

Friday, 28 January 2022

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ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

You are summoned to a meeting of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee which will be held in the Committee Room 1, Woodgreen, Witney OX28 1NB on **Thursday, 3 February 2022 at 2.00 pm.**



Giles Hughes
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillors: Alaa Al-Yousuf (Chairman), Andrew Coles (Vice-Chair), Mike Cahill, Owen Collins, Rupert Dent, Harry Eaglestone, Ted Fenton, Andy Goodwin, Liz Leffman, Norman MacRae MBE, Martin McBride, Alex Postan, Carl Rylett, Harry St John and Ben Woodruff

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 Democratic Services officers know prior to the start of the meeting.

AGENDA

1. **Minutes of Previous meeting (Pages 5 - 10)**
To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2021.
2. **Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments**
3. **Declarations of Interest**
To receive any declarations of interest from Councillors relating to items to be considered at the meeting, in accordance with the provisions of the Council's Local Code of Conduct, and any from Officers.
4. **Participation of the Public**
Purpose:
To receive any submissions from members of the public, in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure.
5. **Committee Work Programme 2020/2021 (Pages 11 - 104)**
Purpose:
To provide the Committee with an updated Work Programme for 2020/2021, and these following items will be considered at this meeting:

WPI and WP2 – Review Witney Flood Investigation Report
WP3 - Ubico 22/23 Business Plan – Presentation from Ubico
WP4 – Service Performance Report 2021 Q2 – Review Report
WP5 – Air Quality, verbal update from Phil Measures

Chairman's update on Carbon Action Plan Working Group

Recommendation:
That the Committee notes the work programme, provides comment where needed and makes amendments where required.
6. **Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2020-2021 (Pages 105 - 148)**
Purpose:
To note the Council's Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report for 2020-2021, agreed by Cabinet on 15 December 2021.

Recommendation:
That the content of the Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report be noted
7. **Cabinet Work Programme (Pages 149 - 156)**
Purpose:
To give the Committee the opportunity to comment on the Cabinet Work Programme February to May 2020.
Recommendation:
That the Committee decides whether to express a view to the Cabinet on relevant issues in its Work Programme.

8. **Members' Questions**

Purpose:

To receive questions from Members relating to the work of the Environment 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.

(END)

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WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Held in the Committee Room 1 at 2.00 pm on **Thursday, 2 December 2021**

PRESENT

Councillors: Alaa Al-Yousuf (Chairman), Andrew Coles (Vice-Chair), Mike Cahill, Rupert Dent, Harry Eaglestone, Ted Fenton, Andy Goodwin, Liz Leffman, Martin McBride, Alex Postan, Carl Rylett, Harry St John and Ben Woodruff.

Officers: Laurence King (Shared Principal Engineer), Louise Oddy (Service Designer), Scott Williams (Business Manager - Commissioning Strategy), and Michelle Ouzman (Strategic Services).

Councillor Norman MacRae MBE was also present.

27 Minutes of Previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 September 2021 were approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

28 Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Owen Collins.

29 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

30 Participation of the Public

There was no Participation of the Public.

31 Waste Bin Placement and Renewal Programme

The Chairman introduced the Contracts Manager, Scott Williams, and Service Designer, Louise Oddy.

Mr Williams addressed the Committee and shared a presentation on the Waste Bin Placement and Renewal Programme.

The Chairman thanked Mr Williams and invited Councillors to comment or ask questions of Mr Williams or Louise Oddy, remembering to focus on the Policy and not local issues.

Councillor Fenton asked who paid for the bins to be emptied, WODC or the Town Council. Mr Williams clarified that WODC was responsible for the adopted highway but if the land was owned by the Parish, or was the responsibility of the Parish, it would fall to them to maintain. However, he noted that as part of this service moving forward, WODC would offer this service to the Parish Council.

Councillor Goodwin enquired how long the gap was between removal of the old bin and installation of a new bin. He also queried if, where sites were busy, was there a plan to issue more recycling bins. Louise Oddy explained that at the beginning of the programme there had been a resource issue where ten members of staff were off sick with Covid on the same day. However, the programme got back on track and the gap between removal and replacement was usually two days.. As for the recycle bins, these were not being issued anymore as they were not properly used, and were mixed contaminated.

Councillor StJohn asked if the timetables for collection had changed, as some bins seem to be full. Louise Oddy confirmed that this would be reviewed at a meeting in January where all

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collections were going to be looked at. The review would include seasonal timetables where bins were fuller in summer and less so in winter, different routes would be planned and highlighted that Parish councils could request more frequent pickups. Mr Williams also confirmed that there was no decrease in resource, therefore Ubico had capacity, if there was a need to target bins more frequently.

Councillor McBride enquired about the consultation process and asked if there was a reduction in the number of bins at the Country Park. Louise Oddy explained that she and Councillor MacRae had visited the Country Park several times, and there was no reduction of bins. However, the location of the new bins may have been moved to convenient spots, where they were most needed. Councillor McBride also asked about bad aromas at key locations, particularly bus stops and play areas. Louise Oddy confirmed that only litter bins would be located at these areas, and dog waste bins would be located at positions where they were needed. At the January review meeting these issues were to be looked at especially in the summer months where key locations would have more frequent pickups.

Councillor Rylett commented that there were still recycle bins in situ and queried if there were some locations where recycling works. Mr Williams confirmed that once the replacement programme had been completed, there would be no recycle bins only the new ones, due to the contamination issues. However, there was no reason why they couldn't come back to looking at recycling at a later stage in the process, after the replacement programme was completed. Another tool being considered was electronic chips inside the bins that would read how full it was, resulting in targeted pick-ups.

Councillor Eaglestone raised concerns about the policy of the numbers of bins installed on newest sites, and how this was being managed, particularly the Windrush new estate. Mr Williams and Louise Oddy confirmed that at the moment the developers had to come to WODC and say how many bins they would like to install at the site. They were aware of the play park bin on that site was deemed to be too small, and were looking to replace this with a larger bin. Discussions were in place to improve the process to ensure that bin numbers were agreed with developers at the planning stage, so that no extra bins are installed putting a burden on the Council for pickups once the estate was completed and in use. Need to be strict with the developers to only put the number of bins agreed, there is a mechanism for a recourse to charge back, but it is better to stop this before it gets to that stage.

Councillor Postan also wanted to know about communication and information to the Parish Councils and the public, especially about one particular issue, the Country Parks. Louise Oddy confirmed the name of the Parish Council contact, and confirmed she met on site and walked the village only last week where there were these issues, and agreed quite swiftly where bins would be located. Ubico were starting the replacements today, and would complete tomorrow. Louise to share the emails with Councillor Postan.

Councillor Dent enquired if all bin locations were known. Officers confirmed that Ubico had a device that took a picture of which automatically populated their maps with the location.

Councillor Coles commented on the overflowing of bins near bus stops which he felt should be a priority and asked that his thanks be passed to the team because whenever he had reported an issue, this had been swiftly picked up and cleared.

Councillor Fenton wanted assurances about location of bins near to cafés and benches when, in the summer months, bad aromas and flies were a problem, perhaps accelerating the emptying of the bins, even if they were not full. Miss Oddy confirmed that bins would be strategically placed, for example not next to benches where people may want to sit and eat. She advised that consultation helped when making decisions on where bins were located.

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Councillor StJohn asked about the planning of two new housing estates where there were no plans for siting bins. Louise Oddy confirmed that this was not unusual, a bin would be placed at the playground but that typically, bins were not put on housing estates. Mr Williams referred to the Cabinet report which included details of a study by Herefordshire County Council where bins were taken away from housing estates, resulting in no increase in litter.

Mr Williams also stated that the kerbside recycling units within the District were working well and being used regularly.

Councillor Postan enquired if all Parish Councils were paying for their bin collections. Mr Williams confirmed there were two sets of figures that they had, and that at January's review they would be looking at these figures closely.

The Chairman thanked Miss Oddy and Mr Williams for attending and answering Members questions.

Resolved the presentation be noted.

32 Committee Work Programme 2020/2021

The Chairman addressed the meeting and provided an update on the Committee Work Programme as follows:

Review of the Section 19 Report and the Riparian Work – Item 1 & 2

The Chairman introduced Laurence King the Shared Lead Flood Risk Management Officer who addressed the Committee and gave a verbal update.

Mr King clarified that legally Section 19 report could not be delegated, and that an agreement between the Council and Oxford County Council (OCC) was unsigned. Frustration had grown locally regarding the floods, and the lack of a Section 19 report, however, WODC had decided to take the lead and put funding in place to commission the work. The report was due to be shared with Mr King, week commencing 13 December for final tweaking. It would then be submitted to Frank Wilson and Councillor MacRae for review. Following the review, the report would go to Scrutiny and finally formal Cabinet. To set expectations, the report was likely to be submitted to Cabinet in January 2022 at the earliest.

Councillor Coles commented that he had spoken with Mr Cotton and the County Council were keen that this report would be circulated as soon as possible.

Councillor Fenton asked for clarity as to whether producing Section 19 Reports was a County or District responsibility. In response, Mr King stated that OCC felt they had delegated the report responsibility to WODC, however, the legal agreement had not been signed.

Councillor Leffman noted there had been a lack of communication between OCC and WODC which had delayed action and this needed to be looked at further by the Committee to understand the process.

The Chairman agreed that the responsibility and processes between WODC and OCC regarding this issue needed to be added to the work programme.

Mr King was able to inform the Committee that OCC did used to have a team since the 2007 floods, which used to work closely with WODC, with regular meetings. The team leader had retired and OCC resources had been depleted hence why the agreement was never concluded and signed.

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The Chairman thanked Mr King and concluded that at the next meeting 3 February 2022 the report would have been issued and at that point the Committee could reflect on that and the process between WODC and OCC.

Councillor StJohn wanted to know why the Section 19 report had taken so long, and noted that no answer from Mr Cotton, even though he had been chased on several occasions.

Mr King reflected on the length of time the 2007 Section 19 report took to produce, it was over one year with the report not published until 2008. He believed the initial hold up was due to the unsigned agreement but he highlighted that the report was not an in depth technical report but a summary and did not unlock funding.

Councillor Postan reminded Members that it was not only Witney that flooding occurred in but also in Windrush and Shilton, affecting a great number of dwellings. If clearing the river upstream at these two points went ahead, the outcome could make it worse at Witney as more water flows down river.

Mr King agreed that clearing at these two points would just increase flood rise elsewhere, but also made it very clear that works should not be done on its own. All works should be properly managed following the recommendations in the report, surveys initially, before works, all of which would require funding.

Councillor Dent stated that there was a lack of clarity on responsibility, and felt this definitely needed reviewing.

The Chairman agreed that this would be on the Work Programme for the next Committee meeting 3 February 2022.

Mr King commented that there were still some negotiations to conclude on the OCC and WODC agreement, and it was not just a case of signing. The legal acts were there and were clear, but delegating authorities through such agency agreements was not so easy.

The Chairman noted that there were still clarifications to be made, and it was hoped that by the next meeting the Committee would be better informed.

Mrs Emberson-Wines from the Environment Agency (EA), had attended September's meeting, where a number of questions were raised. The answers to these questions were available for the 2 December meeting and the Chairman asked if there were any questions from the Committee Members.

Councillor Coles stated he was disappointed with the answers especially as now we are in a second year of delay. He was going to take it up with Environment Agency again, but wanted it noted.

In relation to Question 2, Councillor St John asked why the de-silting could not be done at the Witney bridge location. He advised that there were two channels that flowed under the bridge and the nearest to the south bank was where he thought the main issues were.

Mr King said he had visited this location with the EA's Operations Manager, and understood there was not the support or funding. The EA thought spot de-silting did not reap long term benefits and were not in favour, even as a repeated action.

Councillor Postan stated that he thought some locals were willing to fund private de-silting and Mr King informed the Committee that any work on the river must have formal consent from the EA.

Ubico – The Chairman confirmed that Ubico would be in attendance at the next meeting to give a presentation to the Committee, on future business plans.

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Air Quality – Councillor MacRae confirmed that there was a link now on the WODC Website. Councillor Leffman requested if the Committee could be updated on the latest information and the Chairman suggested that the relevant officers be invited to the 3 February meeting for an update.

The Chairman commented on the Climate Action Working Group who had met earlier that day and advised that the presentations would be circulated.

The Local Nature Partnership – The Chairman announced that this was already on the Climate Action Working Group's radar as it came under Bio-Diversity and Land Management. Therefore, to avoid duplication, this item would be removed from the work programme. In addition, the Committee should have received an invitation from Eventbrite portal to a webinar on Tuesday 7 December 2021, with Wild Oxfordshire to talk about their work, with WODC on nature recovery. The Chairman urged Councillors to check their emails for the invite.

33 Cabinet Work Programme

Resolved that the report be noted.

34 Members' Questions

Councillor Fenton raised the issue of late bin collections in Church Street, Bampton with seven out of twelve collections being late. He asked if communication, such as a leaflet drop, could be passed to residents to advise them of the situation and the reasons for lateness.

In response, Councillor MacRae updated the Committee advising that this was a result of faulty vehicles. This had been further compounded by a delay in sourcing spare parts, a situation which was affecting the whole country. He assured Members that the website was being updated daily regarding any collection issues.

Councillor Postan advised that having heard from Parish Council, the Councils Information Service was working really well.

Councillor McBride advised that where he lived neighbours shared information and bins so that all rubbish was collected - , one neighbour may have less collection one week so offered the space in the bin to other neighbours, which worked well.

The Meeting closed at 3.12 pm

CHAIRMAN

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 <p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>	<p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>
<p>Name and date of Committee</p>	<p>Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee 3 February 2022</p>
<p>Report Number</p>	<p>Agenda Item No. 5</p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p>Committee Work Programme 2021/2022</p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Accountable member</p>	<p>Cllr Alaa Al-Yousuf, Chairman Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee Email: alaa.alyousuf@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Accountable officer</p>	<p>Amy Bridgewater-Carnall, Senior Strategic Support Officer Tel: 01993 861522 Email: democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Summary/Purpose</p>	<p>To provide the Committee with an update on its Work Programme 2021/22.</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p>Annex 1 - Work Programme for 2021/22</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>That the Committee notes the work programme, provides comment where needed.</p>
<p>Corporate priorities</p>	<p>To enable the Committee to review its Work Programme and support the Council's priorities to protect the environment whilst supporting the local economy, to meet the current and future needs of residents and to provide efficient and value for money services, whilst delivering quality front line services.</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. At the May meeting the Committee gave consideration to the development of its Work Programme for the year having regard to the changes to the approach to scrutiny work adopted by Council on 22 October 2008.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1. Members are asked to consider the work programme, along with the Cabinet work programme, and decide if there are any items that they wish to scrutinise in particular.
- 2.2. Once considered, the Committee can decide whether to submit formal comments or recommendations to the Cabinet as they see fit.
- 2.3. In addition to the items contained in the Work Programme there will still be the opportunity to bring forward one-off reports and papers on particular issues of interest to the Committee but it will also be necessary to maintain a general overview of the ways in which external agencies are responding to community concerns. The inclusion of a standing agenda item for Members' questions also provides the opportunity to raise relevant issues.
- 2.4. Local Lead Flood Authority – update
Laurence King attended the December meeting and was hoping the expected Flood report would be completed for sharing in January 2022.

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. CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. Whilst there may be climate change implications arising from specific items within the Work Programme, there are none arising directly from this report.

7. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

- 7.1. In accordance with the Constitution of the Council, Committee has the power to investigate any matters it considers relevant to its work area, and to make recommendations to the Council, the Executive or any other Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council as it sees fit.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 8.1. None.

December 2021

WP	Title	Format	Lead Officer / Cabinet Member	Next report / Anticipated Completion Date	Comments
1	Review of OCC Section 19 relating to the Christmas Floods 2020	Written report	Bill Oddy / Councillor MacRae	3 February 2022, Committee to review the report and comment.	The Cabinet member, Councillor MacRae and the Shared Principal Engineer Mr Laurence King attended the 2 December Committee meeting and gave updates. The draft report is due w/c 13 th December for tweaking, it will then be issued as final version to Frank Wilson and Councillor MacRae, then Scrutiny, then Cabinet.
2	Riparian Ownership and flood risk WODC owned land	Verbal update	Councillor MacRae / Laurence King	3 February 2022 Committee to review the report and comment.	Site visit occurred 5th August 2021. Report to be completed by mid-December. Report to be shared in late January.
3	Ubico 22/23 Business Plan themes	Presentation from Ubico	Councillor MacRae / Beth Boughton (Ubico)	3 February 2022	Beth Boughton from Ubico due to present in person.
4	Service Performance Report 2021-22 Quarter Two	Written Report	Bill Oddy / Councillor MacRae	3 February 2022	Bill Oddy, Elizabeth Griffiths and Frank Wilson on hand for questions.
5	Air Quality Update	Verbal Update	Phil Measures	3 February 2022	Phil Measure to provide a verbal update

Work Programme 2021/2022 – Environment O&S

Annex I

6	Governments initiative of zero recycle cost for residents	Verbal update	Councillor MacRae / Scott Williams	When there is news to share. Initiate began 2019 but is behind due to the pandemic, review beginning 2022	Verbal update due from Scott Williams when there is news to share. See link for current details: https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-sets-out-plans-to-overhaul-waste-system
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Regular Reports	Frequency	Next Meeting Date
Update on Carbon Action Plan – Ness Scott and Councillor Harvey (Cabinet Work Programme number 3)	Every meeting	May 2021 onwards – to induct any new Members and verbal update.
Flood Prevention, Drainage & Sewerage Infrastructure Issues - Councillor MacRae / Laurence King	As required	Ongoing
Air Quality	Annual report	Phil Measures to give a verbal update at the Committee 3 February - see link: https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/environment/noise-pests-pollution-and-air-quality/air-quality/

Suggestions for future workstreams:

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WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

www.westoxon.gov.uk

Witney Flood Investigation Report December 2020

Date: 26th January 2022

Version	Date	Details	Author	Checked	Approved
1	06/01/2022	Draft	Richard Bennett	Laurence King	
2	26/01/2022	Final Report	Richard Bennett	Laurence King	Frank Wilson

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) has undertaken a flood investigation into the Witney Christmas floods 2020 and shared this report with the Environment Agency and Oxfordshire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority for comments. Wherever possible, given the time constraints, these comments have been included within this document. WODC works collaboratively through an informal agency agreement with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) to undertake flood investigations as well as drainage enforcement and consenting functions on behalf of the LLFA in West Oxfordshire. This is separate to the County Council's LLFA responsibility for the final approval and publication of the Section 19 report. In the interests of having this investigation report concluded in an appropriate timeframe WODC has procured additional support to produce this report for Witney and invited the County Council, the EA and other stakeholders including the Witney Flood Group and landowners for their comments.

December 2020 flood event

It was deemed necessary to complete a formal investigation into the flood incidents in Witney due to the number of properties that reported flooding internally.

At least 54 residential and business properties were confirmed as flooding internally on the 23rd and 24th December 2020. This included residents at Mill House Care Home, Riverside Gardens and Riverside House needing to be evacuated.

Surface water flooding of some roads first occurred during the 23rd December 2020 in a number of places in Witney (section 2.1 for more detail). The amount of rainfall and its intensity that fell on that day overwhelmed some parts of the highway drainage systems which are very reliant on outfalls to watercourses which had started to become compromised by the rising river level. This was followed on the 24th December 2020 by river flooding when the upstream catchment flows reached Witney and river levels peaked. The level peaked just after midnight on the 25th December 2020.

Not unusually in flood events, the causes are from multiple sources with no one cause and no one solution required to reduce risk of future events.

Conclusions

From reviewing the information provided regarding the December 2020 flood event, historic river data and modelling information, it is clear that the 2020 event was greater than the current EA modelled 1 in 100 year flood event with flows similar to the peak flow in the modelled 1 in 100 year plus 20% event.

From the level information obtained from the Lidar (Laser Imaging, detection and Ranging) data it is clear that there is an issue with flood plain connectivity downstream of the Aquarius site and through the raised footpath at Langel Common.

Levels in the field to the South of the Aquarius site and to the east of the eastern channel of the river Windrush seem to suggest that flood flows would not be able to fill and pass through to the flood plain further downstream as easily as the 2014

modelling suggests. The flood levels in the model are lower than the ground level in the field adjacent to the channel in the modelled 1 in 20 year event and at the 1 in 100 year flood level, not all flows would be able to spill back in to the river.

The level of the raised footpath further downstream varies between 79.72m and 80.1m AOD which is higher than the modelled 1 in 100 year flood level of 79.68m AOD, confirming that the embankment is not accurately reflected in the 2014 model. The river through this area and upstream of Bridge Street is in poor condition due to no significant maintenance being carried out for many years.

It has been confirmed that an updated flood risk model for the Windrush and its tributaries through the town is to be carried out by the EA which will include information gathered since 2014 and from the December 2020 floods.

The updated model will need to fully understand the issues around Bridge Street and through to Langel Common, and confirm the main causes affecting the flood levels upstream of Bridge Street.

There is currently minimal information on the private and highway drainage systems throughout Witney and further investigations need to be carried out throughout the affected areas to fully understand the existing drainage systems and any issues with them.

Main Actions

Action	Lead Stakeholders	Consulting stakeholders
Communicate the explanation for the previous problems with the flood warning system and explore what further improvements and enhancements could be made.	EA	WODC, LLFA and residents.
Re-establish the Agency flood group meetings to discuss problems and to look at strategies to combat flooding due to Climate Change. Have periodic meetings with the local flood group to discuss the issues and recommendations with representatives from key authorities.	LLFA	All Authorities
Update the 2014 model with updated level information, especially downstream of the Aquarius Bridge through to the footpath at Langel Common. Include main tributaries through Witney	EA	WODC, LLFA, WFMG
Increased EA / Riparian maintenance to be carried out along the river Windrush through and downstream of Witney. Proactive visits and	EA	Landowners

encouragement to ensure riparian owners carry out their duties.		
Investigate if the river could be modified to increase flow capacity during severe conditions, especially between New Bridge Street through to the footpath in Langel Common.	EA	Landowners ,LLFA and WODC.
Investigate if the perimeter ditch of the Aquarius site can be modified/ diverted to increase flow Capacity.	WODC	EA, Landowners, LLFA
Look at improving flows through Langel Common footpath to ensure flood plain connectivity is improved during all flood events.	EA	OCC, Landowners ,WODC
Install Gauge boards from Woodford Mill through to Langel Common and set up a Flood Warden network with local volunteers to record the levels during flood events.	EA	WFMG, LLFA
Look at opportunities for flood storage and increased flood plain capacity upstream of Witney and Crawley such as nature based solutions through partnership working.	EA	Landowners, LLFA, WODC
Look at opportunities for schemes to manage flows upstream of the Hailey Road drain such as nature based solutions through partnership working.	WODC	LLFA, EA Landowners, WFMG
Property flood resilience (PFR) measures which improve the resilience of the community before a flood occurs. Many properties have already carried out measures on their properties, but further funding and support may be available to help more people;	Homeowners	WODC, EA, OCC
Measures to improve the resilience of existing public or community-owned infrastructure;	All Local Government Bodies	
Local community volunteer approaches to improve the community's ability to plan, respond and recover from flooding; link to local community emergency plans; encourage affected Care Home to develop Business Continuity Plan and Evacuation Plan.	All	Communities and Residents

WODC to continue regular maintenance of their ordinary watercourse assets and use their powers under the Land Drainage Act 1991 to ensure Riparian owners carry out required maintenance.	WODC	Landowners
OCC to regularly check and maintain highway assets through Witney, in line with their current maintenance regimes. Any affected areas that haven't been checked after December 2020 should be prioritised.	OCC Highways	
Bridge Street bridge to be checked regularly and de-silting under the bridge to be carried out as and when required accepting that without de-silting being also undertaken on the upstream side of the bridge there would be little benefit to simply de-silting under the bridge.	OCC Highways	EA
Privately owned drainage systems to be checked for blockages and defects and remedial works to be carried out where necessary. Connectivity downstream to be confirmed.	Developers, Landowners	WODC, LLFA
Foul sewers to be checked for surface water connections, blockages and capacity issues. Remedial works to be carried out as necessary to minimise surface water entering the system and increase capacity.	TW	LLFA, WODC

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Appendix A – Further Photos

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) Investigation

Section 19 of the Flood and Water Management Act (F&WMA) states:

- 1) On becoming aware of a flood in its area, a Lead Local Flood Authority must, to the extent that it considers it necessary or appropriate, investigate:-
 - a. which risk management authorities have relevant flood risk management functions, and
 - b. whether each of those risk management authorities has exercised, or is proposing to exercise, those functions in response to the flood.
- 2) Where an authority carries out an investigation under subsection (1) it must:-
 - a. publish the results of its investigation, and
 - b. notify any relevant risk management authorities.

West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) is not the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), but does deliver a delegated Flood Risk Management Service for the LLFA through an informal arrangement.

The legal obligations of the LLFA cannot be delegated, but in the interests of having investigation reports concluded in a timeframe that will help reduce residents' concerns around speed of resolution WODC has produced this report for Witney, in conjunction with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), which can be used by the LLFA and other RMA's for their own purposes.

The LLFA have a set criteria which determines when a S19 report is required. The criteria is set out below and WODC have decided to follow that criteria.

LLFA/OCC Criteria

- Internal flooding (excluding to basements) to five or more residential properties or businesses within an area of 1km².
- Internal flooding of a business premises employing more than 10 people within an area of 1km².
- Internal flooding (excluding to basements) of at least one property or business for one week or longer.
- Flooding of one or more items of critical infrastructure, which could include hospitals, health centres, clinics, surgeries, colleges, schools, day nurseries, nursing homes, emergency services (police, fire, ambulance) stations, utilities and substations.

Caused a transport link to be impassable:

- Motorways, trunk roads, Class A and B highway closures shall all be investigated.
- Class C highways – 10 hours or more unless the route is the only means of access, or is primary route for critical infrastructure then reduce to 4 hours.
- Class U highways – 24 hours or more unless the route is the only means of access, or is primary route for critical infrastructure then reduce to 4 hours.
- All rail link closures shall be investigated.

Any flooding event that a risk management authority deems significant but does not meet the agreed thresholds should be put forward to the Strategic Flooding Group Committee for consideration.

1.2. Site Location and context

Witney is a thriving market town on the edge of the Cotswolds, 12 miles west of Oxford and just north of the A40 road. Witney has over 25,000 residents in over 10,000 households, according to recent figures from Oxfordshire County Council, making it the largest town in West Oxfordshire.

