 6.2.3 In recognition of this, under the Local Plan, the Council will require larger housing developments of 50 or more units to provide at least 25% of market and affordable homes to meet Building Regulations Requirements M4(2)<sup>8</sup> in relation to accessible and adaptable housing.
- 6.2.4 In addition, a minimum of 5% of market and affordable homes should be designed to meet Building Regulation Requirement M4(3) relating to wheelchair adaptability. Where wheelchair adaptable homes are provided they will be counted as contributing towards the 25% accessible and adaptable homes requirement.
- 6.2.5 Developers will be encouraged to ensure that ceilings are strong enough to support track hoists and to allow stairlifts to be fitted where there is a need.
- 6.2.6 Furthermore, data from the WODC Homeseeker+ register shows an increasing demand for either lift access or ground floor properties increasing with age and developers are encouraged to consider this need when designing new developments.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-and-use-of-buildings-approved-document-m>





### 6.3 Space standards

6.3.1 In March 2015 the Government set out the nationally prescribed space standards for new housing<sup>9</sup>. The guidelines set out the gross internal floor area for new dwellings at a defined level of occupancy as well as dimensions for key parts of the home, notably bedrooms, storage and floor to ceiling height. Whilst it is not a policy requirement of the Local Plan, WODC supports the use of this guidance and encourages developers to apply these as a minimum when designing new homes.

### 6.4 Tackling the Climate and Ecological Emergency

6.4.1 WODC has declared a climate and ecological emergency. In the wake of that emergency, as part of a suite of overall measures, the Council now expects developers and applicants to take an ambitious approach towards energy and sustainable design to ensure new homes being delivered in West Oxfordshire are fit for the future.

6.4.2 Core objective 18 (CO18) of the Local Plan aims to *'improve the sustainable design and construction of new development, including improving energy, water efficiency and water management'*.

<sup>9</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/524531/160519\\_Nationally\\_Described\\_Space\\_Standard\\_Final\\_Web\\_version.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/524531/160519_Nationally_Described_Space_Standard_Final_Web_version.pdf)

6.4.3 This is reflected in a number of Local Plan policies including Policy OS3 – Prudent Use of Natural Resources which requires all development proposals (including affordable housing) to show consideration of the efficient and prudent use and management of natural resources through various means including:

- Making the most efficient use of land and buildings;
- Minimising the need to travel;
- Minimising the use of non-renewable resources;
- Minimising impact on the soil resource;
- Minimising energy demands and energy loss;
- Minimising summer solar gain, maximising passive winter solar heating, lighting, natural ventilation, energy and water efficiency and reuse of materials;
- Maximising resource efficiency, including water with all new residential development will be expected to achieve the optional building regulations requirement for water efficiency of 110 litres/person/day;
- Minimising risk of flooding;
- Making use of appropriate sustainable drainage systems;
- Using recycled and energy efficient materials; and
- Minimising waste and making adequate provision for the re-use and recycling of waste and causing no deterioration and, where possible, achieving improvements in water or air quality.

6.4.4 Policy EH6 - Decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy development (excepting wind turbines) states that for all residential development for 100 dwellings or more and all residential developments in off-gas areas for 50 dwellings or more, that an energy feasibility assessment or strategy which assesses viability and practicability for decentralised energy systems, including consideration of the use of local wood fuel biomass and other renewable energy initiatives will be required.

6.4.5 Where feasibility assessments demonstrate that decentralised energy systems are practicable and viable, such systems will be required as part of the development, unless an alternative solution would deliver the same or increased energy benefits.

6.4.6 The Local Plan includes a range of other policies relating to the climate and ecological emergency including policies on biodiversity, green infrastructure, transport, flood risk, environmental protection and so on.

- 6.4.7 WODC will expect all applicants to take full consideration of these policy requirements and demonstrate, within their planning application, how the design of new affordable homes is consistent with the aims, objectives and where applicable, specific requirements of each policy.
- 6.4.8 As part of its consultation on the Future Homes Standard<sup>10</sup> the Government is seeking an uplift to Part L of the Building Regulations and changes to part F (ventilation). The aim is to increase the energy efficiency requirements for new homes and require all new build homes to be future-proofed with low energy heating and world leading levels of energy efficiency. The new standards will be introduced in 2025. WODC are in support of the new standards as a mean to address the climate emergency and reduce energy bills for our residents, especially those in affordable housing.
- 6.4.9 WODC is committed to working in partnership with developers/landowners to support and encourage the wide-scale delivery of affordable housing designed to exemplary standards. This will include discussions around the scope to deliver high standards of fabric efficiency, the use of renewable energy and ways in which embodied carbon can be reduced including through the use of modern methods of construction (see Section 6.5 below).
- 6.4.10 Nationally, there are a number of award winning affordable housing schemes, the most notable being the Goldsmith Street for Norwich City Council, a 100% affordable housing scheme which has been built to Passivhaus standards.

#### *Sustainable Design and Construction Checklist*

- 6.4.11 To aid developers and landowners, WODC is in the process of producing a 'Sustainable Design and Construction Checklist' for applicants. This will be presented within the context of Government's proposed and enhanced standards being implemented through Building Regulations and Future Homes Standard.
- 6.4.12 Further advice and guidance can be obtained from WODC's Climate Change Manager and applicants are encouraged to discuss their proposals at the earliest stage.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/the-future-homes-standard-changes-to-part-l-and-part-f-of-the-building-regulations-for-new-dwellings>

## 6.5 Modern Methods of Construction (MMC)

- 6.5.1 Modern methods of construction (MMC) are homes built using a high proportion of components produced using modern and technologically driven methods of manufacture off site and then assembled on site.
- 6.5.2 Such homes can be built up to 30% quicker than by traditional methods of construction, and with potentially a 25% reduction in costs. Studies have also suggested that MMC can reduce embodied carbon by around 30% compared with traditional methods of construction.
- 6.5.3 Other potential benefits include:
- Reduced site waste and disposal;
  - Improved quality from factory production;
  - Clear stages for inspection to address issues such as thermal bridging and airtightness; and
  - Typically lightweight – potential to build adjacent to or over existing buildings to make the most efficient use of land.
- 6.5.4 WODC therefore very much welcomes the use of modern methods of construction including off site construction as a delivery mechanism to increase the speed of delivery and quality of new homes in the district and would welcome discussions with potential developers, applicants and registered providers on this basis.

## 7.0 Viability

### 7.1 Approach to viability considerations in West Oxfordshire

- 7.1.2 The provision of affordable housing will affect the value of land for residential development but will not generally render it uneconomic for residential development. The costs of delivering a workable, high quality development should be anticipated and reflected in the price paid for land and not reduce the ability of a site to provide what is required under the planning obligation.
- 7.1.3 This is reflected in the Government’s practice guidance on viability which states that the total cost of all relevant policy requirements including contributions towards affordable housing should be taken into account when defining benchmark land values<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> Viability Planning Practice Guidance - Paragraph: 012 Reference ID: 10-012-20180724

- 7.1.4 Policy H3 of the Local Plan has been subject to viability assessment through the preparation of the Local Plan 2031 and is a known requirement of residential development in West Oxfordshire. As such, there will be a presumption that developments will include full and appropriate provision for affordable housing unless it can be robustly demonstrated otherwise.
- 7.1.5 This is consistent with the Government’s practice guidance on viability which states that ‘where up-to-date policies have set out the contributions expected from development, planning applications that fully comply with them should be assumed to be viable’<sup>12</sup>.
- 7.1.6 On this basis, it is up to the applicant to demonstrate whether particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at the application stage. Such circumstances could include, for example where development is proposed on unallocated sites of a wholly different type to those used in viability assessment that informed the plan; where further information on infrastructure or site costs is required; where particular types of development are proposed which may significantly vary from standard models of development for sale (for example build to rent or housing for older people); or where a recession or similar significant economic changes have occurred since the plan was brought into force.
- 7.1.7 In such instances, the onus is on the developer to demonstrate viability providing a full economic appraisal of the cost of development including returns from sale of housing, contribution to local infrastructure and services and required profit margin. The appraisal should be presented on a residual land value basis and include a valuation of the site in its current use, not the purchase price or hope value, and should accompany the planning application or form part of the pre-application discussions.
- 7.1.8 In accordance with the Government’s viability practice guidance, where a viability assessment is submitted to accompany a planning application this should be based upon and refer back to the viability assessment that informed the Local Plan; and the applicant should provide evidence of what has changed since then.
- 7.1.9 Any viability assessment should reflect the government’s recommended approach to [defining key inputs](#) as set out in National Planning Guidance.
- 7.1.10 Where the Council requires independent advice to validate a viability appraisal, the cost will be borne by the applicant.
- 7.1.11 Where the Council is satisfied that viability would be jeopardised by full provision of affordable housing it will consider supporting external subsidy to enable full

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<sup>12</sup> Viability Planning Practice Guidance - Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 10-007-20190509

provision. Consideration will also be given to altering the mix including size and tenure in accordance with Policy H3.

- 7.1.12 As a last resort the number of affordable dwellings sought will be reduced to make the development viable.

## 8.0 Delivery Mechanisms

### 8.1 S106 agreements

- 8.1.1 The Council will generally expect affordable housing to be secured by a S106 agreement. The Heads of Terms of any agreement will need to be established before determination of a planning application the cost of which will be borne by the applicant. An example of a standard S106 agreement can be found in Appendix 3. This is for guidance only as individual heads of terms will need to be agreed for each development.

### 8.2 Timing of provision

- 8.2.1 Affordable housing should be provided at the same time as open market housing on a site to ensure that there is no imbalance in the supply of affordable housing in the creation of new communities. Developments that seek to delay provision of affordable housing to the end of the development will not be considered favourably by WODC.
- 8.2.2 Where infrastructure may be substantial the Council may permit the sale of an agreed percentage of market homes before the sale or transfer of affordable homes with the remainder to be provided in tranches alongside the market housing.
- 8.2.3 However no development should commence until the affordable housing scheme has been approved and a contract entered into with a Registered Provider and a copy of the contract provided to the Council.

### 8.3 Occupancy:

#### *Nomination and allocation*

- 8.3.1 All applicants seeking social housing will complete the same process and will be assessed against the same clear set of criteria. Depending on their circumstances, applicants will be placed into one of four bands Emergency, Gold, Silver or Bronze. Local connection will be applied to the majority of vacancies to help each local authority meet their housing demand or where it is a legal requirement.

- 8.3.2 Once a successful application has been made, applicants are advised of their banding and application date, together with details of how to access the Choice Based Lettings (CBL) system. This enables them to bid for affordable housing vacancies being advertised in West Oxfordshire.

#### *Homeseeker Plus*

- 8.3.3 West Oxfordshire District Council is one of seven local authorities that operate Homeseeker Plus, a CBL scheme run in partnership with the Social Housing Landlords operating within West Oxfordshire. Affordable homes made available for rental tenures in the district are allocated using this scheme.
- 8.3.4 Homeseeker Plus enables Social Housing landlords to advertise their homes and applicants are asked to bid for them. The majority of social rented housing vacancies are advertised as per local nomination agreements, however social housing landlords may choose to apply their own published allocation policies.
- 8.3.5 Once a bid is placed the computer system will place applicants in order of band, and whether they meet the criteria of the advert. Priority for properties goes to those who have a local connection with the local authority in which the property is located, then to those who have a local connection with any of the other Homeseeker Plus districts and finally to anyone else. Responsibility for letting each available property lies with the Social housing landlord. An application for sheltered and extra care housing for certain schemes may need an assessment of the support needs, prior to an offer being made.

## **8.4 Essential Local Workers (otherwise referred to as Key Workers)**

- 8.4.1 The NPPF defines 'essential local workers' as including 'Public sector employees who provide frontline services in areas including health, education and community safety – such as NHS staff, teachers, police, firefighters and military personnel, social care and childcare workers'.
- 8.4.2 The NPPF definition of affordable housing includes housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers.
- 8.4.3 WODC recognises that housing affordability is critical to attracting and retaining essential local workers/key workers in the district and participates in ongoing collaboration with Oxfordshire County Council in identifying and promoting opportunities for key worker accommodation. Oxfordshire County Council has published a document 'Finding A Home In Oxfordshire – A Guide For Key Workers'<sup>13</sup>

- 8.4.4 Furthermore, WODC recognises that in addition to the health, education, emergency, police and military services traditionally associated with key workers, the definition should be expanded and not limited. Key workers can be employed in commercial, industrial, public bodies, care, farming/agricultural and transport industries as examples. Enabling people to live close to their place of work may also be considered a reason to award Key / Essential Worker status.
- 8.4.5 The Council seeks to attract investment and as a place for new businesses to grow. As part of the Oxford-Cambridge Innovation Arc future concentration of investment and growth is anticipated. Key workers are vital to the economic success of the district.
- 8.4.6 WODC is supportive of, and will seek, innovative methods to bring forward proposals to provide key worker accommodation and offer assistance in facilitating liaison with key contacts.
- 8.4.7 Legal agreements and supplementary documents such as Local Lettings Plans are suggested as platforms for promoting key worker accommodation on agreed schemes. Applicants to the Council's Choice Based Lettings system may be awarded a prioritised classification if they can demonstrate their Key / Essential Worker status. It is expected that those applying for key worker will be expected to meet other qualifying criteria for affordable housing.
- 8.4.8 Where new affordable homes are provided on the basis of them being made available to essential local workers/key workers, the District Council will take this into account in discussions with the developer/applicant and Registered Providers in determining the most appropriate tenure mix.

## **8.5 Housing Options for Members of the Armed Services**

- 8.5.1 West Oxfordshire District Council supports the Oxfordshire Armed Forces Community covenant<sup>14</sup>. We administer the waiting list for all housing association properties that are situated in West Oxfordshire and applications are prioritised according to housing need. Serving members of the Armed Forces are eligible to register on the list, they do not need to have a local connection to West Oxfordshire but if they do, their application will have more priority.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/adult-social-and-health-care/FindAHomelnOxfordshire.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/housing/housing-advice/armed-forces-housing-options/>



- 8.5.2 Former members of the Armed Forces are also eligible to register on the housing waiting list if they have a local connection to West Oxfordshire. However, even if there is no local connection, former Armed Forces members can register within five years from their date of discharge from the Forces.
- 8.5.3 Bereaved spouses or civil partners of those serving in the regular forces are also eligible to register where (i) the bereaved spouse or civil partner has recently ceased, or will cease to be entitled, to reside in Ministry of defence accommodation following the death of their service spouse or civil partner, and (ii) the death was wholly or partly attributable to their service.
- 8.5.4 Existing or former members of the reserve forces who are suffering from a serious injury, illness, or disability which is wholly or partly attributable to their service are also eligible.

## **8.6 Community-led housing**

- 8.6.1 WODC is supportive of Community Led Housing Initiatives and has a long standing tradition of supporting this type of housing delivery. Stonesfield Community Land Trust in West Oxfordshire is one of the first CLT's in the country and has been supported by WODC to deliver a number of affordable housing schemes within the village since 1983. WODC is currently working with other local groups interested in delivering community led schemes in the district.
- 8.6.2 These schemes are set up and run by a local, independent, not-for-profit organisation which has often been specifically created for the purpose of building affordable homes for the community.
- 8.6.3 This can be a collection of individuals, a parish or town council, a developer or a registered provider looking to work in partnership with the community initially by providing a site and offering further support as the development progresses.
- 8.6.4 The organisation will ensure homes for rent, sale or shared ownership remain affordable for local people. The housing is usually developed by, with and for the community and the community group have the opportunity to develop skills and expertise along the way.
- 8.6.5 Community-led housing is highly flexible depending on the type of scheme required such as co-housing; self-help housing; Community Land Trusts and co-operative and resident-controlled housing.

### *What Issues can Community-led Housing Tackle?*

- 8.6.6 Community-led housing can involve market sale, discount market sale, shared ownership, market rent, affordable rent, rent to buy or a combination of these. This way it can empower local communities, making them more resilient and able to address issues and groups such as affordability; downsizing; an ageing population; first time buyers and fuel poverty.

### *What are the guidelines for Community-led Housing?*

- 8.6.7 Community-led housing proposals should ensure that:
- Meaningful community engagement and consent occurs throughout the development process. The community does not necessarily have to initiate and manage the process, or build the homes themselves
  - The local community group or organisation owns, manages or stewards the homes in a manner of their choosing. This may be done through a mutually supported arrangement with a registered provider that owns the freehold or leasehold for the property
  - The benefits to the local area and/or specified community must be clearly defined and legally protected in perpetuity

### *Models of Community-Led Housing*

**Community Land Trusts (CLTs)** - a form of community-led Housing, set up and run by people to develop and manage homes as well as other assets. They act as long-term stewards of land and housing. In this model they may delegate the development work and/or management of the asset to a project partner such as a housing association or the CLT may become a registered provider itself. For more information visit the National CLT Network<sup>15</sup>.

**Co-housing** - groups of self-contained dwellings with the benefit of shared additional facilities all managed by a group. The facility may be a large kitchen where group meals are shared or a hall where meetings and classes may be hosted. It can be a communal garden facility. For more information visit UK Cohousing<sup>16</sup>.

**Co-operatives** - a form of community-led housing where it is built (or renovated) and managed by members of a group with democratic collective control to influence the

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<sup>15</sup> <http://www.communitylandtrusts.org.uk/>

<sup>16</sup> <https://cohousing.org.uk/>

scheme and its management. The tenure would be shared ownership or affordable rent. For more information visit The Confederation of Co-operative Housing<sup>17</sup>.

**Community Custom and Self-Build** - where an individual or an association of individuals, or persons working with or for individuals or associations of individuals, build or complete houses to be occupied as homes by those individuals. For more information visit the National Custom and Self build Association<sup>18</sup>.

8.6.8 For more information about Community Led Housing in WODC please see the council web pages<sup>19</sup>

## 8.7 Supported Living

8.7.1 'Supported living' provides support to help people live as independently as possible. It includes various accommodation options and can be suitable for a variety of different people including older people, adults with learning/physical disabilities or sensory problems, mental health problems and adults and young people with a disability who have spent time in residential care and are moving towards independent living or [transitioning to adulthood](#).

8.7.2 Policy H4 of the Local Plan (Type and Mix of New Homes) provides in principle support for the provision of specialist housing including for older people as well as those with a disability.

8.7.3 Oxfordshire County Council has produced a Market Position Statement<sup>20</sup> for care services in Oxfordshire aimed at existing and potential providers of care homes, home support, mental health services, Extra Care Housing, Supported Living, employment and daytime opportunities, and any other care services.

8.7.4 It highlights a number of specific priorities and future requirements in respect of extra-care housing, care homes and supported living including a significant shortage of accommodation for those with a learning disability and/or autism.

8.7.5 The District Council will therefore work closely with Oxfordshire County Council and developers/applicants and RPs to consider the provision of such specialist accommodation as part of the overall mix of market and affordable homes on residential schemes within West Oxfordshire.

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<sup>17</sup> <https://www.cch.coop/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://nacsba.org.uk/>

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/housing/community-led-housing/>

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/file/adult-social-and-health-care/OxfordshireMPS2019-22.pdf>

## 9.0 New routes to delivery

9.0.1 West Oxfordshire District Council is interested in working in partnership with our neighbouring Oxfordshire Local Authorities and local landowners to accelerate the delivery of affordable housing in the District. Through potential partnership arrangements we will seek to establish a pipeline of suitable sites for development and look to increase the speed with which new homes can be constructed for the residents of West Oxfordshire.

### 9.1 Blenheim approach

9.1.1 WODC has a longstanding partnership with Blenheim Estate and has been working closely with Blenheim on an innovative model for delivering an increased level of affordable housing at between 60 – 80% of market rental costs. This model has been successfully implemented in Long Hanborough and will also be offered on their other sites for development in Woodstock. It is the intention of Blenheim to retain ownership of the rental properties so they can be held in perpetuity for local people, especially those within the key worker categories. Shared ownership properties are also available under the model and residents can staircase up to 100% ownership with Blenheim having first refusal on purchase if the properties subsequently come to the market.

9.1.2 All allocations for affordable housing properties are handled through WODC's Homeseeker Plus team for affordable rent and Help to Buy South<sup>21</sup> for shared ownership.

### 9.2 Partnerships with legacy landowners

9.2.1 WODC is also interested in partnering with other legacy landowners to accelerate delivery of affordable housing in the district and would welcome discussions with those landowners who are considering development as part of their long term legacy planning. Rural exception sites that would help meet the affordable housing needs of our smaller rural settlements are particularly of interest. Please contact the Strategic Affordable Housing Team for further discussion.

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<sup>21</sup> <https://www.helptobuyagent3.org.uk/>

## 10.0 Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal

- 10.1 In 2017 Oxfordshire's six local authorities together with the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership began collaboration with the Government (Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal).
- 10.2 As part of this collaboration, Oxfordshire received £215 million of new funding to support provision of 100,000 new homes in Oxfordshire by 2031.
- 10.3 Of this total, £150 million focuses on infrastructure to help accelerate delivery of these new homes.
- 10.4 It also includes £60 million for a bespoke programme to deliver at least 1320 additional affordable homes by March 2021 (named the Oxfordshire Affordable Housing Programme) although this has now been extended to March 2022 – see below. This fund is additional to the existing Homes England Affordable Homes Programme which is ongoing and will continue alongside it.
- 10.5 Whilst use of the Growth Deal funding will not be a material consideration in planning applications, it is intended that it will help facilitate additional affordable housing to that secured through legal agreements.
- 10.6 By releasing its funds early in the development process, it is intended that Growth Deal becomes attractive to developers in the financing of their schemes.

### *Future West Oxfordshire Affordable Housing Programme*

- 10.7 The Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal will work to secure further public and private funding to support the ambition of providing 100,000 new homes by 2031.
- 10.8 Post COVID-19 pandemic, an extension to the Growth Deal program to include a 4th year has now been agreed. Additionally, through collaboration and use of grant funding, West Oxfordshire District Council seeks to establish a lasting programme that will, via a pipeline of schemes, strategic partnerships and innovative delivery vehicles, provide a material uplift in the level of new affordable housing in Oxfordshire and seek to increase the pace of its delivery.

## 11.0 Monitoring and Review

- 11.1 The delivery of affordable housing will be monitored in the Council's Annual Monitoring Report and reported on through the Council's annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS).

## **Glossary**

### **Annual Monitoring Report**

Information on the implementation of planning policies in West Oxfordshire published and submitted to Central Government at the end of each calendar year.

### **Discount Market Housing**

Affordable Housing which is wholly owned by the occupier but is always sold at a discount on full market price.

### **Homeseeker+**

West Oxfordshire District Council's register of residents seeking affordable housing. Residents are required to register with Homeseeker+ to be eligible to apply for affordable housing units that become available within the district.

### **Intermediate Housing**

Affordable Housing which is wholly or partly owned by the occupier but acquired at below full market price. Shared Ownership and Discount Market Sale are types of intermediate housing.

### **Nominations Agreement**

An agreement between the Council and a Registered Provider of affordable housing which allows the council to specify key criteria for the occupiers of the housing.

### **Registered Provider**

The term 'Registered Providers' includes both private registered providers of social housing (mainly housing associations) and local authorities that are registered with the Regulator<sup>22</sup> of Social Housing. Registered Providers **Shared Ownership**

Affordable housing which is part owned by the occupier who also pays rent on the remainder of the property, usually an RP.

### **Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

A document that supplements and elaborates policies and proposals in the Local Plan document.

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[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/801982/Becoming\\_a\\_registered\\_provider.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/801982/Becoming_a_registered_provider.pdf)

## Appendix 1 - Policy H3 Affordable housing

In order to address identified affordable housing needs, the Council will require 'qualifying' market housing schemes to make an appropriate contribution towards the provision of affordable housing within the District.

Within the Cotswolds AONB, housing schemes of 6-10 units and which have a maximum combined gross floorspace of no more than 1,000m<sup>2</sup> will be required to make a financial contribution towards the provision of affordable housing off-site within the District. This commuted sum will be deferred until completion of the development to assist with viability.

Across the District as a whole, housing schemes of 11 or more units or which have a maximum combined gross floorspace of more than 1,000m<sup>2</sup> will be required to provide affordable housing on-site as a proportion of the market homes proposed as follows:

- High value zone (50%)
- Medium value zone (40%)
- Low value zone (35%)

The following levels of affordable housing provision will be applied in relation to sheltered housing and extra-care housing:  
Sheltered housing

- High value zone (50%)
- Medium value zone (40%)
- Low value zone (35%)

Extra-care housing

- High value zone (45%)
- Medium value zone (35%)
- Low value zone (10%)

In circumstances where it can be demonstrated that the level of affordable housing being sought would make a scheme unviable, a revised mix and type of housing will be considered before a lower level of affordable housing provision is accepted.

Where external funding is available it may be applied to schemes to ensure affordability of rental levels or to increase the number or to change tenure or type of homes to meet priority needs.

Affordable housing mix and tenure will be responsive to identified local needs and site specific opportunities. A financial contribution for the provision of affordable housing on other sites in West Oxfordshire in lieu of on-site provision may be appropriate if it can be demonstrated that:

- It is not physically possible or feasible to provide affordable housing on the application site; or

- There is evidence that a separate site would more satisfactorily meet local housing need and contribute to the creation of mixed communities.

In some instances, a combination of on-site provision and a financial contribution may be appropriate.

West Oxfordshire District Council and its partners will work with parish councils,

registered providers of affordable housing and local housing, community land and self-build trusts to identify additional suitable rural sites for small scale affordable housing schemes to meet specific local housing needs which cannot be met in any other way. All new homes on these sites will remain affordable in perpetuity to people in housing need who have a local connection with the parish or appropriate adjoining parishes. Sites will be well-related to the existing built-up areas of towns and villages. Where family

homes are proposed priority will be given to locations within a reasonable walking distance of a primary school.

The Council will consider the inclusion of an element of market housing in rural exception sites (RES) provided it is demonstrated to be necessary to delivery (eg. by subsidising the affordable element). In such cases, any market housing would be expected to be a subsidiary element of a predominantly affordable housing scheme.