Witney has developed along the banks of the River Windrush. The river is braided upstream and downstream of Witney but through the built up area, it has been straightened and it passes under two main road bridges, Bridge Street and New Bridge Street. In recent years, the town has expanded rapidly, with housing development at Madley Park, Millers Mews, Grangers Place, Woodford Mill and also post 2007, with the completion of the Aquarius Site and developments of notable size being built off Burford Road and West Witney.

Three main tributaries enter the River Windrush in the centre of Witney; Hailey Road Drain upstream of Bridge Street, the Madley Brook in Langel Common and the Colwell Brook/QED system that joins the river Windrush near Ducklington. The Hailey Road Drain is culverted under Eastfield Road and Hailey Road.

A further tributary of the River Windrush, the Queen Emma's Dyke, forms and flows through Witney before joining the Windrush south of Witney.

The Environment Agency (EA) has previously identified over 100 properties in Witney to be at high risk of fluvial flooding. The EA flood map, Risk of Flooding from Rivers and Seas, is shown in Figure 1 below.

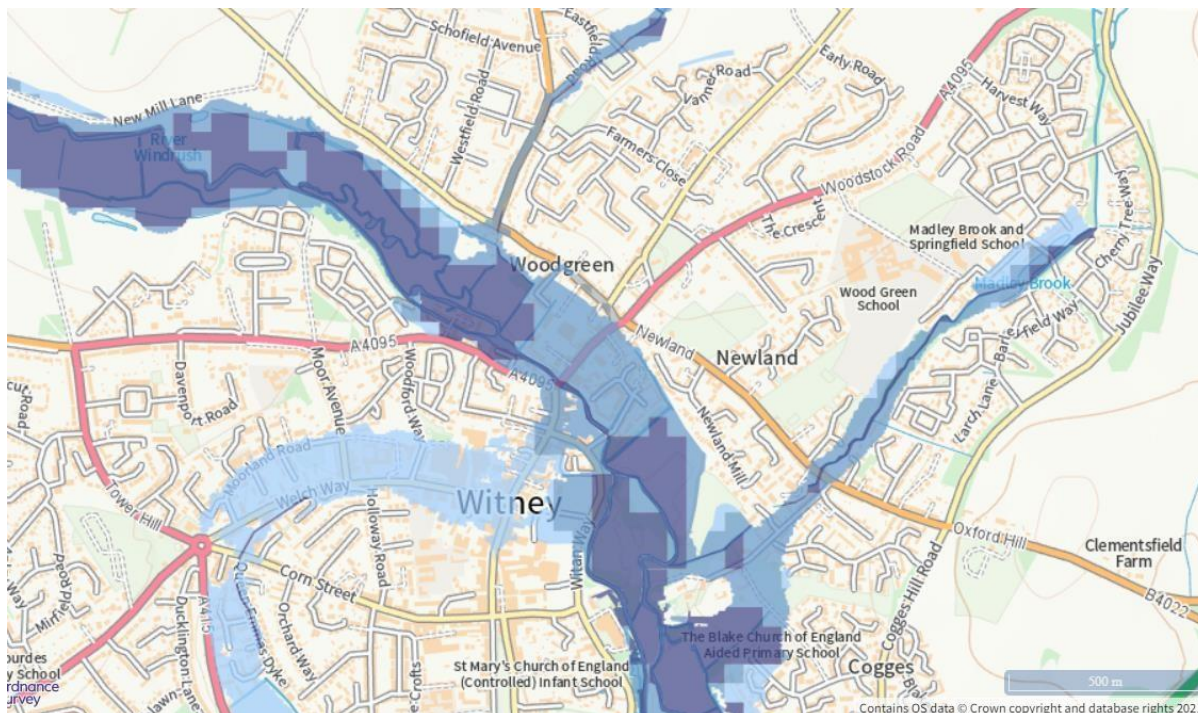


Figure 1 - EA flood map, Risk of Flooding from Rivers and Seas

1.3. Previous flood events

Approximately 235 properties in Witney were flooded during the events of July 2007. The flooding was from multiple sources due to the sheer the amount of rainfall that fell during within a 24 hour Period and the accumulation of rainfall from the weeks before.

The EA report “Witney Flood Review July 2007” stated *“On the 19 July 2007, 113mm of rain fell at Bourton-on-the-Water in 28 hours. This equates to more than twice the average monthly rainfall for July. Several rain gauges in the upper parts of the Windrush catchment recorded even greater totals: Sherbourne recorded 122mm, and Guiting 140mm. This extraordinary rain is what caused the majority of flooding in the town centre, from the River Windrush.”*

“Rainfall totals for Witney (from the rain gauge at the Thames Water Sewage Treatment Works) are more relevant when considering flooding that the town witnessed on Friday 20 July – the pluvial flooding. This rain gauge recorded 84mm in 17 hours.”

The EA report also confirmed that the peak flow recorded at the Worsham flow monitoring station during July 2007 was 29.26m³/s. The river flows during the July 2007 even are shown in figure 2 below.

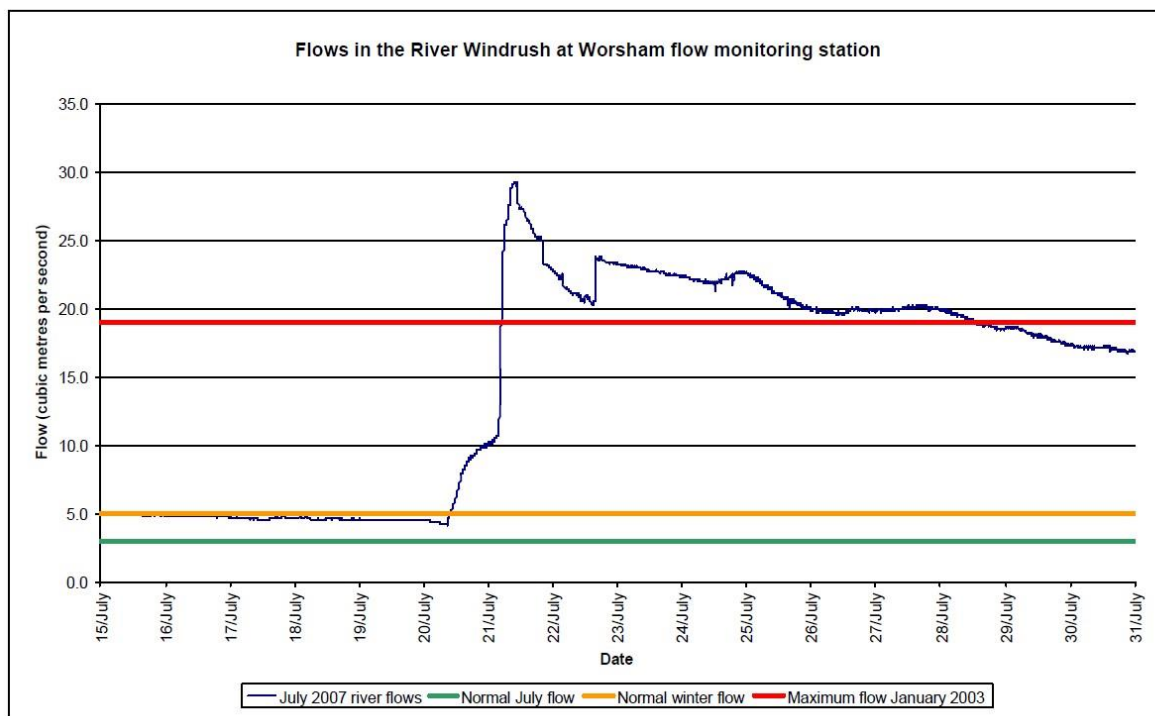


Figure 2 – July 2007 river flows for the River Windrush from EA Flood Review July 2007

The West Oxfordshire District Council Witney flood report stated that RAF Brize Norton recorded 125 millimetres of rain in a period of 12 hours.

In December 2013 - January 2014, flooding was also experienced in Witney. Internal flooding was reported in West End (including the industrial Estate), Bridge Street and Riverside gardens and also highway flooding in Eastfield Road and Hailey Road which was witnessed on the 23rd and 24th December. Flooding also occurred in February 2014. Rather than a significant rainfall event, the flooding in January and February was mainly down to continuous heavy rainfall which did not allow the river level to recover to its normal level.

2. RECENT FLOOD ISSUES AND INVESTIGATION

2.1. Summary of December 2020 Floods

It was deemed necessary to complete a formal investigation into the flood incidents in Witney due to the number of properties that reported flooding internally.

At least 54 residential and business properties were confirmed as flooding internally on the 23rd and 24th December 2020. This included residents at Mill House Care Home, Riverside Gardens and Riverside House needing to be evacuated.

The main areas affected with internal flooding were Woodford Mill, Riverside Gardens, Bridge Street, West End (including Industrial Estate), Millers Mews, Newland area (near the Madley Brook) and Eastfield Road. One property was also affected in New Yatt Road.

Highway flooding was also reported on Hailey Road linked to the Hailey Road Drain. Further external flooding was reported in Blakes Avenue, Park Road, Marriots Walk, Cherry Tree Way, Vanner Road and Woodford Way Car Park. There may have been internal flooding in these areas although no internal flooding was confirmed by WODC or OCC.

Surface water flooding first occurred on the 23rd December 2020 in a number of places in Witney, due to the sheer amount of rainfall and intensity that fell on that day which overwhelmed the existing drainage systems. This was followed on the 24th December 2020 by river flooding when the upstream catchment flows reached Witney and river levels peaked. The level peaked just after midnight on the 25th December 2020.

Not unusually in flood events, the causes are from multiple sources with no one cause and no one solution required to reduce risk of future events.

River levels were already high from the significant rainfall that fell at the beginning of October 2020 and river levels were unable to fall back to normal levels before the event on the 23rd December.

2.2. Rainfall and river data analysis

Data has been obtained from CEH, riverlevels.uk and Shoothill Gauge Map. The Rain gauge upstream of Witney at Worsham recorded 37.22mm of rainfall on the 23/12/2020 and a total of 64.5mm the 7 days up to 25/12/2020 when the river was still at its peak upstream of Bridge Street. The gauge in Bourton on the Water, which is located in the upper part of the Windrush catchment, record 56.1mm of rainfall on the 23/12/2020 and 89.7mm for the 7 days up to 25/12/2020.

The Worsham river gauge confirmed the peak flow in the Windrush was 30.348 m³/s on the 24/12/2020. This was more than the flow recorded in July 2007 which was 29.26m³/s.

The gauge at Riverside Gardens, recorded the flood level to peak at 81.45m AOD on the 25/12/2020. (Datum Level 79m + gauge reading 2.45m). The Hydrograph for December 2020 is shown below.

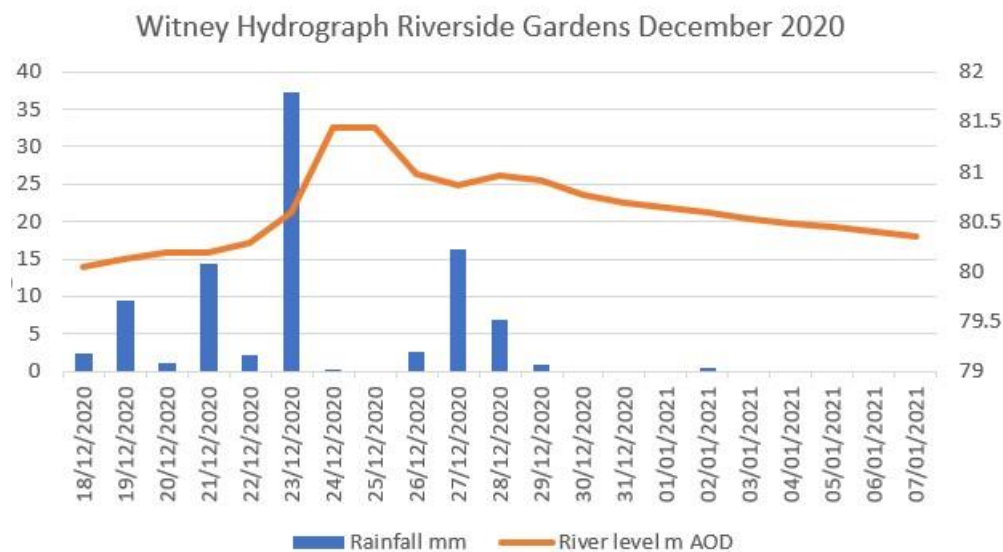


Figure 3 - Hydrograph for Riverside Gardens December 2020

Figure 4 below shows the hydrograph for Riverside gardens from December 2013 through to January 2014. Although the river peaked on the 8th January 2014 to over 81m AOD, the similar rainfall event to the 23rd December 2020, on the same day of December 2013, did not see a significant raise in levels at Riverside Gardens compared to the peak level in December 2020. Following the event in 2020, the river level increased by 1.69m from the river level on the previous day to its peak level within 24 hours of the initial event. In 2013, the river raised only 0.55m from the river level on the previous day to its peak level which took over 48 hours to reach its peak level following the 2013 event. This paragraph is a very simplified view of the different events but it is stating points for further explanation and exploration by the EA and partner RMA/ stakeholders.

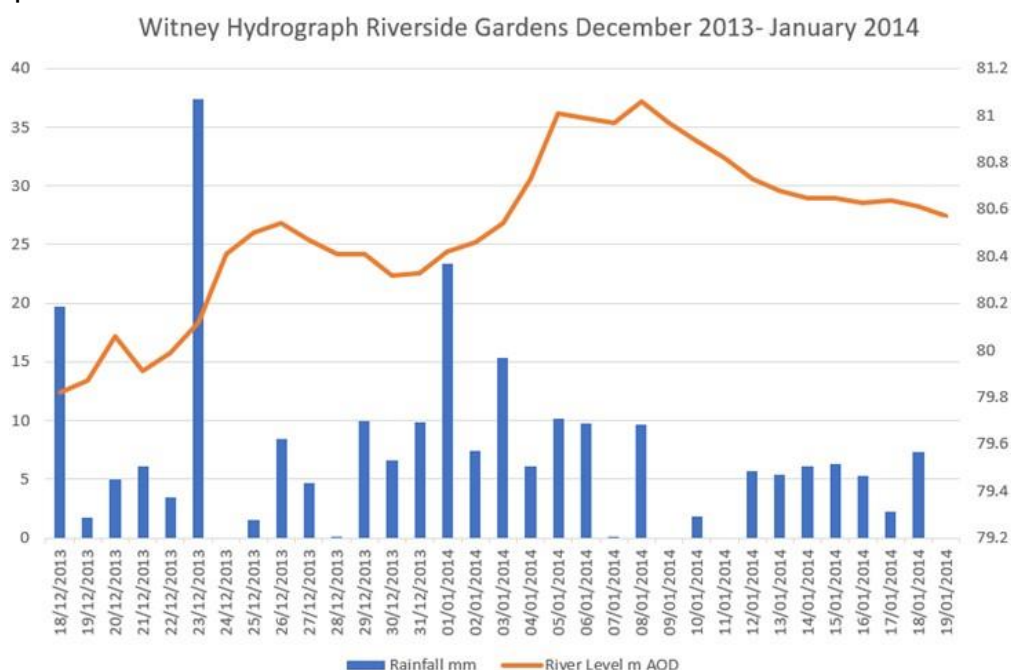


Figure 4 - Hydrograph for Riverside Gardens December 2013 to January 2014

2.3. Documents Reviewed

A list of the documents reviewed as part of this report are listed below;

- WODC Parish Flood Report for Witney (May 2008)
- EA report Witney Flood Review July 2007 (February 2008)
- Witney Flood Mitigation groups Report, River Windrush at Witney; Flooding in December 2020 (January 2021)
- Witney Flood Mitigation Group update to Members (September 2021)
- CH2M Hill Post 2007 ABD – Windrush: Worsham to Witney (A40) Modelling Report and updated model for the EA (April 2014)
- Cllr Enright's Witney Floods 2020, Notes of meeting with residents (January 2021)
- Oxfordshire County Council Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (April 2011)

2.4. Existing Level information

Lidar (Laser Imaging, detection and Ranging) data of the 2020 flown survey was obtained from the Environment Agency's data.gov.uk website. This has been reviewed and the levels in the field to the South of the Aquarius site, between the two channels and to the east of the eastern channel of the river Windrush seem to suggest that any out of bank flows will not be able to fill and pass through to the flood plain further downstream easily. The ground levels in the flood plain raise up in places in the field adjacent to the eastern channel and the flood plain is lower than the bank of the river further downstream before the confluence with the Madley Brook. Upon completion of the EA updated model, this situation can be looked at.

The Lidar data shows the level of the raised footpath in Langel Common varies between 79.72m and 80.1m AOD. It shows that this is a continuous raised structure which completely disconnects the flood plain upstream and downstream. It is important that this reported situation is included in the EA modelling to be carried out.

2.5. Site visits and observations

A meeting was held with the Witney flood Mitigation Group (WFMG) on the 10/12/2021. This involved a site walkover from Langel Common footpath up to Woodford Mill to look at and discuss the main issues and concerns of the flood group and residents of Witney.

The walkover followed the river up through Langel common, the Aquarius site, Bridge Street Mills, Bridge Street, Mill Street, Riverside Gardens and Woodford Mill. However, the other affected areas including West End, Hailey/Eastfield Road and Madley Brook were also discussed.

The main concerns raised were regarding lack of river maintenance which was evident throughout the site walkover. They understand that this is the responsibility of the riparian owners however, they are concerned at the lack of action by key authorities to ensure the necessary maintenance is carried out. Figure 5 below shows a fallen tree in the river at the rear of the Blanket Hall.



Figure 5 – Fallen Tree at the rear of Blanket Hall

The current gauge boards at Bridge Street were discussed and it was mentioned that they are submerged during floods. The WFMG would like to see further gauge boards installed on the Windrush, ideally from Woodford Mill down to Langel Common footbridge so the difference in levels throughout, upstream and downstream of the key structures, can be monitored and assessed.

Concerns were raised over the channel alignment and capacity of the bridge on Bridge Street. It was observed to be restricting peak flows and causing a bow wave effect when the river levels were high on the evening of the 24th December 2020. This is evident in Figure 6 below.



Figure 6 – Bridge Street Bridge upstream 24th December 2020 approximately 23:30PM. Photo provided by Witney Flood Mitigation Group

The raised footpath in Langel Common, shown in Figure 7 below, is a significant concern to the WFMG and affected residents as it has been observed impounding flood plain flows which is evident in Figure 7. The photograph also shows a noticeable difference in level upstream and downstream. WFMG would like to see this replaced with a continuous bridge to allow the flows to pass through unrestricted.



Figure 7 – Footpath in Langel Common, overtopping. Photograph provided by WFMG

Figure 8 below shows the risk of flooding from Surface Water. Although it doesn't take into account the river channel and bridge structures, it identifies the low lying areas through Langel Common and clearly shows the continuous raised footpath that could act as a barrier to flood waters.



Figure 8 – EA Risk of Flooding from Surface Water

Other information provided by WFMG are listed below;

- The flood warning was issued too late and after properties were flooding.
- Sewer flooding in Bridge Street Mills - One of the properties in this area had an overall insurance bill of £40,000. Total estimated insurance bill for all businesses affected is c£300,000. None claim they can get insured now.
- Riverside House/Gardens - 13 Residents were evacuated for 20 hours, 4 homes were flooded, with repairs taking on average 6 months, one resident is still not back in nearly 12 months
- Mill House Care Home - 9 Residents were evacuated.

The WFMG and affected residents in Witney felt there was a lack of action, communication and collaboration from all the key authorities.

The actions the WFMG see as quick wins are;

- Significant EA/Riparian maintenance carried out from Woodford Mill to downstream of the footbridge through Langel Common.
- New Gauge Boards installed from Woodford Mill to Langel Common footbridge
- Investigation into the replacement of the raised footpath to a continuous bridge.

2.6. Environment Agency Model Review

Modelling information has been provided by the Environment Agency (EA) which is based on the Windrush (Worsham to A40) 2014 model. The peak flow recorded at Worsham on the 24/12/2020 compares to the modelled 1 in 100 year plus 20% event and the recorded peak flood level at Riverside Gardens is greater than the 1 in 100 year flood event.

The 2014 model was an update of the existing model following the construction of the Fish bypass channel and replacement weir. It also was updated to better reflect the flows through Bridge Street.

The modelling shows all modelled flows including the modelled flows in the 1 in 100 year plus 70% climate change event to pass through the Bridge Street Bridge however, it shows the flood levels to increase significantly upstream, up to the 70% modelled event. The modelling does suggest a capacity issue further downstream where the river splits into two channels. The model outputs show flows reduce at the river split significantly by over $7\text{m}^3/\text{s}$. It is hoped that the model to be updated will help to clarify the situation.

It is not clear from the modelling if the increase in flood levels upstream of Bridge Street are caused by the Bridge itself or the capacity issues downstream.



Figure 9 – River Windrush split to two channels.

The model results suggests that all the excess flows will spill into the flood plain at this point and re-join the river further downstream before the raised footpath in Langel Common. It also suggests that the water will overspill the footpath in the 1 in 100 year event. The Flood level at the footpath is 79.68m AOD for the modelled 1 in 100 year event. The modelled 1 in 100 year flood extent is shown in Figure 10 below.



Figure 10 – EA modelled 1 in 100 year flood extent

The 2014 model doesn't include the tributaries through Witney.

2.7. Remedial Work Undertaken

Although site visits and meetings were carried out by the WODC Flood Engineer and the EA after the flooding to discuss the merit of several items of work, the EA have not yet carried out any significant works on or adjacent to the river Windrush although the EA have confirmed that it has carried out its annual maintenance programme along the Windrush, Colwell brook, QED and the Hailey Road drain. The EA also sent 2 crews in the immediate aftermath of the flood to check the river for blockages and spoke at length to affected residents to offer advice on flood protection.

The EA have carried out a review of the flood alarms serving Witney. The review prompted the EA to change the level for the 2 hour warning to be issued as well as to install an flow monitor alarm at Worsham to alert the EA duty officer.

The flooding of 2020 has also prompted the EA to carry out a review of its model for the area.

WODC have carried out the annual maintenance of the WODC owned watercourses to the rear of West End industrial estate and Millers mews.

WODC have given advice on PFR to those affected residents who have shown an inclination to acquire it.

WODC are currently reviewing their Emergency Response Plan.

The EA have acquired funding in the current (2021/22) financial year, to investigate flood risk in Witney. They will use this to improve their understanding of flood risk to the community in the area. This will include building on the understanding of the

2014 Initial Assessment, considering information gathered since 2014, including the December 2020 flooding, and developing an updated flood risk computer model for the Windrush and its tributaries through the town. This improved understanding will be key to future decisions regarding options to manage flood risk in Witney. Other benefits from the updated model will include: an updated Flood Map for Planning, an improved basis for Flood Warnings and improved data for use in assessing options and their benefits

After the EA issue a flood warning, they carry out a review to see whether any aspects of the flood warning process can be improved. As the flood warning at Witney was issued late, due to the river level rising so rapidly, they carried out this process for Witney during January 2021. They have since made two changes.

Firstly, they have revised the threshold at which they consider issuing the flood warning, which needs to provide two hours' notice of property flooding. They receive an alarm when this threshold is crossed and use model outputs to forecast this in advance. As river levels rose much more quickly than previously seen on the Witney gauge (installed in 2008) they have lowered that initial threshold. However, they do need to balance out the need for timeliness with the risk of false alarms which degrade customer confidence in the flood warning service.

Secondly, they have reviewed the data from our upstream gauge at Worsham, both level and flow. Following this they now believe that a flow rate of 20m³/s (cumecs, or cubic metres per second) at Worsham relates to flood warning levels being reached at Witney. They have therefore added an alarm to the flow at Worsham, and their duty officers will be notified when this flow is reached.

Residents can sign up to the Flood Warning Service to receive Flood Alerts and Flood Warnings using this link <https://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings> or by calling Floodline on 0345 988 1188.

2.8. Current Maintenance

WODC carries out annual maintenance on WODC owned ordinary watercourses throughout Witney, which includes the ditches behind Millers Mews and West End Industrial Estate.

Figure 11 below shows an update of the EA's maintenance for this financial year and planned for the next financial year. Using its permissive powers the EA carry out annual maintenance on main rivers where it is needed, justified, funded and resourced.

Maintenance – 2021/22

- EA use permissive powers to undertake maintenance
- Does not absolve riparian landowners from their responsibilities

Location	2021/22 Programme Date
Madley Brook	June 2021
Emmas Dyke	June 2021 (spraying completed last week Oct 2021)
Windrush (West Branch)	July 2021
Colwell Brook	August 2021 (lower section south of A40 – delayed, clearance of overhanging vegetation will happen over the coming weeks)
Hailey Road Drain	October 2021

Maintenance – 2022/23

- Bids for government funding to carry out maintenance at locations above have been submitted
- Awaiting confirmation for 2022/23 funding allocation

Figure 11 – EA maintenance

3. CONCLUSIONS

From Reviewing the information provided regarding the December 2020 flood event, historic river data and modelling information, It is clear that the 2020 event was greater than the current EA modelled 1 in 100 year flood event with flows similar to the peak flow in the in the modelled 1 in 100 year plus 20% event.

From the Lidar level data it is clear that there is an issue with flood plain connectivity downstream of the Aquarius site and through the raised footpath at Langel Common.

Levels in the field to the south of the Aquarius site and to the east of the eastern channel of the river Windrush seem to suggest that flood flows would not be able to fill and pass through to the flood plain further downstream easily as the 2014 model suggests. The flood levels in the model are lower than the ground level in the field adjacent to the channel in the modelled 1 in 20 year event and at the 1 in 100 year flood level, only some flows would be able to spill back in to the river.

The level of the raised footpath further downstream varies between 79.72m and 80.1m AOD which is higher than the modelled 1 in 100 year flood level of 79.68m AOD, confirming that the embankment is not accurately reflected in the 2014 model.

The river through this area and upstream of Bridge Street is in poor condition due to no significant maintenance being carried out for many years.

An updated flood risk model for the Windrush and its tributaries through the town is to be carried out by the EA which will include information gathered since 2014 and from the December 2020 floods.

The updated model will need to fully understand the issues around Bridge Street and through to Langel Common, and confirm the main causes affecting the flood levels upstream of Bridge Street.

There is currently minimal information on the private and highway drainage systems throughout Witney and further investigations need to be carried out throughout the affected areas to fully understand the existing drainage systems and any issues with them.

4. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1. Communities and Residents

Communities may consist of the Town or Parish Council, Flood Forum, Community Group and affected residents, amongst others.

Communities and residents who are aware that they are at risk of flooding should take action to ensure that they and their properties are protected.

Community resilience is important in providing information and support to each other if flooding is anticipated. Actions taken can include [subscribing to MET Office email alerts](#) for weather warnings, nominating a Community Flood Warden, producing a community flood plan, implementing property level protection and moving valuable items to higher ground. Finally, individual households can create their own personal flood plans, such as collating important documents for quick removal from the property, torches, waterproof clothing etc.

Oxfordshire County Council has produced a number of flood guides covering various subjects, some of which relate to this type of flood incident. The relevant guides have been identified and are available at: www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com

4.2. Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)

As stated within the introduction section, OCC as the LLFA has a responsibility to investigate flood incidents under Section 19 of the F&WMA.

The LLFA also has a responsibility to maintain a register of assets which have a significant effect on flooding from surface runoff, groundwater or ordinary watercourses (non-Main River) as detailed within Section 21 of the F&WMA. The register must contain a record about each structure or feature, including the ownership and state of repair. OCC is also required to keep a record of flooding hotspots across the county.

OCC's practices relating to third party assets is to notify third party owners of their asset forming part of a flood risk system, and assist by advising those third party owners on the condition of their assets and their maintenance responsibilities.

As Lead Local Flood Authority, OCC will be looking for support from other risk management authorities, communities and individual home owners to ensure flood incidents are reported, and any assets which have a significant effect on flood risk are recorded on the asset register.

While OCC can suggest possible causes of flooding in Witney, and make recommendations to ensure flood risk is mitigated as far as possible, the F&WMA does not provide OCC with the mandate or funding to act on identified causes of flooding or force risk management authorities to undertake any recommended actions.

4.3. Highway Authority (Oxfordshire Highways)

Oxfordshire Highways have a duty to maintain the highway under Section 41 of the Highway Act 1980 but subject to the special defence in Section 58.

New highway drainage systems are designed to Highways England's Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (Volume 4, Section 2). They are only required to be constructed to drain surface water runoff from within the highway catchment rather than from the wider catchment.

There are historic drainage systems in historic highways which can become the responsibility of the Highway Authority due to dedication, as opposed to adoption. These drainage systems may not have been designed to any standard.

They undertake regular highway drainage cleansing. Identify and develop a detailed plan of their assets.

If flooding occurs OCC will assess the capacity of the highway assets and identify any areas with insufficient capacity for draining runoff from the highway. Where this leads to flood risk to properties improvement works should be considered.

Assess the suitability of third party drainage systems accepting discharge from Highway Drainage systems and report any unsatisfactory areas to the relevant Risk Management Authorities.

4.4. Water Authority - Thames Water Utilities (TW)

Water and sewerage companies are responsible for managing the risks of flooding from surface water, foul water or combined sewer systems. Public sewers are designed to protect properties from the risk of flooding in normal wet weather conditions. However, in extreme weather conditions there is a risk that sewer systems can become overwhelmed and result in sewer flooding.

Since October 2011, under the 'Private Sewer Transfer', AWS adopted piped systems on private land that serve more than one curtilage and were connected to a public sewer on 1st July 2011. Sewerage Undertakers have a duty, under Section 94 of the Water Industry Act 1991, to provide sewers for the drainage of buildings and associated paved areas within property boundaries.

Sewerage Undertakers are responsible for public sewers and lateral drains. A public sewer is a conduit, normally a pipe that is vested in a Water and Sewerage Company or predecessor, that drains two or more properties and conveys foul, surface water or combined sewage from one point to another, and discharges via a positive outfall.

There is no automatic right of connection for other sources of drainage to the public sewer network. Connection is therefore discretionary following an application to connect.

4.5. West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC)

District Councils have powers under Section 14 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 (LDA) to undertake flood risk management works on ordinary watercourses (non Main River) where deemed necessary.

Under Section 20 of the LDA, District Councils have the powers to (by agreement of any person and at that person's expense) carry out any drainage work which that person is entitled to carry out. Agreement may not be required in certain emergency or legally upheld situations.

The District Council also has delegated authority from OCC/LLFA to serve notice on persons requiring them to carry out necessary works to maintain the flow of ordinary watercourses under Section 25 of the LDA and receives funding from the LLFA to do this.

The District Council is the Planning Authority and has a role in Building Control and the Building Regulations.

4.6. Environment Agency (EA)

The EA is responsible for taking a strategic overview of the management of all sources of flooding and coastal erosion. This includes setting the direction for managing the risks through national and strategic plans; providing evidence and advice to inform Government policy and support others; working collaboratively to support the development of risk management skills and capacity; and providing a framework to support local delivery.

The EA also has operational responsibility for managing the risk of flooding from main rivers. Main rivers are usually larger river and streams and include all watercourses defined on the main river map which can be accessed at <https://environment.data.gov.uk/DefraDataDownload/?mapService=EA/StatutoryMainRiverMap&Mode=spatial>

The responsibility for maintenance and repair of rivers lies with the riparian owner, but the EA have permissive powers to carry out maintenance work on main rivers under Section 165 of the Water Resources Act 1991 (WRA).

The EA encourage third party asset owners to maintain their property in appropriate condition and may take enforcement action on a prioritised basis where it is appropriate. They may also consider undertaking maintenance or repair of third party assets only where it can be justified in order to safeguard the public interest and where other options are not appropriate.

Further remit of the EA includes;

- preparing preliminary flood risk assessments and flood risk management plans for flooding from main rivers, reservoirs and the sea (Flood Risk Regulations 2009)

- warning and informing (Ministerial Direction to the National Rivers Authority, 1996)
- regulating activities that may affect the risk of flooding from main rivers (Environmental Permitting Regulations (England and Wales) Regulations 2016)
- Carrying out surveys and mapping (Flood Risk Regulations 2009, Water Resources Act 1991)
- reporting to the minister on flood and coastal erosion risk and how the national and local strategies are being applied by all of the authorities involved (FWMA, 2010)
- acting as a statutory consultee for planning authorities providing advice on planning applications, local plans and environmental assessments regarding flood risk from main rivers and the sea (Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015)

4.7. Land Owners and Developers

Land owners are responsible for the drainage of their land and controlling any movement of sediment from their land. Legally, owners of lower-level ground have to accept natural land drainage from adjacent land at a higher level. The exception to this is where the owner of the higher level land has carried out “improvements” such that the runoff from the land cannot be considered “natural”.

Agricultural practices by land owners can be considered as “improvements” to the land, so that cultivation of crops or other land uses can take place. Mitigation works are required on improved land to account for the change in natural land drainage and changes to surface water runoff this can create.

Land owners and developers are responsible for working with the Local Planning Authority to ensure that their development is completed in accordance with the planning permission and all conditions that have been imposed.

Advice for developers is available on the Oxfordshire Flood Toolkit.

www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com/planning/developers/

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1. General

Listed below are the recommended course of actions emanating from this formal Flood Investigation Report. All the actions are simply initial recommendations that require discussing in detail to determine their true feasibility.

It is important to note that it is for the relevant responsible body or persons to assess each recommendation in terms of the legal obligation, resource implications, priority and cost/benefit analysis of undertaking such action.

The recommendations may be included within the Action Plan linked to the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy or in the relevant risk management authority's future work programmes, as appropriate.

Authorities should work together Look into funding opportunities to carry out the listed actions. There are multiple funding sources which could contribute to schemes and improvement works going forward. The majority schemes will require elements of partnership working and contributions to be successfully funded. They are likely to need to provide multiple benefits such as improving flood resilience whilst also managing water levels, reducing drought risks, helping nature recovery as well as climate adaptation.

There are several funding options available which can be explored through multi agency working groups such as,

- Flood & Coastal Erosion Risk Management (FCERM) ○ Flood Defence Grant in Aid (FDGiA)
 - Local Levy Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC)
- DEFRA Natural Flood Management Funding
- Woodland Creation Grants
- Agricultural & Environmental Schemes (Countryside Stewardship)
- Funding sources relating to development and regeneration, such as section 106 agreements, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and New homes bonus
- Non-government organisations and charitable trusts
- Community fundraising and events
- Lotteries (Heritage Lottery Fund, Big Lottery, Arts Council
- Volunteering
- Nature for Climate Fund
- Grants from other government departments, such as BEIS, MHCLG, DfT, DfE (for example, Flood Resilient Schools)
- UKRI – the research councils funding
- Business in the community
- Green recovery challenge fund

5.2. Main Actions

Action	Lead Stakeholders	Consulting stakeholders
Fully communicate the explanation for the previous problem with the alert system and consider what further improvements and enhancements could be made.	EA	WODC, LLFA and residents.
Re-establish the Agency flood group meetings to discuss problems and to look at strategies to combat flooding due to Climate Change. Have periodic meetings with the local flood group to discuss the issues and recommendations with representatives from key authorities.	LLFA	All Authorities
Update the 2014 model with updated level information, especially downstream of the Aquarius Bridge through to the footpath at Langel Common. Include main tributaries through Witney	EA	WODC, LLFA, WFMG
Increased EA / Riparian maintenance to be carried out along the river Windrush through and downstream of Witney. Proactive visits and encouragement to ensure riparian owners carry out their duties.	EA	Landowners
Investigate if the river could be modified to increase flow capacity during severe conditions, especially between New Bridge Street through to the footpath in Langel Common.	EA	Landowners, LLFA and WODC
Investigate if the perimeter ditch of the Aquarius site can be modified/ diverted to increase flow Capacity.	WODC	EA, Landowners, LLFA
Look at improving flows through Langel Common footpath to ensure flood plain connectivity is improved during all flood events.	EA	OCC, Landowners, WODC
Install Gauge boards from Woodford Mill through to Langel Common and set up a Flood Warden network with local volunteers to record the levels during flood events. Ensure this engages with broader Community Emergency Plans.	EA	WFMG, LLFA WODC
Look at opportunities for flood storage and increased flood plain capacity upstream of Witney and Crawley such as nature based solutions through partnership working.	EA	Landowners, LLFA, WODC, EA

Look at opportunities for schemes to manage flows upstream of the Hailey Road drain such as nature based solutions through partnership working.	WODC	LLFA, EA Landowners, WFMG
Property flood resilience (PFR) measures which improve the resilience of the community before a flood occurs. Many properties have already carried out measures on their properties, but further funding and support may be available to help more people;	Homeowners	WODC, EA, OCC
Measures to improve the resilience of existing public or community-owned infrastructure;	All Local Government Bodies	
Local community volunteer approaches to improve the community's ability to plan, respond and recover from flooding; link to local community emergency plans; encourage affected Care Home to develop Business Continuity Plan and Evacuation Plan.	All	Communities and Residents
WODC to continue regular maintenance of their ordinary watercourse assets and use their powers under the Land Drainage Act 1991 to ensure Riparian owners carry out required maintenance.	WODC	Landowners
OCC to regularly check and maintain highway assets through Witney, in line with their current maintenance regimes. Any affected areas that haven't been checked after December 2020 should be prioritised.	OCC Highways	
Bridge Street bridge to be checked regularly and de-silting under the bridge to be carried out as and when required, accepting that unless de-silting is also carried out upstream of the bridge there would be little benefit to simply carrying it out under the bridge.	OCC Highways	EA
Privately owned drainage systems to be checked for blockages and defects and remedial works to be carried out where necessary. Connectivity downstream to be confirmed.	Developers, Landowners	WODC, LLFA
Foul sewers to be checked for surface water connections, blockages and capacity issues. Remedial works to be carried out as necessary to minimise surface water entering the system and increase capacity.	TW	LLFA, WODC

5.3. Communities and Residents

(e.g. Town/Parish Council, Flood Forum, Community Group, land owners and affected residents)

Nominate a Community Flood Warden to help coordinate the following:
Preparing Household Emergency Plans for vulnerable properties in this area.
Regularly inspecting ditches and pipework in the area of flood risk. Report blockages or other issues to the land owner and the LLFA. Explore options for property level protection and implement any recommendations. This could include additional drainage at the rear of properties, self-sealing air bricks and flood barriers. Information on Flood Prevention measures for Home Owners, Communities and Businesses can be found on the Flood Toolkit:

www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com/risk/prevention

Residents should check whether they are at risk of flooding by using the long term flood risk service www.gov.uk/check-long-term-flood-risk. If they are at risk of flooding they should sign up for flood warnings by visiting [sign up for flood warnings.gov.uk](http://sign-up-for-flood-warnings.gov.uk).

Permanent measures such as installing floodgates, raising electrical sockets and fitting non-return valves on pipes can also be considered. WODC, OCC and the EA can provide advice on these matters and more information can be found at:

www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com/emergency/preparation

Explore community wide solutions (e.g. attenuation areas, overflow routes, tree planting). Use the Flood Toolkit Funding Tool to find sponsors who may be willing to help fund improvement projects: www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com/risk/funding

Continue to report flood incidents to the Lead Local Flood Authority at: www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com/emergency/report-flood. Endeavour to obtain as much evidence of flood events as possible, such as photographic and video evidence.

Residents to explore obtaining Government subsidised flood insurance via Can Flood Re help me? Floodre.co.uk

5.4. Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA)

Work with the Oxfordshire County Council Emergency Planning Team and the Environment Agency to support the community based Flood Wardens.

Work with the Oxfordshire County Council Emergency Planning Team, the Environment Agency and other flood management authorities to support the

community in the production of a Community Flood Plan and provide advice to residents on how to explore options for property level protection.

Inform owners of the drainage systems and watercourses within the overall surface water catchment area of their legal responsibilities.

Re-establish the Agency flood group meetings to discuss problems and to look at strategies to combat flooding due to Climate Change. Have periodic meetings with the local flood group to discuss the issues and recommendations with representatives from key authorities.

Look at opportunities for schemes to manage flows upstream of the Hailey Road drain such as nature based solutions through partnership working.

5.5. Highway Authority (Oxfordshire Highways)

Regularly check and maintain highway assets through Witney in line with their current maintenance regimes. Add detailed information of the assets to the OCC Asset Register.

Assess the capacity of the highway assets in the affected areas and identify any areas with insufficient capacity for draining runoff from the highway. Where this leads to flood risk to properties improvement works must be considered.

Assess the suitability of third party drainage systems accepting discharge from Highway Drainage systems and report any unsatisfactory areas to the relevant Risk Management Authorities.

Work with the community and LLFA to clarify ownership and maintenance responsibilities for watercourses, particularly where these are located within or near to the highway.

Bridge Street Bridge to be checked regularly and se-silting to be carried out as and when required.

5.6. Water Authority Thames Water Utilities (TW)

Assess the sources of water entering the public sewerage system. Foul sewers to be checked for surface water connections, blockages and capacity issues. Remedial works to be carried out as necessary to minimise surface water entering the system and increase capacity.

Assess the capacity of their assets and identify any areas of insufficient capacity. Where this leads to flood risk to properties improvement work must be considered.

5.7. West Oxfordshire District Council

Continue to consult with the Environment Agency and Lead Local Flood Authority as required in respect of planning applications for new developments to reduce flood risk. Aim to ensure that all works are carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents.

Review the planning policies relating to developments in the vicinity of the flooding incident, together with any flood risk assessments and drainage designs. Consider contacting the developers to take action in the event that any items relating to surface water drainage and flood risk are not evident or ineffective in the final developments or in the construction period.

Utilise their enforcement powers under Section 25 of the Land Drainage Act 1991 where it is considered that riparian owners are failing to maintain ordinary watercourses in their ownership.

Continue regular maintenance of their Ordinary watercourse Assets, in line with current maintenance regimes.

Endeavour to assist other flood risk management authorities and land owners in the preparation of a detailed plan of assets relating to drainage and flood risk, to share with the LLFA and the community.

Investigate if the perimeter ditch of the Aquarius site can be modified/ diverted to increase flow capacity.

Support developers and landowners to investigate private drainage and check for blockages and defects with remedial works to be carried out where necessary.

Continue to support homeowners and businesses in providing individual property level protection.

5.8. Environment Agency (EA)

Work with the Oxfordshire County Council Emergency Planning Team and the LLFA to support the community in the instatement of a community based Flood Wardens.

Fully understand and communicate the explanation for the previous issues with flood warnings for Witney. Consider what further improvements could be made to the alerts for Witney (and West Oxfordshire).

Update the 2014 model with updated level information, especially downstream of the Aquarius Bridge through to the footpath at Langel Common. Include main tributaries through Witney. Fully understand the issues affecting river levels upstream of Bridge Street.

Increased maintenance to be carried out along the river Windrush through and downstream of Witney. Proactive visits to riparian owners and encouragement of

riparian owners, also work with local groups to ensure regular maintenance is carried out.

Investigate if the river could be modified to increase flow capacity during severe conditions, especially between New Bridge Street through to the footpath in Langel Common.

Look at improving flows through Langel Common footpath to ensure flood plain connectivity is improved during all flood events.

Install gauge boards from Woodford Mill through to Langel Common and set up a network of flood wardens with local volunteers to record the levels during flood events.

Look at opportunities for flood storage and increased flood plain capacity upstream of Witney and Crawley such as nature based solutions through partnership working.

5.9. Land Owners and Developers

Developers should work with local authorities to ensure all development is completed in accordance with approved plans and documents, and planning policy.

Land owners should undertake regular inspection and maintenance of their drainage systems in accordance with a defined maintenance regime. Further, they should identify and develop a detailed plan of their assets to share with the LLFA, other flood risk management authorities and the community.

Land owners should assess the capacity of their drainage systems and identify any areas with insufficient capacity for the collection, conveyance, storage and disposal of surface water. Where this could lead to runoff to the public highway or nuisance to third party private property, improvement works should be considered.

Landowners who are riparian owners are responsible for carrying out work to maintain the natural flow of water in the relevant watercourse. Such work will include the removal of significant blockages and the removal of vegetation if it is causing premature flooding to third party land and or property.

Review the library of flood guides on the Oxfordshire Flood Toolkit.

Agricultural land owners should carry out works to their land to reduce surface water runoff. These include following principles of good soil husbandry and providing land drainage systems such as ditches. [The Single Payment Scheme, Cross Compliance Guidance for Soil Management, 2010 edition, should be referenced.](#)

These works help to retain the natural land drainage regime and provide the best soil conditions for the continued agricultural use of the land. Farmers in receipt of Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) payments are required to carry out a Soil Protection Review which should identify any problems with soil erosion and runoff and help identify solutions to the problem.

Examples of good practice for reducing surface water runoff from agricultural land are:

Ploughing fields in a perpendicular direction to the slope of the land, reducing the effect of channelling of water over the land when it rains; Using techniques and machinery to limit compaction of soils; Growing crops that match the capability of the land, particularly in relation to the timings of activities and not overworking soils through the year; Providing new ditches, sub-soil drainage and outfalls, and reinstating and regularly maintaining existing ditches. Old existing ditches may be completely filled and difficult to see. The type of soil make-up, type of flora and overall lie of the land can help to determine the routes of filled in historic ditches; Preventing changes to the levels of the land that would cause channelling of surface water to a single point where this would not naturally occur. It should be noted that following good practice for managing surface water runoff cannot completely remove the risks of natural land drainage and the associated quantities and flow routes of runoff that can cause flooding.

6. DISCLAIMER

The findings of the report are based on a subjective assessment of the information available by those undertaking the investigation and therefore may not include all relevant information. As such it should not be considered as a definitive assessment of all factors that may have triggered or contributed to the flood event.

Any recommended actions outlined in this FIR will be for the relevant responsible body or persons to assess in terms of resource implications, priority and cost/benefit analysis of the proposal. Moving forward, these may be included in the Action Plan linked to the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy or in the relevant risk management authority's future work programme as appropriate.

The opinions, conclusions and any recommendations in this Report are based on information provided to West Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council.

The opinions, conclusions and any recommendations in this report are based on conditions encountered and information reviewed at the time of preparation and West Oxfordshire District Council expressly disclaims responsibility for any error in, or omission from, this report arising from or in connection with those opinions, conclusions and any recommendations.

The implications for producing Flood Investigation Reports and any consequences of blight have been considered. The process of gaining insurance for a property and/or purchasing/selling a property and any flooding issues identified are considered a separate and legally binding process placed upon property owners and this is independent of and does not relate to the information in this report highlighting flooding to properties at a street level.

West Oxfordshire District Council do not accept any liability for the use of this report or its contents by any third party.

ACRONYMS

WODC West Oxfordshire District Council
OCC Oxfordshire County Council
EA Environment Agency
TWA Thames Water Authority
WFMG Witney Flood Mitigation Group
FIR Flood Investigation Report
F&WMA Flood and Water Management Act 2010
LDA Land Drainage Act 1991
LLFA Lead Local Flood Authority
WRA Water Resources Act 1991

USEFUL LINKS

Highways Act 1980:

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/66/contents **Water**

Resources Act 1991:

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1991/57/contents **Land**

Drainage Act 1991:

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1991/59/contents

EA - 'Living on the Edge' a guide to the rights and responsibilities of riverside occupation: www.gov.uk/government/publications/riverside-ownership-rights-and-responsibilities **EA - Prepare your Property for Flooding:**

How to reduce flood damage Flood protection products and services

www.gov.uk/government/publications/prepare-your-property-for-flooding

Oxfordshire County Council Flood and Water Management Web Pages:

www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/fire-and-public-safety/emergency-planning/community-resilience>

West Oxfordshire District Council Flood Reports and Reviews;

<https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/environment/flooding/flood-reports-and-reviews/>

Flood and Water Management Act 2010

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/29/contents>

USEFUL CONTACTS

Oxfordshire County Council Highways:

Tel: 0345 310 1111

Website: www.fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk

Environment Agency:

General Tel: 08708 506 506 (Mon-Fri 8-6) Call charges apply.

Incident Hotline: 0800 807060 (24 hrs)

Floodline: 0345 988 1188

Email: enquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

Thames Water

Emergency Tel: 0800 316 9800 (select option 1)

Website: www.thameswater.co.uk/help-and-advice/bursts-and-leaks/report-a-leak-orburst-pipe

Appendix A – Further Photos



Bridge at New Bridge Street, Aquarius Site access



River Windrush looking downstream from Bridge Street



Channel through Woodford Mill



Weir near Woodford Mill



Gauge at Blanket Hall in 2007. Photo provided by Witney Flood Mitigation Group



Flooding behind Eastfield Road backing up from Hailey Road Drain. Visible flow route from Vanner Road. Photo provided by Witney Flood Mitigation Group



Upstream of Bridge



Riverside Gardens 24th December 2020 approximately 23:10PM. Level recorded at 23:15pm by the river gauge was 81.443m AOD. Photo provided by Witney Flood Mitigation Group

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Business Plan 22/23

Business Plan Governance



- Approval of Ubico's Business Plan is a reserved matter for our eight shareholders
- Approval of the Business Plan by shareholders demonstrates control over Ubico as part of retaining our Teckal exemption
- All shareholders have an equal vote
- Majority decision, but consensus is sought among all shareholders

Business Plan Timeline

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July –
October

- Develop proposed business plan themes

November
- February

- Shareholder engagement

February

- Final draft shared with shareholder representatives and Ubico's board for final comment

March-
April

- Formal Shareholder approval sought via written resolution

Five Year Vision

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Vision

Recognised by our customers and employees as a quality provider of sustainable services for our local communities, delivering best value and reliability

Pillars

People

Operational Excellence

Climate

Business Development

Pillars

Page 59



People



The right talent in the right roles with the right skills

Operational Excellence



Deliver quality, add value, maintain high standards

Business Development



Build capability to deliver value to our partnerships

Climate



Minimise our environmental impact and support our shareholders to meet their carbon neutral targets

People

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Agile Leadership Teams

- Build HR function to meet the needs of Ubico's expanded operations
- Design a leadership training and development program to meet the needs of the senior leadership team
- Review terms and conditions for all staff, assessing against the market

Attractive Local Employer

- Continue to improve applicant process
- Modernise the company induction process to enable digital delivery
- Ensure ongoing support mechanisms for mental health and wellbeing

Excellence in training and development

- Create a training and apprenticeship strategy for Ubico
- Ensure ongoing quality provision of in-house training
- Pilot a learning management system (LMS)

Operational Excellence

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Delivering Quality

- Maintain our Operator's Licence (for our fleet) and our environmental permits (for our licensed sites)
- Retain our ISO45001 certification
- Embed the company-wide use of the fleet management system
- Embed Gloucester City services

Adding Value

- Drive continuous improvement, safety, innovation and efficiency
- Mobilise connected workforce project in line with agreed roadmap
- Continue to explore opportunities for cross-boundary working and increased integration and collaboration

Finance, Procurement and Governance

- Introduce annual assurance review
- Long term strategic financial model in place for partners
- Continue to explore options to help partners meet budget pressures

Marketing

- Improve website and social media footprint to enhance market presence to current and potential employees
- Undertake a branding review
- Promote our successes in carbon reduction initiatives

Climate

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Strategy

- What Ubico can do
- What we need shareholder approval to do

Partnership Working

- Work with our partners to evaluate the journey to net zero on our fleet
- Develop high level options for strategic depot locations to inform shareholder partner decision making

Compliance and Performance

- Create baseline KPI framework to underpin progress reporting
- Expand carbon reduction driver training
- Retain ISO14001

Business Development

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Increased operational services for Shareholders

- Explore expansion of services offered to current shareholders
- Further work to assess feasibility and benefits around recycle reprocessing and facilities management

Future Ubico


- Consolidate our business foundations
- Agree principles with existing shareholders
 - Geography
 - Risk appetite
 - Alignment
- Further assess vehicle for delivery if/when necessary

Business plan engagement - next steps

- **Socialise**
 - Shareholder engagement continues until February
- **Finalise**
 - Board endorsement and shareholder sign off of final document March/April
- **Deliver**

Any questions?