## Appendix 2 - Useful Contacts

West Oxfordshire District Council, Elmfield, New Yatt Road, Witney, Oxon OX28 1PB

<https://www.westoxon.gov.uk>

**Strategic Housing Manager** – for information on housing need and types of affordable housing

**Planning Policy Manager** – for general planning advice

**Area Planning Manager** – for site specific and pre-application advice.

Planning: 01993 861420

Email: [planning@westoxon.gov.uk](mailto:planning@westoxon.gov.uk)

### Registered Providers

Cottsway Housing Association, Cottsway House, Heynes Place, Avenue Two, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX28 4YG	Tel: 01993 890000 Web: <a href="http://www.cottsway.co.uk">www.cottsway.co.uk</a>
Sovereign, Woodlands, 90 Bartholomew Street, Newbury, RG14 5EE	Tel: 0300 5000 926 Web: <a href="http://www.sovereign.org.uk">www.sovereign.org.uk</a>
Clarion Housing, Level 6, 6 More London Place, Tooley Street, London, SE1 2DA	<a href="tel:03005008000">Tel: 0300 500 8000</a> Web: <a href="http://www.clarionhg.com">www.clarionhg.com</a>
Aster Group, Sarsen Court, Horton Avenue, Cannings Hill, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 2AZ	Tel: 0333 400 8222 Web: <a href="http://www.aster.co.uk">www.aster.co.uk</a>
Sanctuary Housing Association, Chamber Court, Castle St, Worcester, WR1 3ZQ	Tel: 0800 131 3348 Web: <a href="http://www.sanctuary-housing.co.uk">www.sanctuary-housing.co.uk</a>
GreenSquare, Methuen Park, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN14 0GU	Tel: 01249 465465 Web: <a href="http://www.greensquaregroup.com">www.greensquaregroup.com</a>
SOHA, Royal Scot House, 99 Station Rd, Didcot, OX11 7NN	Tel: 01235 515900 Web: <a href="http://www.soha.co.uk">www.soha.co.uk</a>
Sage Housing, Orion House, 5 Upper St Martin's Ln, West End, London, WC2H 9EA	Tel: 020 3369 0431 Web: <a href="http://www.sagehousing.co.uk">www.sagehousing.co.uk</a>
Platform Housing Group, Progress House, Midland Rd, Worcester, WR5 1DU	Tel: 0333 200 7304 Web: <a href="http://www.platformhg.com">www.platformhg.com</a>
Stonewater Housing Association, Montpelier House, Southbank Rd, Kenilworth, CV8 1LA	Tel: 01926 859857 Web: <a href="http://www.stonewater.org">www.stonewater.org</a>
Hanover, The Heal's Building, Suites A&B, 3rd Floor, 22-24 Torrington Place, London, WC1E 7HJ	Tel: 0800 731 2020 Web: <a href="http://www.anchorhanover.org.uk">www.anchorhanover.org.uk</a>
Housing 21, Tricorn House, 51–53 Hagley Road, Birmingham, B16 8TP	Tel: 0370 192 4000 Web: <a href="http://www.housing21.org.uk">www.housing21.org.uk</a>

## Appendix 3- Example S106 Agreement Affordable Housing Schedule

### 1. Definitions

In this Schedule

- 1.1 "Affordable Housing" means dwellings that will be available to households who are otherwise unable to secure private sector housing for purchase or rent locally in prevailing economic circumstances such housing being provided for in conformity with the advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework published by the Department for Communities and Local Government and who have in the opinion of the District Council a need for such housing and which housing is to be constructed on the Site
- 1.2 "Affordable Housing Dwellings" means at least % of the Dwellings to be built as part of the Development as Affordable Housing and constructed and provided in accordance with the Affordable Housing Scheme
- 1.3 "Affordable Rent" means a rent up to 80% of the local market rent for an equivalent property for the size and location, based on a valuation in accordance with a method recognised by the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and not higher than the relevant local housing allowance maximum amount set for eligibility for housing benefit
- 1.4 "Affordable Rented Units" means (unless otherwise agreed in writing by the District Council) 70% of the Affordable Housing Dwellings let by a Registered Provider and offered at an Affordable Rent (and subsequently varied in line with those rents from time to time) and on terms complying with the HCA's good practice guidance for such rents and associated service charges
- 1.5 "Affordable Housing Scheme" means a scheme including a plan setting out the location size type specification and Tenure of the Affordable Housing Dwellings which shall be approved by the Council pursuant to the terms of this Deed and with such amendments as the Council may approve from time to time
- 1.6 "Applicant" means a person who is on the District Council's Waiting List and is in need of Affordable Housing

- 1.7 “Build Standards” means unless otherwise agreed by the District Council Dwellings that achieve at least the minimum requirements of Building for Life 12 (which is a government endorsed industry standard for well-designed homes)
- 1.8 “Contract” means a contract to transfer the Affordable Housing Dwellings (together with all necessary rights of way and easements) to the Registered Provider
- 1.9 “District Council’s Waiting List” means the list for allocating Affordable Housing as set out in the Housing Nominations Scheme or any equivalent or similar replacement from time to time in existence
- 1.10 “HCA” means the Homes and Communities Agency created pursuant to the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 exercising the functions in relation to the funding of affordable housing and includes any successor body exercising similar functions
- 1.11 “HCA Model Lease” means a lease in a form which has been approved and or prescribed by the HCA for shared ownership which allows a lessee to acquire up to and including 100% of the equity of the Shared Ownership Unit and the freehold
- 1.12 “Head of Planning and Strategic Housing” means the officer of the District Council who is responsible for the affordable housing in the District Council’s area or such other officer as may be appointed from time to time
- 1.13 “Housing Nominations Scheme” means the prevailing District Council Housing Nominations Scheme which sets out eligibility for Applicants on the District Council’s Waiting List and the procedure for nominations from the waiting list to Affordable Housing Dwellings within the District Council’s administrative area at the time when allocations are made
- 1.14 “Mortgagee” means any mortgagee or chargee of: -
- 1.14.1 any Affordable Housing Dwelling and/or;
- 1.14.2 a Registered Provider or the successors in title to such mortgagee or chargee or any receiver (including an administrative receiver) or manager appointed pursuant to the Law of Property Act 1925
- 1.15 “Nomination” means the nomination by the District Council to the Registered Provider of the Qualifying Person for an Affordable Housing Dwelling
- 1.16 “Practical Completion” means actual completion of the construction of the Affordable Housing Dwellings in accordance with the Contract which save for minor defects permits beneficial use and occupation of the same

- 1.17 “Qualifying Person” means an individual who is on the District Council’s Housing Register
- 1.18 “Registered Provider” means an affordable housing provider as provided for in the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008 and which
- is registered with the HCA (or its replacement body) and which has been approved by the District Council
  - can demonstrate that it has sufficient stock within the West Oxfordshire District and/or can provide evidence of effective community engagement to ensure that high quality management and service standards will be employed, and
  - can demonstrate that it will work jointly with the District Council in meeting the Housing Allocations Policy and agrees to enter into a formal nominations agreement with the District Council upon entering into the Contract
- PROVIDED ALWAYS that if Registered Providers shall have ceased to exist or have been superseded then the expression shall be taken to mean such nearest equivalent body whose objectives include the provision of low cost housing for renting or shared ownership by local people as the District Council may reasonably approve for the purposes of this Agreement
- 1.19 Tenure means Affordable Housing Dwellings which comprise one or more of the following tenures types
- 1.19.1 Affordable Rented Unit; and/or
  - 1.19.2 Shared Ownership Unit
- 1.20 “Shared Ownership Unit” means (unless otherwise agreed in writing by the District Council) 30% of the Affordable Housing Dwellings provided by a Registered Provider where a proportion of the equity is sold on a long lease to the purchaser and the remainder of the equity is initially retained by the Registered Provider subject to rent being charged on the retained equity on terms that are set out in the HCA Model Lease or such other form of lease reasonably requested by the Registered Provider and which shall be first approved by the Council and in accordance with the following:

- 1.20.1 the initial percentage of equity sold is between 40% (or such other lower percentage as may be agreed by the District Council) and 70% which shall be calculated to ensure the Shared Ownership Units are affordable to those in housing need with regard to local incomes and local house prices;
  - 1.20.2 rent on unsold equity is initially set at no more than 2.75% or such other percentage as may be agreed by the District Council (acting reasonably); and
  - 1.20.3 charges for services are levied in accordance with the good practice guidance issued by the HCA but provided always that this shall provision shall not prevent each such unit being responsible for contributing of a fair and reasonable proportion of any service charge levied for the Development and/or that part of the Development within which such each unit shall be situate
- 1.21 "Size Standard" means compliance with the Government's Nationally Described Space Standard for each and every unit type of Affordable Housing Unit
2. The Owner covenants with the District Council as follows:-
- 2.1 Not to cause or permit the Implementation of Development until a Contract has been entered into with a Registered Provider and the Affordable Housing Scheme has been approved in writing by the District Council
  - 2.2 To provide the Affordable Housing Dwellings on the Site in accordance with the Affordable Housing Scheme as approved by the District Council
  - 2.3 Unless otherwise agreed in writing by the District Council % of the Affordable Housing Dwellings shall be 1 or 2 bedroom Dwellings to accommodate singles, couples, smaller families and older people and % of the Affordable Housing Dwellings shall be large enough to accommodate households of four or more people and this can include two bedroom houses
  - 2.4 To provide (unless otherwise agreed by the District Council) the Affordable Housing Dwellings so that they meet the Build Standards and the Size Standard

- 2.5 To ensure that all the Affordable Housing Dwellings shall be built “tenure blind” in respect of external design and features so that they are materially indistinguishable from the General Market Housing save to the extent any variation is required to meet the specification requirements of a Registered Provider
- 2.6 Not to Occupy or cause or permit the Occupation of more than
- 2.6.1 30% of the Dwellings which are General Market Housing (or such other number as may be agreed in writing by the District Council) until fifty Affordable Housing Dwellings have been built to Practical Completion and transferred pursuant to the Contract with the Registered Provider
- 2.6.2 60% of the Dwellings which are General Market Housing (or such other number as may be agreed in writing by the District Council) until all the Affordable Housing Dwellings have been built to Practical Completion and transferred pursuant to the Contract with the Registered Provider
- 2.7 Save for the disposal of the Affordable Housing Dwellings pursuant to the Contract from the date of Practical Completion the Affordable Housing Units shall (subject to the remaining provisions of this paragraph 2.7) not be used other than for Affordable Housing to be provided to Qualifying Persons in accordance with the District Council’s Housing Nominations Scheme and shall be retained in perpetuity as Affordable Housing to meet the needs of people locally who are financially unable to rent or purchase a private dwelling on the open market save that:-
- 2.7.1 where an Affordable Housing Dwelling is occupied in accordance with this clause nothing in this Agreement shall prevent the occupation of that Affordable Housing Dwelling by the spouse partner survivor or dependants of that person or such other category of person entitled to occupy or continue to occupy under prevailing housing legislation
- 2.7.2 any tenant or its successors in title who has exercised the right to buy/acquire pursuant to the Housing Act 1996 or any other statutory provision or contractual right to buy for the time being in place in respect of a particular Affordable Housing Dwelling will not be bound by this Agreement

- 2.7.3 any tenant or its successors in title of a Shared Ownership Unit who has acquired 100% of the equity to the Shared Ownership Unit will not be bound by this Agreement
- 2.7.4 any Mortgagee shall not be bound by this Agreement provided that the Mortgagee has first complied with paragraph 2.7.5 of this Schedule
- 2.7.5 a Mortgagee (whether or not the mortgagee is in possession) shall not dispose of one or more of the Affordable Housing Dwellings or commence proceedings for possession of the Affordable Housing Dwelling unless it shall
- a) in the case of proceedings for possession have first given to the District Council no less than seven days prior notice of the commencement of such proceedings and at the time it commences such proceedings shall send copies of any notices or documents served in relation to such proceedings to the District Council's Head of Planning and Strategic Housing
  - b) in the event that the Mortgagee chooses to exercise its power of sale or leasing it shall serve written notice to that effect on the District Council and shall use its reasonable endeavours over a period of three months from the date on which it served notice on the District Council to dispose of the Affordable Housing Dwelling(s) (as the case may be) to a Registered Provider on terms which will retain the Affordable Housing Dwellings as Affordable Housing provided that the Mortgagee shall not be required to dispose of the Affordable Housing Dwelling(s) at less than market value taking into account the terms of this Agreement for a consideration less than the monies owed to the Mortgagee such consideration to include all accrued principal monies interest and costs and expenses
  - c) In the event that the Mortgagee is unable to dispose of the Affordable Housing Dwellings within the said period of three months the Mortgagee shall be entitled to dispose of the Affordable Housing Dwelling(s) at its discretion free from all the obligations or

restrictions in this Deed and following such disposal the disponent and its successors in title will not be bound by this Agreement

- 2.8 Nominations to all Affordable Rented Units on first and subsequent occupation shall be made by the District Council in accordance with the District Council's Housing Nominations Scheme and a nomination agreement to be entered into between the District Council and the Registered Provider.



 <b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>	<b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b>
Name and date of Committee	<b>Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Thursday 8 April 2021</b>
Report Number	<b>Agenda Item No. 8</b>
Subject	<b>Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2019/20</b>
Wards affected	ALL
Accountable member	Councillor Jeff Haine, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning Email: <a href="mailto:jeff.haine@westoxon.gov.uk">jeff.haine@westoxon.gov.uk</a>
Accountable officer	Chris Hargraves, Planning Policy Manager Tel: 01993 861686 Email: <a href="mailto:Chris.Hargraves@publicagroup.uk">Chris.Hargraves@publicagroup.uk</a>
Summary/Purpose	To consider the Council's Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report for 2019/20.
Annex	<a href="#">Annex A</a> – Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2019/20
Recommendation	That the content of the Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report be noted.
Corporate priorities	The Annual Monitoring Report is purposefully structured around the six main themes of the Council Plan (2020 – 2024).
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	None.

## I. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. Members will be aware that under current legislation, the Council is required to prepare an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) which provides an update on the following matters:
  - Progress of the Local Plan and any other related documents against agreed timetables;
  - Implementation of Local Plan policies;
  - Neighbourhood Planning;
  - Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) where this has been introduced; and
  - How the Council has fulfilled its obligations under the Duty to Co-Operate.
- 1.2. The AMR must be made available on the Council's website, at its main offices and any other appropriate locations.
- 1.3. Attached at [Annex A](#) is a copy of the Council's AMR which covers the period 1 April 2019 – 31 March 2020. A brief overview of the main points arising is provided below.

## 2. AMR 2019/20 - OVERVIEW

- 2.1. The AMR is structured in line with the six main themes of the West Oxfordshire Council Plan (2020 – 2024).
- 2.2. Under each theme, the AMR provides relevant contextual/background information before considering what has happened during the monitoring period 2019/20 and then summarising what's on the horizon in terms of future Council activities and actions.
- 2.3. Set out below is a brief summary overview for each theme.  
**Climate Action**
- 2.4. The AMR demonstrates a positive, yet gradual decline in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions across the District, increasing prevalence of renewable energy installations, increases in the number of public electric vehicle charging points and a general decline in the amount of residual household waste.
- 2.5. There has been a small decrease in the number of priority species and overall priority habitat and countywide work has commenced on a Nature Recovery Strategy for Oxfordshire to identify places where wildlife can be helped to return.
- 2.6. Looking forward, the District Council will take forward its Carbon Action Plan and Climate Change Strategy and continue to work with partners to further develop the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.
- 2.7. There may be an increase in household waste as a result of residents spending more time at home during the Covid-19 pandemic.  
**Healthy Towns and Villages**
- 2.8. The AMR includes a range of contextual information demonstrating that on the whole, West Oxfordshire performs better than, or similar to the national average on most indicators for health and wellbeing.
- 2.9. During the monitoring year, there has been a small amount of additional healthcare permitted together with some additional leisure floorspace. Visitor numbers to the District's main leisure centres have been much lower than usual as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

- 2.10. Good progress has been made in respect of various transport improvements across the District including the proposed park and ride site at Eynsham and associated improvements to the A40 corridor including access to Witney at Shores Green.
- 2.11. Looking forward, work will soon commence on a new Playing Pitch Strategy along with a Built Facilities Strategy and there will be a roll out of a new Health Impact Assessment (HIA) toolkit across the County to help create healthy, more resilient and sustainable communities.
- 2.12. There will be further public engagement in respect of the various A40 improvements including improved access to Carterton.

### **A Vibrant District Economy**

- 2.13. The AMR demonstrates that West Oxfordshire has a strong and diverse economy and one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country with particular potential for growth in engineering, motorsport and food production. The District's Town Centres continue to face challenges with Witney in particular having experienced an increase in vacant town centre units.
- 2.14. In 2019, there were 57,200 employees, 6,100 more than in 2018, with the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) identifying specific opportunities for new strategic employment growth at the Garden Village and at Carterton.
- 2.15. During the monitoring year, 41,646m<sup>2</sup> of employment floorspace was permitted but there was a loss of 8,513m<sup>2</sup> as a result of permitted changes of use to residential. Fibre access has now been provided to 4,006 of 4,788 properties in the District, with the project due for completion in November 2020.
- 2.16. In response to the Coronavirus pandemic, the District Council has processed 2,095 successful COVID grant applications valued in excess of £25,030,000 and a working group has been established to support the safe reopening of the Districts high streets.

### **Strong Local Communities**

- 2.17. The AMR identifies that the proportion of people 'satisfied with their neighbourhood' (90.2%) is higher than the Oxfordshire average (86.5%) and that on the whole, the District remains largely within the least deprived local authority areas in the country.
- 2.18. During the monitoring year, two public houses were added to the West Oxfordshire List of Assets of Community Value (AVC) and three neighbourhood plans were formally adopted or 'made' (Hailey, Shilton and Eynsham). In addition, over £3m was collected by the District Council through Section 106 planning obligations including £1.2m for affordable housing.
- 2.19. Looking forward, the AMR identifies that the Council's CIL charging schedule will be submitted for examination and that further progress will be made on the Council's Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) along with continued Council support for the various neighbourhood plans that are currently in progress.

### **Meeting the Housing Needs of our Changing Population**

- 2.20. The AMR shows that there are around 49,000 households in West Oxfordshire, with around 2,042 households on the housing waiting list. Since 2011, there have been 4,437 new homes completed, an average of just under 500 per year.
- 2.21. During the monitoring year, 1,086 new homes were completed, of which 325 were on allocated sites with the total number of affordable homes completed being 454 (42%). 335 dwellings were granted planning permission of which 23% were on previously developed (brownfield) sites.

- 2.22. The supply of deliverable housing sites currently stands at 5.4 years, in excess of the national five-year minimum requirement.
- 2.23. Looking forwards, the Council will update its Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) and progress the Area Action Plan for Salt Cross together with its other various supplementary planning documents.
- 2.24. A review of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 will commence in autumn 2021.

#### **Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance**

- 2.25. The AMR demonstrates that the Council remains committed to delivering excellent services to its local communities with over 80% of planning applications having been determined within target timescales over the last 5 years and over 1,000 building control applications processed each year.
- 2.26. Within the monitoring year, good progress has been made in respect of the Salt Cross Garden Village AAP along with supplementary planning documents for the other strategic site allocations, a developer contribution SPD and an affordable housing SPD.
- 2.27. In respect of the duty to co-operate, the District Council has continued to actively engage with the other Oxfordshire Authorities and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) on various spatial planning and infrastructure matters including the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and delivery of all other components of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal.
- 2.28. Looking forwards, in accordance with the principles of the One Public Estate Programme, feasibility work on partnership owned sites will take place with a draft scoping exercise with input from partners to be undertaken.

#### **Cabinet consideration**

- 2.29. This report was considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 17 February 2021 and in response to the points raised, a number of minor changes to the AMR were made including additional reference to partnership working with the Environment Agency and Thames Water on water related issues, additional labelling on Figure 6 to improve clarity and a minor error corrected regarding the amount of net employment land permissioned.

### **3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. The AMR raises no specific financial implications.

### **4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1. Preparation of the AMR is a legal requirement under the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

### **5. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1. The AMR raises no significant risks.

### **6. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1. The AMR reports on a number of climate action related issues in accordance with the Council Plan 2020 – 2024.

### **7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 7.1. None.

### **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

8.1. None.

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WEST OXFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

# Annual Monitoring Report

2019 - 2020

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## Introduction

This is the West Oxfordshire District Council Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for the year 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

The AMR has been prepared in accordance with legislative requirements and provides information on the following:

- Progress of the Local Plan and any other related documents against agreed timetables;
- Implementation of Local Plan policies;
- Neighbourhood Planning;
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) where this has been introduced; and
- How the Council has fulfilled its obligations under the duty to co-operate.

The structure of the AMR is based on the six main themes of the [West Oxfordshire Council Plan](#) (2020 – 2024) which are as follows:

**1. Climate Action** - Leading the way in protecting and enhancing the environment by taking action locally on climate change and biodiversity is structured in line with the six main themes of the West Oxfordshire Council Plan.

**2. Healthy Towns and Villages** - Facilitating healthy lifestyles and better wellbeing for everyone.

**3. A Vibrant District Economy** - Securing future economic success through supporting existing local businesses and attracting new businesses to deliver the economic ambitions of the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy.

**4. Strong Local Communities** - Supporting and building prosperous and inclusive local communities.

**5. Meeting the Housing Needs of our Changing Population** – Securing the provision of market and affordable housing of a high quality for the wide range of householders making their home in West Oxfordshire.

**6. Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance** – Delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council.

There is a considerable overlap between the Council Plan themes outlined above and the Core Objectives of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031. Relevant Core Objectives from the Local Plan are therefore highlighted throughout the AMR as appropriate.

The AMR sets out for each theme, an outline of the current district context in terms of background/contextual information, before considering what has happened during the monitoring period 2019/20 and then summarising what is on the horizon in terms of future Council activities and actions.

# I. Climate Action

*Leading the way in protecting and enhancing the environment by taking action locally on climate change and biodiversity*

## Background Context

- In recognition of the urgency needed to face the challenge of climate change, West Oxfordshire District Council has declared a climate and ecological emergency, committing to taking local action and leading the district to become carbon neutral by 2030.
- West Oxfordshire is a largely rural district with 34% of its land covered by the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The district’s population of 109,800<sup>1</sup> is relatively sparse at approximately 155 per square kilometre.
- Climate action is needed to be taken by all who live, work and visit West Oxfordshire and therefore, although this monitoring report section focuses in the main on the District Council’s actions and achievements, it also includes some facts and figures on the important work led by others working towards the same goal, at the district / county or more local geographies.
- Previous annual reports have shown a positive, yet gradual, decline in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions across the district. Between 2005 and 2018 total carbon emissions have fallen from 785.6 to 568.6 (kt CO<sub>2</sub>), as broken down by source of emission in figure 1.

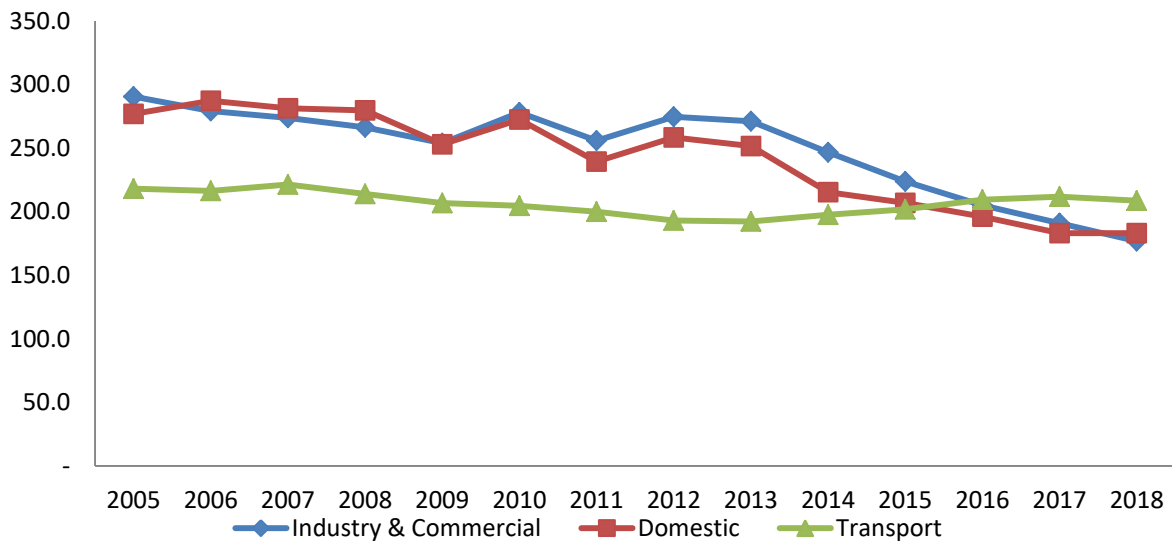


Figure 1: West Oxfordshire's Total kt CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions within LA Scope of Influence, By Sector (DBEIS)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [ONS mid-2018 population estimates released June 2019](#)

<sup>2</sup> DBEIS UK Greenhouse Gas Inventory 2005-2018, published June 2020

- Renewable energy generation is becoming increasingly commonplace in the effort to reduce dependency on fossil fuels. As of 2019, there were 2,894 renewable energy sites in the District, 99% of which were Photovoltaics. Trends indicate a steady increase in the amount of new renewable energy sites coming forward in West Oxfordshire since 2014.
- As of October 2020, there were 19 public electric vehicle charging devices available in West Oxfordshire<sup>3</sup>, the District being within the 20<sup>th</sup> to 40<sup>th</sup> percentile of UK local authority areas in terms of total provision.
- Residual **household waste** per household (kg) has seen a general decline between 2013 and 2019.
- Over the same period of time, the amount of waste sent for **reuse, recycling or composting** has remained at a relatively consistent level. The relative proportion of overall waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting increased year on year from 2013 (57.4%) to 2017 (63.4%) but fell to 57.8% in 2018/19 .

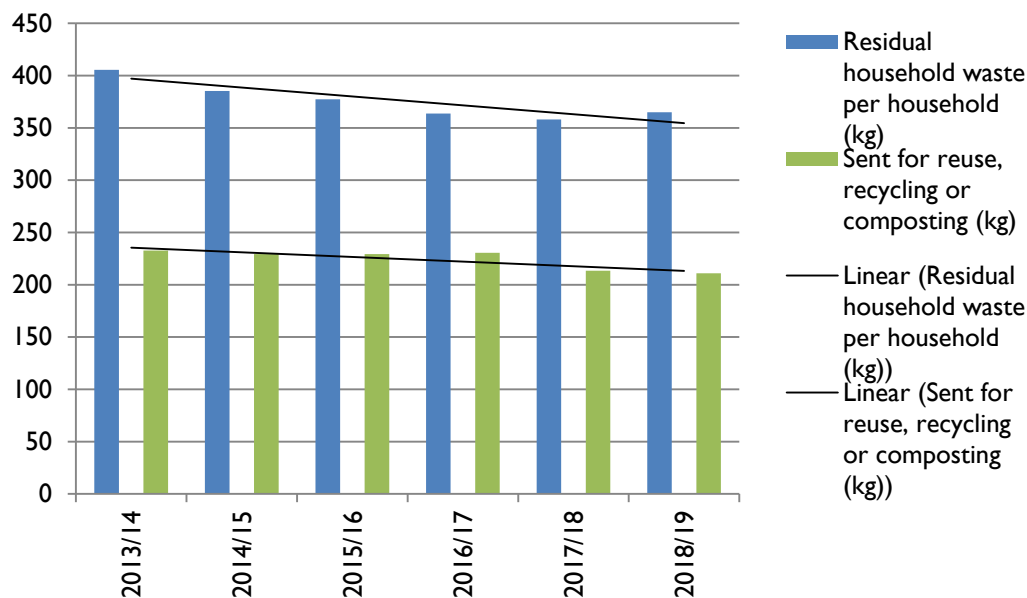


Figure 2: Residual household waste in West Oxfordshire 2013 - 2019 □

- This trend is broadly in line with Oxfordshire as a whole, the County having one of the lowest rates of waste arising per household, and one of the highest recycling rates (58% across Oxfordshire in 2018-19.) Several reasons are suggested for this trend, including tightened standards on councils' abilities to recycle materials; changing habits, such as accessing news and information online rather than through print media; re-processors demanding material with less contamination; and lighter packaging<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Department for Transport (DfT), October 2020 <http://maps.dft.gov.uk/ev-charging-map/>

<sup>4</sup> Oxfordshire Resource & Waste Strategy 2018-2023

- **West Oxfordshire's ecological network** is made up of sites designated for their international, national and local importance, including:

- One international site: a small area of the Oxford Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Two National Nature Reserves (Wychwood NNR and Chimney Meadows NNR)<sup>5</sup>
- 28 SSSIs wholly or partly in West Oxfordshire, representing approximately 0.02% of the land area. 28.2% of the total SSSI area within the district is in favourable condition. The method used to assess SSSI's has changed in the monitoring year. SSSI's are now split into 'units' of which there are 54 in the District.<sup>6</sup>
- 103 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), totalling 1,571 hectares. The area of these LWS has increased by 1.72 hectares since the last monitoring year.
- 16 Geological Sites, the combined area of which is 333.32 hectares
- 14 Conservation Target Areas
- Part the Cotswolds Valleys Nature Improvement Area (NIA) extends into West Oxfordshire, largely covering the valley areas of the Evenlode and Windrush rivers.

- The map at Figure 3 shows the levels of light pollution in West Oxfordshire. The darker shades of red show the areas which shine the most/brightest light into the night sky and the darker blue shades show the areas which have the lowest levels of light shining into the night sky.

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<sup>5</sup> The state of NNRs are measured by Bucks, Berks and Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT)

<sup>6</sup> Thames Valley Environment Records Centre (TVERC) Biodiversity Annual Monitoring Report 2019-2020

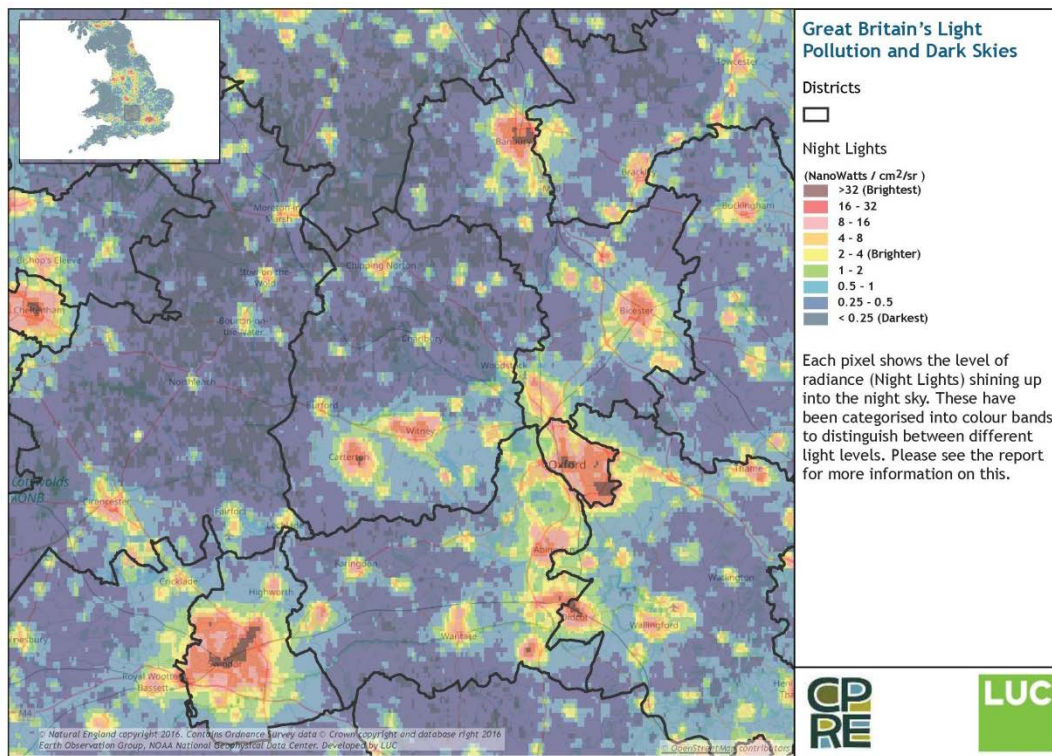


Figure 3: Light pollution and Dark Skies in West Oxfordshire

- The map shows that while high light pollution levels are recorded in Witney and Carterton and in particular the skies above RAF Brize Norton are among the brightest in the country, a large proportion of the most rural areas in the District have some of the darkest skies and lowest levels of light pollution.
- There is one Dark Sky Discovery Site in the district, located at the Rollright Stones Ancient Monument near Chipping Norton.
- There are two Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in the district, at Bridge Street in Witney and at Horsefair in Chipping Norton, both AQMAs having been declared in 2005 and both having high levels of Nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) pollutants derived from vehicular traffic.
- Several rivers flow through West Oxfordshire providing important corridors for biodiversity, opportunities for recreation and forming part of the setting of many towns and villages. However they also present a flood risk, particularly:
  - High risk flood zone of the River Windrush, intersected by several developed areas in Witney. Much of the land adjacent to the Windrush is, however, rural agricultural.
  - Significant areas of functional flood plain in the south of the Eynsham-Woodstock sub-area associated with the confluence of the River Windrush and the River Thames
  - Large areas of River Thames functional flood plain in the south of the Carterton Sub-area, however again this land is largely rural and agricultural in nature.

- Functional Floodplain associated with the River Evenlode at Shipton-under-Wychwood and its tributaries flowing from Milton-under-Wychwood.
- Flood defences in West Oxfordshire offer a standard of protection ranging from 2 to 100 years. Defences designed to a 100 year standard are found along the Upper Thames and are maintained by the Environment Agency, such defences include flood walls, embankments and stone revetments. Many of the other fluvial defences across the District have a design standard less than 50 years. Flood defences are mapped in Appendix B, figures 2A-F of the [West Oxfordshire Level I SFRA Update Report](#), Nov 2016.
- Water quality is measured on a river catchment scale and West Oxfordshire falls within two catchment areas: the Evenlode and the Windrush. In 2016, in both the Evenlode and Windrush catchments, most of the water bodies were of moderate status.
- There are currently 9 “At Risk” sites in West Oxfordshire included in the Heritage at Risk Registers, including 2 places of worship and 7 archaeological sites. Although there was no change in the last year in the overall number of “At Risk” sites, the number of sites in the district has declined over the last seven years.

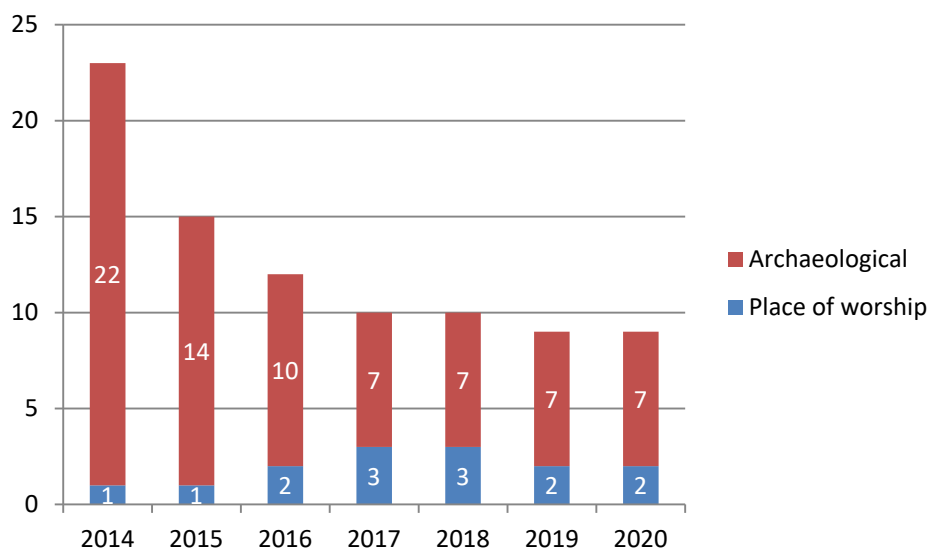


Figure 4: No. of sites on the Heritage at Risk Register from 2014 to 2020

- The Local Plan Core Objectives for protecting and enhancing our environment and reducing the impact from climate change are as follows:

**CO14** Conserve and enhance the character and significance of West Oxfordshire’s high quality natural, historic and cultural environment – including its geodiversity, landscape, biodiversity, heritage and arts – recognising and promoting their wider contribution to people’s quality of life and social and economic well-being both within the District and beyond.

- CO15** Contribute to reducing the causes and adverse impacts of climate change, especially flood risk.
- CO16** Enable improvements in water and air quality.
- CO17** Minimise the use of non-renewable natural resources and promote more widespread use of renewable energy solutions.

## What's happened in 2019/20?

- The District Council has calculated and audited its own carbon emissions for 2019/20 period using the BEIS UK Government carbon emissions conversion factors (July 2020). The total reported CO<sub>2</sub>e (which stands for carbon equivalent emissions) have increased between 2018/19 to 2019/20 by 529 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e - a percentage increase of 21.2%. There has been a cumulative reduction in CO<sub>2</sub>e of 68.4% from the baseline year 2009/2010.
- The rise in CO<sub>2</sub>e between 2019/19 and 2019/20 can be attributed to the fact the Council has, this year, reviewed and extended its scope of emissions so that Scope 1, Scope 2 and Scope 3 emissions are all encompassing. Furthermore, for the Council's waste vehicle fleet emissions, the 2019/2020 now replaces mileage data with liquid fuel consumption which is more accurate but does increase the CO<sub>2</sub>e associated with this new method of reporting. The 2019/2020 CO<sub>2</sub>e carbon account is now being incorporated as the baseline for the Council's trajectory for achieving its target of carbon neutral by 2030.
- The condition of two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (three separate units) was assessed by Natural England. The Salt Way SSSI, with a main habitat of lowland calcareous grassland was found to be in unfavourable but recovering condition. Two units with the Taynton Quarries SSSI, both whose main habitats are lowland calcareous grassland, were both found to be in favourable condition.
- As reported by Thames Valley Environmental Record Centre (TVERC), in West Oxfordshire from 2019 to 2020, there was:
  - A small decrease in the number of priority species from 117 (2019) to 101 (2020)
  - A small decrease in overall priority habitat from 5012ha (2019) to 4986ha (2020)<sup>7</sup>
  - 101 water vole surveys were undertaken in 2019 with 35 recording positive signs. This is a lower proportion of positive recordings than last year.
- A Town and Parish Forum was held in October 2019 which focussed on Managing West Oxfordshire's natural environment for biodiversity gain and Climate Change.
- Oxfordshire's Nature Recovery Network will need a doubling of land managed for

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<sup>7</sup> changes most attributable to new information such as confirmation of boundaries or habitat types rather than the creation or loss of habitat

wildlife by 2050. Nature continues to face an uncertain future, with many birds, butterflies, flowers and other wildlife disappearing from Oxfordshire's countryside at an alarming rate. The District Council has teamed up with experts from around the county to develop a Nature Recovery Strategy for Oxfordshire. A first draft of a Nature Recovery Network Map has been produced to identify places where wildlife can be helped to return<sup>8</sup>.

- No Electric Vehicle Charging Points were installed on Council owned land in 2019/20.
- One standalone renewable energy scheme was permitted in 2019/20, a solar photovoltaic farm with a site size of approximately 63.4ha at Twelve Acre Farm, Eynsham. It should be noted however that the majority of small scale energy schemes, especially solar PV schemes, benefit from permitted development rights and do not require planning permission. It is not possible to identify and record these installations.
- The latest report on air quality in the district (June 2020) indicates that the annual average for NO<sub>2</sub> was just under 42 µgm-3 this year at the Horsefair monitoring point, an improvement on the annual average of 47 µgm-3 experienced during 2018. Nitrogen dioxide levels in Bridge Street, Witney continue to exceed the national air quality objective. The annual average results of 41.9 µgm-3 and 44.84 µgm-3 can be compared with last year when the levels were 41.8 µgm-3 and 48.2 µgm-3 respectively.
- 313.57 kilos of residual household waste per West Oxfordshire household was produced in 2019/20 against a target of 365kg.
- 61.6% of household waste (cumulative) was sent for reuse, recycling or composting, a greater proportion than last year (57.8%).
- There was an eight week door knocking campaign in August/September 2019 aimed at increasing food waste recycling and raising awareness of what items can and cannot be placed in the recycling bin. This type of initiative has been proven nationally to be the most effective way of changing recycling behaviour.
- No Conservation Area Appraisals were carried out in 2019/20 but there remains one appraisal in progress, Woodstock, work on which has paused.
- There were no heritage assets added to the at risk register in 2019/20

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<sup>8</sup> Available to view here: <https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/biodiversity/oxfordshires-nature-recovery-network/>



## What's on the horizon?

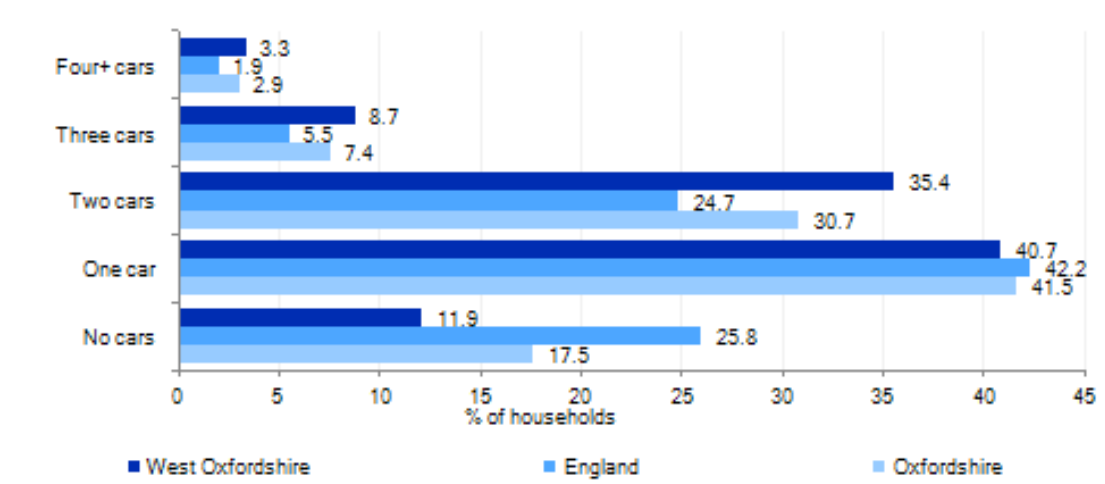
- Having appointed a Climate Change Manager in November 2019, the Council now has a pre-approved commitment to implementing its ambitions for climate through:
  - A Carbon Action Plan for the Council, setting out the trajectory for how to become carbon neutral Council by 2030;
  - A Climate Change Strategy setting out the Council's objectives and plans working across District in delivering climate action.
- Continued partnership work with partners across Oxfordshire to further develop the Local Nature Recovery Strategy, including further exploration of how the Draft Nature Recovery Map can be used to inform the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and the proposed review of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 due to commence in autumn 2021.
- Continued monitoring of the Experimental Environmental Weight Restriction in Burford with a consultation period to end in February 2021 and Oxfordshire County Council to review to extent to which HGV levels have changed in Burford and the surrounding monitoring sites.
- The Covid-19 pandemic has meant that West Oxfordshire residents have been spending longer periods of time at home. It is anticipated that in 2020-2021 there could be an approximate 10% rise in the household waste figures.
- As part of the update of the district-wide Infrastructure Delivery Plan, the District Council will work closely with the Environment Agency, Thames Water and other key organisations on 'water-related' issues such as flood risk and foul water drainage.

## 2. Healthy Towns and Villages

*Facilitating healthy lifestyles and better wellbeing for everyone*

### Background Context

- When assessed against the indicators for health and wellbeing from the Oxfordshire-wide Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2020)<sup>9</sup>, West Oxfordshire on the whole, performs better than, or similar to the national average on most indicators.
- One of the key indicators for health and wellbeing is life expectancy; Oxfordshire outperforms the south east and England as a whole. There is however a notable discrepancy between male and female life expectancy (81.6 for males and 84.7 for females).
- The population for West Oxfordshire has continued to increase steadily and the most recent ONS study<sup>10</sup> estimates the population of the District at 110,643.
- Primary and Secondary healthcare provided across some 16 local GP practices in addition to the Witney Community Hospital and the War Memorial Community Hospital in Chipping Norton.
- Figure 5 shows the percentage of car ownership within West Oxfordshire and how that compares to the rest of the country and county.



- In terms of physical activity, a study carried out by Sport England<sup>11</sup> found that 69% of the District's population are physically active. This is a greater proportion than nationally and matches the county figure.

<sup>9</sup> Provided by Oxfordshire County Council, available at: <https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/joint-strategic-needs-assessment>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalesscotlandandnorthernireland>

<sup>11</sup> Sport England (Active Lives Survey) 2019 - <https://www.sportengland.org/know-your-audience/data/active-lives>

- According to a 2019 study by the charity End Child Poverty<sup>12</sup> 20% of children in West Oxfordshire are living in poverty.
- The Local Plan Core Objectives for strong market towns and villages are as follows:

<b>CO1</b>	Enable new development, services and facilities of an appropriate scale and type in locations which will help improve the quality of life of local communities and where the need to travel, particularly by car, can be minimised
<b>CO2</b>	Ensure that new developments are suitably located and well designed to protect and enhance the individual form, character and identity of our towns and villages as well as contributing to the quality of life in West Oxfordshire.
<b>CO3</b>	Promote safe, vibrant and prosperous town and village centres and resist proposals that would damage their vitality and viability or adversely affect measures to improve those centres.

### What's happened in 2019/20?

- A small amount (2m<sup>2</sup>) of additional floor space for healthcare was permitted in the 2019/20 period, relating to the extension of a dental surgery in Chipping Norton.
- A new football pitch for Carterton Football Club was permitted and 2,232m<sup>2</sup> of additional leisure floor space was permitted in the 2019/20 period, including the change of use from the Lidl premises in Witney to a gym and two other schemes:

Parish	Description	Area (m <sup>2</sup> )
Witney	Conversion of existing premises from class A1 use to class D2 use (Gymnasium)	1,077
Witney	Change of use from Light Industrial (Class B1 (C) use) to Leisure for use as a private I-I personal training Unit (Class D2 use).	48
Carterton	Change of use of units I0 and I1 from vacant retail units to leisure use and a cafe element for Carterton Gymnastic Club CIC	1,107

- Consultants have been appointed to develop a Built Leisure Facilities Strategy / Accessing Need and Opportunities Guide (ANOG).
- During 2019/20, there were a total of 895,689 visits to the District's main leisure centres (Windrush, Chipping Norton, Carterton and Bartholomew) excluding school

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.endchildpoverty.org.uk/child-poverty-in-your-area-201415-201819/>

visits. This is a decrease of 47,827 from the previous monitoring period.

- COVID-19 forced the closure of all District leisure centres towards the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of the monitoring period. A nationwide lockdown continued into the 2020/2021 monitoring period with zero visits in the first quarter of the year.
- Some further information on the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic over the immediate months following the end of the 2019/20 monitoring year is provided in the Strong Local Communities section from page 26.
- The District Council continues to work with Oxfordshire County Council and other partners to bring forward strategic infrastructure schemes. With regards the A40 corridor improvements, the preliminary design stage was completed for the eastbound bus priority lane on A40 from Eynsham to Duke's Cut canal bridge; selected elements of westbound bus priority; 850 space park and ride site at Eynsham; and selective junction improvements on A40 in Eynsham/ Cassington area. A revised funding package and bringing forward the Park & Ride element was approved by Oxfordshire County Council in December 2020.
- Feasibility design has progressed for the dualling of the A40 from Witney to Eynsham, integrated east and westbound bus lane and provision of dedicated bus, cycle and walking facilities along the Duke's Cut section of the A40.
- Feasibility design has also progressed on the Access to Witney at Shores Green proposed scheme.
- The Access to Carterton Strategy preferred options package is divided into three distinct schemes to improve Carterton's strategic connectivity: B4477 Carriageway Improvement Scheme; West Facing Slips at B4477/A40 Junction and wider benefits schemes and; Witney to Carterton cycleway along Witney Road. During 2019/20 scheme option generation has taken place for all elements.

### **What's on the horizon?**

- The Council is committed to working collaboratively with the health and voluntary sector and local communities to enhance the health and wellbeing of West Oxfordshire's residents.
- Following completion of the Accessing Needs and Opportunities Guide, the next stage of developing the Built Facilities Strategy will be to establish a leisure facility mix for consultants working on the site identification to take forward.
- Following approval from Sport England, consultants to be appointed to commence work on a new Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) for the District.
- Health Impact Assessment (HIA) next steps – reported to the Growth Board on 26 January for approval, following which there will be training/awareness raising with Officers and Members.

- Public engagement on A40 schemes and Access to Witney at Shores Green in spring 2021 and landowner discussions.
- Determination of the A40 Park & Ride planning application (Oxfordshire County Council). Following a submission of Business Case to Department for Transport in late spring 2021, subsequent approval is expected late Summer 2021 with detailed design on the Park & Ride element commencing shortly thereafter with construction to start in early 2022.
- Access to Carterton next steps: produce a fully costed preferred option package by March 2021. With public consultation to follow later in 2021/22. Full funding opportunities will also be sought.

### 3. A Vibrant District Economy

*Securing future economic success through supporting existing local businesses and attracting new businesses to deliver the economic ambitions of the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy*

#### Background Context

- West Oxfordshire has a strong and diverse economy and one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country.
- According to the latest ONS experimental estimates of regional gross value added (GVA) (balanced) by industry, **GVA** in West Oxfordshire totalled £2.38bn (£26,814 per head) in 2018 (provisional estimation)<sup>13</sup>. It was estimated that Real Estate and Manufacturing were the largest industry sectors (see figure 6), worth £485m and £411m respectively.
- Previously GVA has typically been used as a measure of productivity at a county and regional level and so a direct comparison / trend analysis of the above figures has not been possible. However, the 2015 West Oxfordshire Economic Snapshot<sup>14</sup> reported on the district's **workforce structure** by industry sector at the time of the last Census (2011). Whilst there was a reported high proportion of employment in the Health, Education, Public Admin & Defence, Wholesale and Retail, and Manufacturing industries; Financial and Real Estate was one of the industries with a lower proportion of the district's workforce (see figure 7).
- The 2015 Economic Snapshot recognised the **potential for growth** in the engineering, motorsport and food production sectors.

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<sup>13</sup> ONS data available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/grossvalueaddedgva>

<sup>14</sup> Available at: <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/svrbpu22/west-oxfordshire-economic-snapshot-jan-2015.pdf>

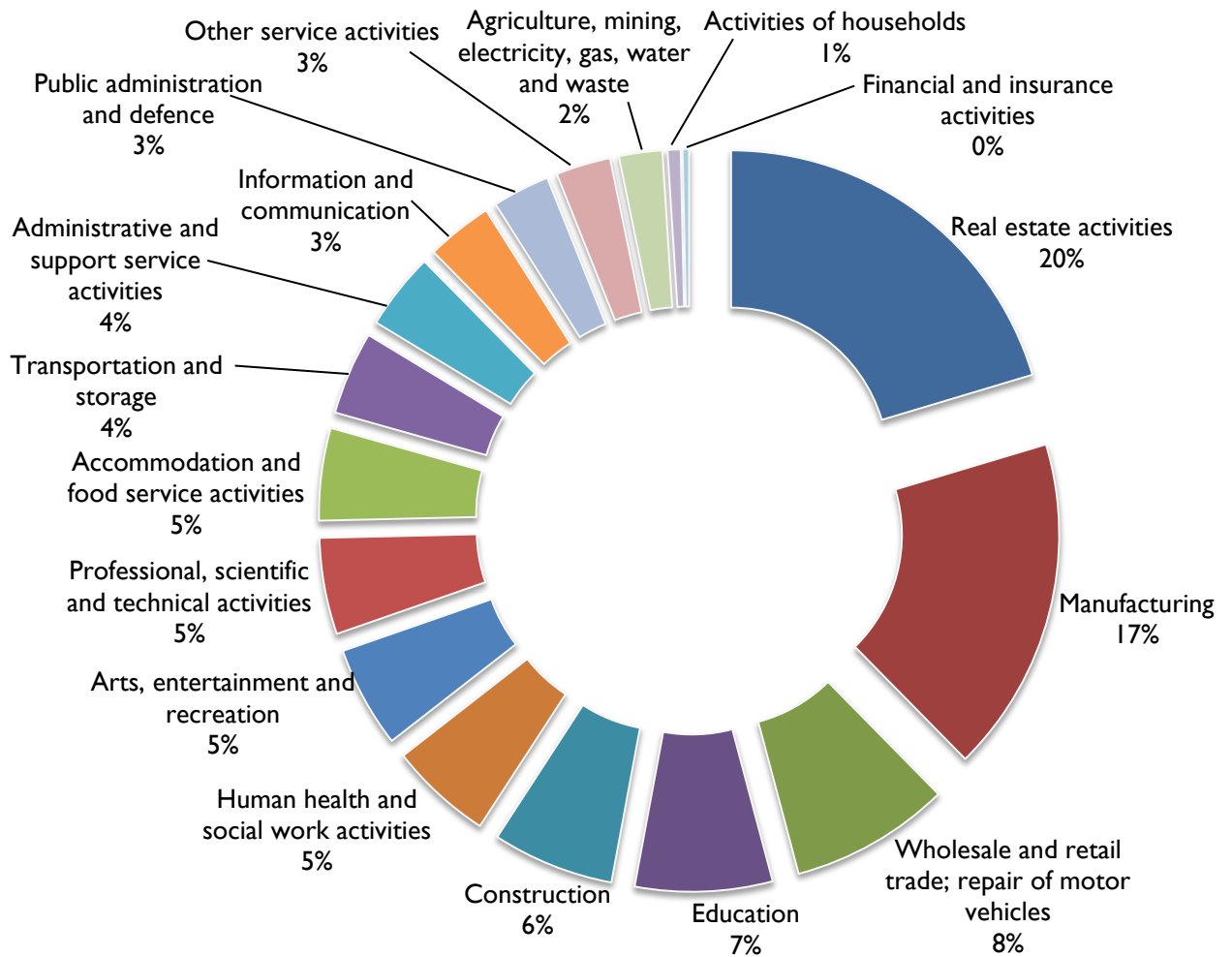


Figure 6: Experimental estimate of Gross value added (balanced) by industry

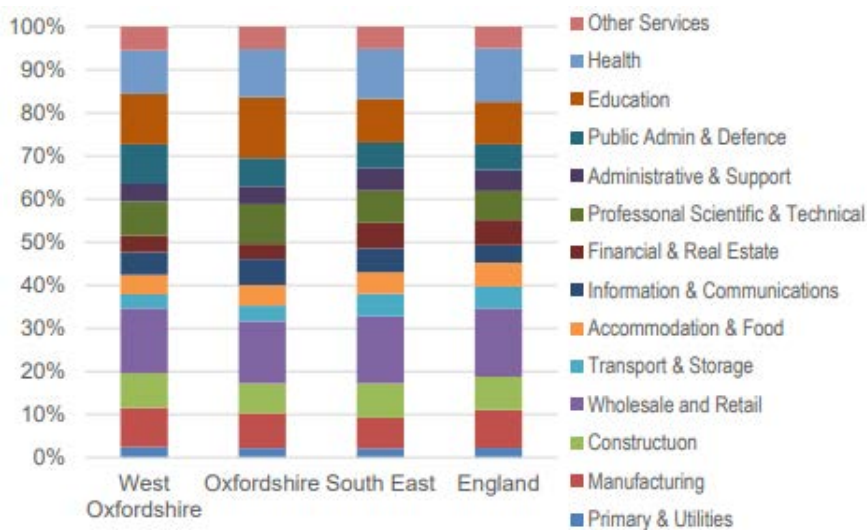


Figure 7: Industrial Structure of West Oxfordshire workforce (Census 2011)

- Launched in September 2019, the **Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (OxLIS)**<sup>15</sup> responds to the UK Industrial Strategy which aims to increase growth and productivity across the country and create more prosperous communities. The OxLIS presents a long-term framework against which private and public sector investment decisions can be assessed and there are a number of specific opportunities for West Oxfordshire, including:
  - The West Oxfordshire Science Park (part of the proposed Garden Village) and the Carterton & RAF Brize Norton Industrial Hub identified within a proposed network of global hubs and international clusters.
  - Involvement in the establishment of a Data and Mobility Living Lab
- In 2019, West Oxfordshire had 57,200 employees, 6,100 more than in 2018<sup>16</sup>.
- In 2019, nearly 90% of businesses in West Oxfordshire employed up to 9 employees (micro-businesses). There were 20 businesses employing over 250 people, including Owen Mumford, Siemens and Renault FI.
- 87.6% of West Oxfordshire residents aged 16 - 64 are **economically active** and of persons in employment nearly a quarter are in professional occupations.