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 WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Thursday 3 February 2022
Report Number	Agenda Item No. 5 (work programme 4)
Subject	Service Performance Report 2021-22 Quarter Two
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	All relevant Cabinet Members
Accountable officer	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Tel: (01993) 861658 Email: giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	This report provides details of service performance during Q2
Annexes	Annex A - Performance Indicator report Annex B – Waste Management Indicator report
Recommendation	That the Committee reviews, and challenges as appropriate, performance for 2021-22 Q2
Corporate priorities	Climate Action: Leading the way in protecting and enhancing the environment by taking action locally on climate change and biodiversity 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 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
Key Decision	No
Exempt	No

I. BACKGROUND

- I.1. The Council monitors service performance each quarter, and a report on progress towards achieving the aim and priorities set out in the Corporate Plan is produced at the end of Q2 and Q4. The Q2 update on progress on the priorities will be encompassed within the Annual Monitoring Report and presented to Cabinet in December 2021 followed by the Overview and Scrutiny committees.
- I.2. A review of performance indicators is currently underway, and Portfolio Holders are having discussions with relevant managers about priority areas and finding metrics that would be most representative and provide assurance as to how the Council is performing.
- I.3. The Commissioning Framework sets out the relationship between Publica and the Council and their respective responsibilities. 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.
- I.4. 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. He has noted the capacity issues and high workloads in some services which have contributed to a reduced level of operational performance in those services over the last few months, as well as the actions that are being taken to improve performance. He has drawn particular attention to the following:
 - i. 19 July marked the lifting of all Covid-19 restrictions, and some staff have returned to the office while others are working in a hybrid style in line with Publica's Agile Working Strategy 2020. Whilst we need to ensure that staff are available to deliver services whether in the office or not, the change to more flexible working practices has presented an opportunity to review office space requirements and identify any space that can be repurposed. Draft office layouts have been developed for Woodgreen with proposals for desk layouts, meeting rooms, breakout areas and new tenanted areas. The Chief Executive will be consulting with Members on the proposals shortly;
 - ii. Leisure visits and gym memberships are operating at around 75% and 70% of previous levels respectively. Both Chipping Norton Leisure Centre and Carterton have good membership levels, while Windrush is facing competition from PureGym which is a self-serve 'no frills' gym offer. In response, GLL is revising its marketing and promotions for Witney;
 - iii. Customer satisfaction ratings for services delivered by phone have continued to remain high throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. West Oxfordshire ranked within the top 10 councils on the GovMetric Telephone Channel Satisfaction Index for August 2021. Face to face surveys which only restarted in July are also indicating that satisfaction is high with this channel, although the number surveyed was low due to low footfall;
 - iv. The website satisfaction indicator has been suspended while the service explores other methods for assessing the effectiveness of this communication channel. The Council recognises that it needs to focus on the ability to provide more options for accessing the Council's services including the potential for channel shift to quicker and more cost effective methods of communication where possible, such as the website. The Channel

Choice project has commenced, and processes are beginning to be reviewed in those service areas that receive high volumes of calls.

2. SERVICE PERFORMANCE

- 2.1. The services which relate to the work of this Committee are Environmental Regulatory Services, Waste Management, and Parking; the relevant indicators are listed at the front of the Performance Indicator report at **Annex A** with pages **20 to 25** of that Annex providing the further relevant information. Waste Management indicators were not available for reporting to Cabinet in December, and a more detailed report is provided at **Annex B**.
- 2.2. Performance for services that relate to the work of this Committee was mixed. Of the six targeted indicators, one indicator achieved its target (Green), two indicators achieved their targets 'within tolerance' (Amber), and two indicators did not achieve their targets (Red). There was no data to report for one indicator, 'the percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales' as no high risk food inspections were due in Q2.
- 2.3. The indicators that did not meet their targets (RED) are considered below together with rectifying actions:

- The number missed bins per 100,000 scheduled collections increased steeply in Q2 due to a combination of reasons including the fuel shortage as well as positive Covid-19 cases and a shortage of HGV drivers. In addition to fuel refilling limits, Ubico had to use smaller vehicles as there are only three BP (contracted) garages in the District that can be accessed by full size waste vehicles. The smaller vehicles have less capacity and required multiple trips to be made which created a delay in collections, and therefore repeat reports of missed bins. The use of agency staff and crew members who are unfamiliar with the allocated rounds will also have contributed to the increase in the number of misses.

Resolution: The service reports that improvements are already evident with collections back to normal service. The introduction of In-Cab technology on 29 September is expected to improve efficiency in service delivery including reducing the number of misses by providing crew members with assistance to find all of the properties on their particular round.

- The amount of residual household waste per household improved in Q2 at 95.25 kg per household, a reduction of over 4 kg compared to Q2 a year ago. The reduction is likely to reflect the return of some workers to the office following the lifting of Covid-19 related restrictions.

Resolution: It is likely that the amount of residual household waste per household will continue to be affected by the impact of the pandemic on living style and work patterns. The Council is completing a comprehensive communications programme which is running throughout the year to highlight the importance of reduce and reuse before recycling. In addition, communications are being sent to residents on behalf of the Oxfordshire Resources and Waste Partnership which the Council is a member of, and over the Christmas period there will be an emphasis on reducing waste food, which should have a positive effect on waste flows.

A note on waste management data

- 2.4. Over the last few months, a verification exercise has been undertaken on the Council's waste management data. Following the publication of local authority waste management data for 2019-20 by Defra earlier this year (based on the data submitted by the Council into the WasteDataFlow), inconsistencies in the reporting of the combined recycling rate and the amount of residual household waste per household were identified between the Council, Defra, and Oxfordshire County Council.
- 2.5. The data is complex due to the large number of data sources from third parties that have to be collated and managed. The data team reviewed the sources of data and the calculations, with much effort being placed on producing accurate figures. The team consulted waste specialists at the County Council, Defra and Ubico as part of the verification exercise.
- 2.6. Waste management data from 2018-19 was reviewed. The Council reported waste management indicators for 2018/19 were found to be consistent with the team's recalculated figures. The Council reported combined recycling rate for both 2019-20 and 2020-21 were found to have been over stated due to higher reports of dry recycling tonnages, while residual household waste per household had been under reported. The main issues identified were:
- During 2019-20 and 2020-21, residual household waste tonnages did not include all the components of residual waste, for example, rejects in the recycling stream were not included. The inclusion of the additional components in particular rejects means that residual waste is higher than previously reported, and the recycling rate is lower.
 - The co-mingled dry recycling tonnages report from Suez included both household and trade recycling, as well as rejects in the recycling stream. Going forwards, only household dry recycling tonnages which go for recycling will be included in the calculation.
- 2.7. Over the last three years, the annual combined recycling rate has remained broadly consistent between 58.1% and 58.7%. Residual waste per household has crept up and reached relatively high levels during 2020-21.
- 2.8. During 2020-21, total household waste tonnages increased by 13% as a result of Covid-19, and householders working from home and/or self-isolating, when the presentation of all types of waste increased. The combined recycling rate for the year did not increase due to the increase in residual waste tonnages (13.6%).
- 2.9. Moving into 2021-22, total household waste tonnages have fallen back slightly which is due to lower amounts of dry recycling and composting in the first six months of the year. On the other hand, residual waste tonnages have remained elevated especially during Q1 when the last lockdown was ending and some restrictions were still in place. Some gains were made by the end of Q2; although, the combined recycling rate was lower (60.40%) than a year ago (61.84%), it was not dissimilar to 2019-20 (60.51%).
- 2.10. The amount of food waste sent for anaerobic digestion, although a small proportion of the total sent for recycling, continues to be higher than pre-Covid-19 times.
- 2.11. A full report is attached at **Annex B**.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1. None

4. RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1. None

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

5.1. None

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1. None

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WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Delivering great services locally

PERFORMANCE REPORT:
July 2021 - September 2021

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	(Snapshot) Number of households in emergency accommodation under 28 days	Number of fly tips collected
Customer satisfaction – web	(Snapshot) Number of households in emergency accommodation 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 within timescales	Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales
Percentage of telephone calls answered within 20 seconds	Percentage of minor planning applications determined within timescales	Residual household waste per household (kg)
Telephone abandon rate	Percentage of other planning applications determined within timescales	(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 Council Tax Support new 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 Council Tax Support change events	Number of visits to leisure centres	
(Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process housing benefit changes of circumstances	Number of gym memberships	
(Cumulative) Percentage of housing benefit overpayment due to LA error/Admin delay		

A note on performance benchmarking

Benchmarking can be a useful tool for driving improvement; by comparing our performance with other similar organisations, we can start a discussion about what good performance might look like, and why there might be variations, as well as learning from other organisations about how they operate (process benchmarking).

A selection of readily available benchmarking data for the most recent period (2019-20) was included in the 2020-21 Q4 performance report on a trial basis. The 2020-21 benchmarking data has started to be released and will continue over the year until around December 2021. An annual exercise will be undertaken to update the CIPFA benchmarking charts and the Shire Districts' median /top quartile lines.

Two comparator groups that are commonly used to benchmark Councils' performance are: all shire district councils and CIPFA Nearest Neighbours (NN). The CIPFA NN Model is based on family groups; it adopts a scientific approach to measuring the similarity between councils taking into account a range of demographic and socio-economic characteristics. The standard model provides the 15 nearest neighbours to each council. In contrast, the all shire districts comparator group is a much larger dataset of 192 councils, and there will inevitably be a much greater variation between the councils in this group.

When we embark on performance benchmarking, it is important to understand that we are often looking at one aspect of performance i.e. the level of performance achieved. Although the CIPFA NN Model groups councils on the basis of similarity, these factors are external and based on 'place'. The model does not take into account how services are resourced or compare in terms of quality or level of service delivered, for example, how satisfied are residents and customers? Furthermore, each council is unique with its own vision, aim and priorities, and services operate within this context.

Therefore, benchmarking data should be viewed as a 'guide' and as a starting point for discussion. It is important to understand performance within context, and there will be a variety of internal factors that determine performance including costs, workloads and quality.

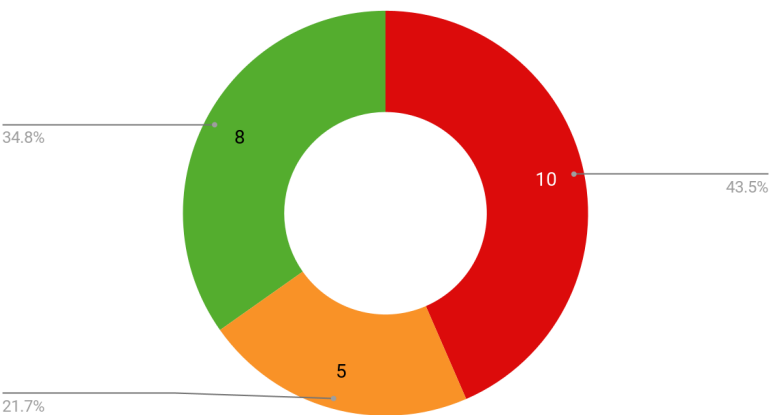
Note

The data benchmarks have been extracted from LG Inform, a benchmarking tool, which contains a range of routinely published data. The median and top (best 25%) quartile lines are based on annual outturns but applied to the quarterly data.

KEY PERFORMANCE METRICS

At a glance...

Summary of Performance



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OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Performance continues to be mixed for a third consecutive quarter. The main issue has been lack of capacity due to both high workloads as a result of both internal (improvement work /new systems) and external factors (Covid-19 related, economic, ‘stamp duty holiday’) and vacant posts in some services.

Additional resources have been secured in particular over the last quarter to support services to reduce the backlog of work, and services are reporting that workloads have become more manageable, although it will take time for performance to improve. In addition, some services have been successful in the recruitment to vacant posts.

The Planning service has an improvement programme in place which has already delivered significant improvements in the validation of applications, and a service re-designer has commenced work to improve processes in Land Charges. Although it is difficult to resolve the resilience issues in Customer services, the switch in focus to improving digital take up is expected to reduce call volumes and improve performance

Indicators with targets	Status
Customer satisfaction - phones	
Customer satisfaction - F2F	
% of calls responded to within 20 seconds	
Abandoned call rate	
CT collection rate	
NNDR collection rate	
Average days to process CTS new claims	
Average days to process CTS change events	
Average days to process HB change events	
% HB overpayment	
Households in emergency accommodation under 28 days	
Households in emergency accommodation over 28 days	
% major planning applications determined within time	
% minor planning applications determined within time	
% other planning applications determined within time	
% planning appeals allowed	
Affordable homes delivered	
% land charge searches dispatched within time	
Leisure visits	
Gym memberships	
% high risk notifications assessed within time	
% high risk food premises inspected within time	n/a
Residual waste per household (kg)	No data
% overall recycling rate	No data
Missed bins per 100,000	
Parking enforcement	

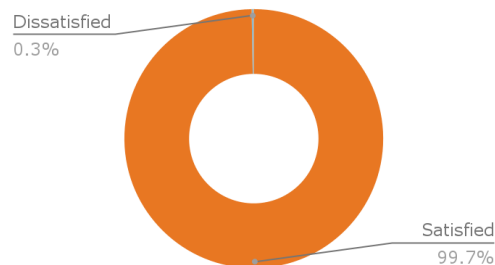
CUSTOMER SERVICE

Customer satisfaction

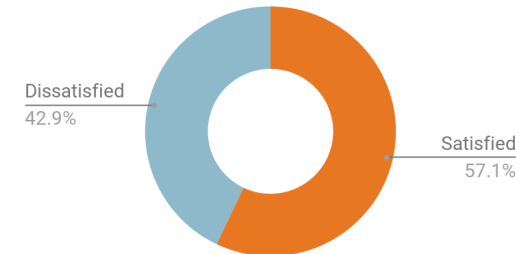
Face to face - 12 respondents



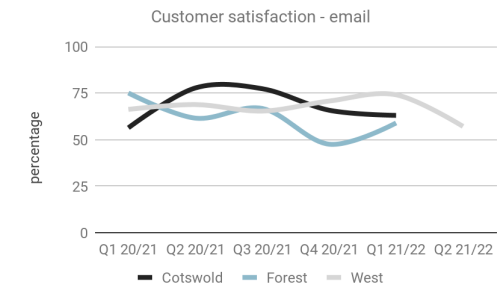
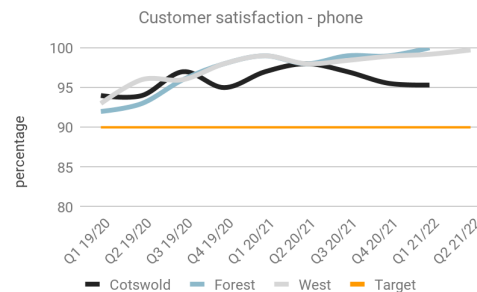
Phone - 377 respondents



Email - 177 respondents



What's the trend?



OBSERVATION

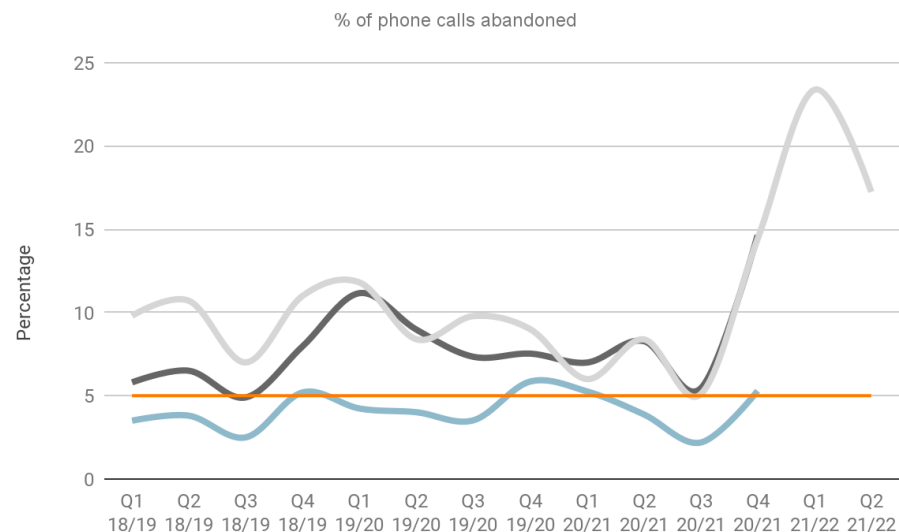
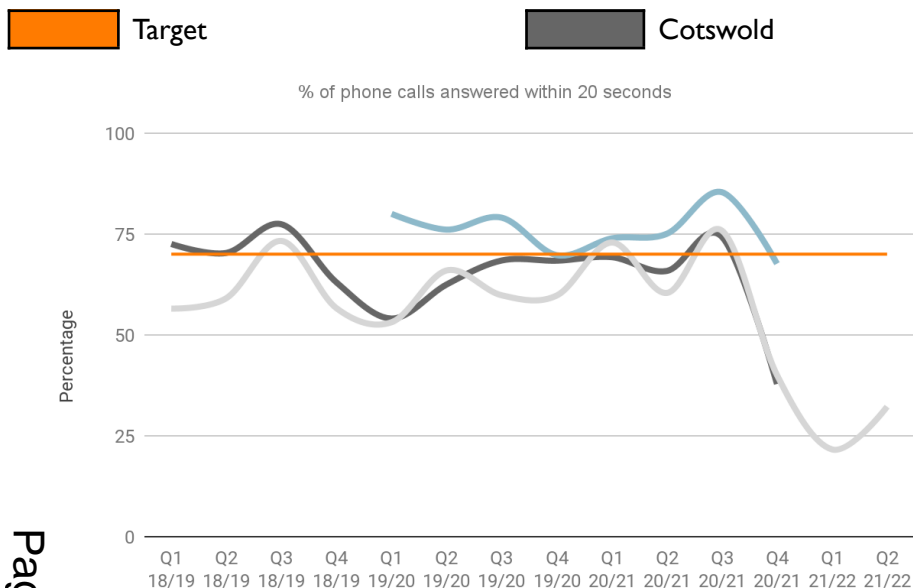
Council offices and the Town Centre shop re-opened to customers from 12 April 2021, and although footfall continues to be relatively low, face to face surveys re-commenced at the end of July.

Overall, satisfaction ratings for services delivered via the phone continue to be high; this Council ranked within the top 10 councils on the GovMetric Telephone Channel Satisfaction Index for August 2021.

Satisfaction ratings for services delivered via email is indicating a slight downward trend. There were just 25 comments left by the 76 dissatisfied customers, 18 of which related to the waste and recycling service, and eight of these referred to missed collections or waiting for containers (see Missed bins per 100,000 commentary). In addition, if the case is transferred to the back office, the case is closed by the Advisor, and this will generally be before the case has been resolved by the back office which can cause confusion. Some improvements are expected as In Cab technology will address this issue for waste and recycling cases as Ubico will close the case once it has been resolved.

Reporting of website satisfaction has been suspended while the service looks into other methods for reporting on web based services and the website itself. It has been agreed that this indicator is not a good measure of satisfaction for services delivered via the website due to the extremely low number of responses, a large proportion of which is not accompanied by qualitative data to understand the nature of the dissatisfaction

Telephone calls - response and abandonment



OBSERVATION

There was a small improvement in performance in Q2.

Many staff in this service take opportunities to progress in the organisation, and recruitment is ongoing to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to deliver the service, however, we need to be mindful that it takes up to six months to train new staff.

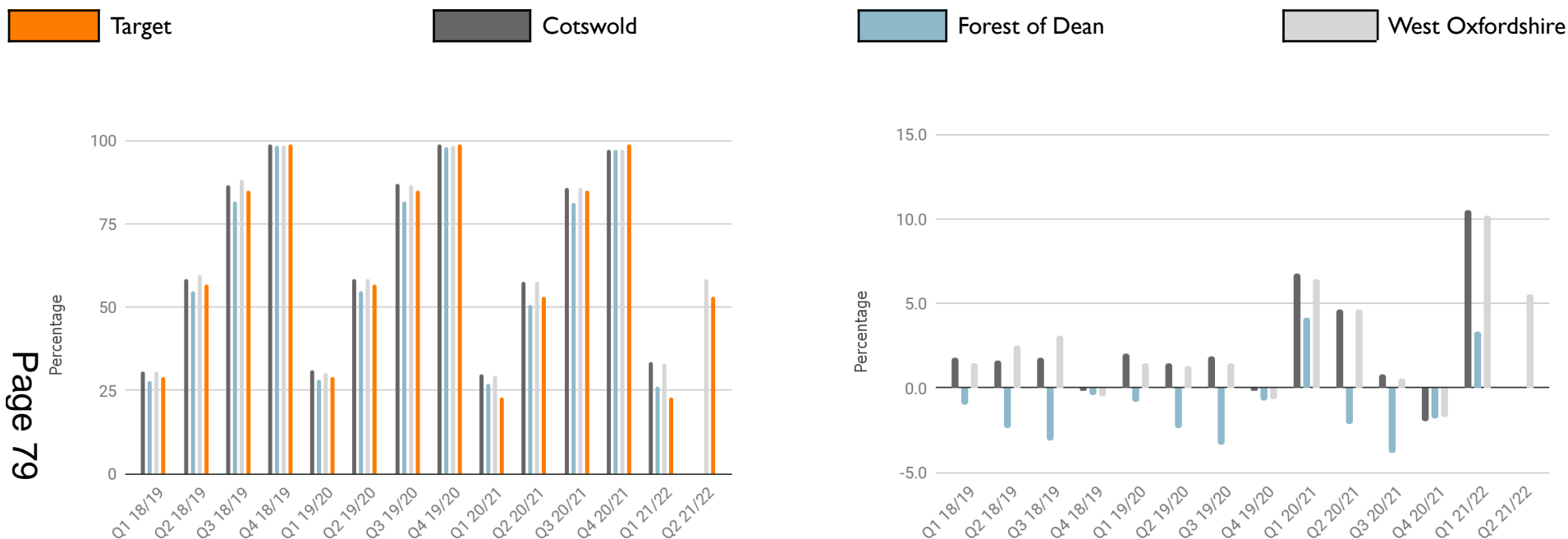
Although the service is continuing to collect this type of metric, the focus has switched to ensuring that satisfaction for our services remains high, and developing a framework for measuring digital take-up so that we can understand better the impact of digitisation on demand for customer services. The Channel Choice project has commenced, and the processes will be reviewed in services with high call volumes in order to reduce call length time as well as the need for customer contact.

The service is also identifying 'quick wins' to reduce call waiting time, for example, improvements to call waiting messages have been implemented. The caller now receives a tailored message for the service s/he is calling about that signposts to easier ways to complete the transaction, which will be digital/online in most cases.

Note: Following a review of performance indicators at the end of 2020-21, these indicators are no longer collected and reported for Cotswold and Forest

Revenues and Benefit

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

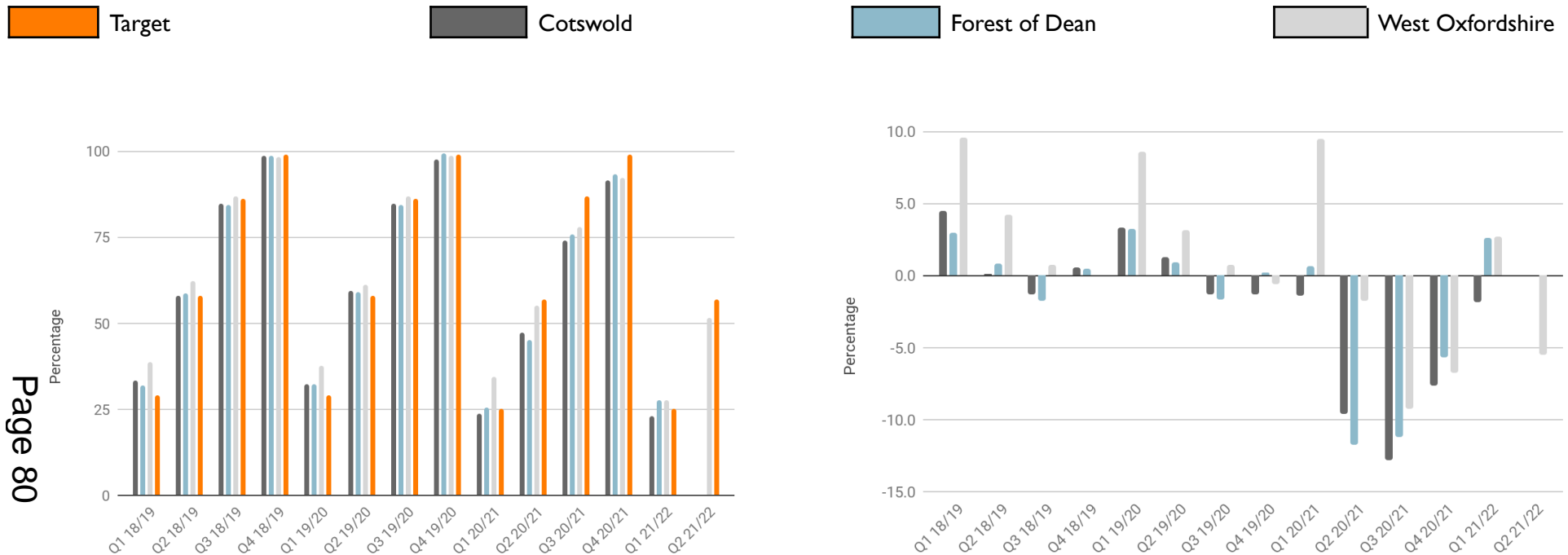


OBSERVATION:

The collection rate appears to be returning to more normal levels, and is up on the same period of the previous year. However, the end of furlough, the removal of the Universal Credit uplift, and higher utility costs could potentially affect the collection rate. The service continues to support residents, 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.

Recovery action re-commenced at the beginning of Q1; and Magistrates Courts are open for liability order hearings

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



OBSERVATION:

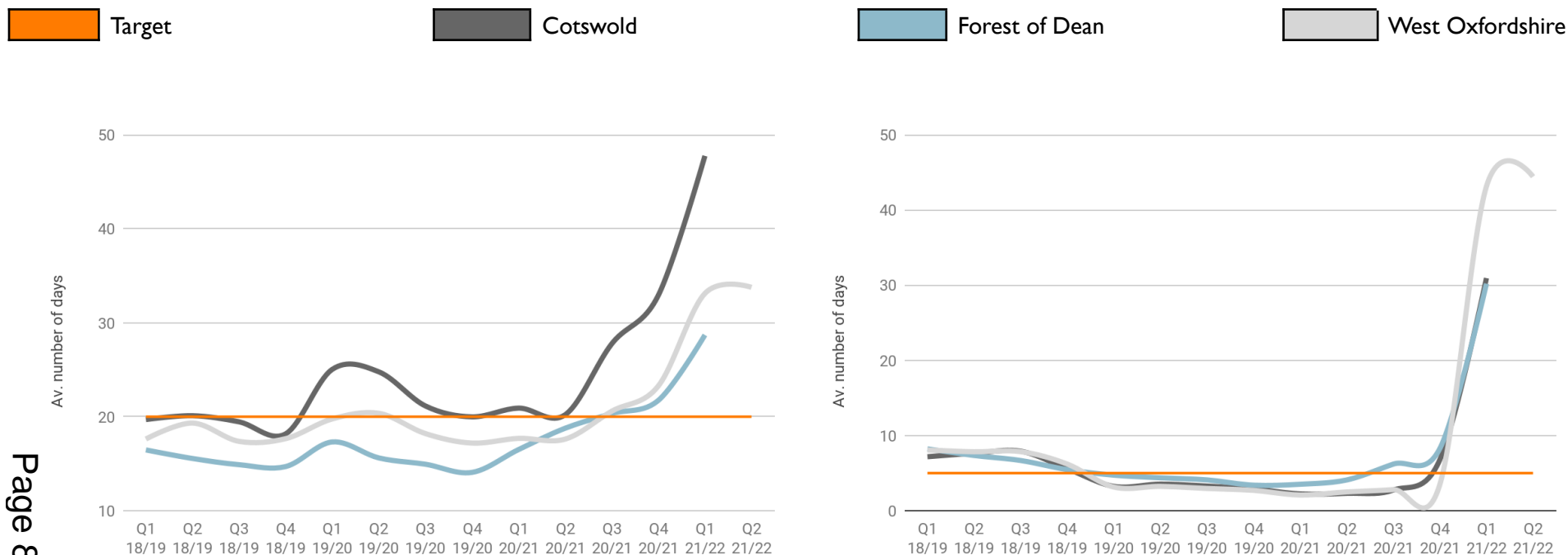
At the end of Q2, the collection of business rates continues to be lower than pre-Covid times. There is a backlog of business rates work due to the implementation of the revenues and benefits system, and reduced capacity within the team due to 50% of resource being allocated to processing business grants. The team is now almost back at capacity, and backlogs are improving, with a plan in place to bring backlogs down across the service.