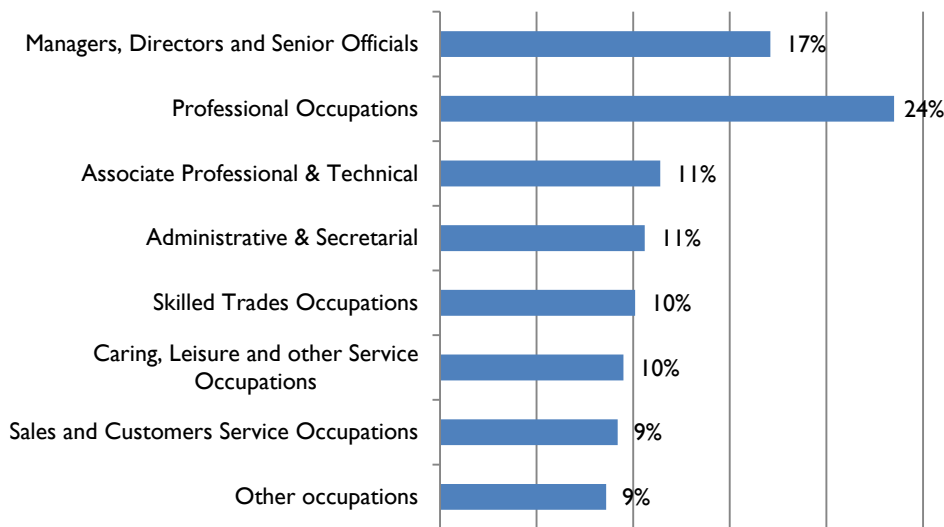


Figure 8: West Oxfordshire workforce by occupation

- In West Oxfordshire, enterprises have an average of 1.1 **local units**, lower than the national average.
- West Oxfordshire's **town centres** continue to face challenges of remaining competitive in a modern market with new technologies and spending behaviours, competition from out of town retail and leisure destinations. In particular, Witney has experienced an increase in vacant town centre units, with 35 units currently being unoccupied (10% of total units). This is an increase from 27 in 2018 (8% of

<sup>15</sup> Available at: <https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/lis>

<sup>16</sup> Business Register of Employment Survey (BRES), Nomis, Available at: <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/sources/bres>



total units). A further two units are temporarily closed as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic but are anticipated to re-open in the new year.

- As of November 2020, Carterton is in a more favourable position than Witney in terms of town centre vacancy with three units currently remaining unoccupied (4% of all units). Of these units, two have recently had planning applications approved and are hoped to be operational in the near future.
- The 2015 West Oxfordshire Economic Snapshot<sup>17</sup> provides the most up to date detailed account of the **key employment locations** across the district. A high-level assessment of these key sites was undertaken in terms of their location, utility and quality (see figure 9). Sites in Carterton, Witney and Eynsham scored particularly well. Further, at the time of the last Census (2011), 18% of employed residents in West Oxfordshire worked mainly at or from home, which had seen an upward trend. The coronavirus pandemic has increased levels of homeworking, however locally specific data is not yet available.

Centre	Sites	Location	Utility	Quality	Total
Carterton	Carterton South Industrial Estate	0	-1	-1	-2
	Ventura Park	1	1	1	3
	West Oxfordshire Business Park	1	1	1	3
Chipping Norton	Elmsfield Industrial Estate, Primsdown Industrial Estate, Station Road Industrial Estate, Worcester Road Industrial Estate	0	1	0	1
	Cromwell Park	1	1	1	3
Eynsham	Oasis Business Park	1	1	1	3
	Elm Place	1	1	1	3
	Oakfields Industrial Estate	1	1	1	3
	Old Station Way	1	1	1	3
Long Hanborough	Hanborough Business Park	1	0	0	1
	Blenheim Office Park	1	1	1	3
Stanton Harcourt	Lakeside Industrial Estate	1	1	1	3
	Stanton Harcourt Industrial Estate	1	1	1	3
Witney	Bromag Industrial Park	0	1	0	1
	De Havilland Way	1	1	1	3
	Eagle Industrial Estate	-1	1	0	0
	Newland Industrial Estate	-1	0	0	-1
	Range Road	1	1	1	3
	Station Lane	0	1	0	1
	Windrush Industrial Park	1	1	1	3
	Network Point	1	1	1	3

<sup>17</sup> Available at: <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/svrbpu22/west-oxfordshire-economic-snapshot-jan-2015.pdf>

	Compton Hay, Des Roches Square, Meadow Court, Spinners Yard, Thorney Leys, Waterside Court, Witney Office Village	1	1	1	3
	Blenheim Palace Sawmill, Clanfield Workshops, Crawley Mill	1	1	1	3
	Enstone Business Park	1	1	0	2
	Langston Priory, Threshers Yard, Mount Manor	1	1	1	3
<b>Remote</b>	Southill Business Park	0	1	1	2
	Groves Timber Yard	-1	-1	-1	-3
	Minster Lovell	-1	-1	-1	-3
	Wroslyn Road	-1	-1	-1	-3

Figure 9: Key employment site assessment<sup>17</sup>

- The Local Plan Core Objectives for sustainable economic growth are as follows:

**CO7** To support sustainable economic growth which adds value to the local economy, improves the balance between housing and local jobs, provides a diversity of local employment opportunities, capitalises on economic growth in adjoining areas, improves local skills and work readiness, removes potential barriers to investment and provides flexibility to adapt to changing economic needs.

**CO8** To enable a prosperous and sustainable tourism economy

### What's happened in 2019/20?

- A total of 41,646m<sup>2</sup> (33,133m<sup>2</sup> net) employment land (B use classes) was permitted in 2019/20, the majority of which (m<sup>2</sup>) is located within the Witney sub-area and is predominantly made up of the floorspace to be gained from the West Witney employment area (planning reference 19/02011/RES).

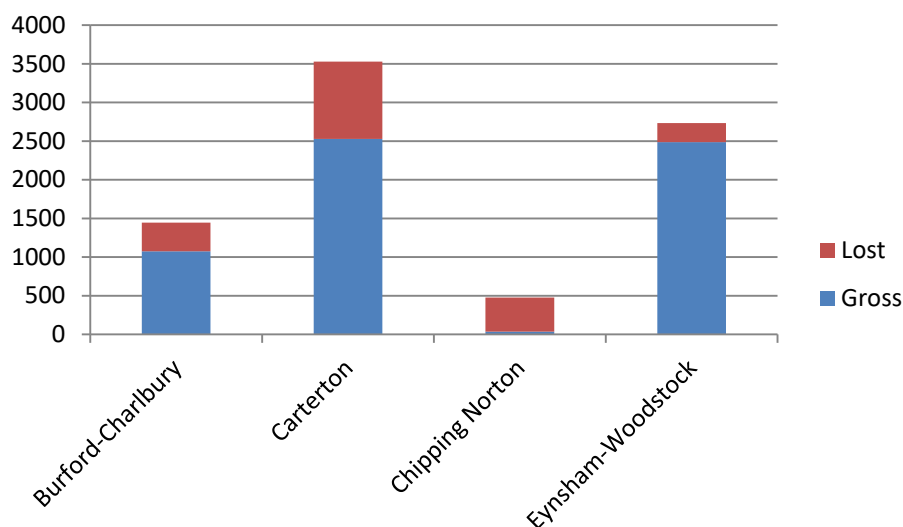


Figure 10: B use class floorspace permitted (m<sup>2</sup>) by sub-area (separate graph for Witney sub-area in figure 11)

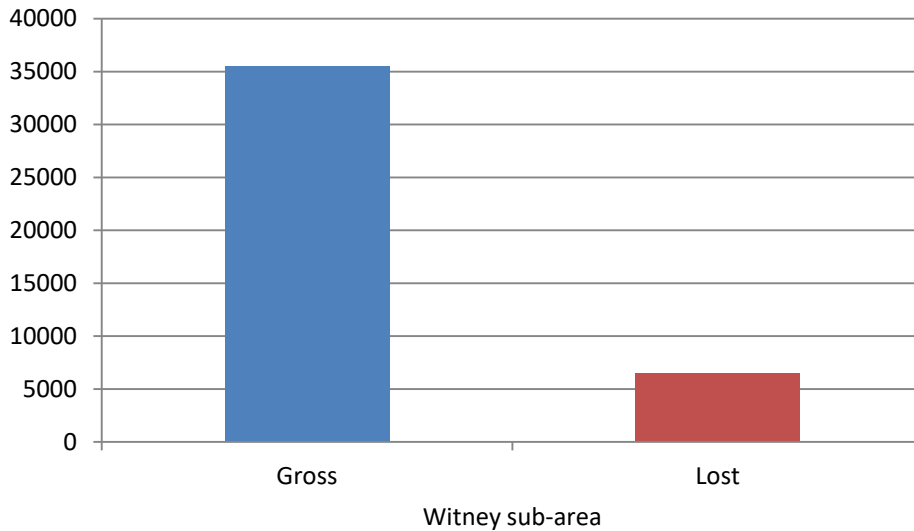


Figure 11: B use class floorspace permitted (m<sup>2</sup>) in the Witney sub-area

- A total of 11,155m<sup>2</sup> (10,432 m<sup>2</sup> net) of permitted employment floorspace was completed. Only within the Chipping Norton sub-area was there a loss of employment floorspace through a single completed change of use of a storage unit (B8 use) to residential use. In the Witney sub-area 3,922m<sup>2</sup> (3,324m<sup>2</sup> net) employment space was completed.

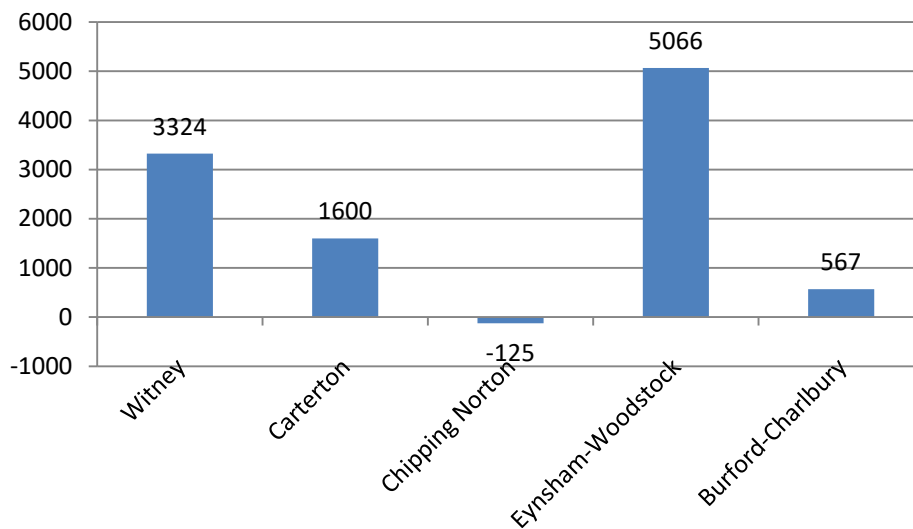


Figure 12: B use class floorspace completed (m<sup>2</sup>)

- A total of two change of use schemes from employment to residential completed in the monitoring period resulting in a loss of 273m<sup>2</sup> (both B8 storage and distribution uses in Chipping Norton and Witney).
- Permitted changes of use to residential in 2019-20 would result in a loss of 989m<sup>2</sup> employment floorspace, including a scheme to convert offices to residential in Witney and two light industrial to residential schemes approved under permitted development in Bampton and Burford.

- Policy EI sets out the quantum of land available for business development at Witney, Carterton, Chipping Norton and Eynsham. The following status of land detailed in Policy EI can be updated, as at 31 March 2020, as follows:

Sub Area	Location	Site Type	Site Area (Ha)	Updated Planning Status/Development Progress 2019/20
Witney	West of Downs Road, Witney	Industrial	2.10	Planning permission on part of previous Local Plan allocation for construction of B8 warehouse (planning reference 20/01338/FUL)
Witney	Land at Witney Football Club	Office	0.40	Residential element of permission under construction. Permitted employment development not yet implemented.
Witney	East of Downs Road, South of Burford Road	Commercial	1.81	Development completed
Witney	Land east of De Havilland Way	Business Park	0.47	Proposal for new purpose-built facility comprising B1, B2 and B8 class uses pending consideration (planning reference 20/02391/FUL)
Witney	West Witney SDA	Mixed use	10.00	Residential and phase 1 of employment development (planning permission 19/02011/RES) under construction. Planning permission for phase 2a of employment area (planning reference 20/01729/RES) granted November 2020.
Witney	Former Supergas site, west of Downs Road	Industrial	1.15	No current planning status
Witney	Land Adjacent to Stewart Milne Timber, West of Downs Road	Storage and distribution	0.85	Development completed
Carterton	West Oxfordshire Business Park	Business Park	1.87	Partly completed
Carterton	West Oxfordshire Business Park	Business Park	0.58	Development completed
Carterton	Ventura Park, Carterton	Business Park	0.43	Development completed
Carterton	Land east of Carterton	Mixed use	1.50	Permission granted
Chipping Norton	Cromwell Park, Chipping Norton	Office	0.13	Permission granted
Chipping Norton	Land north of London Road, Chipping Norton	Business Park	9.00	Part of WOLP 2031 allocation (CNI)
Eynsham	Land north of the A40	Science Park	40.00	Allocated in WOLP 2031

- In the main towns of West Oxfordshire (Witney, Carterton, Chipping Norton, Burford and Woodstock), 564m<sup>2</sup> of retail floorspace was permitted (minor extensions of existing units in Witney and a small amount of new retail use as part of a reserved matters approval on the Land East of Woodstock allocation). However, a number of conversions and some large-scale changes of use permitted in the main towns would mean that there would be an overall net loss of 5,481m<sup>2</sup>.
- Outside of the main towns, 2,446m<sup>2</sup> of A1 retail floorspace was permitted. The permitted loss from a single development in Eynsham would result in a net gain of 2,377m<sup>2</sup>.

2019-2020	A1 shops	A2 Financial and professional services	A3 Restaurants and cafes	A4 drinking establishments	A5 Hot food takeaways	TOTAL
<b>Witney</b>	283 (-4,544 net)	0	0	0	0	<b>283 (-4,544 net)</b>
<b>Carterton</b>	60 (-1,129 net)	0 (-355 net)	82 (82 net)	0	0	<b>142 (-1,402 net)</b>
<b>Chipping Norton</b>	0	0	10 (10 net)	0	0	<b>10</b>
<b>Burford</b>	0 (-29 net)	0 (-52 net)	0	0	0	<b>0 (-81 net)</b>
<b>Woodstock</b>	221	221 (43 net)				<b>442 (264 net)</b>
<b>Other settlements</b>	<b>2,446 (2,377 net)</b>	0	0	0	81 (81 net)	<b>2,527 (2,458 net)</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,010 (-3,104 net)</b>	<b>221 (-364 net)</b>	<b>92 (92 net)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>81 (81 net)</b>	<b>3,404 (-3,295 net)</b>

- A total of 13 schemes were granted permission during the monitoring period for tourism related developments. Most of these related to the provision of holiday accommodation.
- The Council's contract with Gigaclear to bring fibre access has now covered 4,006 of 4,788 properties in the District. The project is due for completion at the end of November 2020.
- The District Council is currently undertaking work to enable Carterton Town Council to submit an application for the Government's Future High Streets Fund. The fund is currently closed to applications.
- In response to the Coronavirus pandemic, the District Council has processed 2,095 successful COVID grant applications valued in excess of £25,030,000.
- A working group has been established by Council Officers to support the safe reopening of the District's high streets. Measures have included pavement widening, pedestrianisation, and changes to licensing, helping businesses to operate in a socially distanced manner.

- Continued work in partnership with the Oxfordshire LEP to bring forward projects identified within the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy (LIS), including Carterton Industrial Hub and the Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village Science Park in line with the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy's Investment Plan.

### **What's on the horizon?**

- Continued support to be provided for local businesses as part of the Council's Covid-19 Recovery Plan.
- The next steps in the development of a new Technology Hub for Carterton include a detailed feasibility study and SWOT analysis informed by input from a wide range of stakeholders previously engaged in the concept through the Local Plan process.
- Submission and examination of the Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan, of which the Salt Cross Science and Technology Park is a key part.

## 4. Strong Local Communities

*Supporting and building prosperous and inclusive communities*

### Background Context

- There are roughly 130 separate towns, villages and hamlets scattered across the district with 83 parishes.
- The proportion of people '**satisfied** with their neighbourhood' (90.2%) is higher than the Oxfordshire average (86.5%)
- **Council tax** in West Oxfordshire is within the lowest five shire districts nationally.
- Since being introduced through the Localism Act 2011, there have been five Neighbourhood Plans 'made' (adopted) in West Oxfordshire. These are Eynsham, South Leigh, Hailey, Shilton and Chipping Norton. As of December 2020, a further five Neighbourhood Planning areas are designated for the purposes of producing a Neighbourhood Plan (Brize Norton, Cassington, Charlbury, Milton under Wychwood and Woodstock)
- There are 16 **community transport schemes** operating throughout West Oxfordshire<sup>18</sup>.
- Based on the MHCLG **Index of Deprivation**<sup>19</sup>, a greater percentage of Lower Super Output Areas in West Oxfordshire were within the 40% most deprived in 2019 (see figure 14) than in 2015. However, on the whole, the district remains largely within the least deprived local authority areas in the country.
- The Local Plan Core Objectives for sustainable communities with access to services and facilities are as follows:

**CO9** Promote inclusive, healthy, safe and crime free communities.

**CO10** Ensure that land is not released for new development until the supporting infrastructure and facilities are secured.

**CO11** Maximise the opportunity for walking, cycling and use of public transport.

**CO12** Look to maintain or improve where possible the health and wellbeing of the District's residents through increased choice and quality of shopping, leisure, recreation, arts, cultural and community facilities.

**CO13** Plan for enhanced access to services and facilities without unacceptably impacting

<sup>18</sup> 2019/20 Oxfordshire Community Transport Directory

<sup>19</sup> Index of Deprivation (MHCLG, 2019). Available at: [http://ddgapps.communities.gov.uk/imd/iod\\_index.html](http://ddgapps.communities.gov.uk/imd/iod_index.html)

## What's happened in 2019/20?

- The Localism Act 2011 introduced a new Community Right referred to as the Community Right to Bid which allows Town and Parish Councils and defined community groups to ask the Council to list certain assets as being of community value. In the year 2019/20, two public houses were added to the West Oxfordshire List of Assets of Community Value (ACV)<sup>20</sup>. These are The White House, Bladon and The Cock Inn, Combe. Notably the White House, Bladon has been purchased by the community and is renamed 'The White House Community Pub'.
- Five ACV's were removed from the West Oxfordshire List of Assets of Community Value during the 2019/20 period due to the expiry of their 5 year listing period:
  - The Saddlers Arms, New Yatt
  - The Red Lion, Aston
  - Langdale Hall, Witney
  - Harcourt Arms, Stanton Harcourt
  - Public Open Space adjacent to Reily Close, Long Hanborough
- In 2019/20, three Neighbourhood Plans were made. Hailey Neighbourhood Plan was made on 2 September 2019, Shilton Neighbourhood Plan was also made on 2 September 2019 and Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan was made on 6 February 2020.
- A total of £3,235,314.50 was collected by the Council under Section 106 planning obligations.
- Of this total £1,195,522.48 received was for affordable housing; £164,344.51 was for community facilities; £137,842 was for economic development; £26,410 was for primary education; £1,631,504.51 was for open space and leisure; and £79,691 was for transport and travel.
- Consultation on a revised draft CIL charging schedule took place from 10 July – 21 August 2020. Just over 170 responses were received and these can be viewed [online](#).
- The Council awarded £11,069.46 in grant funding in 2019/20; a total of £10,823.76 in Communities Activities Grants and £239.70 in Individual Development Grants.
- 675m<sup>2</sup> community use floorspace was permitted from five schemes (extensions to create function room at Cotswolds Hotel and Spa, extension to dental surgery in Chipping Norton and a small amount of new community use as part of a reserved matters approval on the Land East of Woodstock allocation).
- A small amount of floorspace for community use was lost (132m<sup>2</sup>) resulting from an approval of the conversion of training rooms to residential in Witney.

<sup>20</sup> Full listing available at: <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/residents/communities/community-rights/>



- 2,600m<sup>2</sup> additional floorspace for educational uses was permitted, including a new primary school at the West Witney site (2,485m<sup>2</sup>).
- Shortly after the end of the 2019/20 monitoring year, the Coronavirus pandemic shifted the District Council's focus towards supporting its residents, businesses and the community and voluntary sector, to mitigate the impact of the national lockdown.
- The Council has since reported on its extensive community response work in the two quarters of 2020/21. The next Annual Monitoring Report for the period 2020-2021 will include a full summary of the Council's Covid Response and Recovery actions.

### **What's on the horizon?**

- Submission of CIL Draft Charging Schedule for independent examination and adoption.
- Further consultation and adoption of Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
- Update of the West Oxfordshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) 2016.
- Preparation of an Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) for 2020/21 with publication no later than December 2021.
- Update of Settlement Sustainability Report 2016.
- WODC to continue to support designated Neighbourhood Planning bodies in their preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan. Five further Neighbourhood Plans are currently in progress (Brize Norton, Cassington, Charlbury, Milton-under-Wychwood, Woodstock).

## 5. Meeting the Housing Needs of our Changing Population

*Securing the provision of market and affordable housing of a high quality for the wide range of householders making their home in West Oxfordshire*

### Background Context

- There are approximately 49,000 **households** in West Oxfordshire, with around 900 Ministry of Defence dwellings (estimation based on a combination of Council Tax and Electoral roll data).
- As of February 2020 there were 2,042 households on the **housing waiting list**, with over half of these requiring a 1 bedroom property. A further 30.26% of households on the register required a 2 bed property. 11.31% required 3 bedrooms, 3.53% required 4 bedrooms and only 0.98% required 5 or more bedrooms.
- In 2019, full-time workers could expect to pay 10.4 times their annual work-place based earnings on purchasing a home in West Oxfordshire<sup>21</sup>. This had increased from 2011 where the property price to earnings ratio was 9.1 and in 1997 where the ratio was 5.1. It is however a decrease since 2018 which had a ratio of 11.6.
- The most recent assessment of **housing need** in West Oxfordshire identifies an objectively assessed need (OAN) for 660 homes per year from 2011 to 2031. Within this, there is a need for 274 affordable homes each year (excluding existing commitments).
- The West Oxfordshire Local Plan sets out that provision will be made for at least 15,950 new homes in the period 2011 - 2031, phased as follows:

	West Oxon's needs	Oxford City's needs	Combined annual requirement
2011 - 17	550 per annum		550 per annum
2017 - 18	550		550
2018 - 19	550		550
2019 - 20	550		550
2020 - 21	550		550

<sup>21</sup>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/bulletins/housingaffordabilityinenglandanddwales/2019>

2021 - 22	525	275	800
2022 - 23	525	275	800
2023 - 34	700	275	975
2024 - 25	850	275	1125
2025 - 26	850	275	1125
2026 - 27	850	275	1125
2027 - 28	850	275	1125
2028 - 29	850	275	1125
2029 - 30	850	275	1125
2030 - 31	850	275	1125
Totals	13,200	2,750	15,950

- Over the last 9 monitoring years (2011—2020) there have been the following **residential permissions and completions**:
  - 8,503 dwellings granted permission; an average of 945 per year
  - 4,437 new homes completed; a yearly average of 493
- The Council is required to maintain, and update annually, a register of **Brownfield sites** that are appropriate for residential development and meet a number of criteria set by the government. The West Oxfordshire Brownfield Register, updated in 2020, contains 21 sites with a potential for between 482 and 582 dwellings to come forward over the plan period to 2031.
- There is a theoretical need for around 19 **Gypsy and Traveller pitches** for the period to 2031 however the requirement is likely to be much lower<sup>22</sup>. The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 includes provision for at least 5 pitches and 5 plots between 2016 and 2031.
- As of 1st April 2019 there were a total of 526 registrations on the West Oxfordshire **Self-build** and Custom Housebuilding Register.

<sup>22</sup> based on national evidence on those meeting the government's definition of travelling communities being only 10%

- At April 2019, there were 34 **care home beds** per 100 people aged 85, over and above both the regional and national averages (both 31).

### What's happened in 2019/20?

- 1,086 new homes were completed in 2019/20. This greatly exceeds the Local Plan housing requirement of 550 homes for the monitoring year (West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, Policy H2).

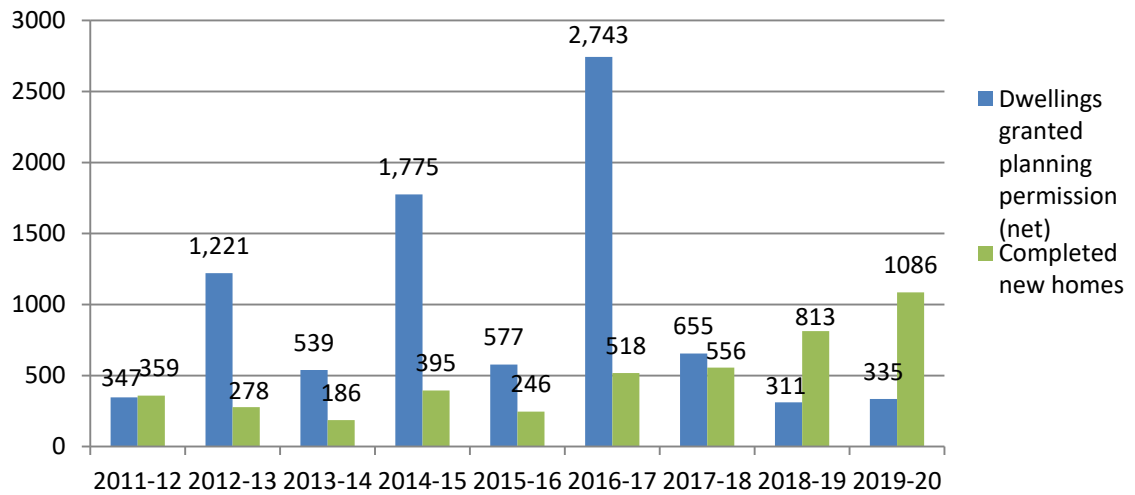


Figure 13: Residential permissions and completions 2011 - 2020

- 240 (22%) of completed dwellings were on previously developed (brownfield) land. This is a marginally higher percentage than last year, however, over the last five years there remains a downward trend in the proportion of completed dwellings built on brownfield land, as shown in the graph below.

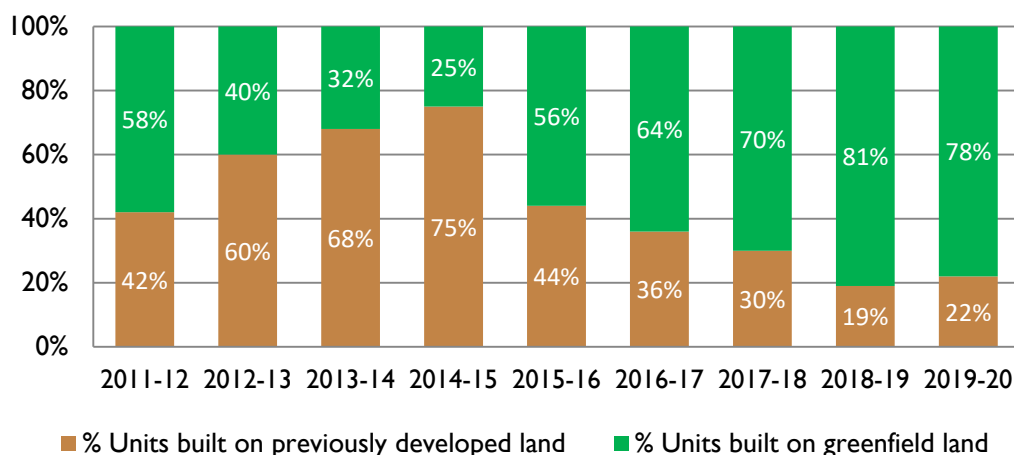


Figure 14: % Residential completions on greenfield and previously developed land 2011 - 2020

- Of the dwellings completed in 2019/20, 325 were on allocated sites. This included:
  - 152 at North Curbridge (West Witney)
  - 42 at East of Carterton
  - 8 at East of Woodstock
  - 61 at West of Thornbury Road, Eynsham (part of the West Eynsham SDA)
  - 47 at REEMA Central (-7 net due to the loss of 54 units)
  - 7 at Land south of Banbury Road, Chipping Norton (part of East Chipping Norton SDA)
  - 42 at Land at London Road and Trinity Road, Chipping Norton (part of East Chipping Norton SDA)
  - 20 at Former Stanton Harcourt Airfield
- The total number of affordable housing completions in 2019/20 was 454 (42% of overall completions).
- 408 dwellings were granted permission, (a net total of 335, taking account of superseded permissions / amended schemes resulting in a net change of extant permissions). This includes 2 dwellings (separate individual schemes) granted via planning appeal.

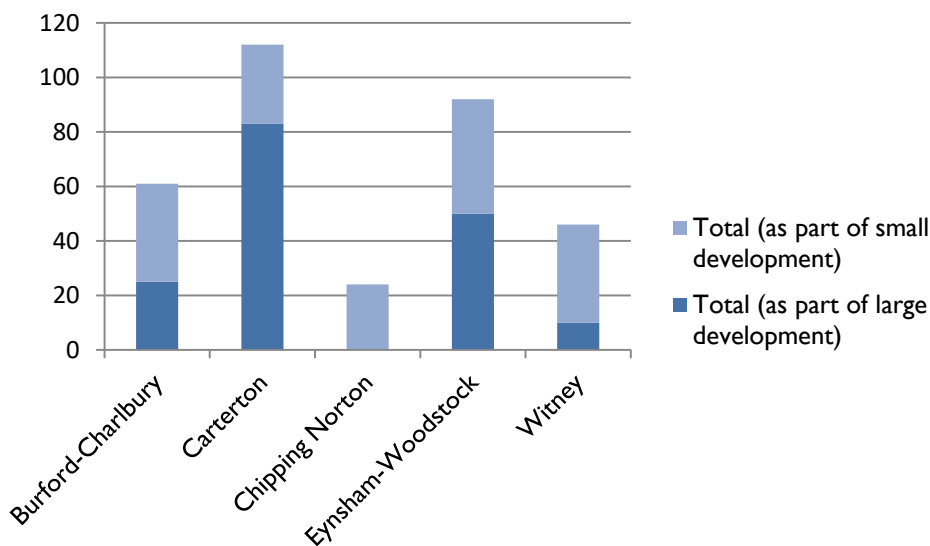


Figure 15: Dwellings granted permission 2019/20 by size and sub-area

- 93 (23%) of dwellings granted permission were on previously developed (brownfield) sites.
- The breakdown of residential permissions by property size revealed a larger proportion of smaller properties (1 and 2 bedrooms) and fewer larger 4+ bed homes compared to the Local Plan's indicative housing mix guidelines, as set out below.

<b>Local Plan 2031 property size guidelines</b>	4.8% 1 bed	27.9% 2 bed	43.4% 3 bed	23.9% 4+ bed
<b>Housing permissions 2019/2020 property sizes</b>	21%	42%	25%	11%

- The Council’s most recent Housing Land Supply Position Statement (January 2021) demonstrates that the Council can demonstrate a 5.4 year supply of deliverable housing sites over the 5-year period 2020 - 2025.
- Between 1 April 2019 and 22 November 2020, there were 27 entries onto the Council’s Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Register.
- 7 households had reported to have been in emergency accommodation for under 28 days in 2019/2020. It was understood that this was a combination of rough sleepers and sofa surfers. 2 households were reported to be in emergency accommodation at the end of March 2020 however due to Covid-19, Housing Associations were pausing house moves to help limit the spread of the virus following instruction from central government.

### **What’s on the horizon?**

- The Area Action Plan (AAP) for Salt Cross Garden Village and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) for the four Strategic Development Areas (West Eynsham, East Chipping Norton, East Witney and North Witney), will provide an overall framework for delivering housing and other needs on these sites.
- The Council continues to monitor whether the supply of deliverable housing sites is sufficient to meet the housing requirement as set out in the Local Plan.
- An update of the Council’s Housing Land Supply Position Statement, to cover the five-year period 2021 to 2026, will be published by December 2021.
- The Council will update its Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) which will help to inform the initial stages of the proposed Local Plan review in autumn 2021, as well as the next update of the Council’s Brownfield Register to be published by 31 December 2021.

## 6. Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance

*Delivering excellent modern services whilst ensuring the financial sustainability of the Council*

### Background Context

- West Oxfordshire District Council remains committed to delivering excellent services to its local communities.
- Over the past five years 81% of **planning applications** were determined by the Council in the target timescale (see annual break-down in figure 16).

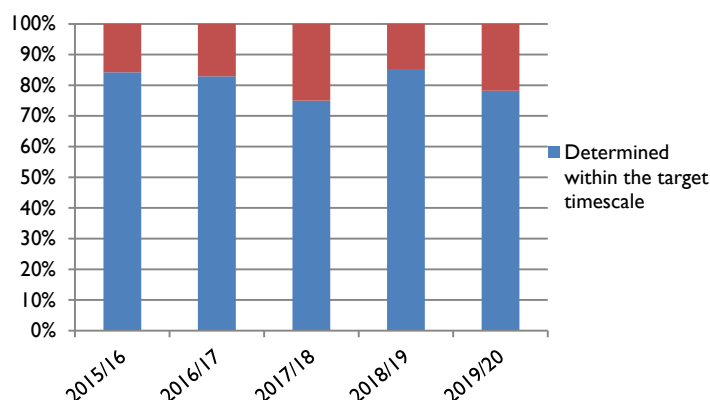


Figure 16: Planning application determinations

- The Council also provides a Building Regulation (Control) approval service, including Full Plan checks and Building Notices (typically for smaller works) and over 1,000 applications are processed each year. Over the past five years 77% of **Building Control Full Plans** were checked within 21 calendar days of receipt (see annual break-down in figure 17)<sup>23</sup>.

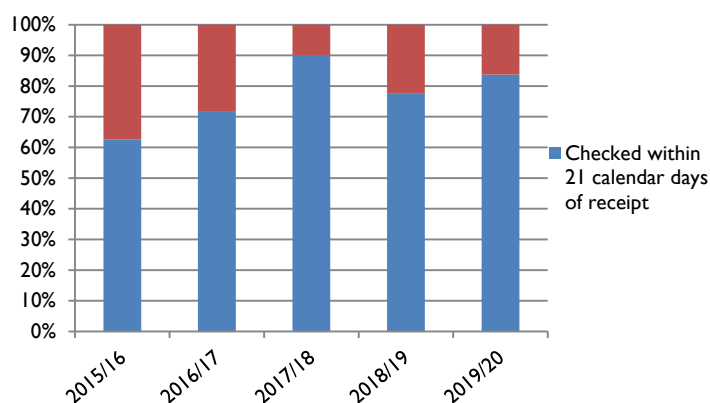


Figure 17: Building Control Full Plan checks

<sup>23</sup> See Annual Performance Summaries for full commentary on these figures. Available at: <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/about-the-council/council-performance-and-spending/council-performance/>

- As of 31 January 2019, West Oxfordshire District Council owned 248 land/building holdings, of which 215 were freeholds, 30 were leaseholds and 3 were other types of holdings.

### What's happened in 2019/20?

- No new SPDs were adopted during the monitoring period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 and 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020. However, the Council's current LDS (Nov 2020) identifies six future SPDs to be prepared. The Council made the following progress in respect of the preparation of the proposed SPDs and the Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan. For further information and document timetables in full, please refer to the Council's Local Development Scheme approved in November 2020<sup>24</sup>.

Document	Purpose of document	Progress to date
<b>Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan (AAP)</b>	Will form part of the statutory development plan for West Oxfordshire, alongside the Local Plan 2031, to lead the development of the garden village allocated as a Strategic Location for Growth (SLG) in the Local Plan.	Two rounds of initial consultation took place in June 2018 (Issues consultations) and Aug 2019 (Preferred Options) followed by a pre-submission draft consultation in November 2020.
<b>West Eynsham Development Framework (SPD)</b>	West Eynsham, East Chipping Norton, East Witney and North Witney are all allocated as Strategic Development Areas (SDAs) in the Local Plan 2031.	Initial consultation held in August – September 2018. Ongoing discussions with landowners/developers and additional evidence collated in respect of preferred access solutions.
<b>East Chipping Norton Development Framework (SPD)</b>	The purpose of the proposed Development Framework for each site is to set out the Council's main aims and objectives for each site and the key parameters within which developers will be expected to work to bring the sites forward in a comprehensive and coordinated manner.	Initial consultation held in January – March 2019. Ongoing discussions with landowners/developers.
<b>East Witney Development Framework (SPD)</b>		Initial consultation held in June – July 2019. Ongoing discussions with landowners/developers
<b>North Witney Development Framework</b>		Preliminary consultation anticipated Spring 2021.

<sup>24</sup> West Oxfordshire Local Development Scheme November 2020 available at: <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/8d892efe28f7c0d/llds-november-2020.pdf>



<b>(SPD)</b>		
<b>Developer Contributions SPD</b>	Intended to provide additional clarity on the use of planning obligations and CIL.	An initial consultation took place in November 2020.
<b>Affordable Housing SPD</b>	Will provide additional detail in respect of the delivery of affordable housing – a key issue for West Oxfordshire.	An initial consultation took place in November 2020 to be followed by a further consultation in February 2021.

- A total of 1,331 planning applications were determined in 2019-20, 78% of which were determined within the target timescale (down 7% from 2018-19). 5% of applications were refused.
- 83.8% of building control full plans were checked within 21 calendar days of receipt.
- 99.8% of land charge searches were completed within ten working days.
- Section 110 of the Localism Act sets out a 'duty to co-operate' which essentially means that local planning authorities and other 'prescribed bodies' must engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis to address cross-boundary issues of strategic importance such as housing and transport.
- The Council continues to actively engage with the other Oxfordshire Authorities<sup>25</sup> and the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) on various spatial planning and infrastructure matters (including the preparation of the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 and delivery of all other components of the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal).
- The pre-submission draft AAP published in August 2020 was accompanied by a [Duty to Co-Operate Statement of Compliance](#) demonstrating how the AAP has been prepared in accordance with the duty to co-operate. A key aspect of this has been discussions with Oxford City Council in respect of various matters including housing need and a memorandum of operation has been prepared to outline the mechanism through which the allocation of affordable homes is expected to take place.
- A commitment in the Council Plan to direct our management of property assets through a new Asset Management Plan to achieve improvements in the joint use of sites through the One Public Estate programme has moved a step forward with completion of a series of feasibility reviews of sites in Welch Way.

### What's on the horizon?


- Future Annual Monitoring Reports will provide an update of progress on the Council Plan objectives more widely, in addition to Local Plan monitoring, and are anticipated

<sup>25</sup> Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council, Cherwell District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council

to be published by the autumn following the report's monitoring year. The AMR for the monitoring period 2020-2021 (the first full reporting year of the West Oxfordshire Council Plan) is therefore expected to be published in autumn 2021.

- In accordance with the principles of the One Public Estate Programme, feasibility work on partnership owned sites will include consideration of options for development that suit all partner's needs. A draft scoping exercise will be undertaken to which input will be invited from all partner organisations.

# Agenda Item 9

 <p><b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b></p>	<p><b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b></p>
<p>Name and date of Committee</p>	<p><b>Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Wednesday 8 April 2021</b></p>
<p>Report Number</p>	<p><b>Agenda Item No. 9</b></p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p><b>Service Performance Report 2020-21 Quarter Three</b></p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Accountable member</p>	<p>All relevant Cabinet Members</p>
<p>Accountable officer</p>	<p>Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Tel: (01993) 861658 Email: giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Summary/Purpose</p>	<p>This report provides details of service performance during Q3</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p><a href="#">Annex A</a> – Performance Indicator report</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>That the Committee reviews, and challenges as appropriate, performance for 2020-21 Q3</p>
<p>Corporate priorities</p>	<p>Climate Action: Leading the way in protecting and enhancing the environment by taking action locally on climate change and biodiversity Healthy Towns and Villages: Facilitating healthy lifestyles and better wellbeing for everyone A Vibrant District Economy: Securing future economic success through supporting existing local businesses and attracting new businesses to deliver the economic ambitions of the Local Industrial Strategy Strong Local Communities: Supporting and building prosperous and inclusive local communities Meeting the Housing Needs of our Changing Population: Securing the provision of market and affordable housing of a high quality for a wide range of householders making their home in West Oxfordshire</p>
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Exempt</p>	<p>No</p>

## **I. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. The Council monitors service performance each quarter as well as progress towards achieving the aim and priorities set out in the Corporate Plan at the end of Q2 and Q4.
- 1.2. Performance in those service areas relating to the work of this Committee is provided in this report.

## **2. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK - PERFORMANCE REPORTING**

- 2.1. A high level Commissioning Framework was approved by Cabinet in October 2020. The Commissioning Framework identifies that the provision of robust performance data – quantitative and qualitative, together with a robust analysis of that data and evidence – is vital to ensure that the Council has the information to assess whether its commissioned services are being delivered to a high quality.
- 2.2. A new performance management framework has been developed; a much broader framework than previous frameworks. It sets out six key strands of information on which assurance needs to be provided, with a key shift in focus from performance monitoring to performance management:
  - Business analytics and service assurance
  - Place based measures and comparators
  - Publica Business Plan strategic actions
  - Council Plan priority actions
  - Project and programme management assurance
  - Risk and opportunity management
- 2.3. The performance report will continue to evolve in line with the Performance Management Framework as well as feedback from senior officers and Members.
- 2.4. The Commissioning Framework also sets out the relationship between Publica and the Council and their respective responsibilities. Publica's Executive Director (Commissioning) is accountable to the Council for the services commissioned from Publica, and also for the services commissioned by Publica from third parties on behalf of the Council. Publica must ensure that it provides the necessary information to the Council so it can assess whether the commissioned services are being delivered in accordance with the agreed quality and standard. The Council's Chief Executive is responsible for reviewing and approving the information provided in this report prior to its publication.
- 2.5. The Council's Chief Executive has received a report on service performance, and he has assessed it in line with the high level Commissioning Statement, and confirms that overall, services have been delivered to the agreed quality and standard. The Chief Executive has also noted the continued impact of Covid-19 on communities, businesses, customers, services, and staff as the nation moves from response to recovery and back to response again. The recent flooding incidents also meant that Ubico crews, staff, councillors and volunteers were out supporting residents over the Christmas period, while other staff helped with coordination and organisation, and keeping residents and communities up to date with the latest information. He has drawn particular attention to the following:

- i. Many services continue to support residents, communities and businesses that have been impacted by Covid-19 as part of their every day job. Enormous efforts continue to be made by a number of services in supporting businesses to access grants, and supporting the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable and other residents to access the help they need;
- ii. The Council's leisure facilities re-opened on 25 July 2020 with additional activities being restarted in line with government guidance, but were required to close down again in line with the announcement of a second lockdown between 5 November and 2 December 2020. Facilities were re-opened in the lead up to Christmas but as Oxfordshire went into Tier 4 on 26 December 2020, all leisure facilities have remained closed from this date. A contract variation and financial recovery package have been agreed to cover the period until March 2021;
- iii. Affordable housing has continued to be delivered in the District and demonstrates the success of the strategic sites included in the Local Plan in bringing forward housing numbers. One hundred and thirty-nine affordable homes were delivered in Q3 bringing the total to 300 for the year so far, and exceeding the Local Plan target of 274;
- iv. The Council's business rates collection figure is being understandably impacted by Covid-19 as is the case with other councils throughout the country. Government has gone some way in helping certain businesses such as retail with 100% business rate relief, but there are still businesses that are struggling financially. The Council is distributing a number of support grants to eligible businesses, however, there is no requirement to use it to pay for business rates;
- v. The Housing team has created exit plans to move households into more secure tenancies including private rented, housing association, and supported accommodation, which has significantly reduced the number of households living in emergency accommodation over the last six months; however, with a third lockdown commencing on 5 January 2021, it is likely that the numbers will start to rise again.

### **3. COVID-19 UPDATE**

- 3.1. During Q3, the key elements of the Community Response hub – call handling, outbound calling, complex welfare support and problem solving, food parcel delivery and welfare checks - were retained but with a much smaller staff resource than during the first lockdown.
- 3.2. The nation entered a second lockdown in November; the Council contacted everyone on the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable list in one form or another depending on their risk factors. An outbound calling team was remobilised to contact a higher risk group, while messages were sent by email and text to others.
- 3.3. Residents that required additional help were referred to the Localities team for more complex support. The team uses a person centred approach to understand the underlying issues and to support the resident to prioritise what s/he may need help with first. This conversation might result in an onward referral to a statutory or voluntary sector service such as Adult Social Care or Citizens Advice, the delivery of an emergency food parcel, a referral to a community support group for befriending or shopping support, or an internal referral to housing services. Between October and December 2020, the Localities team supported 244 residents in this way, and over 1,000 since the start of the response. The lack of a countywide hub such as the one that operates in Gloucestershire has resulted in

the district councils in Oxfordshire needing to directly support residents with a wider range of needs. The Community Wellbeing team has remained central to the response and has continued to run the complex calling element whilst balancing the need to continue core work.

- 3.4. During Q3, the Council was also charged with the distribution of its £59k allocation of the government's Emergency Assistance for food and essential supplies funding. The funding was fully utilised on supermarket vouchers for individuals and families in food need (managed by Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire on behalf of the Council), and a grant scheme for community organisations providing food support. In addition, the Council introduced a new grant scheme and allocated £39k to local food projects and foodbanks up to the 31st December.
- 3.5. The Council is continuing to support local businesses who are having to adapt to changing Covid-19 restrictions, and multiple lockdowns. It is responsible for distributing the large range of business grants made available by central government. Financial support is also available to those individuals having to self-isolate under the Test and Trace support payment.
- 3.6. During Q3, the following business grants were awarded:
  - i. Local Restrictions Support Grant (closed) – a total of £ 898,890 was paid out to 544 businesses in retail, leisure, hospitality, and events which were mandated to close between 5 November and 2 December 2020. Further retrospective applications have since been received;
  - ii. Additional Restrictions Grant (discretionary) – a total of £114,028 was paid out to 70 businesses from November to the end of Q3. This grant is available for businesses that do not have a business rate assessment of their own, and would include charity properties and regular market traders;
  - iii. Christmas Support Payment for wet-led pubs funding – grants of £1,000 were paid to 13 businesses during December. This fund closes on 28 February 2021;
  - iv. Local Restrictions (closed) – a total of £16,340 was awarded to 17 businesses that were mandated to close either under the Tier system or current lockdown; the fund opened on 2 December.
- 3.7. The administration of business grants and the Test and Trace isolation payments have impacted on resources across a wide range of services including ICT, Accountancy and Accounts Payable, and Revenues and Customer Services. New online application forms have been created and a new process built in Salesforce; and additional returns have been completed on the value of grants paid for each scheme for government reporting. The Revenues and Customer Services teams have supported businesses in responding to their enquiries on the grant process and grant applications. Although additional resource has been made available externally to help administer the grants, existing resources have to support and train them up.

#### **4. SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT**

- 4.1. The services which relate to the work of this Committee are Housing Support, Planning and Strategic Housing, Land Charges, and Leisure and Communities; and the relevant indicators are listed at the front of the Performance Indicator report at Annex A with pages 11 to 19 providing the further relevant information.

- 4.2. Since the start of the pandemic, many services have been impacted by Covid-19; some services such as Leisure facilities have had to close, while others have experienced higher workloads due to demand or because colleagues were supporting residents, communities, and businesses through the crisis. The majority of staff continue to deliver services from home in compliance with Covid-19 instructions and guidance. Overall, many services have performed well in the current conditions and restrictions.
- 4.3. Of the eight targeted indicators, six indicators achieved their targets (Green), and two indicators achieved their targets 'within tolerance' (Amber). The number of households in emergency accommodation over 28 days was set to 'Amber' to recognise that the service has worked hard to place all households into emergency accommodation that have approached the Council, and then created exit plans to move them on to more secure tenancies. The households that remain in emergency accommodation for longer periods of time will generally have more complex needs. A full report is attached at Annex A.

## **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1. None

## **6. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 6.1. None

## **7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 7.1. None

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 8.1. None

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Delivering great services locally

PERFORMANCE REPORT:  
**October 2020 - December 2020**

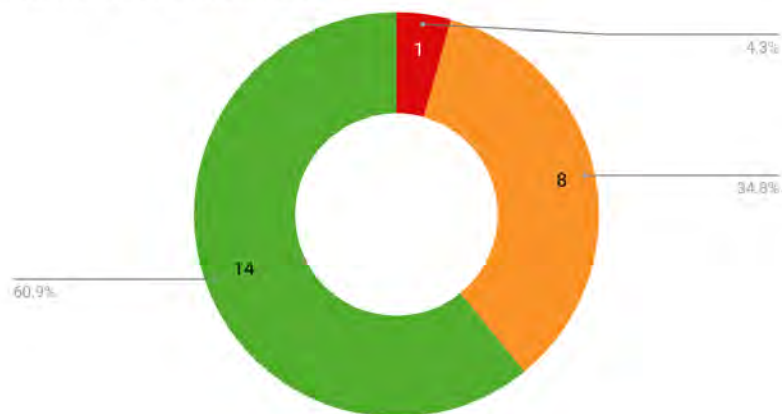
## KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS LIST

Finance and Management O & S Committee	Economic and Social O & S Committee	Environment O & S Committee
Customer satisfaction – face to face	Number of households living in emergency accommodation for under 28 days	Number of fly tips collected
Customer satisfaction – web	Number of households living in emergency accommodation for over 28 days	Percentage of fly tips that result in an enforcement action taking place
Customer satisfaction – telephone	Number of Long Term Empty properties	Percentage of high risk notifications risk assessed within one working day
Customer satisfaction - email	Percentage of major planning applications determined	Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales
Percentage of calls responded to within 20 seconds	Percentage of minor planning applications determined	Residual household waste per household (kg)
Percentage of telephone calls abandoned by the customer	Percentage of other planning applications determined	(Cumulative) Percentage of household waste recycled
(Cumulative) Percentage of council tax collected	Percentage of planning appeals allowed	(Cumulative) Percentage of household waste by waste streams
(Cumulative) Percentage of business rates collected	(Cumulative) Number of affordable homes delivered	Number of missed bin per 100,000 scheduled collections
(Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process new housing benefit claims	Percentage of land charge searches dispatched within 10 working days	Total hours spent undertaking on and off-street parking enforcement visits
(Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process housing benefit change of circumstances	Number of visits to leisure centres	
(Cumulative) Percentage of housing benefit overpayment due to LA error/Admin delay	Number of gym memberships	

# KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS

## At a glance...

Summary of Performance



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### OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Many services have been impacted by Covid-19, and have had to either cease or find new ways of working during multiple national lockdowns. Other services have experienced higher workloads to meet customer/client demand.

Overall, services are performing well but some services continue to be significantly impacted by Covid-19 such as business rates collection, leisure facilities and food safety inspections. In addition, the benefits team is working on the implementation of a new system which has reduced capacity in the service.

To comply with Covid-19 guidance and restrictions, the majority of staff are still working from home. Although many services have been able to deliver services 'virtually' and customer satisfaction for services delivered by phone remains high, other services such as Planning have found the process less efficient

Indicator	Status
Customer satisfaction - phones	Green
Customer satisfaction - F2F	n/a
Customer satisfaction - website	Orange
Customer satisfaction - email	no target set
% calls responded within 20 secs	Green
% abandoned calls	Green
CT collection rate	Green
NNDR collection rate	Orange
Average days to process HB new claims	Red
Average days to process HB change events	Orange
% HB overpayment	Orange
Households in Emergency Accommodation under 28 days	Green
Households in Emergency Accommodation over 28 days	Orange
% major applications determined within time	Green
% minor applications determined within time	Green
% others applications determined within time	Orange
% planning appeals allowed	Green
Affordable homes delivered	Green
% land charge searches dispatched within time	Green
% high risk notifications assessed within time	Green
% high risk food premises inspected within time	Orange
Residual waste per household (kg)	Green
% overall recycling rate	Green
Missed bins per 100,000	Green
Leisure visits	no target set
Gym memberships	no target set
Parking enforcement hours	Orange

# CUSTOMER SERVICE

## Customer satisfaction

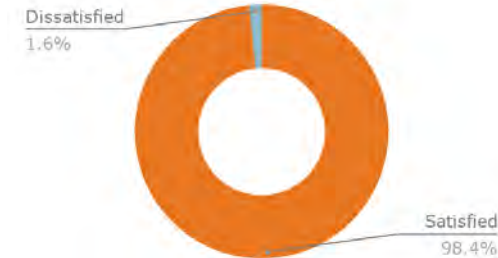
Face to face - no surveys due to Covid19



Website - 56 respondents



Phone - 952 respondents

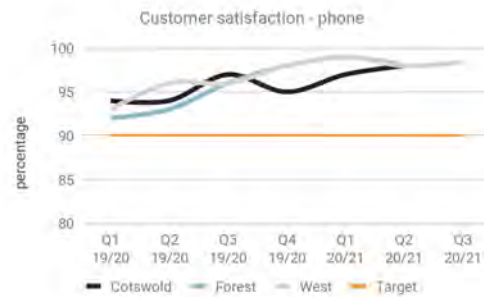


Email - 200 respondents



### What's the trend?

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### OBSERVATION

Due to Covid-19, the Council closed its reception areas; surveys are being conducted by phone, web and email.