The collection rate is expected to remain depressed as the Council has had to make some refunds due to changes in rateable value, as well as businesses struggling financially.

The service is continuing to support businesses; sending out reminders, phoning and emailing businesses to encourage them to contact the Council so that we can support them via manageable repayment plans. The Magistrates Courts are open for liability order hearings which will mean the Council can take formal recovery action and enforce debts that are owed.

During the pandemic, the Government helped certain businesses with 100% business rate relief; which was reduced to 66% at the end of June 2021 and will be in place for the remainder of the financial year

(Cumulative) Average number of days taken to process Council Tax Support new claims and change events



OBSERVATION:

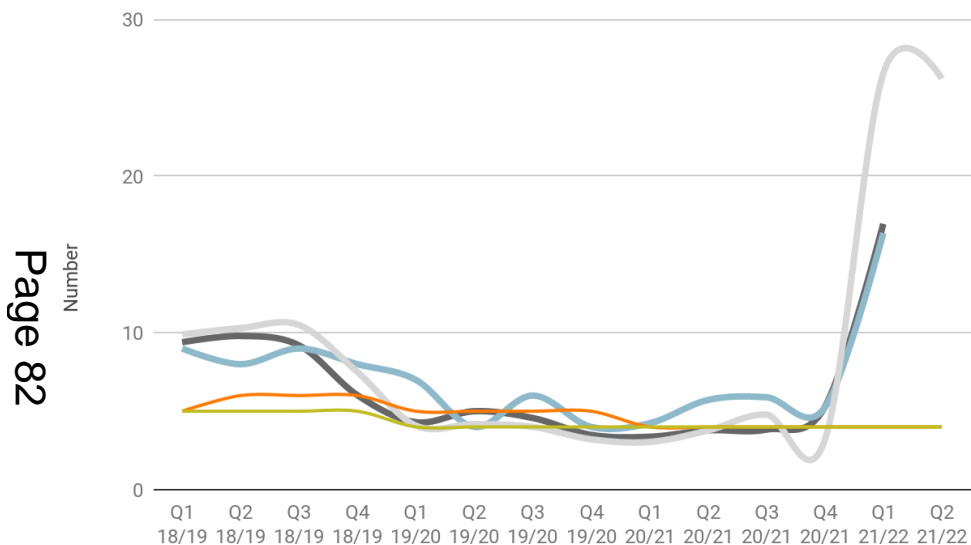
With the injection of additional resources during the quarter, the backlog of work is being managed and is reducing. In addition, three experienced temporary staff have either taken up their positions or will do shortly, and will work across the partnership.

The backlog was created following the implementation of the new benefits system, which was exacerbated by a software failure that prevented the automatic upload of changes of circumstances. Although a partial fix was applied nationally, all councils are awaiting a further fix which is expected to be released in November. In the interim, some cases are being processed manually. A recovery plan is in place which should result in an improvement in performance although this will not be notable this year, aided by the soft launch of the open portal in November; this facility will allow clients to self-serve, and therefore reduce the burden in the back office.

The team is still involved in systems work related to the new benefits system, processing 'Test and Trace' claims (until the end of March 2022) and supporting the administration of discretionary housing grants to the most vulnerable residents in the District.

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

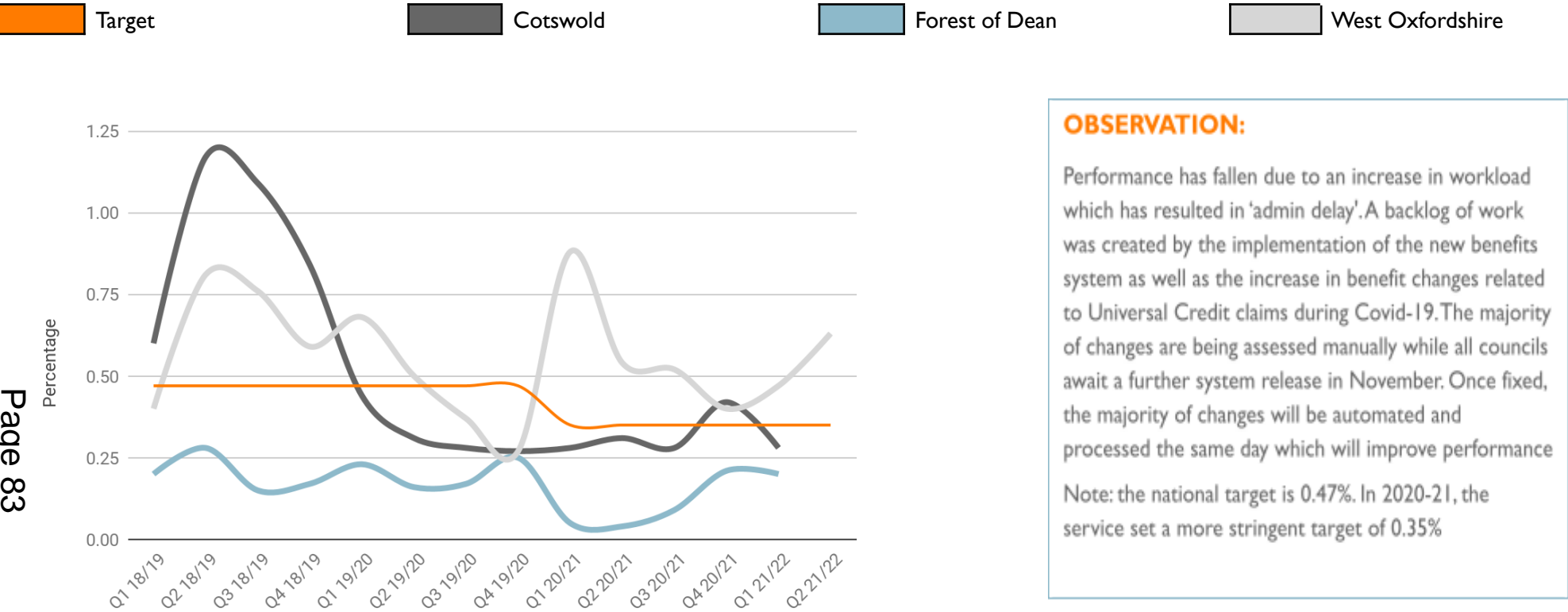
Target
 Cotswold
 Forest of Dean
 West Oxfordshire
 Shire Districts' Median



OBSERVATION:

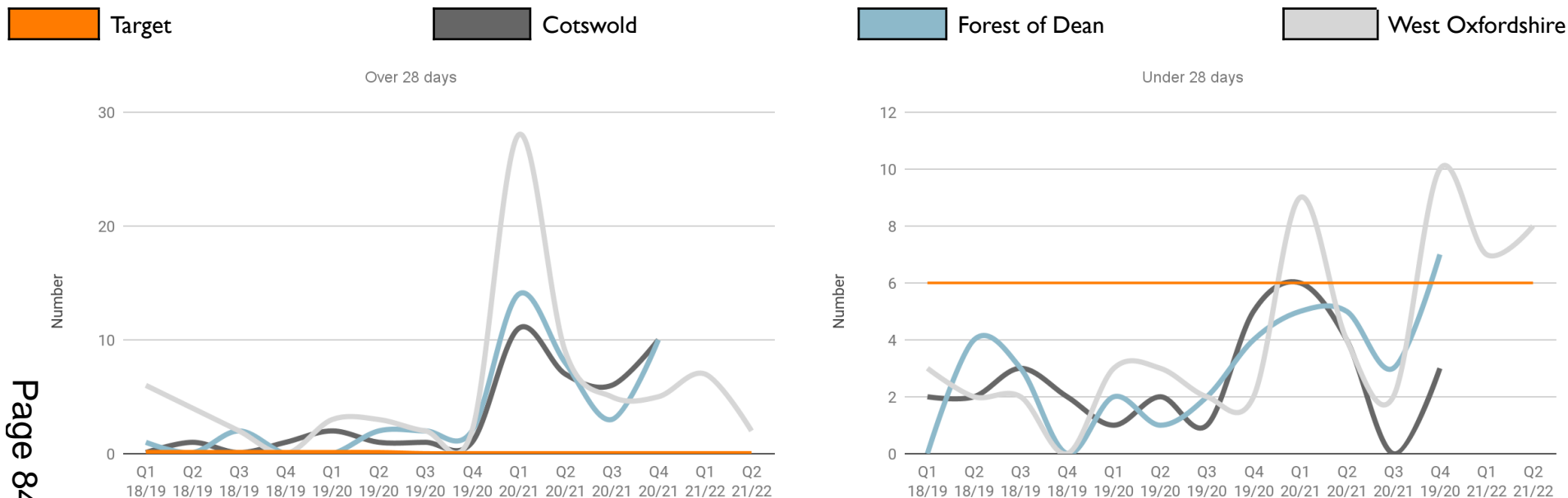
Please see commentary for Council Tax new claims and changes

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



Housing Support

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



OBSERVATION:

During the national lockdowns, the number of households in emergency accommodation increased as councils were required to place all clients who were rough sleeping or at risk of imminent homelessness into emergency accommodation, regardless of priority need, and who had approached the Council. At the end of each lockdown, the numbers decreased, as exit plans were created to move households into more secure tenancies including housing association, supported accommodation, and private rented accommodation. Local Authorities are still being asked by the Government to ensure that anyone confirmed to be rough sleeping receives a swift offer of accommodation, however these numbers have now very much declined into a more manageable amount.

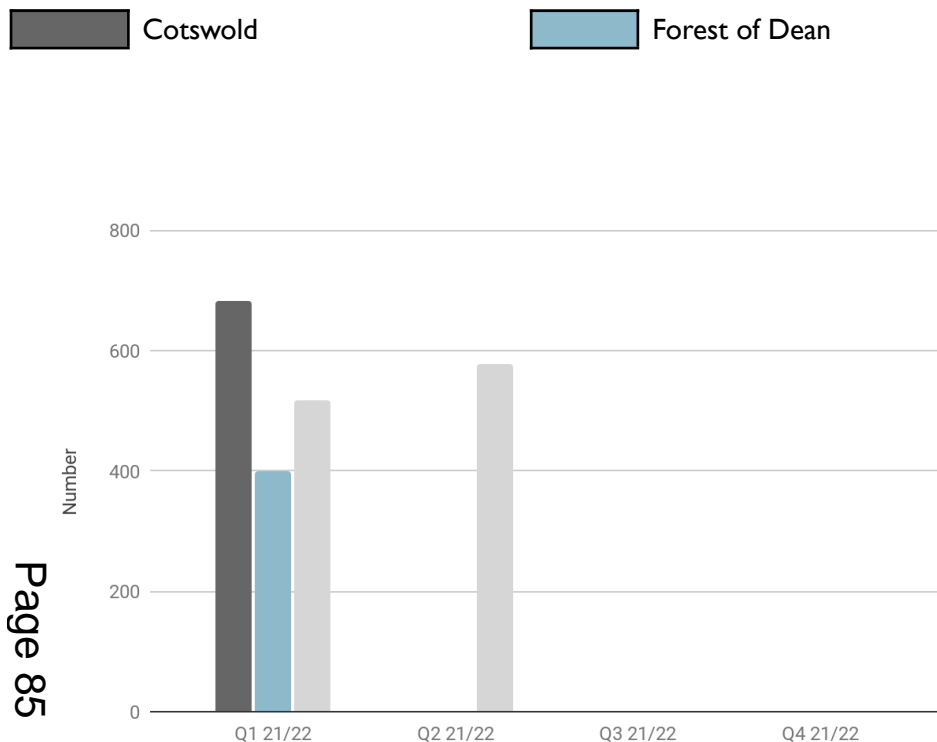
The numbers in emergency accommodation are reducing due to a focus on prevention in line with the Homelessness Reduction Act; and the use of specialist temporary accommodation officers who are able to offer dedicated support and bespoke solutions for helping clients move on successfully from emergency accommodation. However, the availability of social housing stock is low due to low turnover and households not moving as much due to the Eviction ban; and it is often difficult to place clients in private rented accommodation as these properties are usually not affordable and have rents over and above allowable benefits, and require a guarantor.

The Eviction ban was lifted on 1 October 2021 so numbers may rise with more families and domestic abuse cases coming through for re-housing. Going into the winter, the Council will need to make provision for rough sleepers as part of its Severe Weather Emergency Protocol response.

The Old Court House, a property with 15 self-contained units is expected to become available in December 2021 and will help to reduce the numbers in emergency accommodation further.

Note: Following a review of performance indicators at the end of 2020-21, these indicators are no longer collected and reported for Cotswold and Forest

(Snapshot) Number of Long Term Empty properties



OBSERVATION:

Following the transition of the new Revenues and Benefits system from Northgate to Civica, inconsistencies in historical reporting were identified, and work to both cleanse and de-duplicate the data was undertaken, as well as improvements to the system to enable detailed analysis of the data. Therefore, reporting commences from Q1.

The relatively high numbers may be a result of delayed renovation works, sales and lets caused by Covid-19, and the retirement property market, in particular, was affected as this sector of the market was self-isolating. It is also likely that the Council is not always informed when new builds have sold (80 new build properties owned by Sage were recently removed from the list as they were found to be occupied) and there are some Housing Association properties that are awaiting demolition.

A range of proactive work is being undertaken to both reduce the number of LTE properties in the District as well as ensuring that the Council's data is up to date. The LTE officer contacts landlords, homeowners and builders to offer advice e.g. to explain discounts and the options available to them, and eligibility for reduced VAT on renovations. Those with properties empty for over two years have been specifically targeted with letters asking them to make contact with the Council.

The use of GIS mapping has helped to identify clusters and understand the broader picture, enabling more effective tackling of the issue. However, it is difficult to keep the numbers down as those properties that are removed from the LTE list, are quickly replaced with properties that have just moved into the LTE category. The Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny received a report on LTE properties on 18 October

Planning and Strategic Housing

(Cumulative) Percentage of major planning applications determined

% of all applications completed within an agreed timeframe



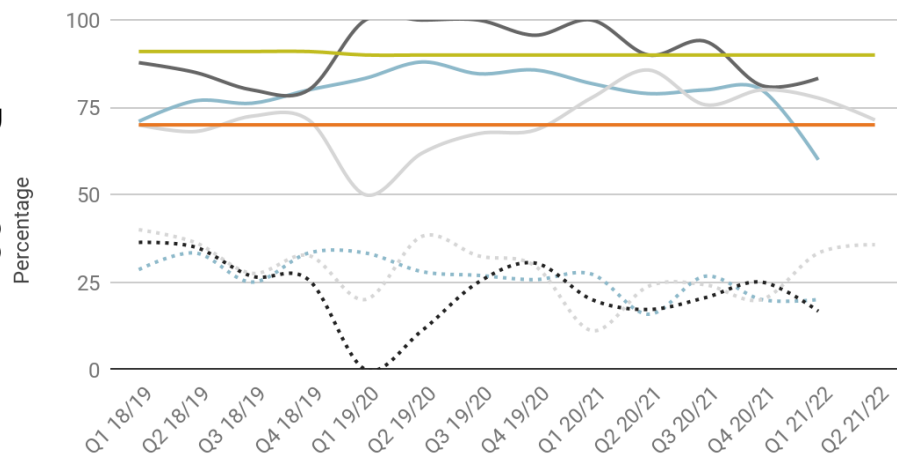
% of all application completed within 13 weeks

----- Cotswold

----- Forest of Dean

----- West Oxfordshire

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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

OBSERVATION:

Five major applications were determined in Q2 compared to 12 in Q2 in the previous year.

Due to a high level of applications, capacity and vacant posts, performance has reduced.

During Q2, the service had four vacant posts, in addition, the Council agreed to fund an additional two posts to meet resourcing requirements to deal with the higher caseload, and to provide an improved career structure to support the recruitment and retention of planning staff. Five career graded posts have been recruited to, with the majority starting in Q3.

Site visits are taking place and while infection rates remain high, staff are taking extra precautions.

The increased capacity over the next few weeks will help to restore performance to previous levels, however, new staff will need to undergo training and the backlog of applications will need to be cleared before this can happen. We expect to see an improvement in performance in Q4.

An improvement action plan for the next 12 months is in place across the whole of the DM service which will be overseen by both the Group and Business Manager

(Cumulative) Percentage of minor planning applications determined

% of all applications completed within agreed timescales

Target
 Cotswold
 Forest of Dean
 West Oxfordshire
 Shire Districts' Median

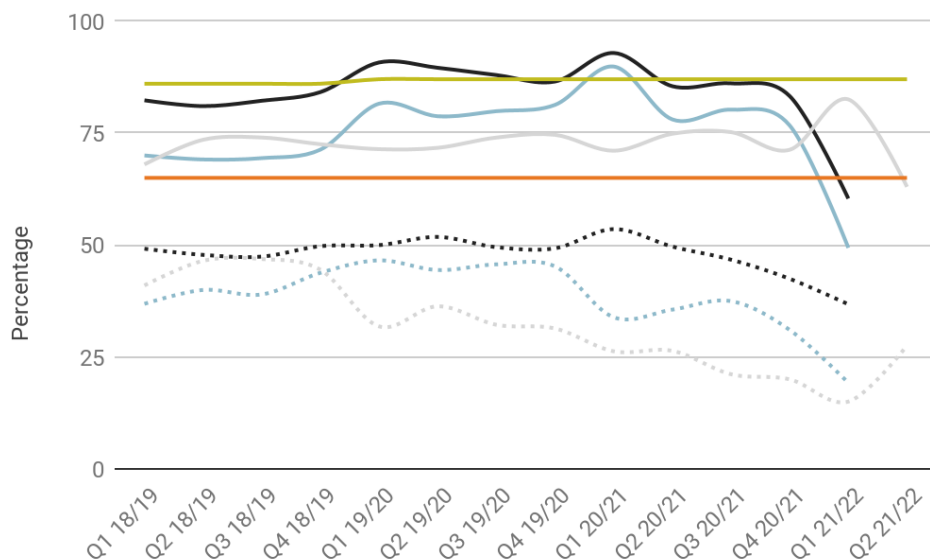
% of all applications completed within 8 weeks

----- Cotswold

----- Forest of Dean

----- West Oxfordshire

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OBSERVATION:

106 minor applications were determined in Q2 compared to 83 in Q2 of the previous year.

Due to a high level of applications, capacity and vacant posts, performance has reduced. Successful appointments during the quarter will increase capacity over the next few months but the backlog will need to be cleared before we see improvements.

See Observation for Major applications for further explanation

(Cumulative) Percentage of other planning applications determined

% of all applications completed within agreed timescales

Target
 Cotswold
 Forest of Dean
 West Oxfordshire
 Shire Districts' Median

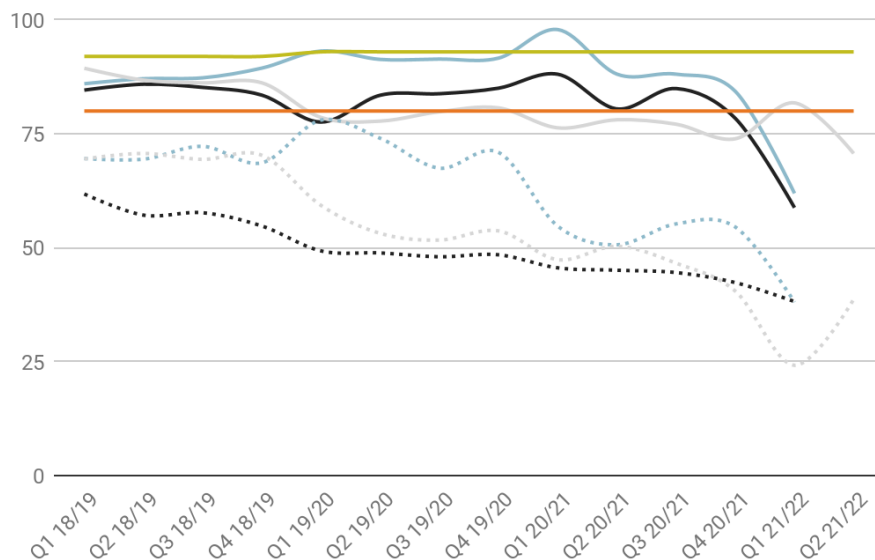
% of all applications completed within 8 weeks

----- Cotswold

----- Forest of Dean

----- West Oxfordshire

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Percentage



OBSERVATION:

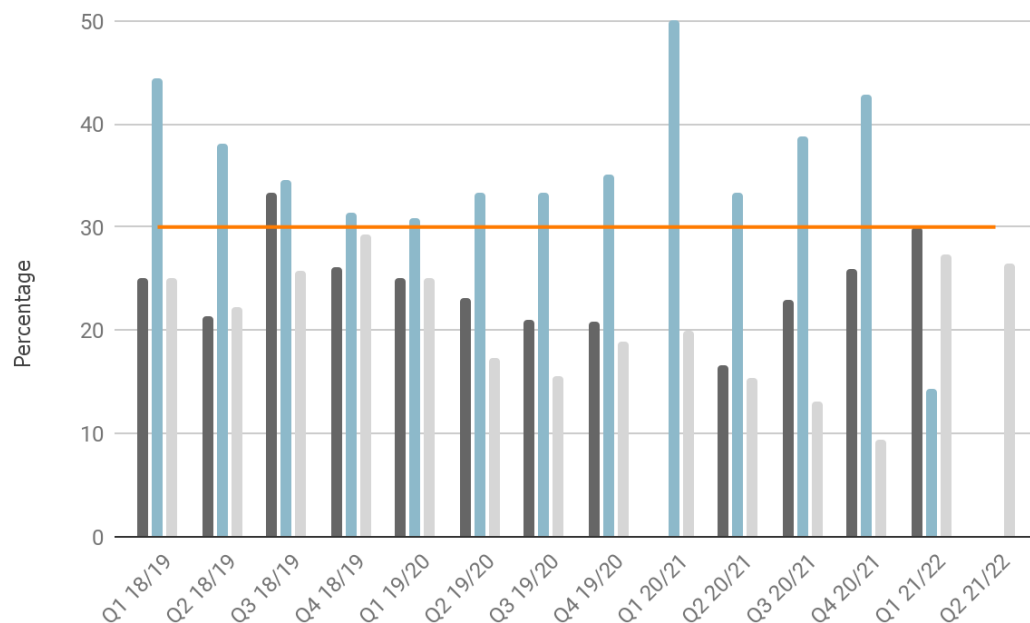
361 other applications were determined in the quarter compared to 247 in Q2 of the previous year.

These applications are mostly householder applications including garage conversions, loft conversions, extensions and garden rooms.

Due to a high level of applications, capacity and vacant posts, performance has reduced. Successful appointments during the quarter will increase capacity over the next few months but the backlog will need to be cleared before we see improvements.

See Observation for Major applications for further explanation

(Cumulative) Percentage of planning appeals allowed



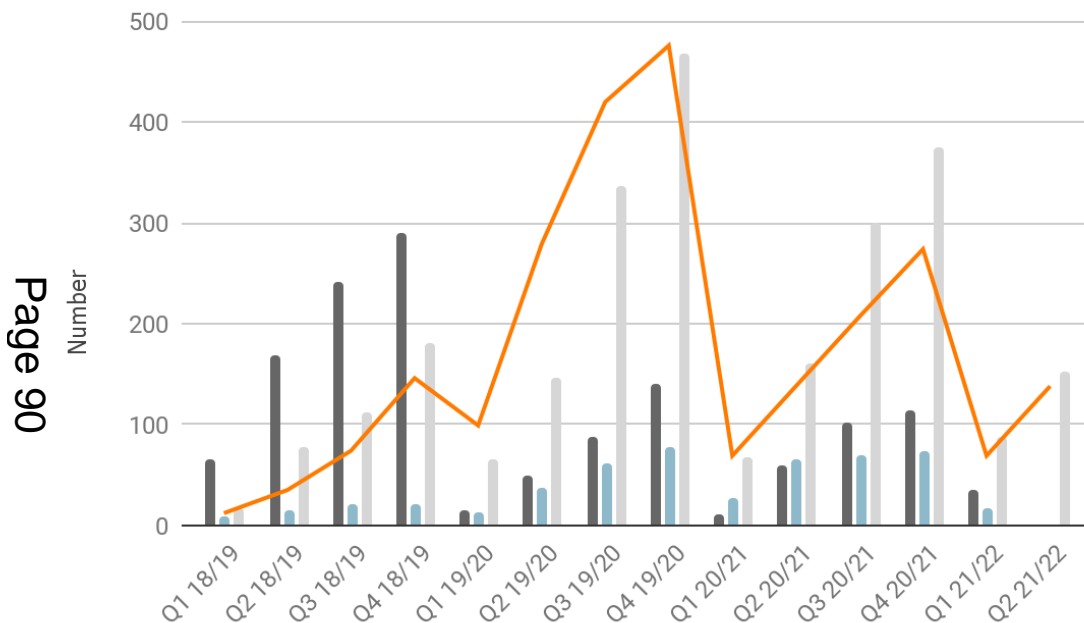
OBSERVATION:

This indicator seeks to ensure that no more than 30% of initial planning decisions are overturned at appeal.

Six appeals were determined in Q2; one appeal was allowed and one appeal was a split decision.