The process of rating the website and leaving feedback is simple with a feedback button on every web page. Despite this, the number of responses to the website survey, although up on the previous quarter at 56 (from 44) remains an extremely small proportion of the 452,484 visitors, and is therefore unlikely to be representative. An analysis of website data for the three Councils has been completed to understand the issues and to determine whether satisfaction is with service provision or the website. The findings indicated that only 40% of responses included any qualitative feedback about potential improvements in council services, web content and navigability. Furthermore, an analysis of the qualitative feedback indicated that a significant proportion (40%) was about service provision or were categorised as user error e.g. mistyping a postcode. Although the website satisfaction survey is yielding some excellent information that can be used to remove errors or make improvements to content on the web platform, due to the extremely small numbers, it provides a poor basis upon which to determine customer satisfaction with the website. Therefore, this indicator has been set to 'Amber'. A new framework to measure the effectiveness of the Council's website and gather customer feedback is planned

Satisfaction ratings for services delivered by phone continue to be high.

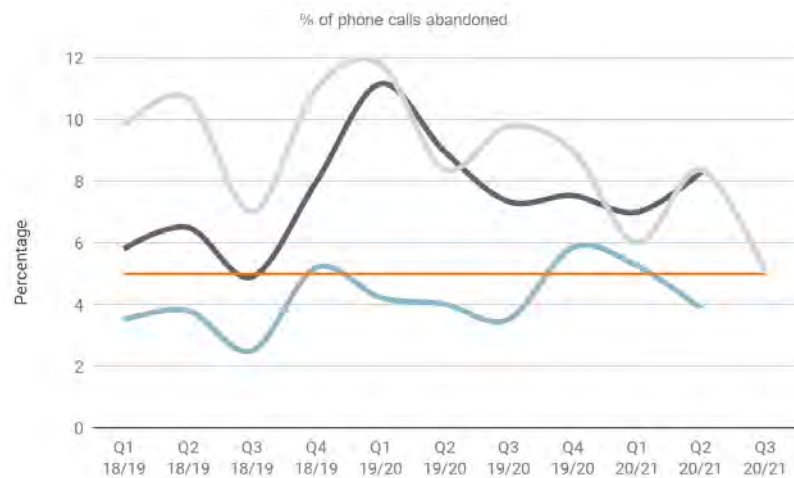
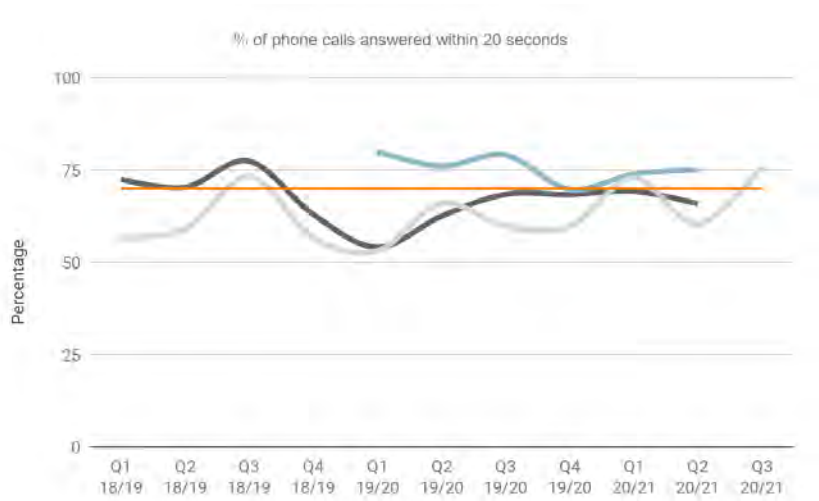
## Telephone calls - response and abandonment

Target

Cotswold

Forest of Dean

West Oxfordshire



### OBSERVATION

A good level of service was achieved this quarter; Q3 is usually a quieter quarter and the offices were closed between Christmas and New Year.

Historically, performance has always struggled to meet targets, even before the pandemic. For a large part of 2019/20 performance was affected by the implementation of the new CRM system and further enhancements that took time to 'bed in', as well as turnover of staff. There were higher workloads in 2019-20 Q4 including a spike in calls relating to garden waste renewals, and to Covid-19. The transfer of four staff who usually provide face to face services to the phones has helped to improve performance levels.

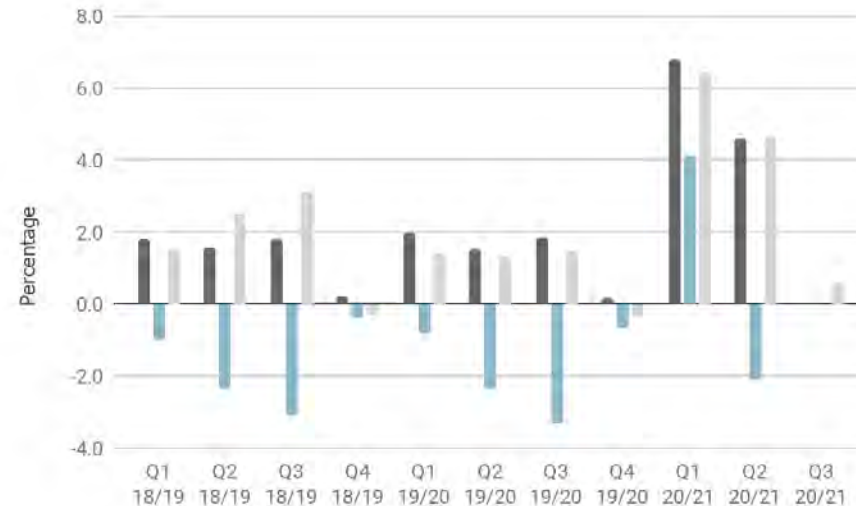
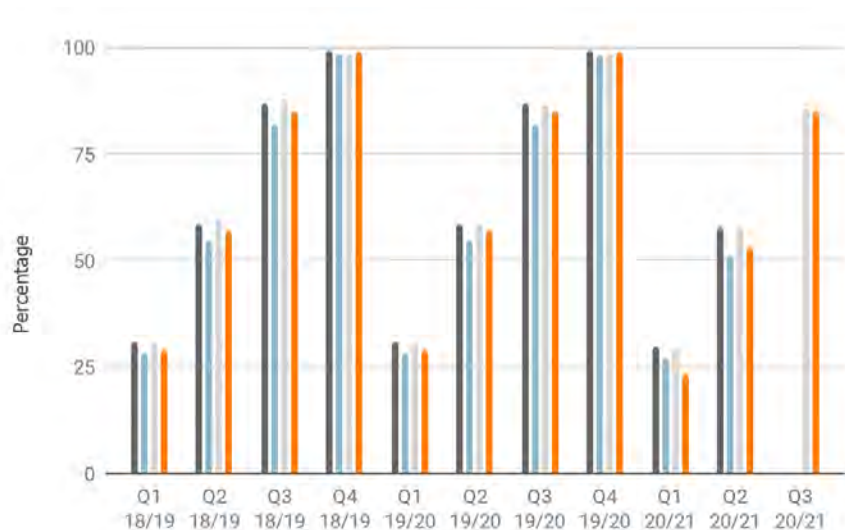
The impact of home working is continuously under review to ensure that any impact on performance is mitigated

## Revenues and Benefit

(Cumulative) Percentage of council tax collected & the difference between the percentage of council tax collected and the target



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### OBSERVATION:

At the end of Q3, the collection rate was less than one percentage point lower than the previous year.

Due to the impact of Covid-19, all recovery action was paused initially following government guidance and Member decision; and the service worked with customers to re-align payment instalments. The service had the go-ahead at the end of September 2020 to re-commence recovery actions such as reminders and final payment letters. The service is contacting customers by phone and email, as well as including a letter with reminders to encourage customers to contact the Council if they are experiencing problems with council tax payments.

Currently, the Magistrates Courts are not holding any liability order hearings which will mean the Council is unable to enforce any debts incurred in 2020/21. The debt will be rolled over into the new financial year, and recovery action will continue

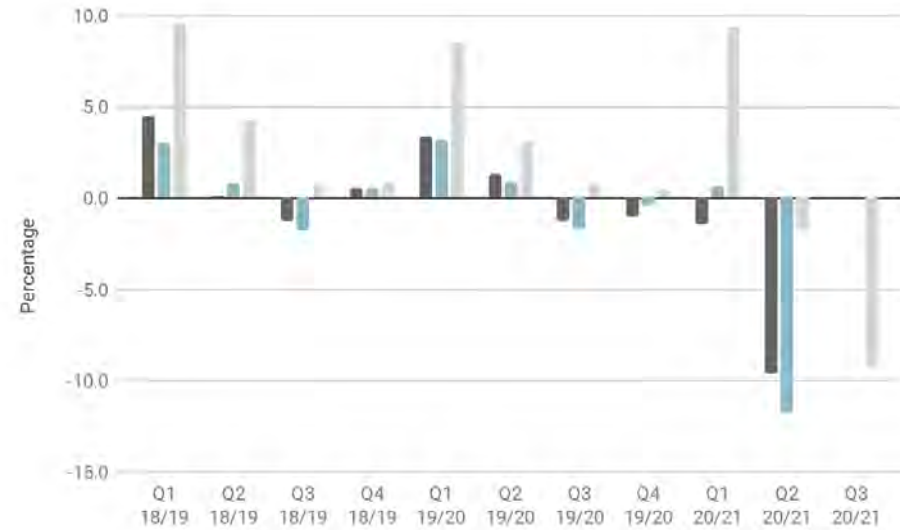
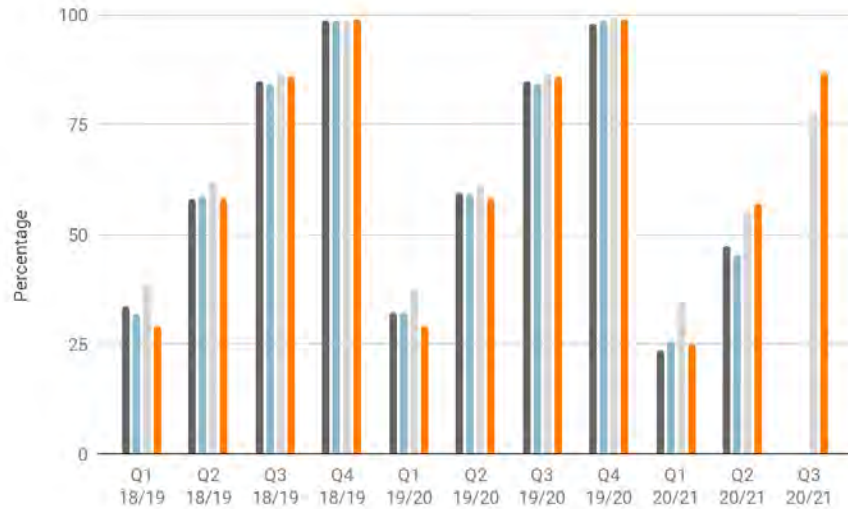
**(Cumulative) Percentage of business rates collected & the difference between the percentage of business rates collected and the target**

Target

Cotswold

Forest of Dean

West Oxfordshire



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**OBSERVATION:**

The collection rate at the end of Q3 was over ten percentage points lower than previous years.

Due to the impact of Covid-19 restrictions and two lockdowns, many businesses were closed in Q1, and part of Q2 and Q3. Following an initial pause in undertaking recovery action, the service is sending out reminders, phoning and emailing businesses to encourage them to contact the Council so that we can support them via manageable repayment plans. Currently, the Magistrates Courts are not holding any liability order hearings which will mean the Council is unable to enforce any debts incurred in 2020/21, so the debt will be rolled forward into the next financial year.

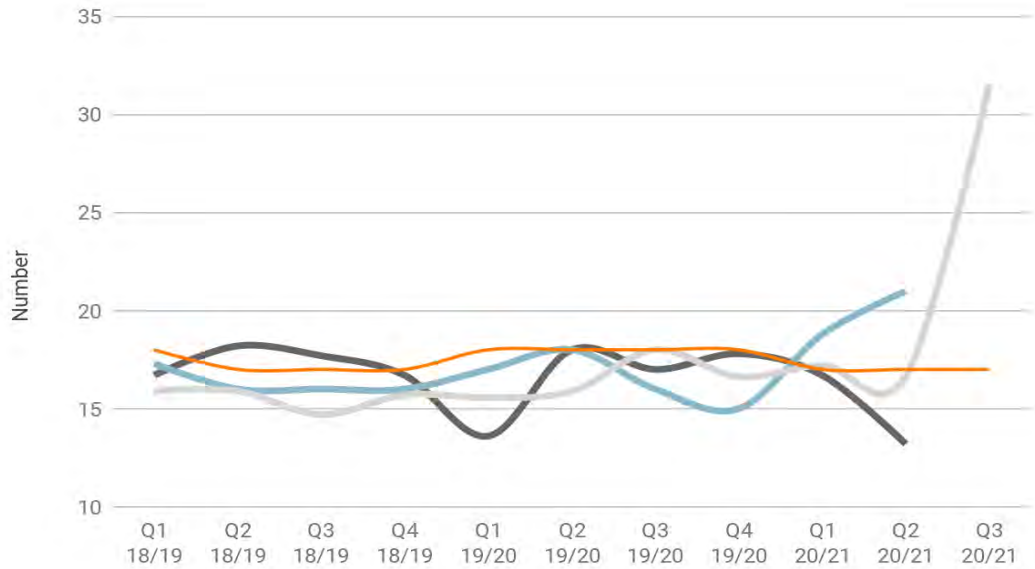
The nation went into a third lockdown on 5 January; Covid-19 is having a major impact on business rate collection figures throughout the country. Government have gone some way in helping certain businesses such as retail with 100% business rate relief. Other businesses are able to apply for support grants but there is no requirement to use it to pay their business rates.

Note: central government funding to cover business rates relief is not included in the outturn

**(Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process new housing benefit claims**



Page 120



**OBSERVATION:**

The Council continues to prioritise new claims. However, the number of new claims is falling as claimants are moved to Universal Credit (UC), therefore significant delays in processing a small number of claims can disproportionately affect the average processing time. During the quarter, one new claim was indexed incorrectly which resulted in the claim not being identified for processing. Other reasons for delays are driven by external factors such as chasing and waiting for evidence from the claimant; the number of claims made defective after the required calendar month has increased i.e. claims are started but not completed. Another example is when the claimant is claiming living costs through UC and housing costs through the Council; in this situation, the UC element must be assessed before the housing element but the processing time commences on receipt of the claim.

There is insufficient time to bring the average processing time back on target by the end of the year; a new revenues and benefits system went 'live' on 4 February, and staff have been supporting the data migration and related testing activities.

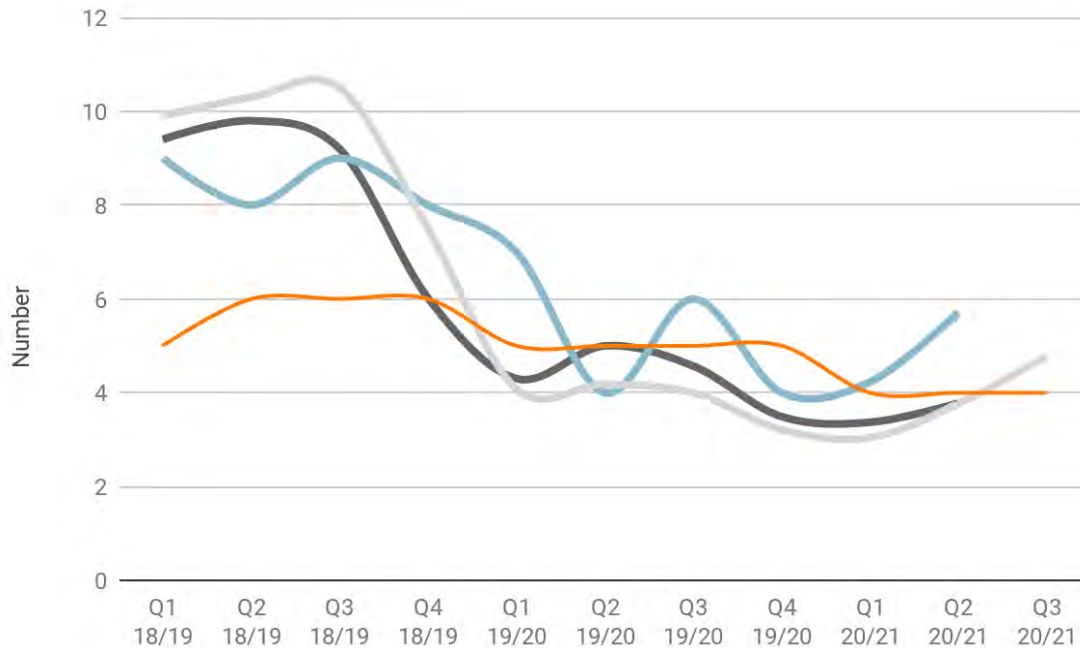
It is likely performance will continue to be impacted throughout 2021/22 as the next phase of the project is to streamline the process further by merging the three partner council systems into one system, and to implement the open portal to enable customers to self-serve which will include integration of the back office system



**(Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process housing benefit change of circumstances**

Target
  Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire

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**OBSERVATION:**

The average processing time has increased over the last two quarters due to increases in workload, and capacity taken out of the service to support the implementation of a new revenues and benefits system.

The number of Universal Credit claims has increased due to the impact of Covid-19, which in turn has resulted in an increase in changes that affect housing benefit and council tax support (the latter is not included in this indicator). In addition, the service continues to receive data loads from the DWP that require checking and the updating of records.

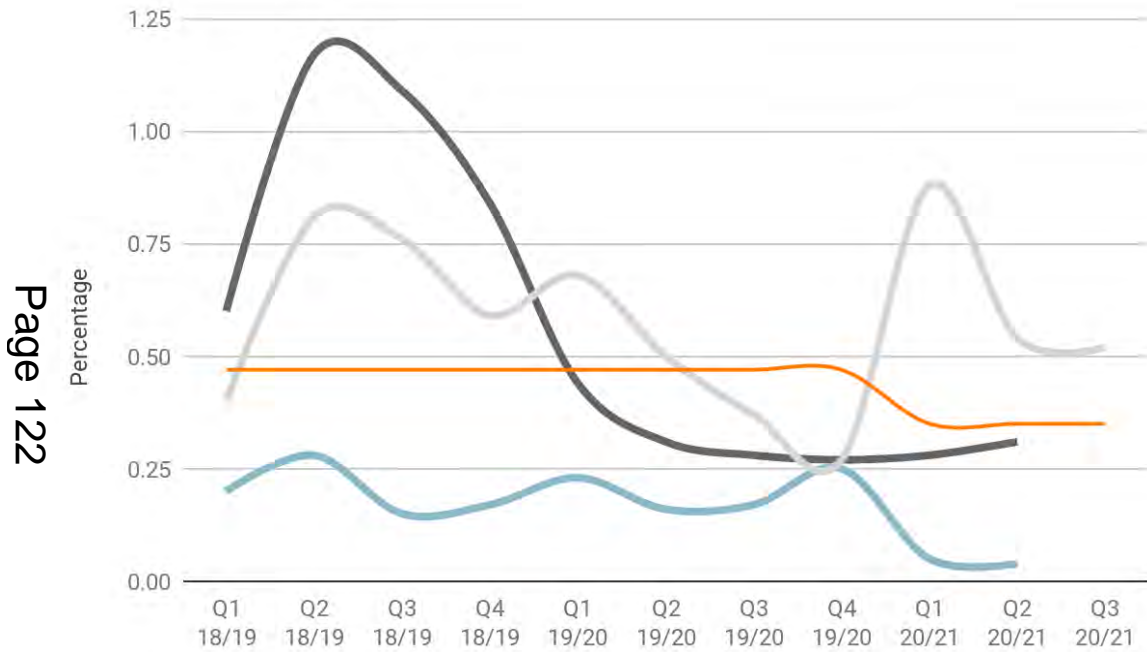
The new revenues and benefits system went 'live' on 4 February. The average processing time is expected to increase in Q4 as staff become accustomed to the new system; and deal with a backlog - there will be period of time when the old system is switched off and the new one switched on.

The service is accessing support on demand from an external source.

Note that historically the quarterly targets have been profiled and have generally been maintained at 5 or 6 days. A more stringent target of 4 days was set for 2020-21

**(Cumulative) Percentage of housing benefit overpayment due to LA error/Admin delay**

Target
  Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire



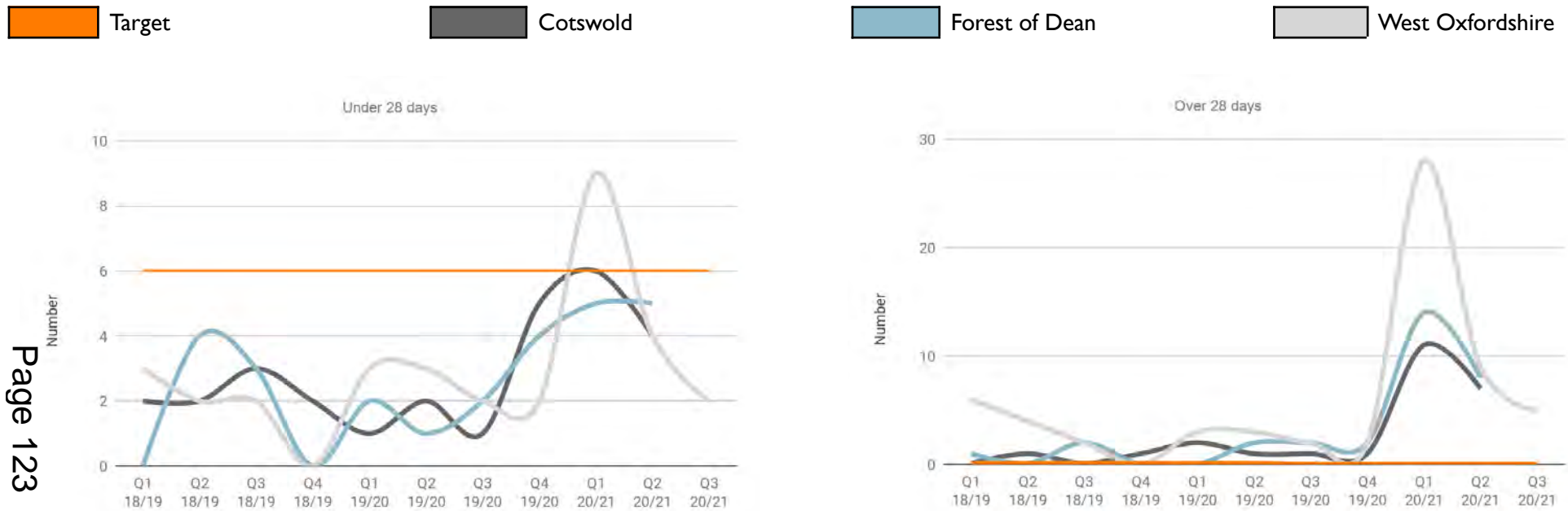
**OBSERVATION:**

We are continuing to involve a number of staff in quality assurance. Due to the high volume in change of circumstances, we take a sampling approach and target areas which we know have high error rates such as calculation of earnings.

There was a small number of errors relating to high value overpayments in Q4 which were amended in Q1. We were expecting the spike to flatten out over the course of the year, and to achieve the annual target of 0.35%. This is no longer the case as the implementation of the new revenues and benefits system has created a backlog which will result in an increase in admin delay. External support on demand is being accessed to help manage workloads

## Housing Support

### (Snapshot) Number of households living in emergency accommodation for under 28 days & over 28 days



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#### OBSERVATION:

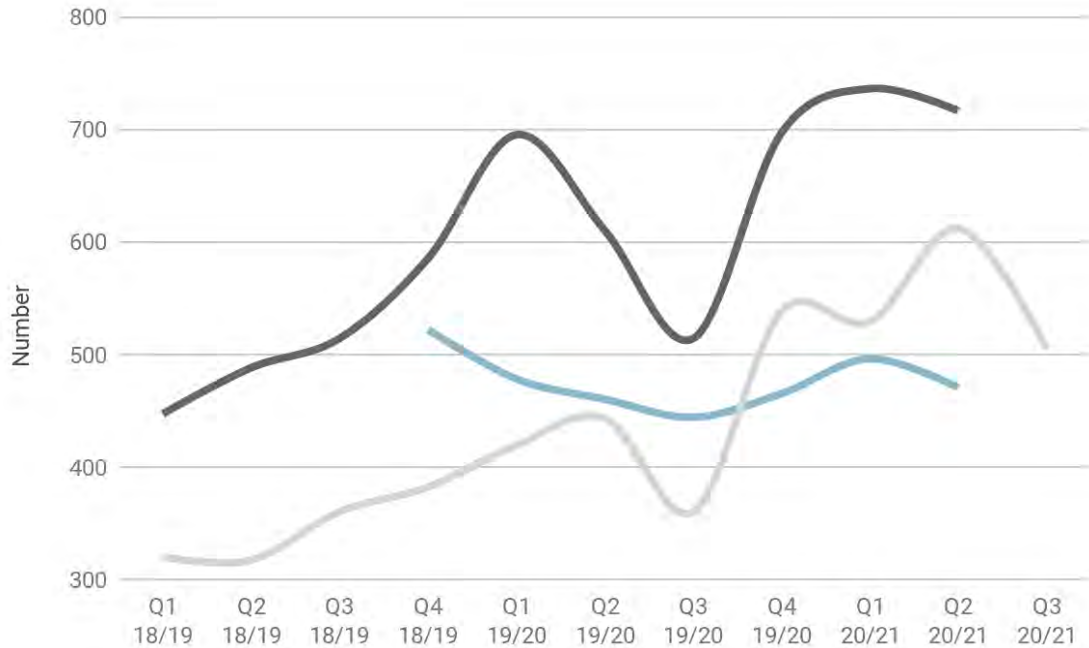
At the beginning of the first lockdown, councils were required to place all clients who are rough sleeping or at risk of imminent homelessness regardless of priority need who have approached the Council, into emergency accommodation, which resulted in a spike in numbers.

The number of households living in emergency accommodation has fallen over the last six months; the Housing team has been creating exit plans to move households into more secure tenancies including private rented, housing association, and supported accommodation. In addition, some households and rough sleepers have chosen to leave emergency accommodation.

At the end of Q3, there were five households that had been in emergency accommodation for over 28 days. The households/individuals that remain in emergency accommodation for longer periods of time have more complex needs, and therefore, it is more difficult to source appropriate move-on accommodation. Therefore, this indicator has been set to 'Amber'.

With increasing Covid-19 infections in Autumn/Winter, a third lockdown commenced on 5 January. It is likely that the number of households in emergency accommodation will start to rise again.

**(Snapshot) Number of Long Term Empty properties**



**OBSERVATION:**

The number of long term empty properties decreased at the end of Q3 following an increase over the previous six months.

Cotswold has re-commenced the planned demolition of housing association properties, but there are still some retirement properties that have not sold.

Recruitment to the vacant LTE officer post has been approved. This post is responsible for monitoring properties and working with landlords to support them to bring their properties back into use. The new post will concentrate on those properties where the Council might be able to influence or take action, rather than on those properties that are being well maintained

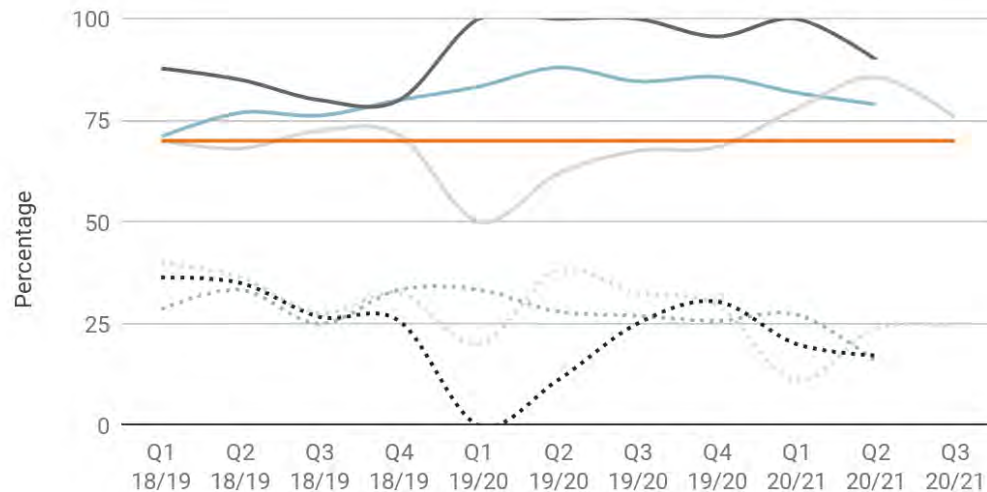
## Planning and Strategic Housing

### (Cumulative) Percentage of major planning applications determined

% of all applications completed within an agreed timeframe



% of all application completed within 13 weeks



#### OBSERVATION:

Twelve major applications were determined in the quarter; and 33 for the first nine months compared to 55 for the same period a year ago.

The service has reported that the number of applications received over the summer and then through to the end of December has been a record nationally and that trend is reflected locally. The increasing numbers coming through combined with reduced efficiency in the planning process as a result of Covid-19 is creating a backlog.

The Planning team has found home working and the restrictions imposed by Covid-19 has created additional burdens as not all aspects of this statutory process can be or are best achieved electronically. In addition, home working has reduced communication between officers, and therefore there is less support for officers which is affecting morale. Validating planning applications for accuracy has proved particularly problematic as a home based exercise as details of the application have to be cross checked against a number of plans and maps which can be achieved much easier using paper versions in the office. An increase in the time to validate the application will reduce the time for the planning officer to determine the application. Other tasks that are achieved more easily in the office include redacting and printing documents e.g. site notices.

The restrictions imposed by Covid-19 have resulted in additional preparation time required for committee meetings, and site visits which need to be unaccompanied and pre-arranged, often with a follow up online meeting or phone call.

Some consultees such as the County and the Environment Agency are struggling to meet response target dates which is also impacting on determination times.

Note: a new validation process has been designed and implemented at all three partner Council development management services over the Christmas/New Year period. Currently, staff are getting to grips with the new process, but once embedded should help increase resilience and performance generally

#### Note

The charts for the planning performance measures have been separated to demonstrate the number of applications that are completed within the set time frames and the number that are completed as a result of an agreed extension of time.

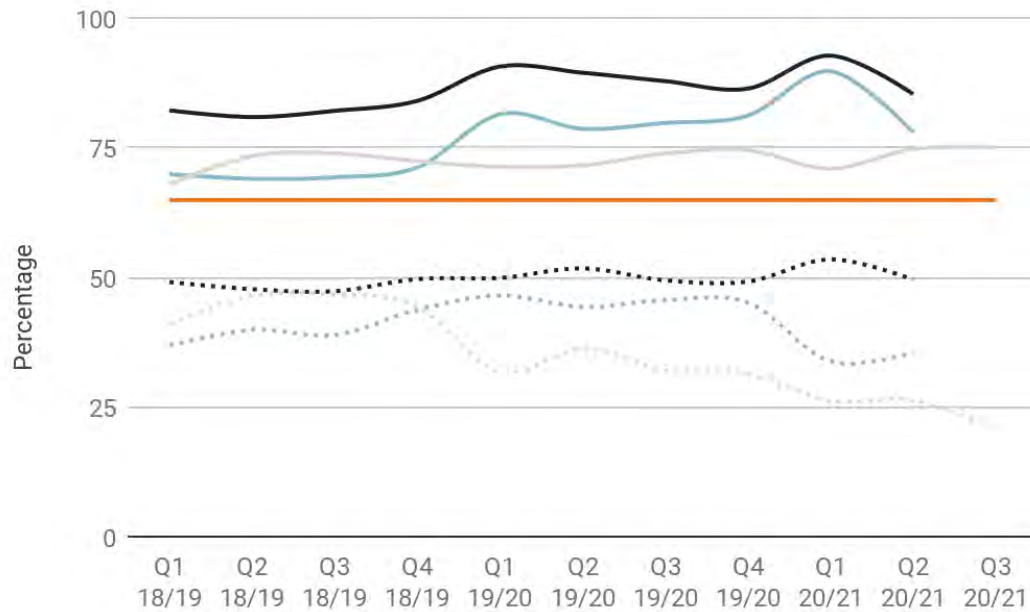
Extensions of times are often a result of consultees requesting changes to the scheme or because the consultee response is essential but has not been received within the timetable. They are also used where officers are working proactively with applicants to improve schemes and make developments acceptable

**(Cumulative) Percentage of minor planning applications determined**

% of all applications completed within agreed timescales



% of all applications completed within 8 weeks



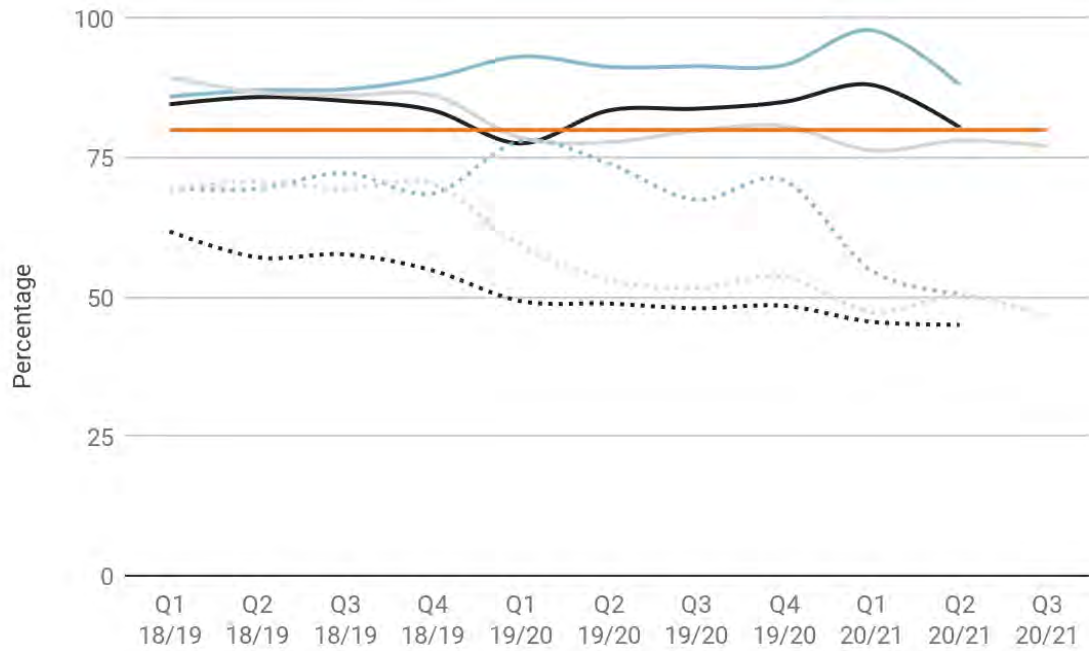
**OBSERVATION:**  
 Ninety-one minor applications were determined in the quarter; and 250 for the first nine months compared to 388 for the same period a year ago.  
 The challenging work conditions coupled with higher volumes of applications coming through is creating a backlog which will begin to impact on performance

**(Cumulative) Percentage of other planning applications determined**

% of all applications completed within agreed timescales



% of all applications completed within 8 weeks

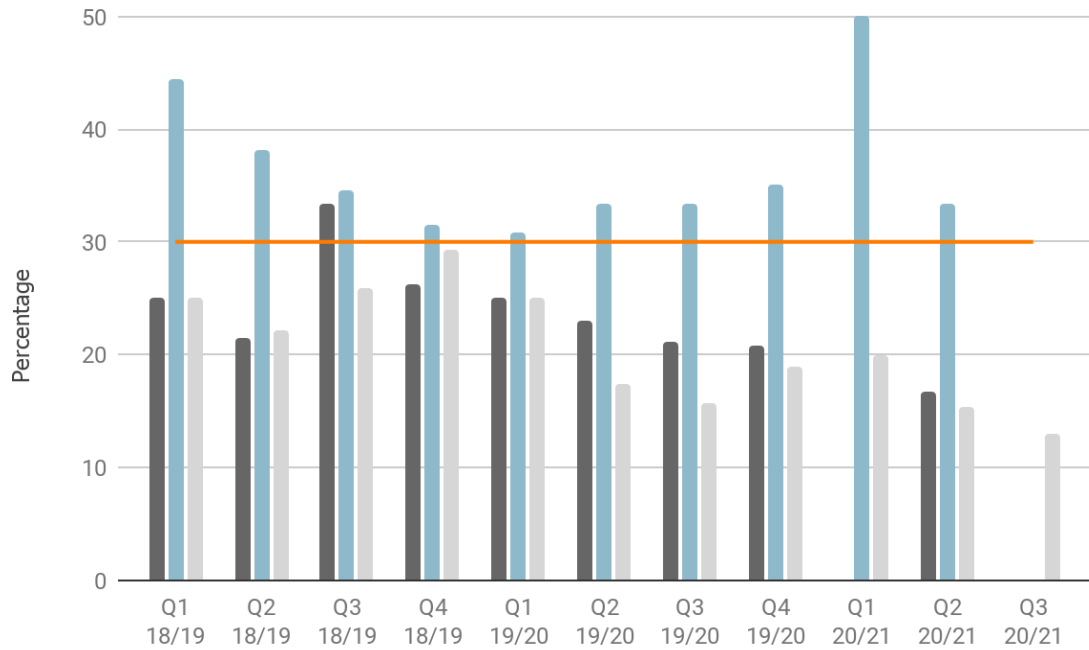


**OBSERVATION:**

247 other applications were determined in the quarter, and 708 for the first nine months compared to 866 for the same period a year ago.

The challenging work conditions coupled with higher volumes of applications coming through is creating a backlog and is beginning to impact on performance

**(Cumulative) Percentage of planning appeals allowed**



**OBSERVATION:**

Ten planning appeals were determined in the quarter with one appeal allowed.

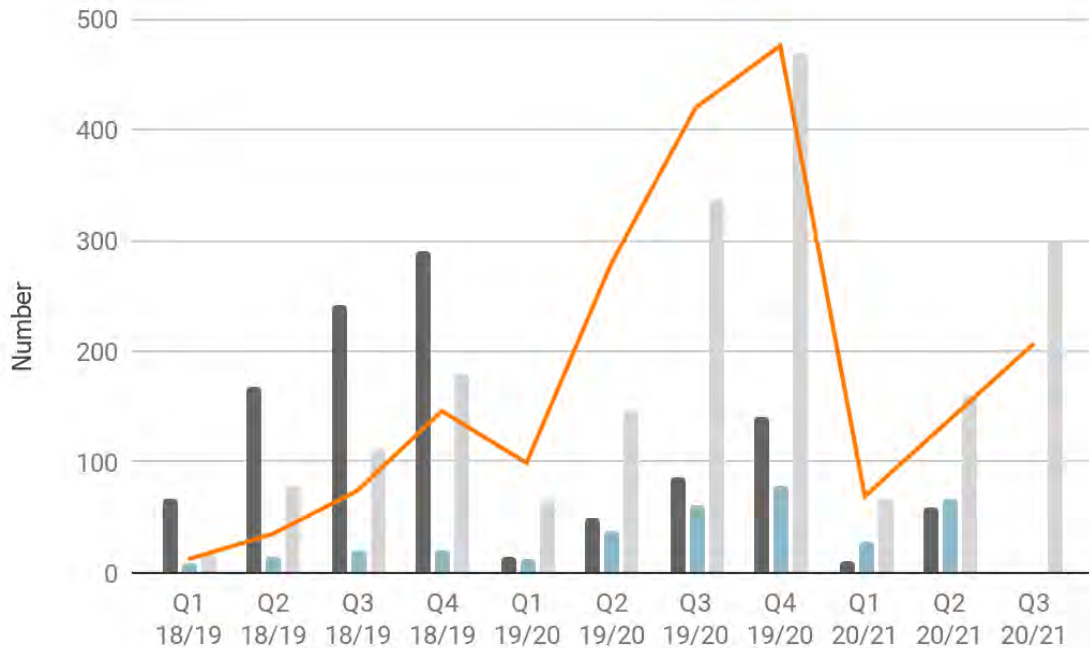
Cumulatively from 1 April 2020 - 31 December 2020, three of the 23 planning appeals were allowed



**(Cumulative) Number of affordable homes delivered**



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**OBSERVATION:**

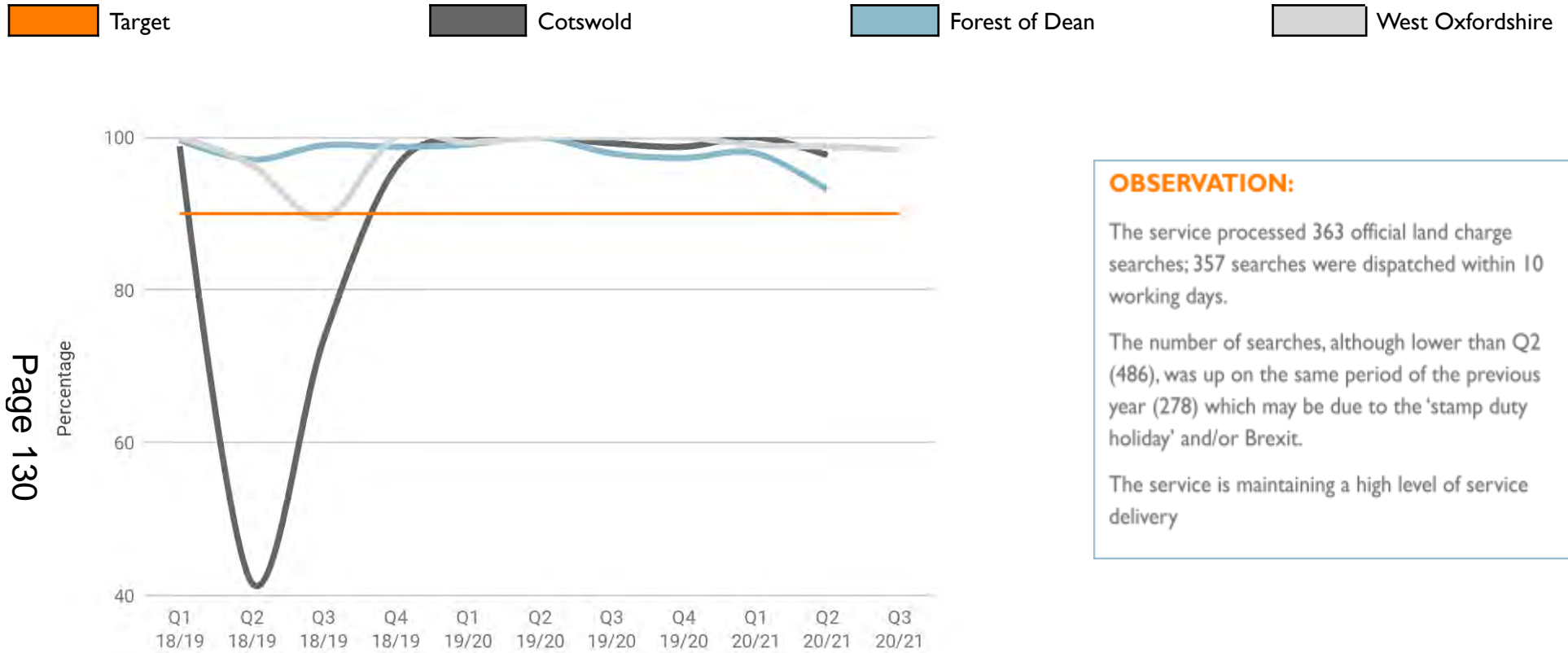
139 affordable homes were delivered in Q3 for rent (95) and low cost home ownership (44) including seven units of discount market sale at Corndell Gardens, Witney.

Cottsway reports that there have been material supply delays in the run up to the brexit agreement that have been exacerbated by some developers stockpiling and increasing demand. However, this has not caused a significant delay to completions to date. Cottsway has repurposed existing buildings on the Stanton Harcourt Airfield development; an administrative delay in obtaining warranty certificates for these properties should be resolved in Q4.

Sovereign has reforecast 14 of the 20 homes anticipated in Q3 and Q4 at Witney Road, Freeland to be completed in 2021/22.

For the first nine months of the year 300 affordable homes were delivered, exceeding the Local Plan target of 274

## Percentage of land charge searches dispatched within 10 working days



**OBSERVATION:**

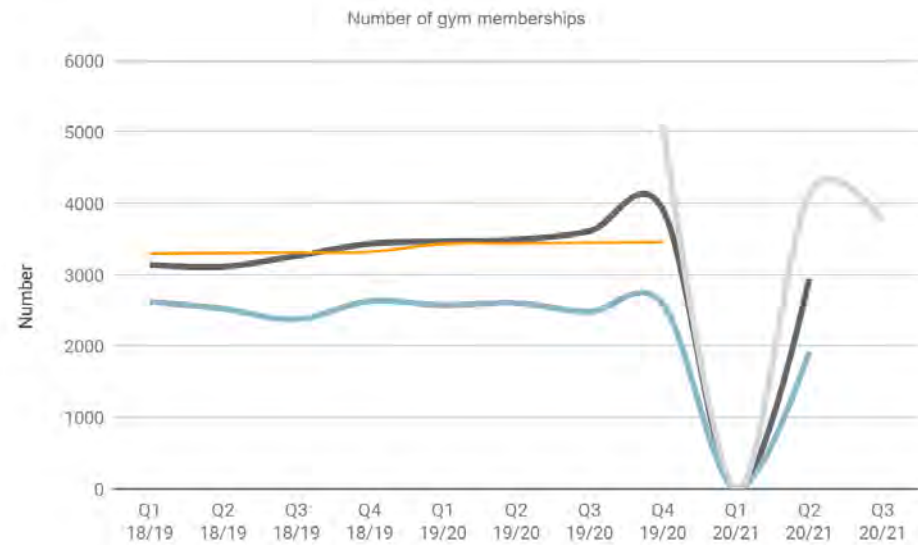
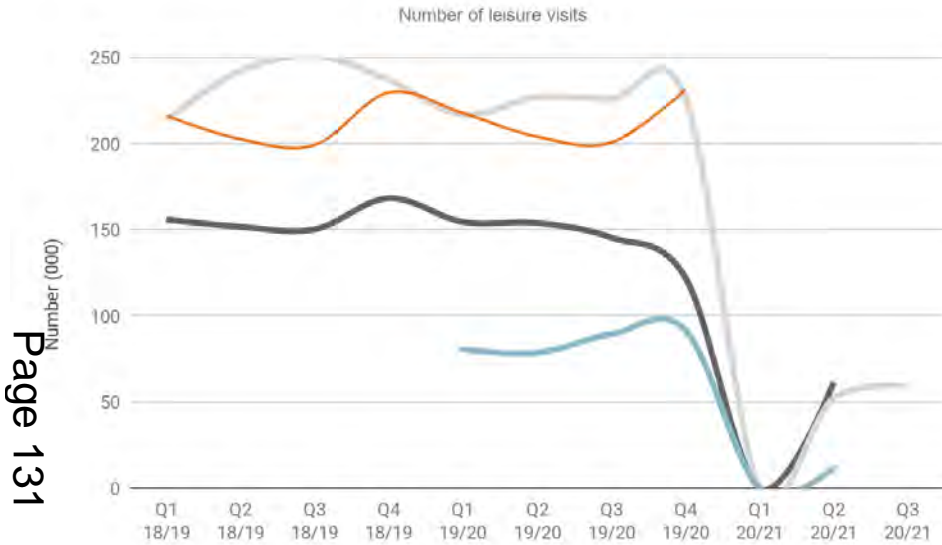
The service processed 363 official land charge searches; 357 searches were dispatched within 10 working days.

The number of searches, although lower than Q2 (486), was up on the same period of the previous year (278) which may be due to the 'stamp duty holiday' and/or Brexit.

The service is maintaining a high level of service delivery

**Leisure**

**Number of visits to leisure centres & (Snapshot) Number of gym memberships**



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**OBSERVATION:**

Following the end of the first lockdown, a financial recovery package was agreed, and some of the Council's leisure facilities reopened from 25 July 2020 under Covid-19 protocols. These included adherence to the governments 'staying COVID-19 secure' declaration which is displayed at all facilities.

All facilities were reopened providing the core activities of gym, group exercise, and swimming with additional activities being restarted in line with government advice and in conjunction with Covid-19 protocols on social distancing, pre-booking, and enhanced cleaning.

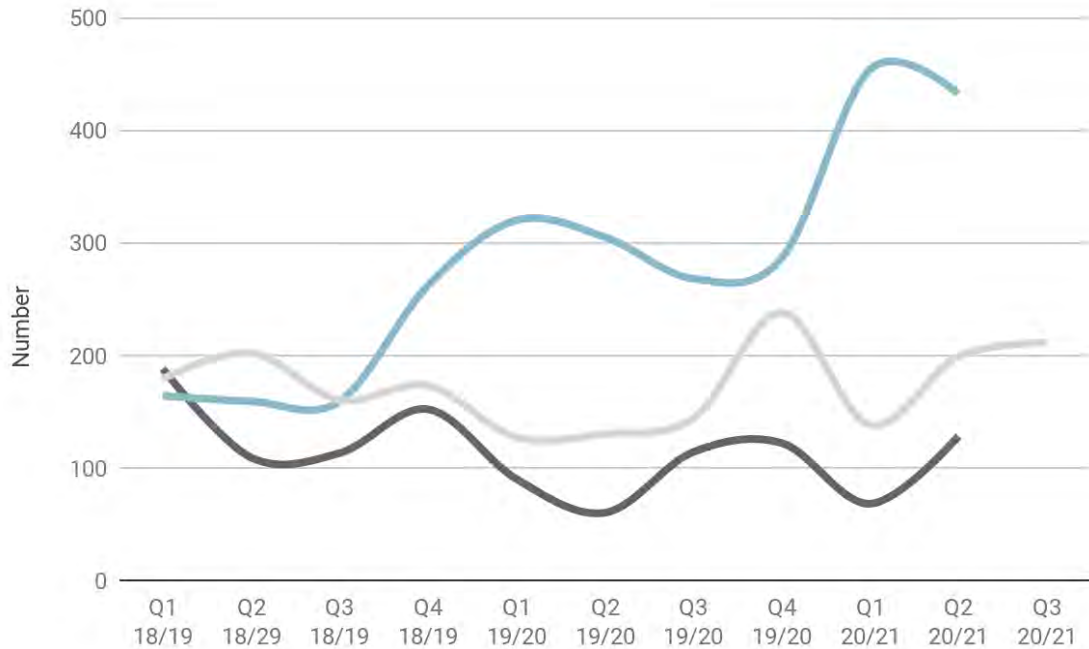
All leisure facilities were closed from 5 November - 2 December as the nation went into a second lockdown. Facilities were re-opened in the lead up to Christmas but as Oxfordshire went into tier 4 on 26 December 2020, all leisure facilities have remained closed from this date.

A contract variation and financial support package have been agreed to cover the period until March 2021

## Environmental and Regulatory

### Number of fly tips collected

Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire



#### OBSERVATION:

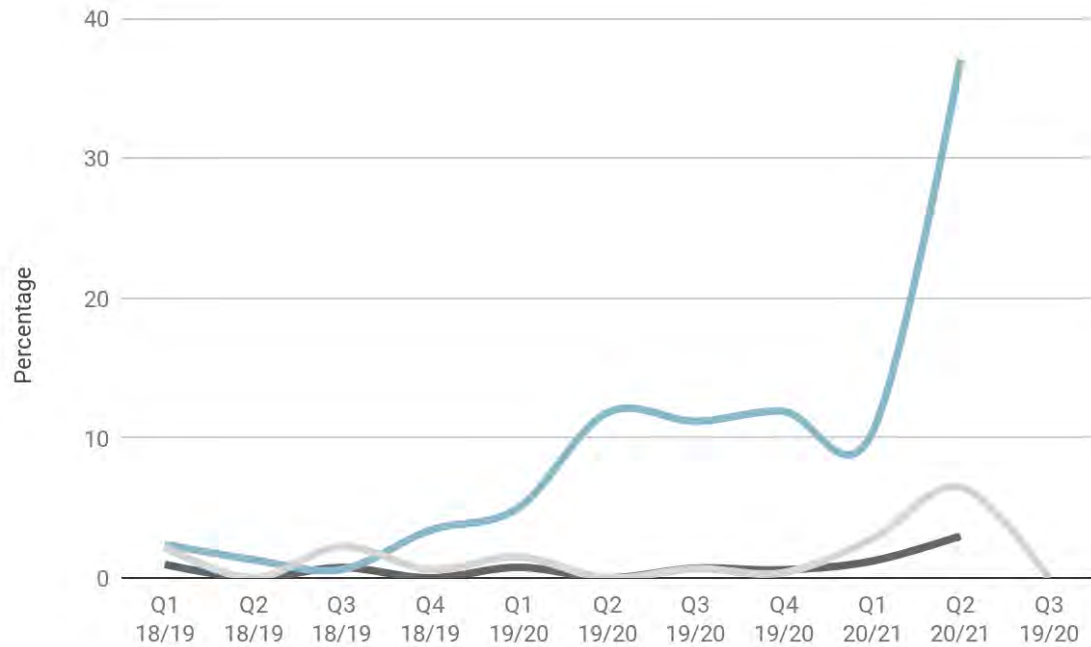
Due to Covid-19, increases in fly tips have been reported nationally, and there are signs that there may be a slight upward trend locally.

The fly tipping service has been redesigned based on customer and user need with the introduction of new on-line forms and web pages. The new process was introduced during Q3 and is still 'bedding in', and will make it easier and quicker for residents to report flytips. It will also reduce duplication and therefore create a more efficient and responsive service.