Cumulatively, 12.5 out of 17 determined appeals were supported, and 4.5 appeals were allowed for the first six months of 2021-22

(Cumulative) Number of affordable homes delivered



OBSERVATION:

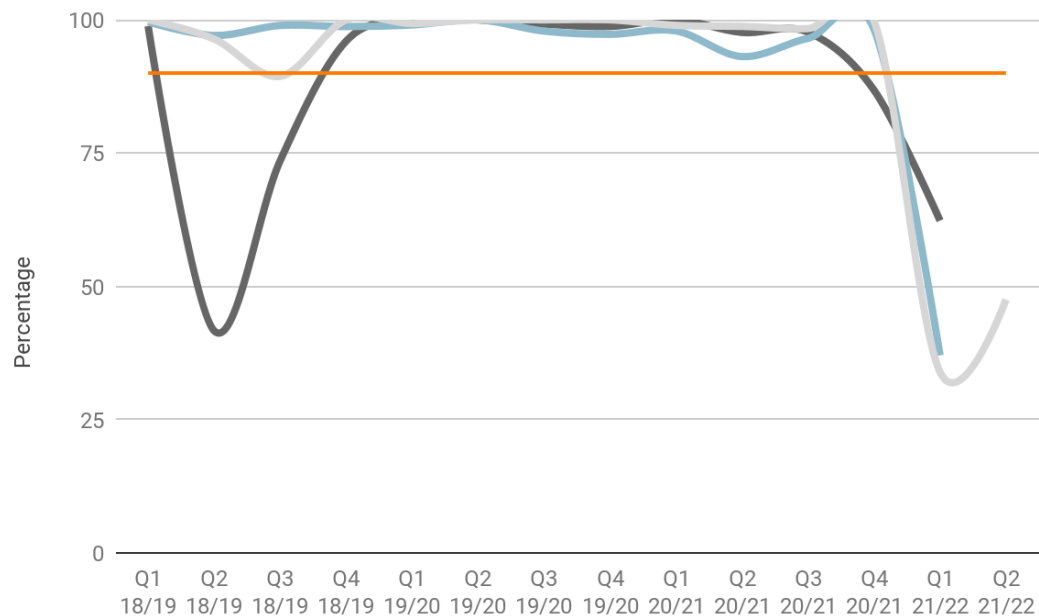
Sixty-five affordable homes were completed in Q2; 44 affordable rent and 21 shared ownership. The completions included 14 at Bampton, 10 at Downs Rd, Witney; and nine each at E Carterton and Shilton Road, Buford.

The total completions for the first six months of the year was 153 affordable homes against a target of 138.

Developers are still experiencing delays in obtaining materials (concrete, roof tiles, plasterboard, kitchens, windows, and doors) which had a slight effect on the number of completed homes in Q2

Percentage of land charge searches dispatched within 10 working days

Target
 Cotswold
 Forest of Dean
 West Oxfordshire



OBSERVATION:

The service processed 282 official land charge searches in Q2; 134 searches were dispatched within 10 working days.

The 'stamp duty holiday' was introduced on 1 July 2020 and ended on 30 September 2021, with the scheme being phased out over the final three months. The number of land charge searches over this period increased by over 20% compared to the five quarters prior to the 'stamp duty holiday', although numbers over the last six months indicate a dropping off.

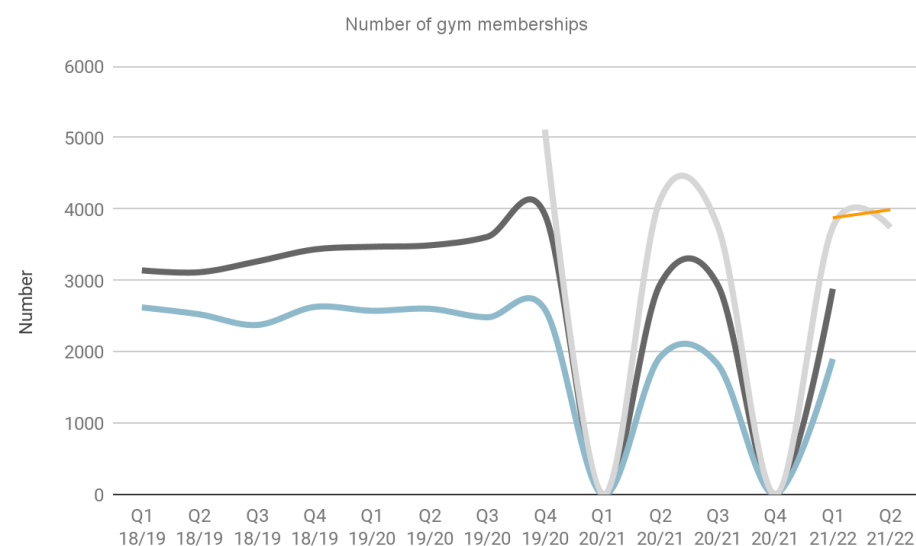
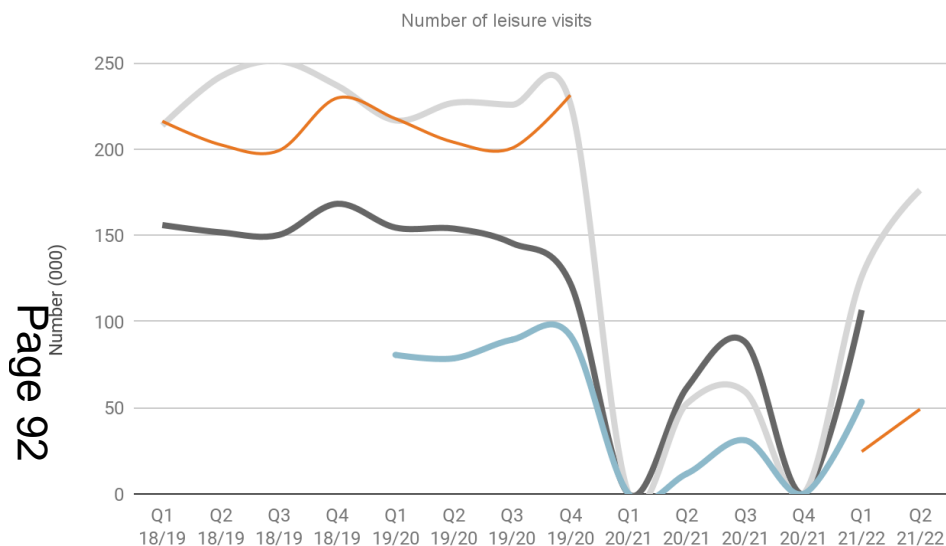
Overall performance has improved in Q2, and the service reports that searches are in the main up to date. October's performance is exceeding the target.

Performance was impacted in Q1 due to vacant posts, which resulted in reduced capacity in the service. Additional resources provided to support the service, and the recruitment to two vacant posts in Q1 resulted in an improved performance that the service was unable to sustain as some of the more complex tasks required more experienced staff. In addition, the service was responding to a growing number of enquiries from the public.

The new starters will undergo further training in October, and the additional resources to support the service will remain in place as a temporary measure. A service re-designer has started to review the land charge search process to identify where improvements can be made especially around the way customers communicate with us.

Leisure

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



OBSERVATION:

Leisure Centre usage for the facilities in West Oxfordshire has been consistent this quarter, and is tracking at around 75% of the same quarter in 2019/20. The total number of active Gym Memberships fell by approximately 3% following a slight rise in Q1; and the total membership numbers are still down to approximately 70% when compared to this time in 2019/20.

The Windrush is continuing to face a challenge with membership sales due to competition from PureGym, and Witney Lakes Resort has recently invested in a range of leisure facilities including new exercise studios. In comparison, Chipping Norton Leisure Centre has high membership levels, while Carterton has shown growth in usage and has maintained the level of gym members. GLL is revising its marketing and promotions for Witney with consideration to the new local provision of PureGym, which is a self-serve 'no frills' gym offer, and Witney Lakes Resort.

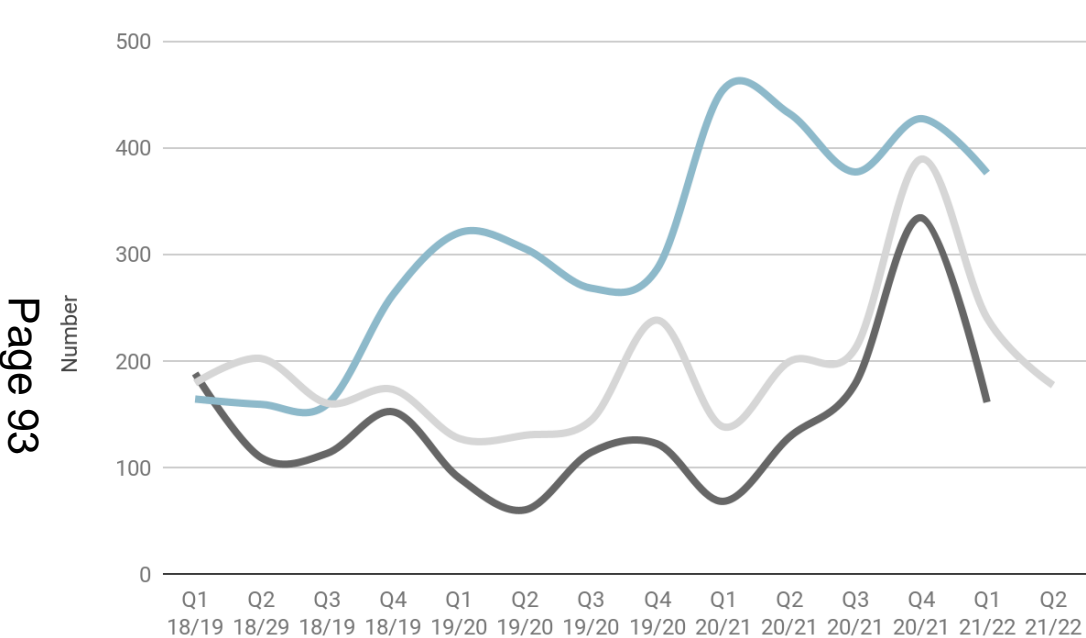
Some Covid protocols are still in place in the centres such as sanitising stations and nightly 'fogging' of areas, and mask wearing has become an advisory measure. Casual swimming continues to be operated in bookable sessions to prevent crowding in the changing rooms and this system seems to be preferable to a lot of swimmers as it makes visits more predictable (guaranteed lane space, changing/showering space etc.).

Preparations are being made for any potential Covid issues in the coming months. GLL has advised that it is revising its recovery forecasts as the sector is facing multiple challenges (utility price increases, low staff levels, reduced usage, uncertainty around winter closures, etc.).

Note: Gym memberships were frozen during the first and third lockdowns. No targets were set for 2020-21

Environmental and Regulatory

Number of fly tips collected



OBSERVATION:

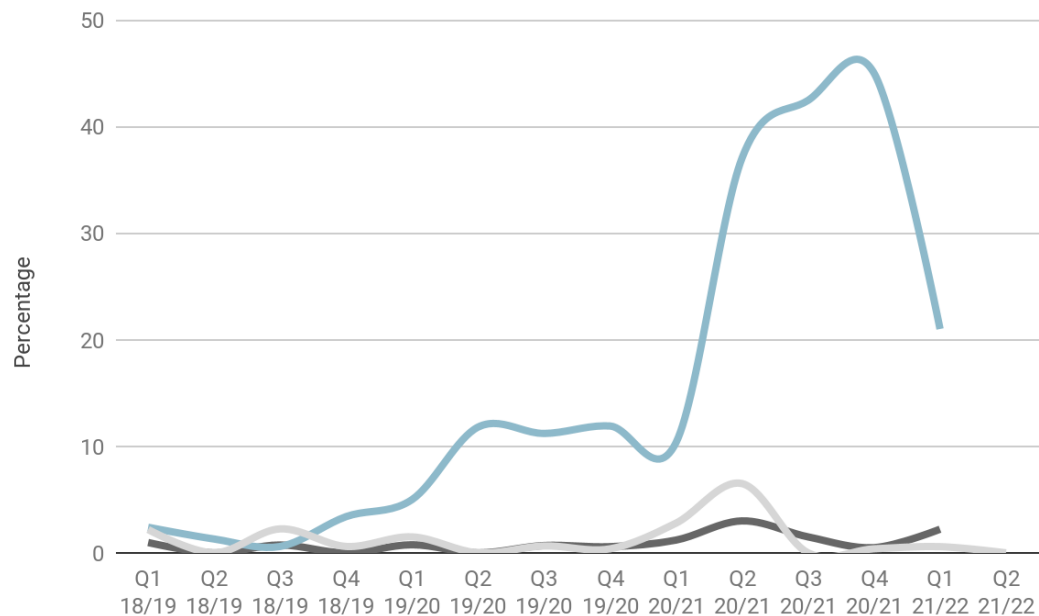
An increase in fly tips was reported nationally which coincided with the start of Covid-19, and this appeared to be reflected locally.

Over the last six months, the number of fly tip collected by Ubico has decreased which may reflect the lifting of restrictions.

Note: This data source does not contain all types of fly tips e.g. asbestos, at all locations e.g. bring sites. Forest of Dean appears to collect a higher number of fly tips than Cotswold and West as it counts fly tips at bring sites

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:

The number of notifications increased during 2020-21 and reached 521 in Q4, but has since reduced and was 398 in the most recent quarter.

No enforcement action was taken in Q2. This was due to reported fly tips not having evidence present for investigation, as well as resourcing levels within the service. Officers have been prioritising anti-social behaviour and private sector housing cases, as these cases can often have a significant impact on those affected.

The service takes a risk based approach to fly tipping, and will only investigate fly tips where there might be evidence present. These numbers tend to be low, and the fly tips where evidence is found is a small proportion of this low number.

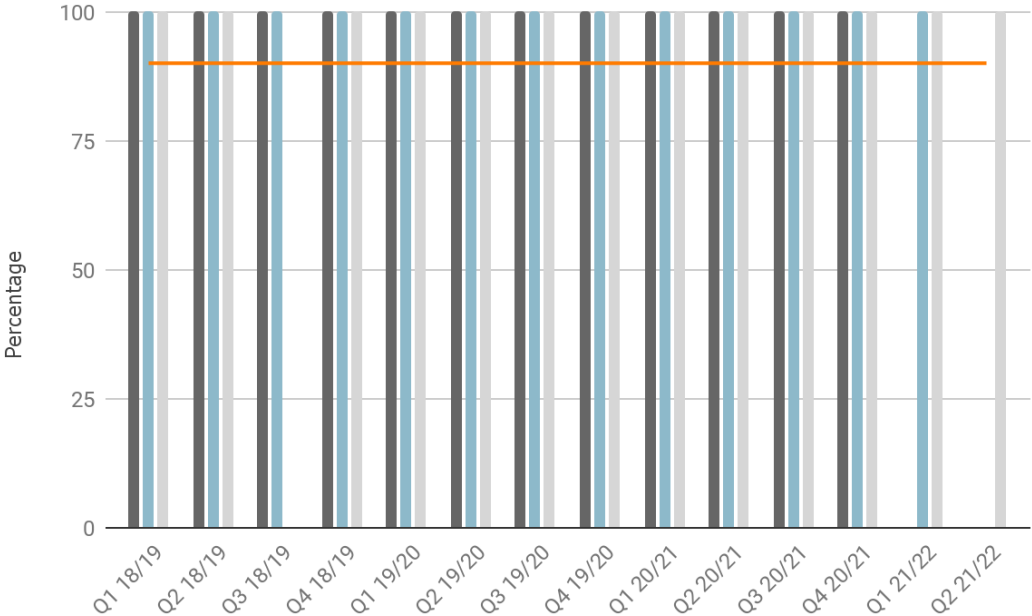
Instead, the Council prioritises the removal of fly tips, and targeted work is carried out when necessary e.g. bring sites.

Cotswold and West operate a small multidisciplinary team, although Cotswold will shortly have a dedicated enviro-crime team. Forest of Dean has operated a dedicated Community Warden team for some time

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

Target Cotswold Forest of Dean West Oxfordshire

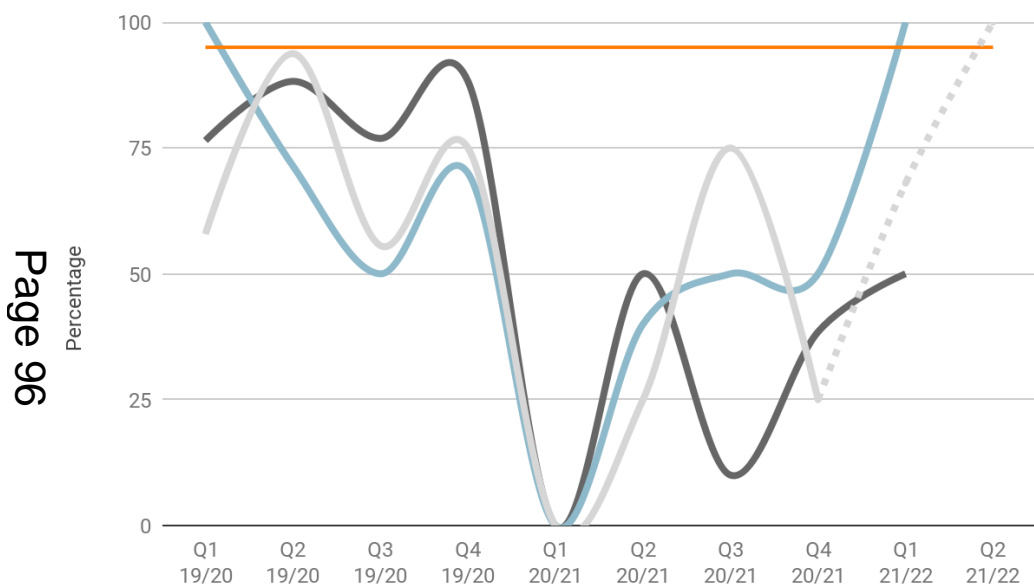
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OBSERVATION:
Two notifications of a potential illegal eviction and no water to a Private Water Supply. Both were assessed within one day

Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales

Target
 Cotswold
 Forest of Dean
 West Oxfordshire



OBSERVATION:

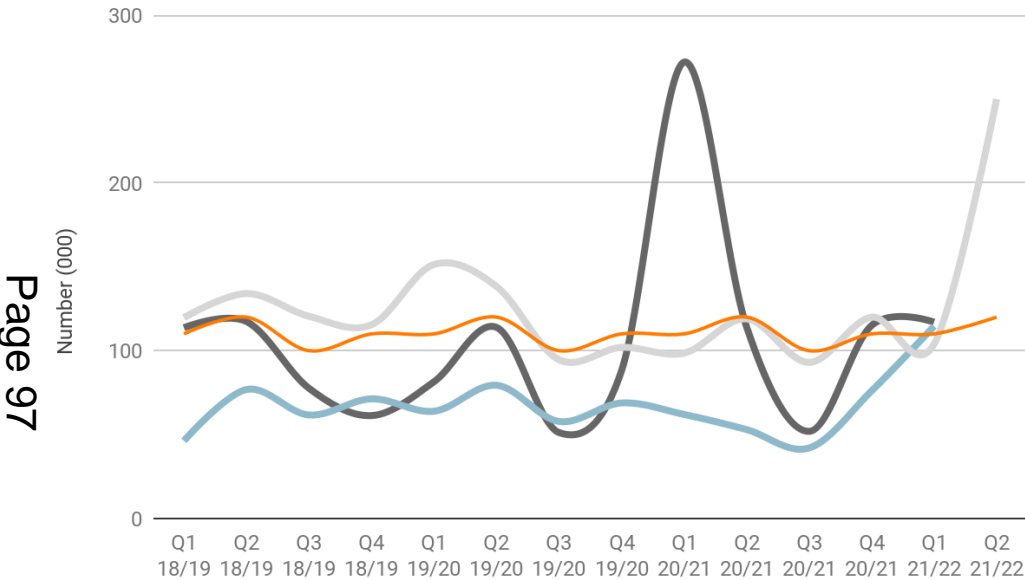
No high risk premises were due a food inspection in Q1 or Q2.

The service is prioritising inspections for high risk premises and new businesses in line with the FSA recovery plan. The small backlog of high risk premises inspections that had built up during the Covid-19 lock downs has been cleared and all new ones are being completed within the 28 day timescale.

Previously, the service had been unsuccessful in recruiting to permanent senior posts, so as an interim measure, two contractors have been appointed to help reduce the backlog of medium risk inspections across the partnership whilst the service is in the process of recruiting to two career graded posts

Number of missed bin per 100,000 scheduled collections

Target Cotswold Forest of Dean West Oxfordshire



OBSERVATION:

Over the last two years, the number of missed bins per 100,000 collections has broadly remained within the target.

There was a steep increase in missed bins this quarter due to a combination of reasons including positive Covid-19 cases and a shortage of HGV drivers, and the fuel shortage.

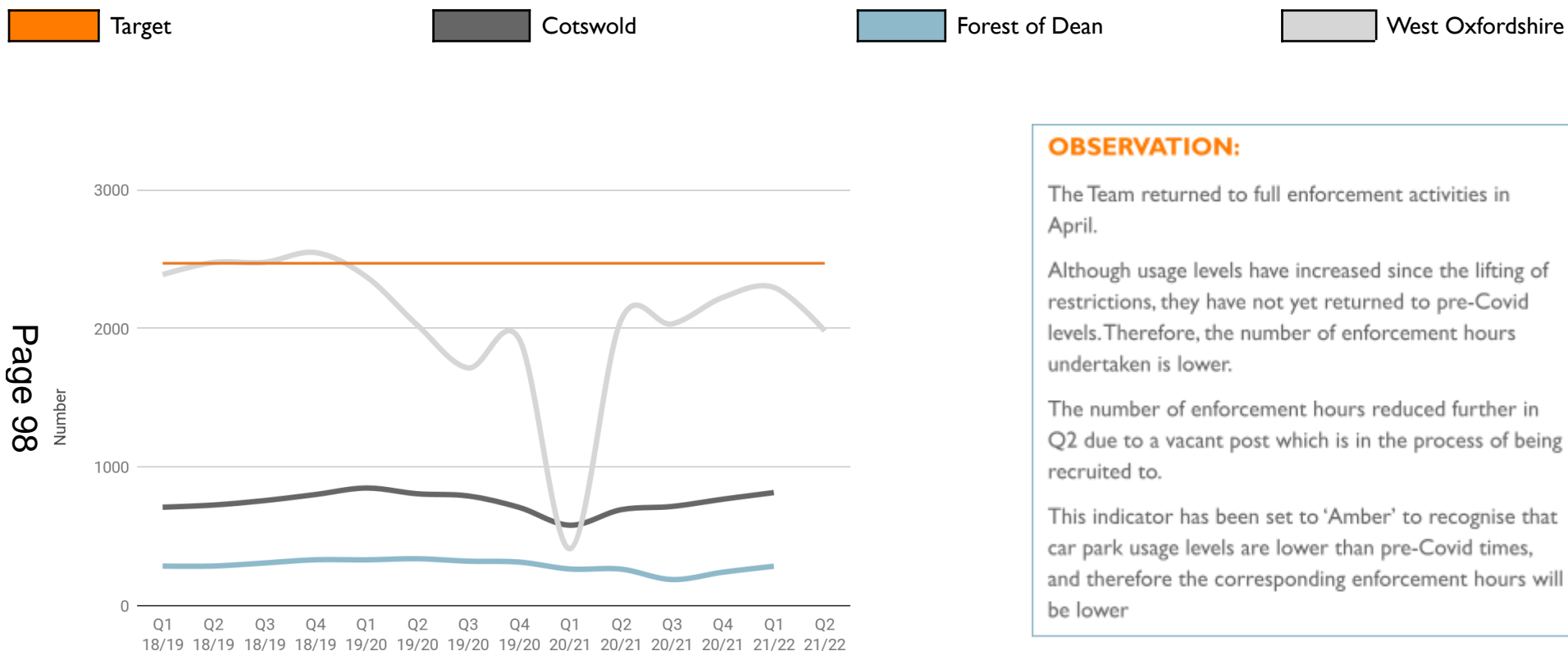
The fuel shortage had a major impact on waste and recycling collections. In addition to fuel refilling limits, Ubico had to use smaller vehicles as there are only three BP (contracted) garages in the District that can be accessed by full size waste vehicles. The smaller vehicles have less capacity and required multiple trips to be made which created a delay in collections, and therefore repeat reports of missed bins.

The use of agency staff and crew members who are unfamiliar with the allocated rounds will also have contributed to the increase in the number of misses.

The service reports that improvements are already evident. The introduction of In-Cab technology on 29 September is expected to improve efficiency in service delivery including reducing the number of misses by providing crew members with assistance to find all of the properties on their particular round

Parking

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



OBSERVATION:

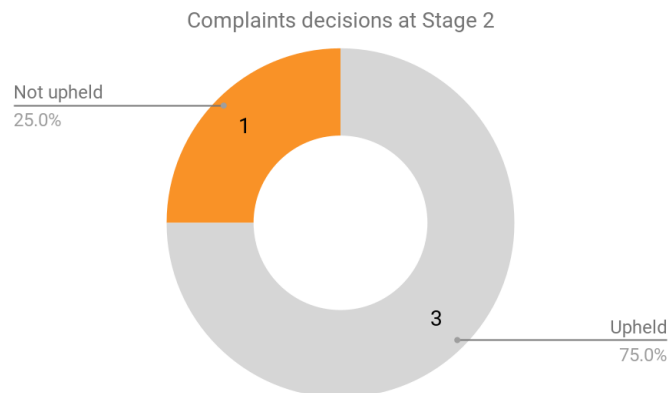
The Team returned to full enforcement activities in April.

Although usage levels have increased since the lifting of restrictions, they have not yet returned to pre-Covid levels. Therefore, the number of enforcement hours undertaken is lower.

The number of enforcement hours reduced further in Q2 due to a vacant post which is in the process of being recruited to.

This indicator has been set to 'Amber' to recognise that car park usage levels are lower than pre-Covid times, and therefore the corresponding enforcement hours will be lower

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

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Service area	Description	Outcome/learning	Stage	Decision	Response time (days)
Development Management	Complaint regarding lack of response to emails	It was found that the Council had failed to respond to emails from the complainant on three occasions, and an apology was offered	2	Upheld	10
Parking	Complainant unhappy with conduct of a Civil Enforcement Officer (CEO), and unhappy with lack of response to email communications about the alleged conduct	Upon investigation, it was concluded that the conduct of the CEO had been unacceptable and an apology was offered. An apology was also offered for the lack of response.	2	Upheld	9
Development Management	Complaint regarding delay to planning application, and subsequent lack of response to requests for updates	It was found that there had been a delay in processing the application due to a backlog of applications, as well as a lack of response to requests for updates. An apology was offered, and the service lead is now working with the complainant to rectify the situation.	2	Upheld	10



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

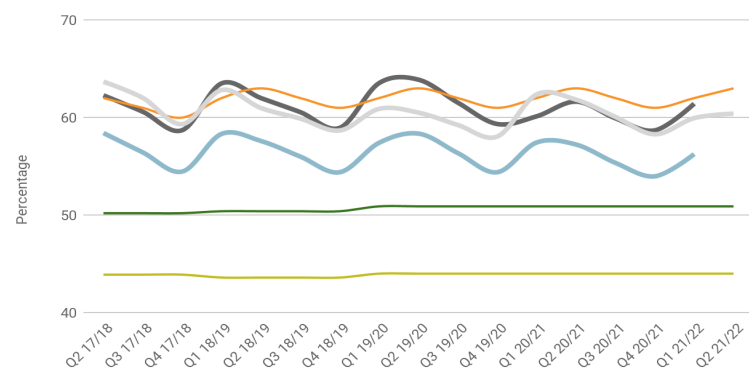
Delivering great services locally

WASTE MANAGEMENT REPORT

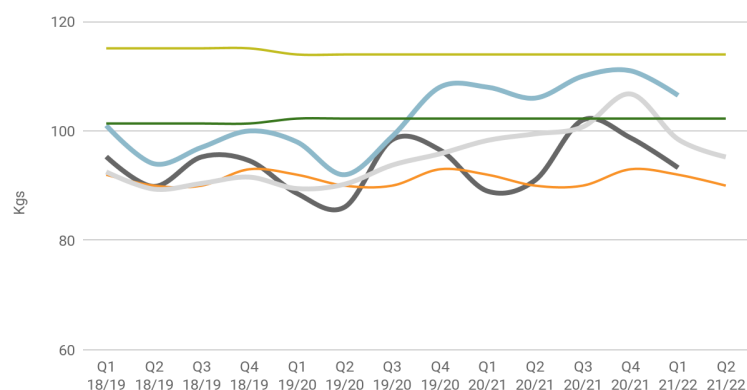
RECYCLING AND HOUSEHOLD WASTE IN THE DISTRICT



Household waste sent for recycling (combined recycling rate)



Residual household waste per household



OBSERVATION

Over the last three years, the annual combined recycling rate has remained relatively stable.

Although there were higher presentations of all types of recycling during 2020-21 as a result of the impact of Covid-19 and multiple lockdowns, there was also a higher presentation of residual household waste particularly during the latter part of the year.

Moving into 2021-22, total household waste tonnages have fallen back slightly which is due to lower amounts of dry recycling and composting in the first six months of the year. On the other hand, residual waste tonnages have remained elevated especially during Q1 when the last lockdown was ending and some restrictions were still in place. Some gains were made during Q2 which resulted in a decrease in residual waste per household.

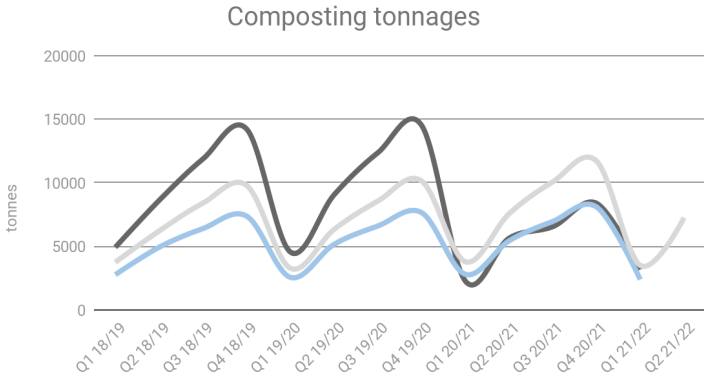
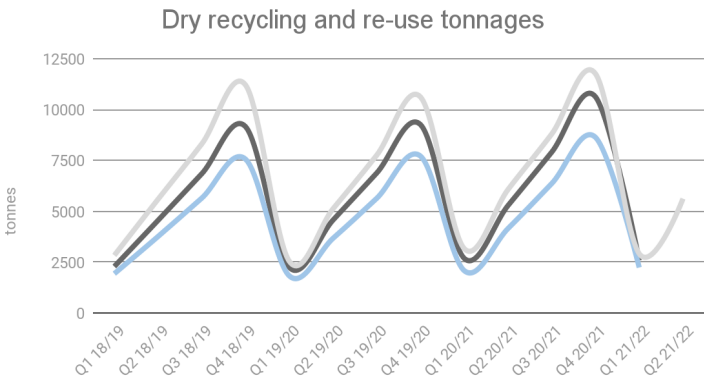
Although, the combined recycling rate was lower at the end of Q2 (60.40%) than a year ago (61.84%), it was not dissimilar to 2019-20 (60.51%). The elevated combined recycling rate at the end of Q2 of 2020-21 was lost by the end of the year due to the increase in residual waste together with lower amounts of recycling during the latter part of the year.

RECYCLING AND RESIDUAL HOUSEHOLD WASTE TONNAGES

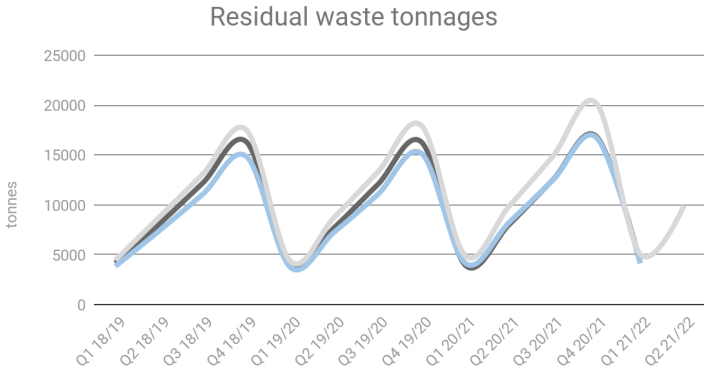
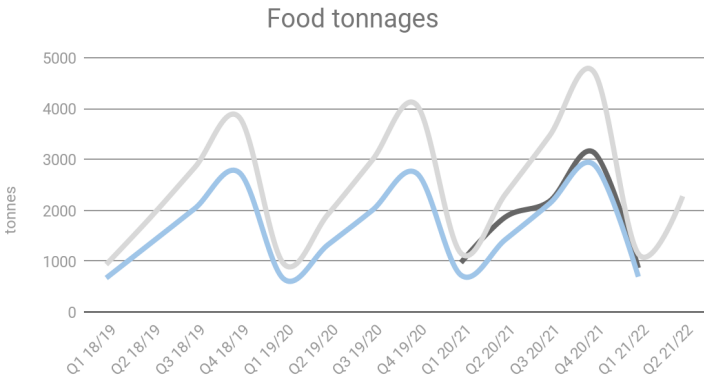
Cotswold

Forest of Dean

West Oxfordshire



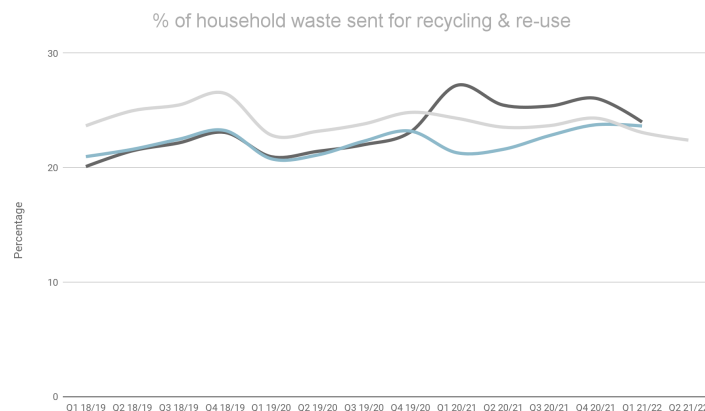
OBSERVATION:
All types of waste materials increased during 2020-21. Residual waste tonnages remain elevated but have improved in Q2. At the end of Q2, dry recycling tonnages and composting tonnages have decreased compared to the previous year, although composting tonnages are still higher than pre-Covid times. The amount of food waste sent for anaerobic digestion fell slightly at the end of Q2, but continues to be higher than pre-Covid-19 times



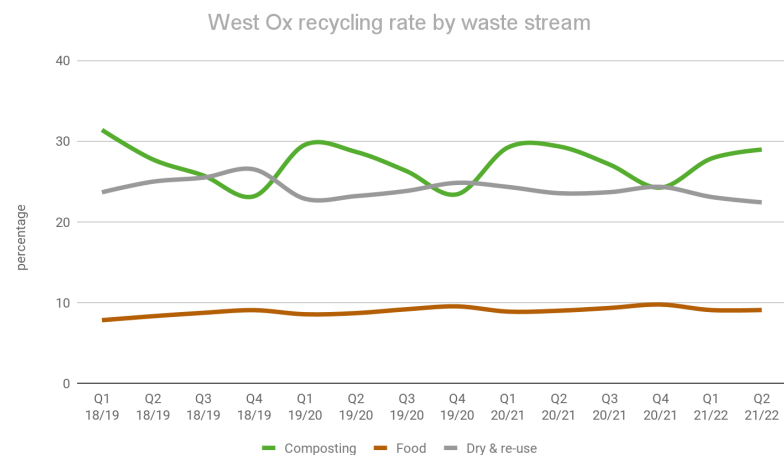
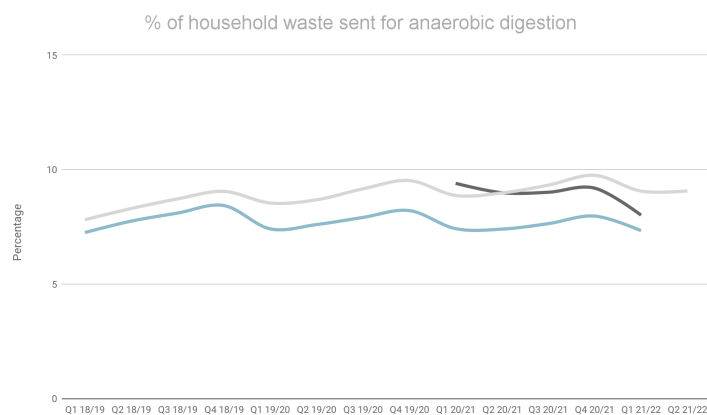
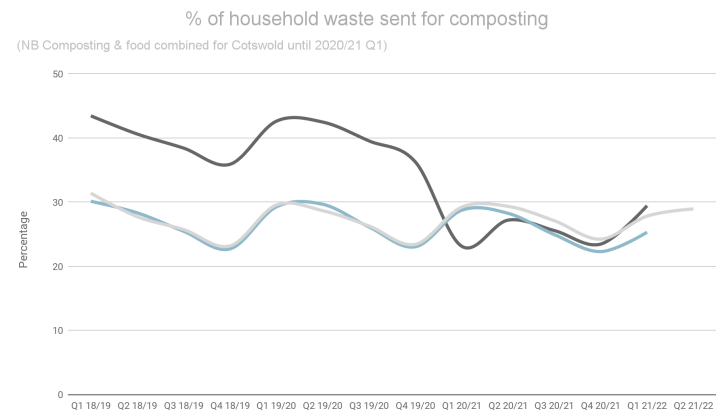
PERCENTAGE RECYCLED BY WASTE STREAM


Cotswold

Forest of Dean



West Oxfordshire



 WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	Environment & Social Overview & Scrutiny Committee Thursday 3 February 2022
Report Number	Agenda Item No. 6
Subject	Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2020-2021
Wards affected	ALL
Accountable member	Councillor Jeff Haine, Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning Email: jeff.haine@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Chris Hargraves, Planning Policy Manager Tel: 01993 861686 Email: Chris.Hargraves@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To note the Council's Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report for 2020-2021, agreed by Cabinet on 15 December 2021.
Annex	Annex A – Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2020-2021
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

- I.1. Members will be aware that under current legislation, the Council is required to prepare a monitoring report 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.
- I.2. The monitoring report must be made available on the Council's website, at its main offices and any other appropriate locations.
- I.3. Attached at Annex A is a copy of the Council's Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) which covers the period 1 April 2020 – 31 March 2021. A brief overview of the main points arising is provided below.

2. AMR 2020-2021 - 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 reporting what has happened during the monitoring period 2020-2021.
- 2.3. The AMR is intended to complement the Annual Statement on the West Oxfordshire Council Plan.
- 2.4. Set out below is a brief summary overview for each theme.
- Climate Action**
- 2.5. The AMR demonstrates the results of the Council's carbon emission calculations, reporting that carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂e) emissions have decreased by 24% between 2019-20 and 2020-2021.
- 2.6. It should be noted that the decrease in carbon emissions can be attributed in part to the Covid-19 pandemic. The significant shift in the number of staff working from home is considered to be the reason for electricity usage in Council offices falling by 22% and business travel falling by 68%. The reduced activity of the District Council's leisure centres has also contributed to a significant reduction in gas and electricity consumption at these sites.
- 2.7. There has been a small decrease in the number of priority species but an increase in overall priority habitat.
- 2.8. A notable decrease in average levels of Nitrogen dioxide at both the Bridge Street, Witney AQMA and Horsefair, Chipping Norton AQMA is considered a consequence of reduced travel patterns arising from the pandemic Lockdowns. Nitrogen dioxide levels in Bridge Street, Witney continue to exceed the national air quality objective.
- 2.9. A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) mechanism was put into operation from April 2020, requiring major (and some minor) applications to demonstrate development proposals secure a positive contribution to biodiversity. In the first year of operation 15 applications were submitted with BNG calculations. Of these applications 3 secured BNG onsite and 2 offsite. The other 10 are either pending or were refused.

Healthy Towns and Villages

- 2.10. 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.
- 2.11. During 2020/21 the leisure centres were opened only for approximately 5 months (under Covid-19 protocols with increased space, reduced numbers, bubbles etc.) due to the 3 National Lockdowns in April, November, and January. This led to a total attendance at the District's main leisure centres (Windrush, Chipping Norton, Carterton, and Bartholomew) of 111,622 visits which equates to 12% of the number of centre visits when compared to 2019/20.
- 2.12. Consultants were appointed to develop a Built Leisure Facilities Strategy / Accessing Need and Opportunities Guide (ANOG) in March 2020 and significant progress towards this has been made during this AMR period. It is anticipated that the Strategy will be adopted by the Council in early 2022.

A Vibrant District Economy

- 2.13. The AMR demonstrates that West Oxfordshire has a strong and diverse economy and lower than average unemployment rates. Nevertheless, the Covid-19 pandemic and the actions taken to contain it had a significant impact on the local economy, businesses, households and outlook of the district's towns and villages.
- 2.14. In June 2019, the unemployment claimant count was 730 and exactly a year later, the unemployment claimant count peaked at 2,500.
- 2.15. In October 2020, the council published the West Oxfordshire Covid-19 Recovery Plan with aims to guide resource investment across four themes; Economy, Climate and Council, Service Delivery and Finance.
- 2.16. 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.
- 2.17. During the monitoring year, 8,320m² (6,625m² net) employment floorspace was permitted. 466m² employment floorspace was lost as a result of permitted changes of use to residential.
- 2.18. The Council's contract with Gigaclear to bring fibre access to 4,788 of properties across West Oxfordshire was successfully fulfilled shortly after the AMR period in June 2021.
- 2.19. In response to the Coronavirus pandemic, the District Council has paid a total of £39,595,446 in grants to local businesses.
- 2.20. The Council worked to implement measures to support the safe reopening of the district's high streets. These included pavement widening, pedestrianisation, and changes to licensing, helping businesses to operate in compliance with Government directives.

Strong Local Communities

- 2.21. 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.
- 2.22. In the year 2020/21, four further assets were added to the West Oxfordshire List of Assets of Community Value (ACV). These are: Public open space adjacent to Riely Close, Long Hanborough; Rose & Crown Public House, Shilton; The White Horse Public House, Stonesfield; and Cassington Allotments, Cassington.

- 2.23. In addition, nearly £1m was collected by West Oxfordshire District Council through Section 106 planning obligations in 2020/21, the majority (c. £600k) was collected towards sports, recreation and play facilities.
- 2.24. The Council awarded a total of £363,793.53 in grant funding in 2020/21, roughly half and half awarded by way of Community Revenue Grants and Community Facilities Grants respectively.

Meeting the Housing Needs of our Changing Population

- 2.25. The AMR shows that there are around 49,000 households in West Oxfordshire, with around 2,375 households on the affordable housing waiting list as of 31 March 2021.
- 2.26. Since 2011, there have been 5,305 new homes completed, an average of just over 500 per year.
- 2.27. During the monitoring year, 868 new homes were completed, of which 352 were on allocated sites with the total number of affordable homes completed being 335.
- 2.28. 223 dwellings were granted planning permission. The breakdown of residential permissions by property size revealed a higher proportion of 1, 2 and 4+ bedroom properties compared to the Local Plan's indicative housing mix guidelines.

Modern Council Services and Sustainable Finance

- 2.29. The AMR demonstrates that the Council remains committed to delivering excellent services to its local communities with just under 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.
- 2.30. Within the monitoring year, good progress has been made in respect of the Salt Cross Garden Village AAP along with a Developer Contributions supplementary planning document (SPD) and an Affordable Housing SPD.
- 2.31. 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.

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

2020 - 2021

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Introduction

This is the West Oxfordshire District Council Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for the year 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021.

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.
- 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 2020/21.

The AMR is complemented by the [Annual Statement on the West Oxfordshire Council Plan](#) which provides a narrative on progress against the actions specified under each of the

Council Plan priorities. The set of actions specified in the Council Plan, together with the Local Plan as the spatial expression of these, highlights the extent of the ambition that West Oxfordshire District Council has for the area, its environment and its resident and business communities.

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 ONS 2020 mid-year estimate of the district's population is 111,758¹ an increase of 1,958 people from the previous year. On the whole, the population is relatively sparse at approximately 155 persons 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 CO₂ emissions across the district. Between 2005 and 2019 total carbon emissions have fallen from 785.6 to 536.4 (kt CO₂), as broken down by source of emission in figure 1. Industry and commercial emissions saw the biggest decrease in 2019, falling 16% from the previous year.

¹ [ONS mid-2020 population estimates release](#)

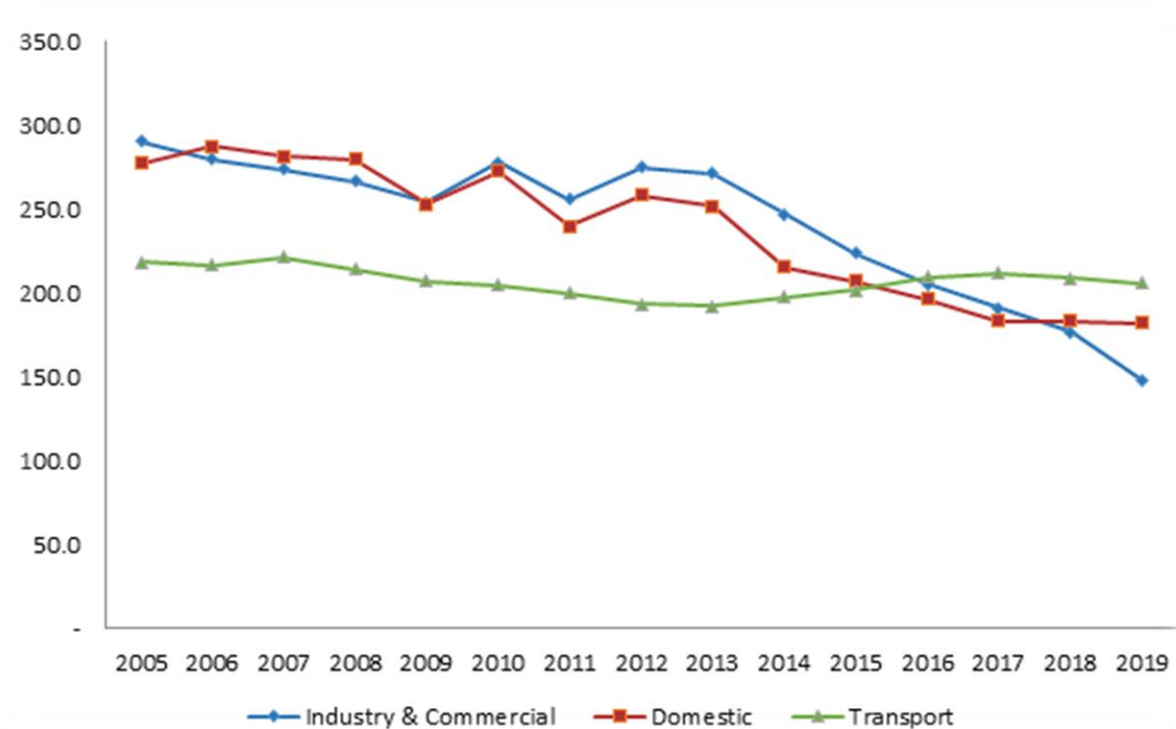


Figure 1: West Oxfordshire's Total kt CO2 Emissions within LA Scope of Influence, By Sector (BEIS)

- 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.
- As of October 2021, DfT [data](#) confirms that there were 20 public electric vehicle charging devices available in West Oxfordshire, the District being within the 20th to 40th percentile of UK local authority areas in terms of total provision.
- West Oxfordshire is covered by 6,584.4 hectares of woodland, which is 9.22% of the total land mass of the District. Woodland cover is defined as being areas of trees that are of at least 0.5ha, wider than 20 metres with a minimum of 20% canopy cover or the ability to achieve it, as presented by [Office of National Statistics Woodland Mapping](#).
- **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)²

² The state of NNRs are measured by Bucks, Berks and Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT)

- 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.³
- 104 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), totalling 1,601 hectares. The area of these LWS has increased by 30 hectares since the last monitoring year with the new designation of Rushey Common and Tar Lakes as a new Local Wildlife Site.
- 16 Geological Sites, the combined area of which is 333.32 hectares
- 14 Conservation Target Areas (CTAs)
- 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.

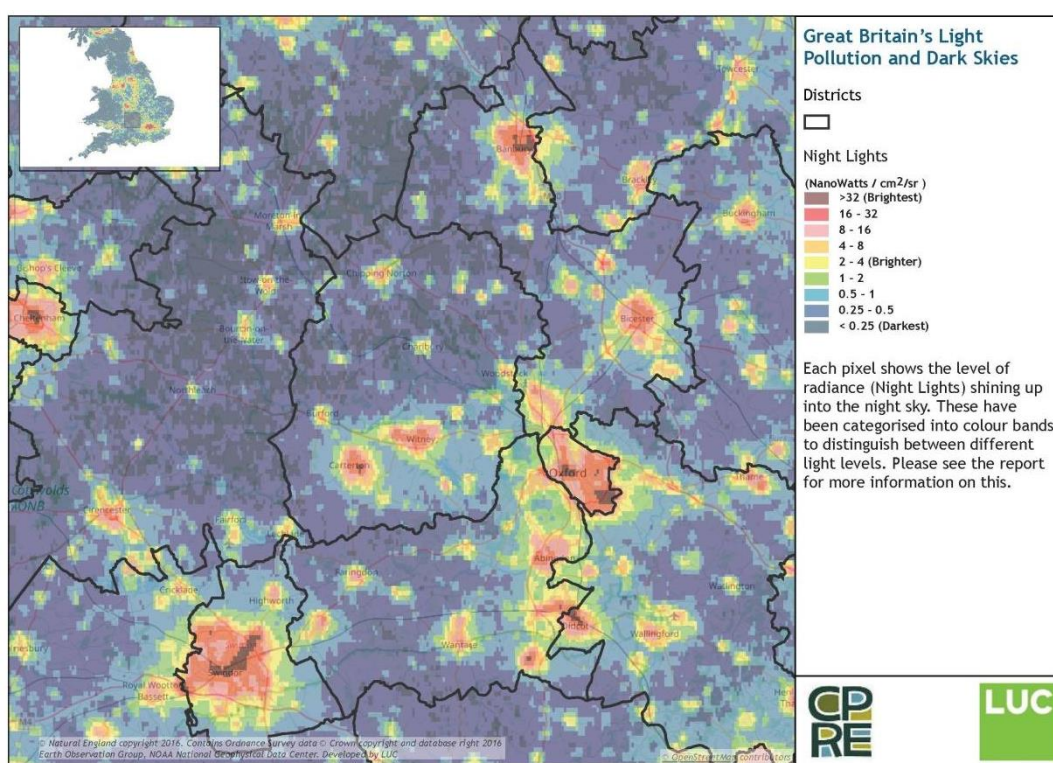


Figure 2: Light pollution and Dark Skies in West Oxfordshire

- 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

³ Thames Valley Environment Records Centre (TVERC) Biodiversity Annual Monitoring Report 2019-2020

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 (AQMA) in the district, at Bridge Street in Witney and at Horsefair in Chipping Norton, both AQMA having been declared in 2005 and both having high levels of Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) 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 1 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. The September 2020 Catchment Reports present data for both:
 - Evenlode Catchment: All 18 water bodies in this catchment failed their chemical status. In terms of ecological quality 6 were rated poor and 12 were rated moderate.
 - Windrush Catchment: All 19 water bodies in this catchment failed their chemical status. In terms of ecological quality 2 were good, 9 were moderate, 6 were poor and 2 were bad.
- There are currently 9 “At Risk” sites in West Oxfordshire included in Historic England’s Heritage at Risk Register, 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 eight years.

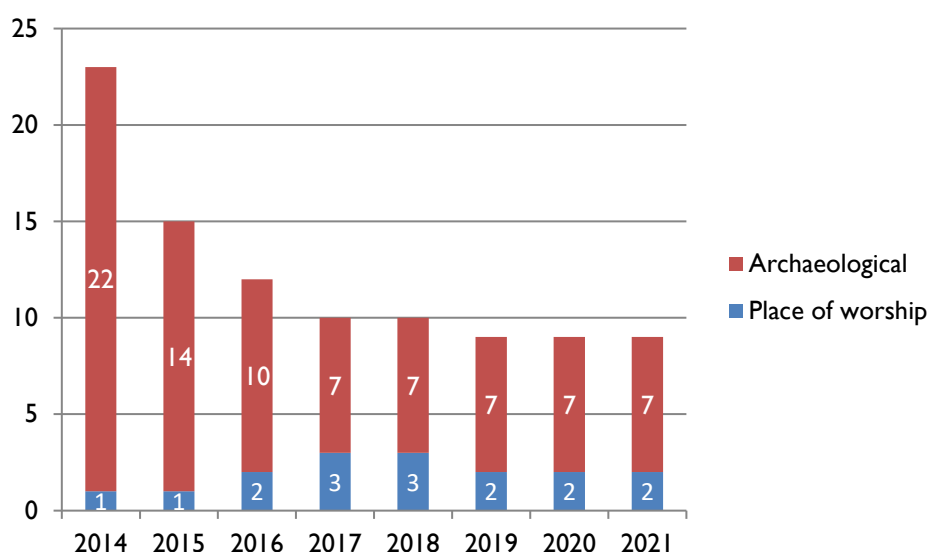


Figure 3: No. of sites on the Heritage at Risk Register from 2014 to 2021

- 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 2020/21?