A high percentage of the fly tips at the Forest of Dean are at recycling sites, which are not counted by West and Cotswold

Percentage of fly tips that result in an enforcement action taking place (defined as a warning letter, fixed penalty notice, simple caution or prosecution)

Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire



**OBSERVATION:**

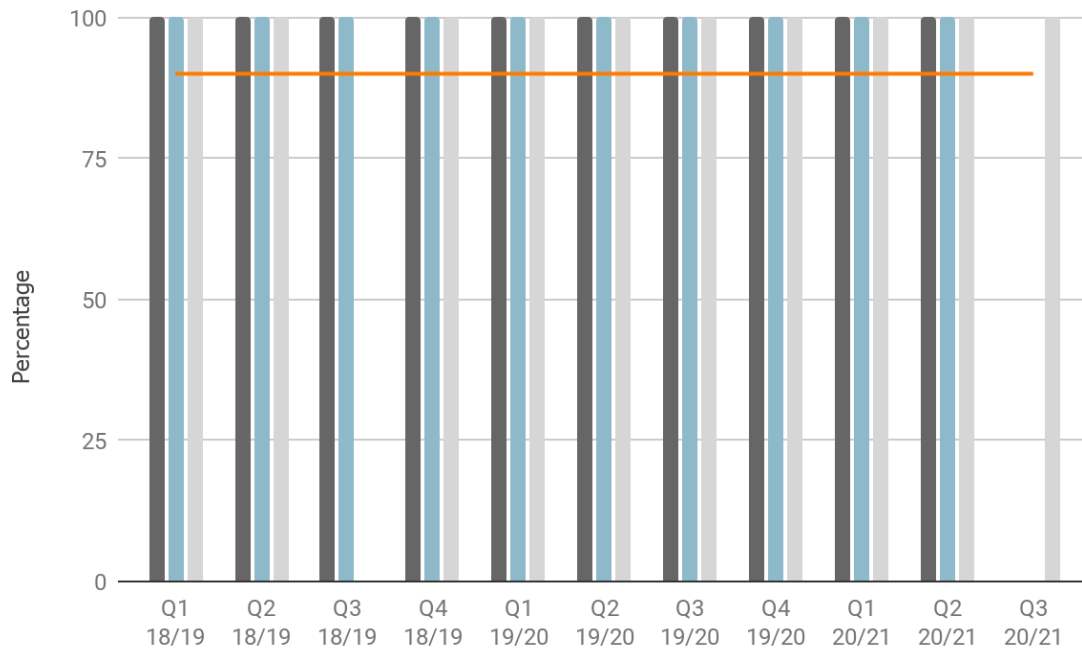
There was an increase in enforcement activity in Q2 following the implementation of a new enforcement pack allowing cautions to be issued via the post.

In Q3, there were 301 notifications of fly tips which did not result in any enforcement actions due to a short term loss of experienced resources in the team which is currently being resolved through a recruitment drive.

In addition, during the quarter the fly tipping service was re-designed for Cotswold and West. A 'support service triage' has been set up to free up specialist officer time to deal with the fly tips that can be investigated further. In Q3, fifteen fly tips were referred to ERS specialists for further investigation. The change in service will require time to 'bed in', and it is likely that the referral criteria will need to be broadened to ensure that a sufficient number of referrals come through for investigation.

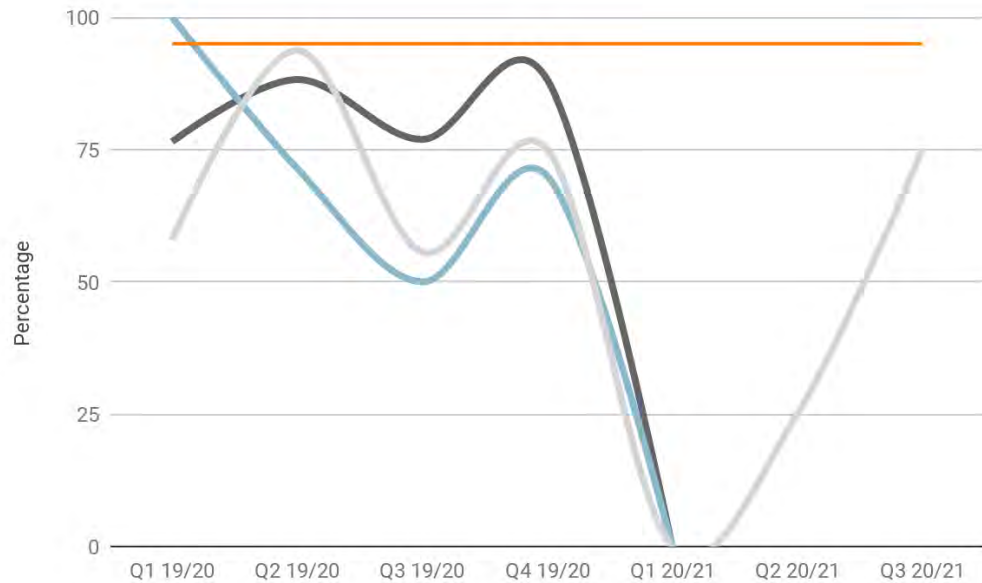
Cotswold and West operate a small multidisciplinary team. In contrast, at Forest of Dean, there is a dedicated Community Warden team, which has also implemented a new enforcement pack

**Percentage of high risk notifications (including food poisoning outbreaks, anti-social behaviour, contaminated private water supplies, workplace fatalities or multiple serious injuries) risk assessed within 1 working day**



**OBSERVATION:**  
 One notification of an allergic reaction to food at a restaurant was received in Q3, and assessed within one day

## Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales



### OBSERVATION:

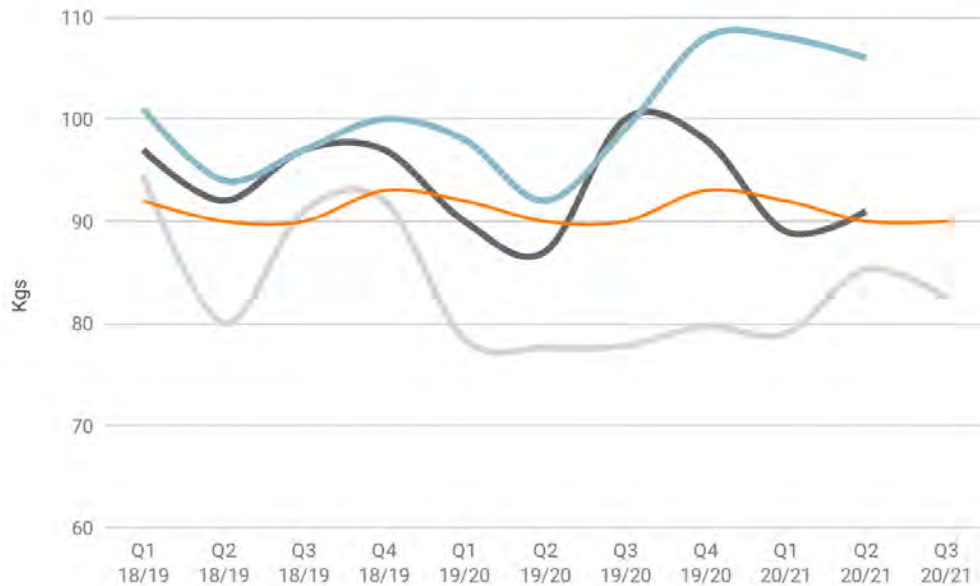
This indicator has been set to 'amber' to recognise that the service has been impacted by Covid-19 restrictions.

All site visits ceased from mid-March to 18 July due to Covid-19. The FSA issued guidance on 17 July advising that routine inspections in high risk food businesses should recommence, excluding businesses catering for vulnerable people where they have previously been assessed as good. All care homes have been contacted to ensure that the correct protocols are in place.

Eight high risk food inspections were due in Q3; although all eight premises received a remote inspection, only six premises received a site inspection within the 28 day timescale. In line with FSA guidance, the service is able to carry out remote inspections which are intended to highlight areas of concern, and if any should arise, those premises would receive a site inspection.

During each lockdown, no site visits could take place unless absolutely necessary. A backlog of other types of inspections is building up, and the service is awaiting further guidance from the FSA on how to deal with the backlog

## Residual household waste per household (kg)



### OBSERVATION:

Due to the impact of Covid-19, all waste and recycling stream tonnages have increased, and reached a peak in October 2020 but appear to be slowly reducing again.

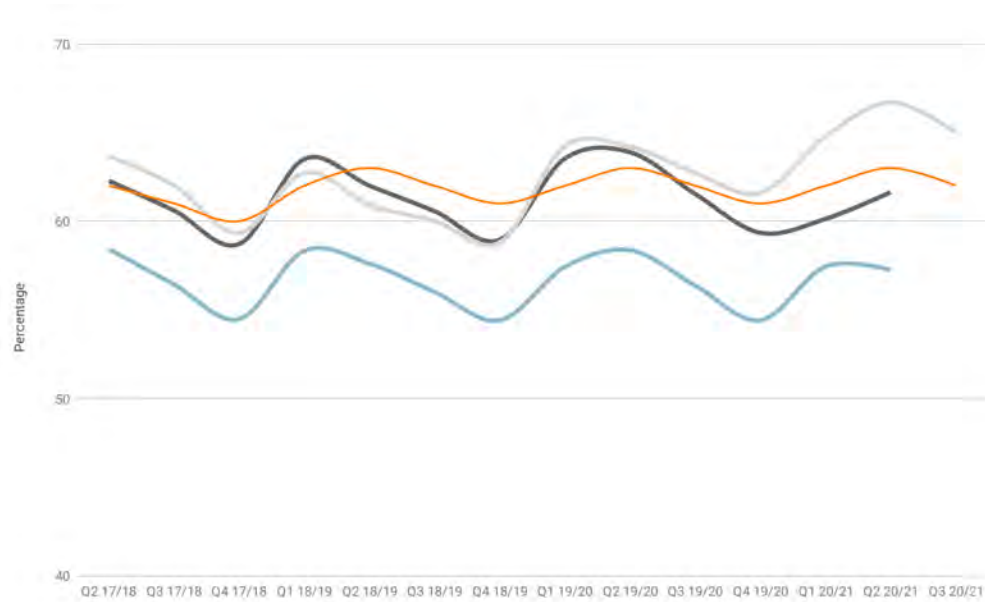
The amount of residual waste produced between April and December 2020 increased by 11.7% compared to same period of the previous year. All excess recycling and food waste is being collected at the kerbside if presented correctly. In addition, the crews were also collecting the additional side waste generated during the Christmas period.

Both the Council and the Oxfordshire Recycles (OCC partnership work) are using their social media channels to promote waste reduction



**(Cumulative) Percentage of household waste recycled**

Target
  Cotswold
  Forest of Dean
  West Oxfordshire



**OBSERVATION:**

Due to the impact of Covid-19, residents are presenting higher amounts of all types of waste.

Dry recycling tonnages for the first nine months of the year were up nearly 36% on the previous year; garden waste tonnages were up nearly 17%, and food tonnages, just over 16%.

The combined recycling rate for the first nine months of the year was 65% compared to 62.72% a year ago; the increase is mainly driven by the increase in dry recycling.

The dry recycling rate was 28.2% (an increase of 2.6 percentage points compared to the same period a year ago), the composting rate was 27.2% and food waste sent for anaerobic digestion was 9.7%.

The service is working closely with UBICO; and all additional recycling and food waste presented correctly at the kerbside by residents is being collected.

Note that the quarterly recycling targets are profiled to account for seasonal differences. The data is also presented cumulatively which will flatten out some of these differences

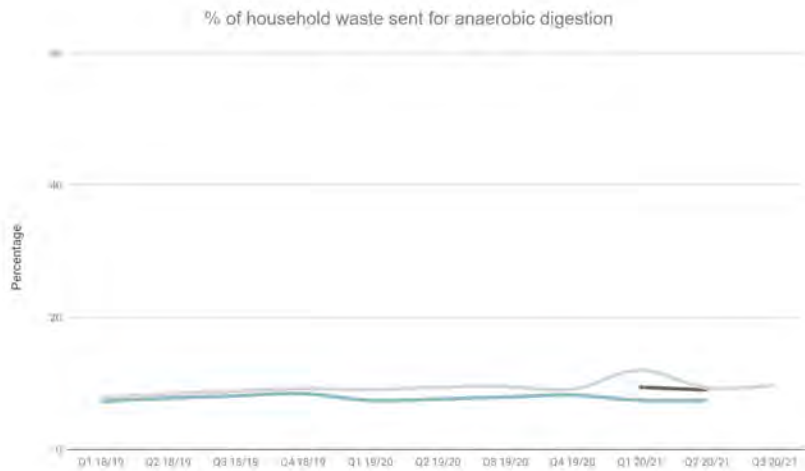
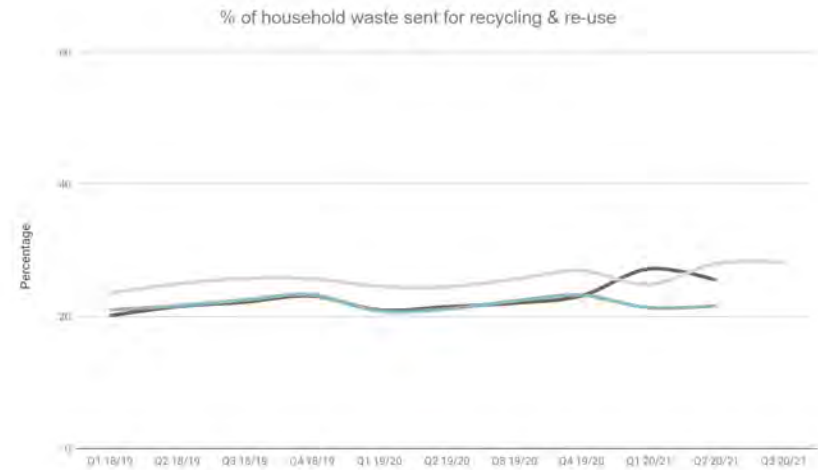
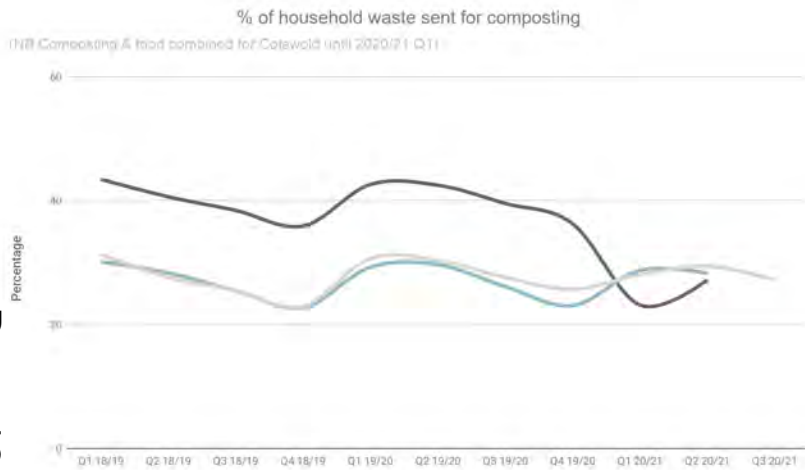
**(Cumulative) Percentage of household waste recycled by waste stream**

Cotswold

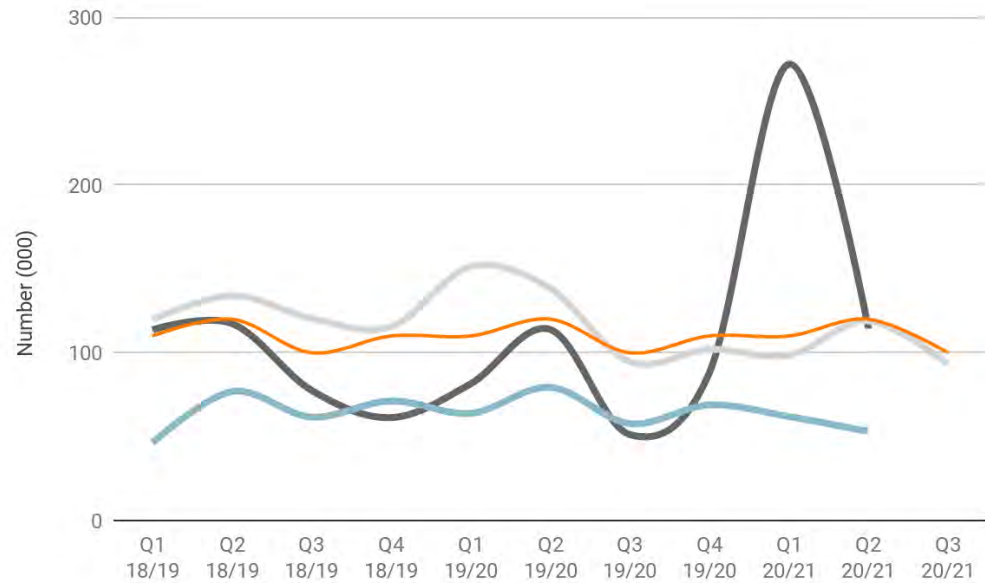
Forest of Dean

West Oxfordshire

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## Number of missed bin per 100,000 scheduled collections



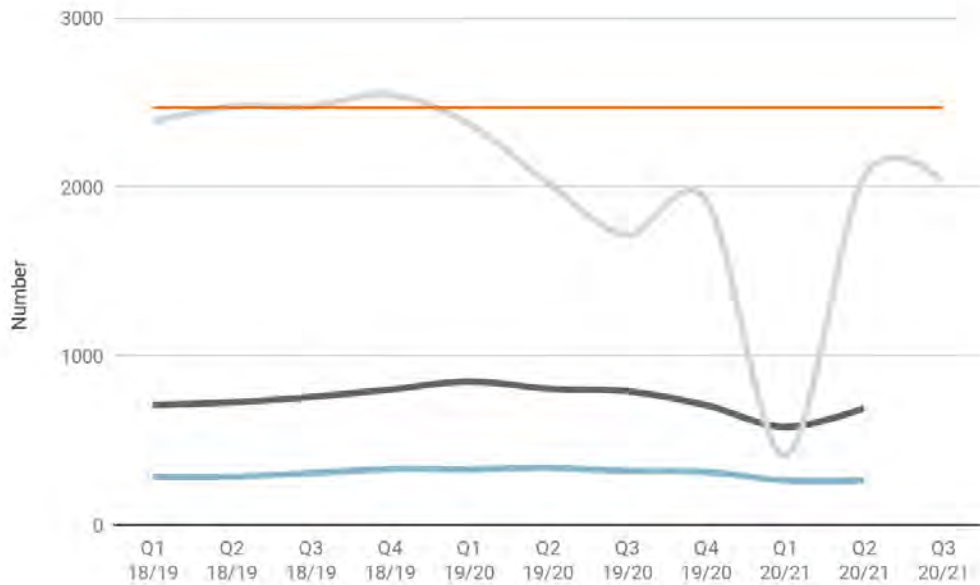
### OBSERVATION:

Overall, there have been improvements over the last year. Previously, the service experienced a high staff turnover in waste crews, and the lack of local knowledge amongst new staff and agency staff caused an increase in the number of missed collections.

There was an increase in the number of misses in March 2020 due to staff absences related to Covid-19, and the use of more agency staff who did not possess local knowledge. Although the service had anticipated that there would be further increases in misses due to increases in waste and recycling tonnage, performance remains within the target. The service is working closely with UBICO to reduce the number of missed bins

## Parking

### Total hours spent undertaking on and off-street parking enforcement visits



#### OBSERVATION:

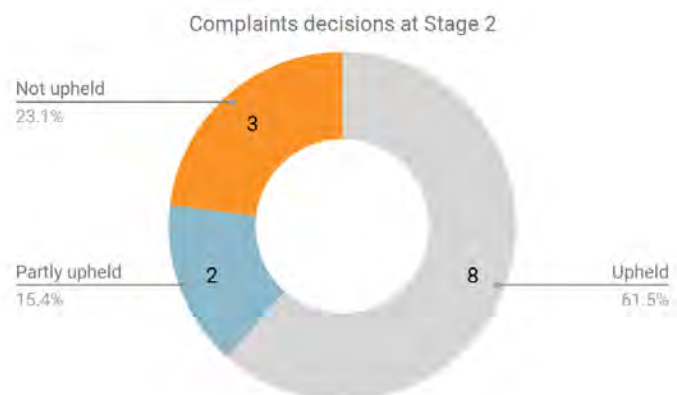
All enforcement activities were suspended on 23 March until 15 June 2020 due to Covid-19, and staff were redeployed to support communities.

Following the suspension, the number of enforcement hours started to return to pre-covid levels; however capacity levels were still down with one vacant part time post and one officer on long term sick. Enforcement officers were also undertaking other duties such as traffic management related to temporary pavement widening and one way systems for social distancing.

During the second lockdown, there was a focus on enforcing dangerous parking and illegal use of disabled bays. Enforcement officers have also been supporting track and trace, and food parcel deliveries.

This indicator has been set to amber to recognise that parking enforcement officers are undertaking a variety of duties

## COMPLAINTS - ARE WE DOING THE 'DAY JOB' REALLY WELL FOR OUR COUNCILS?



### OBSERVATION:

A new Customer Feedback Procedure went live on the 1st July 2020. The Corporate Responsibility team is managing all complaints allowing services to focus on delivery.

The new process has the following stages:

Stage 1: Acknowledgement and Assessment

Stage 2: Investigation

Stage 3: Appeal

The complaints shown below only include upheld or partially upheld complaints

In Q3, there was a higher proportion of complaints upheld; there were seven separate complaints on one issue

Service area	Description	Outcome/learning	Stage	Decision	Response time (days)
Housing	Complainant unhappy with the handling of a housing application	The investigation found that the complainant's original application was not acknowledged. Additionally, an issue with the application had not been communicated to the complainant, resulting in confusion and distress. Apologies were offered for both of these failures	II	Upheld	12 (on an extended timescale)
Development Management	Complaint about the handling of a planning application on a neighbouring property, and the Council's lack of response to emails	The investigation concluded that the Council had acted fairly with regards to the handling of the planning application. However, an apology was offered for the delay in response to the complainant's emails, and it was acknowledged that confusion could have been prevented had there been better communication between the Council and the complainant	Appeal	Partly upheld at Stage II  Partly upheld at Appeal	6 (Stage II)  10 (Appeal)

Development Management	Complaint about the handling of pre-application advice, and subsequent delay in processing the associated planning application	Upon investigation, it was found that the Council had handled the processing of the pre-application advice correctly. However, it was acknowledged that, due to a high workload as a result of the ongoing pandemic, there was a delay in processing the subsequent planning application. An apology was offered, and compensation of £75 to acknowledge the inconvenience caused by the delay	II	Partly upheld	8
Communication & Marketing	Seven complaints about comments made on religious celebrations on social media by a member of staff	The complainants were assured that the Council and Publica take these matters very seriously, and that the comments had been removed. HR is following the appropriate internal procedures in dealing with the member of staff, and communications are being prepared to ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities when using social media	II	Upheld	7



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 <p><b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b></p>	<p><b>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</b></p>
<p>Name and date of Committee</p>	<p><b>Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Thursday 8 April 2021</b></p>
<p>Report Number</p>	<p><b>Agenda Item No. 10</b></p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p><b>Cabinet Work Programme</b></p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Accountable members</p>	<p>Michele Mead, Leader of the Council <a href="mailto:michele.mead@westoxon.gov.uk">michele.mead@westoxon.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>Accountable officer</p>	<p>Keith Butler Head of Democratic Services Tel: 01993 861521 Email: <a href="mailto:keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk">keith.butler@westoxon.gov.uk</a></p>
<p>Summary/Purpose</p>	<p>To give the Committee the opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Work Programme published on 23 March 2021.</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p><a href="#">Annex 1 – Cabinet Work Programme published 23 March 2021.</a></p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>That the Committee decides whether to express a view to Cabinet on relevant issues in the Work Programme for the period.</p>
<p>Corporate priorities</p>	<p>To maintain and enhance West Oxfordshire as one of the best places to live, work and visit in Great Britain and to meet the current and future needs of residents.</p>
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Exempt</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Consultees/ Consultation</p>	<p>None</p>

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. The Cabinet Work Programme is produced on a monthly basis in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Regulations relating to publicity for Cabinet decisions that came into force on 10 September 2012. The programme sets out the Cabinet's work programme for the following three months, as applicable.
- 1.2. The programme [published on 23 March](#), covering the period to June 2021 is included in the [Annex to this report](#), for comment.

## **2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 2.1. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

## **3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1. None

## **4. RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1. Not applicable

## **5. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS**

- 5.1. The Committee may take such action as it considers appropriate within its terms of reference

## **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 6.1. None

## Cabinet Work Programme published 23 March 2021

No.	Proposed Decision and (if applicable) reason(s) the matter is proposed to be considered in private	Key Decision (Yes/No)	Likely to be considered in private (Yes/No)	Decision-maker	Date of Decision	Documents	Notes
1.	Approval to use allocation of up to £140,000 from the Capital programme to procure and implement environmental service system with In-Cab technology in partnership with Ubico	Yes	No	Cabinet	21 April 2021	None	Will first be considered by Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee
2.	Approval of revised Publica Business Plan for 2020/22	Yes	No	Cabinet	21 April 2021	None	Will first be considered by Finance and Management Overview and Scrutiny Committee
3.	Approval of the allocation of the car parking fund set aside for works associated with the Parking Strategy	No	No	Cabinet	21 April 2021	None	
4.	Approval of support for the establishment of a Growth Board Environment Advisory Group, endorsement of the Oxford to Cambridge Arc Environmental Principles; and support for the development of an Arc Environment Strategy	Yes	No	Cabinet	21 April 2021	None	
5.	Approval of the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision in order to inform future plan and strategy development in Oxfordshire	Yes	No	Cabinet	21 April 2021	None	

No.	Proposed Decision and (if applicable) reason(s) the matter is proposed to be considered in private	Key Decision (Yes/No)	Likely to be considered in private (Yes/No)	Decision-maker	Date of Decision	Documents	Notes
6.	Approval of draft West Eynsham Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for consultation	No	No	Cabinet	26 May 2021	Consultation draft	
7.	Approval of upgrade to West Oxfordshire's public space CCTV provision and monitoring arrangements	Yes	No	Cabinet	26 May 2021		Considered by Economic & Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 19 November 2020
8.	Approval of proposed standard fees for Legal and Estates	No	No	Cabinet	26 May 2021	None	
9.	Appointment of representatives on outside bodies for 2021/2022	No	No	Cabinet	26 May 2021	None	
10.	Proposed support for Gloucester City entering into the Ubico partnership and becoming an equal partner	Yes	No	Cabinet	26 May 2021	None	
11.	Approval of proposed Covid-19 Rent Policy for the Council's Commercial Tenants	Yes	No	Cabinet	26 May 2021	None	
12.	Approval of North Witney Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Issues Paper for Consultation	No	No	Cabinet	16 June 2021	None	
13.	Approval of East Witney draft Supplementary Planning Document for consultation	No	No	Cabinet	16 June 2021	None	

No.	Proposed Decision and (if applicable) reason(s) the matter is proposed to be considered in private	Key Decision (Yes/No)	Likely to be considered in private (Yes/No)	Decision-maker	Date of Decision	Documents	Notes
14.	Approval of Oxfordshire Plan 2050 for consultation purposes	No	No	Cabinet	16 June 2021	None	
15.	Approval of Community Facilities Grants	Yes	No	Cabinet	16 June 2021	None	

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