- The District Council has calculated and audited its own carbon emissions for the 2020/21 period using the BEIS UK Government carbon emissions conversion factors (June 2021). The total reported CO₂e (carbon dioxide equivalent emissions) have decreased between 2019/20 to 2020/21 by 712 tonnes, which is a percentage decrease of 24%.
- The fall in CO₂e between 2019/20 and 2020/21 can be attributed in part to the COVID-19 pandemic. The significant shift in the number of staff working from home is considered to be the reason for electricity usage in Council offices falling by 22% and business travel falling by 68%. The reduced activity of the District Council's

leisure centres has also contributed to a significant reduction in gas and electricity consumption at these sites.

- A breakdown of the Carbon Account, by Scope and Location respectively, is provided at appendix I.
- No assessments of the condition of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) were undertaken by Natural England in the monitoring year 2020/2021.
- As reported by Thames Valley Environmental Record Centre (TVERC), in West Oxfordshire from 2020 to 2021, there was:
 - A small decrease in the number of priority species from 101 (2020) to 100 (2021)
 - A small increase in overall priority habitat from 4986ha (2020) to 4993ha (2021)⁴
 - 301 water vole surveys were undertaken in 2020 with 22 recording positive signs. This is a higher proportion of positive recordings than last year.
- Oxfordshire's Nature Recovery Network will need a doubling of land managed for 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. The Oxfordshire Plan 2050 provides an opportunity to use the Nature Recovery Network Map to help plan for nature's recovery at a county-wide level and to set the framework for future Local Plans, including the emerging West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2040.
- A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) mechanism was put into operation from April 2020, requiring major (and some minor) applications to demonstrate development proposals secure a positive contribution to biodiversity. In the first year of operation, 15 applications were submitted with BNG calculations. Of these applications 3 secured BNG onsite and 2 offsite. The other 10 are either pending or were refused.
- No Electric Vehicle Charging Points were installed on Council owned land in 2020/21.
- One standalone renewable energy scheme was permitted in 2020/21, an installation of a Net Zero Carbon project comprising Photo Voltaic solar array (PV Array), Battery Electrical Storage System (BESS), connecting cables, substation, heat pump, water source heat collector pipework, connecting pipes, removal of substation in Palace undercroft and associated works at Land Between Woodstock Sewage Works And B4027, Woodstock. It should be noted however that the majority of small scale energy schemes, especially solar PV schemes, benefit from permitted

⁴ changes most attributable to new information such as confirmation of boundaries or habitat types rather than the creation or loss of habitat

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 2021) indicates concentrations of airborne pollution is above the national objective levels at both of the District's statutory Air Quality Management Areas. This year annual average levels of Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) are 37.9 ug/m³ at Horsefair, Chipping Norton and 36.8 ug/m³ at Bridge Street Witney, compared to last years recordings of just under 42 ug/m³ this year at the Horsefair monitoring point, and 47 ug/m³ experienced during 2018. Nitrogen dioxide levels in Bridge Street, Witney continue to exceed the national air quality objective. Although this represents a notable decrease in comparison to previous years (see Figure 4 for 2019 - 2020 comparative NO₂ concentrations at Witney, Bridge Street) this is a consequence of reduced travel patterns arising from the pandemic Lockdowns. A comparison of the 2020 data with that of 2019 (our last full year before Covid-19) shows that recovery in NO₂ levels mirrors the relaxation of Covid restrictions and consequent increasing travel patterns. The 2020 data must not be taken as evidence of a significant and sustained emissions reduction in either Witney or Chipping Norton Air Quality Management Areas.
- Areas within West Oxfordshire which don't meet National Air Quality Standards have been declared Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). Current Air Quality Action plans for Bridge Street, Witney and Horsefair and High Street, Chipping Norton are currently being updated and will identify the Nitrogen Dioxide source how to reduce concentrations of air pollutants to below National Air Quality Standards.

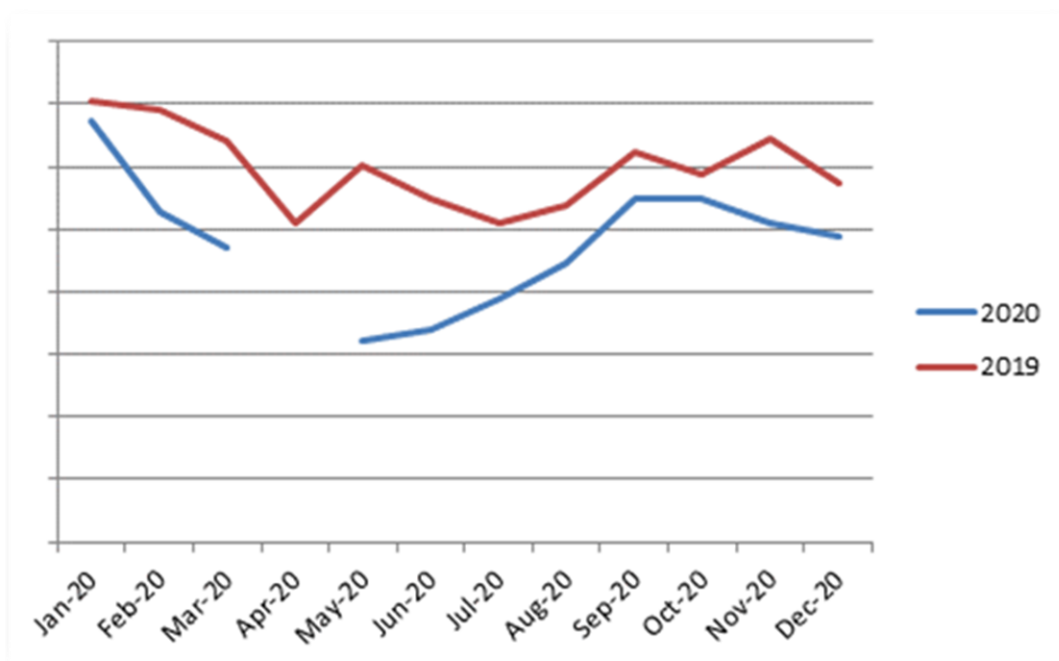


Figure 4: Bridge St, Witney Relative NO₂ concentrations 2019 and 2020

- No Conservation Area Appraisals were carried out in 2020/21 but there remains one appraisal in progress, Woodstock, work on which has paused.

- There were no heritage assets added to / removed from the “at risk” register in 2020/21.

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)⁵, West Oxfordshire on the whole, performs better than, or similar to the national average on most indicators.
- The Coronavirus pandemic started immediately prior to this AMR period in late March 2020. Oxfordshire County Council's Covid-19 Dashboard recorded a weekly rate of Covid-19 cases per 100,000 of:
 - 36 on 1st April 2020
 - a peak of 483 on 4th January 2021
 - 41 on 31st March 2021
- One of the key indicators for health and wellbeing is life expectancy. Both female life expectancy in West Oxfordshire (84.9) and male life expectancy in the district (81.9) is higher than life expectancy nationally (83.5 and 79.6 respectively).
- 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.
- The annual [Sport England Active Lives Survey](#) reported that 65-69% of the District's population are physically active, meaning they undertake 150 minutes weekly exercise.
- The updated (May 2020) [Loughborough University and End Child Poverty survey](#) presents the total number of children under 16 in households with incomes on net housing costs that are below 60% of the median (based on DWP/HMRC local indicators combined with information about housing costs at the local level to estimate poverty rates after housing costs), as a metric of poverty. It indicates that 20% (4058) of children in West Oxfordshire are therefore deemed to be living in poverty.
- Using a [single index for measuring levels of mental health need](#), the district's population has a poorer level of mental health than across Oxfordshire, however, national averages for need of mental health treatment remain higher than district and county levels.

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

- The Local Plan Core Objectives for strong market towns and villages are as follows:

CO1	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
CO2	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.
CO3	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 2020/21?

- 191m² additional floor space for healthcare was permitted in the 2020/21 period, relating to changes of use to dental practices in Carterton and Curbridge.
- At least 192m² additional leisure floor space was permitted in the 2020/21 period as set out below. The loss of 91m² gym floor space was permitted as part of a change of use scheme at Wesley Walk, Witney.

Parish	Description	Area (m ²)
Filkins and Broughton Poggs	Change of use of land from agricultural to class D2 use (Assembly and Leisure) and erection of building for outdoor wedding ceremonies together with associated landscaping.	16
Curbridge	Alterations to include erection of single and two storey extensions to provide enlarged spa, changing room and gym facilities.	176
Shilton	Conversion of agricultural barn to model aviation clubhouse - reception and rest/tea room, model aircraft workshop and storage area. (Retrospective)	Area unknown

- Consultants were appointed to develop a Built Leisure Facilities Strategy / Accessing Need and Opportunities Guide (ANOG) in March 2020 and significant progress towards this has been made during this AMR period. It is anticipated that the Strategy will be adopted by Council in early 2022.

- During 2020/21 the leisure centres were opened only for approximately 5 months (under Covid-19 protocols with increased space, reduced numbers, bubbles etc.) due to the 3 National Lockdowns in April, November, and January. This led to a total attendance at the District's main leisure centres (Windrush, Chipping Norton, Carterton, and Bartholomew) of 111,622 visits which equates to 12% of the number of centre visits when compared to 2019/20.
- Since re-opening in April 2021 a total of 126,039 visits were recorded in Q1 of 2021/22 which whilst indicating a strong return in usage rates in comparison to the previous year, is still approximately 40% behind the usage figures of Q1 2019 - 2020.

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 balanced regional gross value added (GVA), GVA in West Oxfordshire totalled 3.2bn (£29,269 per head) in 2016.
- In 2020, West Oxfordshire had approximately 52,600 employees a decrease of around 8% from 2019.
- According to the ONS, in 2019/20, 82.3% of individuals aged 16-64 in West Oxfordshire were economically active, lower than across the south east (86.9%) but higher when compared to the national figure (79.1%).
- As of 2019, of those who were in employment, almost a quarter were in professional occupations (see figure 5).

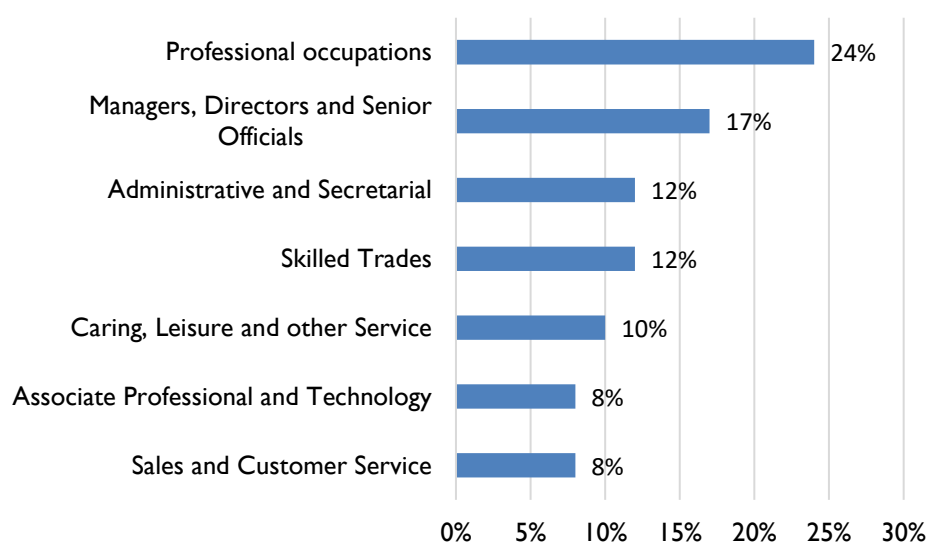


Figure 5: West Oxfordshire workforce by occupation

- Between 2018 and 2020, median earnings in West Oxfordshire decreased from £653.8 a week to £626 a week, previously having been higher than the south east average of £614.90 in 2018 and nationally (£570.50 in 2018), but becoming lower than the average across the region (£629 in 2020) yet still higher than national average (£587.40 in 2020).

- In terms of job growth potential, [the Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village employment study](#) suggests that between 2018 and 2031 West Oxfordshire will see an increase of approximately 10,600 jobs. The projections assume that most of the growth will be driven by sectors such as Residential Care & Social Work, Financial and Business Services as well as Computing and ICT industries (see Figure 6). It is important to acknowledge that these projections provide only one view on how the District may grow in the future.



Figure 6: West Oxfordshire Job Growth Forecasts by Sector (2018 to 2031)

- Launched in September 2019, the [Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy \(OxLIS\)](#)⁶ 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

⁶ Available at: <https://www.oxfordshirelep.com/lis>

- Figure 7 provides an overview of the businesses by employment size in West Oxfordshire. As it can be seen, approximately 86% are micro businesses, and this figure is slightly higher when compared to county and nation. In contrast, West Oxfordshire has roughly 7% of businesses employing 20 or more people, a lower proportion than nationally and county-wide. In 2019, there were 20 businesses employing over 250 people, including Owen Mumford, Siemens and Renault FI.

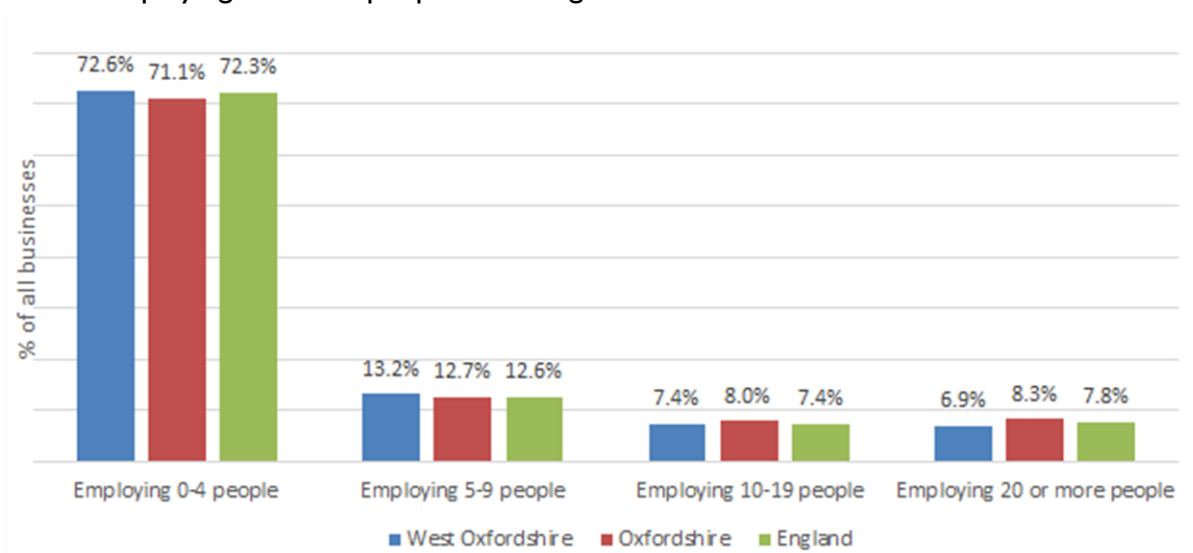


Figure 7: Business size by employees in West Oxfordshire (ONS 2020)

- In West Oxfordshire, enterprises have an average of 1.1 **local units**, lower than the national average.
- The 2015 [West Oxfordshire Economic Snapshot](#) 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 8). 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
	Oasis Business Park	1	1	1	3
Eynsham	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
	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
Remote	Enstone Business Park	1	1	0	2
	Langston Priory, Threshers Yard, Mount Manor	1	1	1	3
	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 8: Key employment site assessment (2015 West Oxfordshire Economic Snapshot)

- 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 2020/21?

- The Covid-19 pandemic and the actions taken to contain it had a significant impact on the local economy, businesses, households and outlook of the district's towns and villages.
- To see the impact of Covid-19 on the workforce, unemployment claimant provides a different perspective. In June 2019, the unemployment claimant count was 730 and exactly a year later, the unemployment claimant count peaked at 2,500 (see figure 8).

Although it is important to note that these figures will have been influenced by the furlough scheme.



Figure 9: Unemployment claimant pre and during Covid-19 in West Oxfordshire (ONS 2020)

- In October 2020, the council published the West Oxfordshire Covid-19 Recovery Plan. This local strategy guides resource investment for four Covid-19 recovery themes, Economy, Community, Climate and Council, Service Delivery and Finance. The Economy Covid-19 Recovery aims include:
 - To support the recovery of the visitor economy – including, repurposing the sector for the domestic market and driving delivery of attractions including The Mullin Automotive Park and redevelopment of Eynsham Hall.
 - To work in partnership with others (including the Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership) ensure that business support is available to all stages and sectors of business, and that to provide skills training opportunities which match the requirements of the local job market.
 - To support the recovery and longer-term vitality and viability of the market towns.
 - To pursue opportunities to deliver on the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy, particularly in relation to the Garden Village Science Park and potential Carterton Technology Hub.
- In February 2021 the OxLEP published The Oxfordshire's Economic Recovery Plan. This County level strategy provides a well-supported and flexible economic route map for recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, and builds on the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy. Covering the period Spring 2021 until Spring 2023, specific proposals beneficial to West Oxfordshire are identified:
 - Enhanced reskilling opportunities, targeting specific set of skills required by the local jobs market

- The development and implementation of an active travel project aimed improved infrastructure for increased rates of walking and cycling as a means of town centre regeneration, improved air quality and reduced car congestion.
- To provide financial business support including business rate relief and discretionary grants
- A total of 8,320m² (6,625m² net) employment land (B use classes) was permitted in 2020/21, the majority of which (4,947m²) is located within the Witney sub-area.

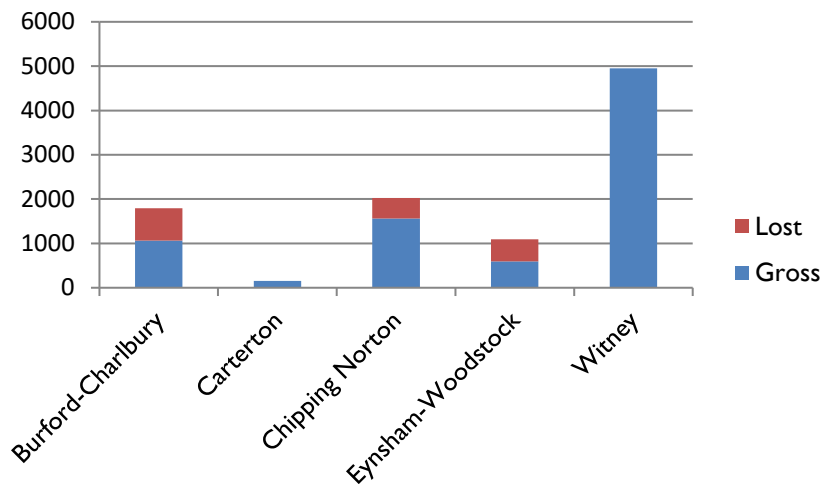


Figure 10: B use class floorspace permitted (m²) by sub-area

- A total of 2,139m² (net) of permissioned employment floorspace was completed, the majority (1,472m² net) being in the Witney sub-area.

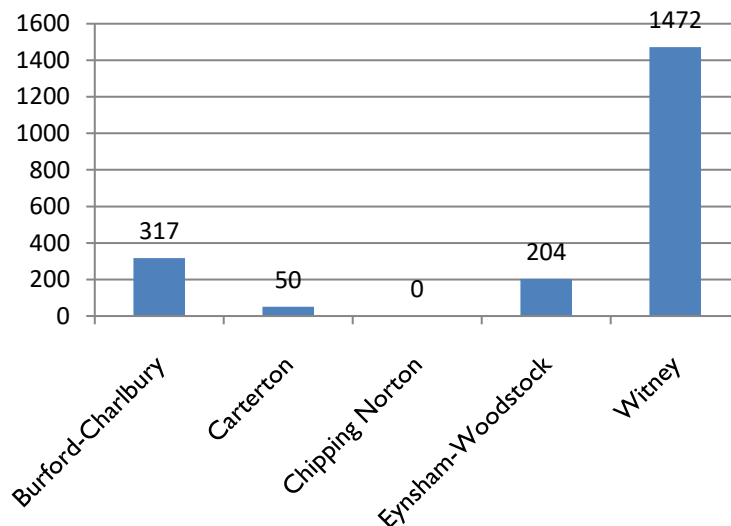


Figure 11: B use class floorspace completed (m²) by sub-area

- A total of two change of use schemes from employment to residential completed in the monitoring period resulting in a loss of 466m² employment floorspace (both B1a office uses in Kingham and Witney).
- Permitted changes of use to residential in 2020-21 would result in a loss of 418m²

employment floorspace, including a scheme to convert four commercial (B1a) units.

- 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 2021, as follows:

Sub Area	Location	Site Type	Site Area (Ha)	Updated Planning Status/Development Progress 2020/21
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	Planning permission for new purpose-built facility comprising B1, B2 and B8 class uses (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) under construction.
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), 340m² of retail floorspace was permitted. Conversions and changes of use permitted in the main towns would mean that there would be an overall net loss of -633m².
- Outside of the main towns, 35m² (-145m² net) of A1 retail floorspace was permitted.

- A handful of schemes which would likely result in a net change in town centre development could not be included in the above figures as the relevant data had not been supplied on submission of the planning application.

	A1 shops	A2 Financial and professional services	A3 Restaurants and cafes	A4 drinking establishments	A5 Hot food takeaways	TOTAL
2020-2021						
Witney	0 (-430 net)	0 (-116 net)	0 (-108 net)	26	0 (-69 net)	26 (-697 net)
Carterton	325	-190	0	0	125 (27 net)	450 (162 net)
Chipping Norton	15 (-182 net)	0 (-464 net)	105	0	0	120 (-526 net)
Burford	0 (-21 net)	0	21	0	0	21 (0 net)
Woodstock	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other settlements	35 (-145 net)	0	108	0	68	211 (66 net)
TOTAL	375 (-403 net)	0 (-770 net)	234 (-126 net)	26	193 (-42 net)	828 (-1339 net)

- A total of 22 schemes were granted permission during the monitoring period for tourism related developments. This included approval of construction of the Mullin Automotive Museum at Enstone Airfield. Most of the remaining tourism related approvals involved the provision of holiday accommodation.
- The Council's contract with Gigaclear to bring fibre access to 4,788 of properties across West Oxfordshire was successfully fulfilled shortly after the AMR period in June 2021.
- In response to the Coronavirus pandemic, the District Council has paid a total of £39,595,446 in grants to local businesses.
- The Council worked to implement measures to support the safe reopening of the district's high streets. These included pavement widening, pedestrianisation, and changes to licensing, helping businesses to operate in compliance with Government directives.

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, Chipping Norton and Charlbury. As of 31 March 2021, a further five Neighbourhood Planning areas are designated for the purposes of producing a Neighbourhood Plan (Brize Norton, Cassington, Ascott under Wychwood, Milton under Wychwood and Woodstock)
- There are 21 community transport schemes operating throughout West Oxfordshire⁷.
- Based on the MHCLG [Index of Deprivation](#), 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 upon the character and resources of West Oxfordshire.

⁷ 2020/21 Oxfordshire Community Transport Directory

What's happened in 2020/21?

- 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 2020/21, four further assets were added to the West Oxfordshire List of Assets of Community Value (ACV)⁸. These are:
 - Long Hanborough - public open space adjacent to Riely Close
 - Rose & Crown Public House, Shilton
 - The White Horse Public House, Stonesfield
 - Cassington Allotments, Cassington
- Five ACV's were removed from the West Oxfordshire List of Assets of Community Value during the 2020/21 period due to the expiry of their 5 year listing period:
 - The Bull Inn, Charlbury
 - The Hand and Shears, Church Hanborough
 - Fulbrook Play Park, Fulbrook
 - The White Horse, Stonesfield
 - The Falkland Arms, Great Tew
- In the AMR period for 2020/21, no Neighbourhood Plans were 'made' (adopted). This was because no referendums were permitted to be held during this period due to the pandemic. Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan however was recommended at Independent Examination to progress to referendum subject to a series of modifications and a referendum was duly held in June 2021 once restrictions were lifted. The referendum voted in favour of Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan and this was 'made' on 14th June 2021.
- A total of £986,491.41 was collected by West Oxfordshire District Council through Section 106 planning obligations in 2020/21.
- Of this total, the majority was collected towards sports, recreation and play facilities (£622,936.45) affordable housing (£164,563) public art (£61,652) and Kilkenny Country Park (£58,478).
- 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 a total of £363,793.53 in grant funding in 2020/21 which comprised:
 - £186,949 in Community Revenue Grants
 - £176,844.53 in Community Facilities Grant
- 349m² community use floorspace was permitted from three schemes (an extension to St Michaels And All Angels Church, Great Tew, creation of a woodland retreat

⁸ Full listing available at: <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/residents/communities/community-rights/>

and community building at Kencot Hill Farm and part change of use of a business premises on Mill Street, Eynsham to an art gallery. No floorspace for community use was lost resulting from planning approvals in 2020-2021.

- 1,874m² additional floorspace for educational uses was permitted, including construction of new classrooms at Bladon Church of England Primary School and Stanton Harcourt Church of England Primary School and construction of a new science building and replacement changing room building at Cokethorpe School.
- During the 2020/21 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. A detailed summary of this effort can be found in the [Council Plan Annual Statement April 2020 - March 2021](#).

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 31 March 2021 there were 2,375 households on the **housing waiting list**, with 59% of these requiring a 1 bedroom property. A further 25% of households on the register required a 2 bed property. 11% required 3 bedrooms, 4% required 4 bedrooms and only 1% required 5 or more bedrooms.
- In 2020, full-time workers could expect to pay 10.8 times their annual work-place based earnings on purchasing a home in West Oxfordshire ([ONS, 2020](#)), an increase from 2019, where the property price to earnings ratio was 10.5, 2011 where the ratio was 9.1, and 1997 which saw a ratio of 5.1.
- 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
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 10 monitoring years (2011—2021) there have been the following residential permissions and completions:
 - 8,697 dwellings granted permission; an average of 870 per year
 - 5,305 new homes completed; a yearly average of 531
- 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 lower⁹. The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 includes provision for at least 5 pitches and 5 plots between 2016 and 2031.
- As of 1st April 2020 there were a total of 682 registrations on the West Oxfordshire Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Register.
- [The Care Quality Commission record](#) at November 2021 indicated that there are 27 care homes in West Oxfordshire providing 1,235 care home beds.

⁹ based on national evidence on those meeting the government's definition of travelling communities being only 10%

What's happened in 2020/21?

- 868 new homes were completed in 2020/21. This greatly exceeds the Local Plan housing requirement of 550 homes for the monitoring year (West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, Policy H2), but is a marginal downturn since the previous monitoring year, largely as a result of the impact of the Covid pandemic.

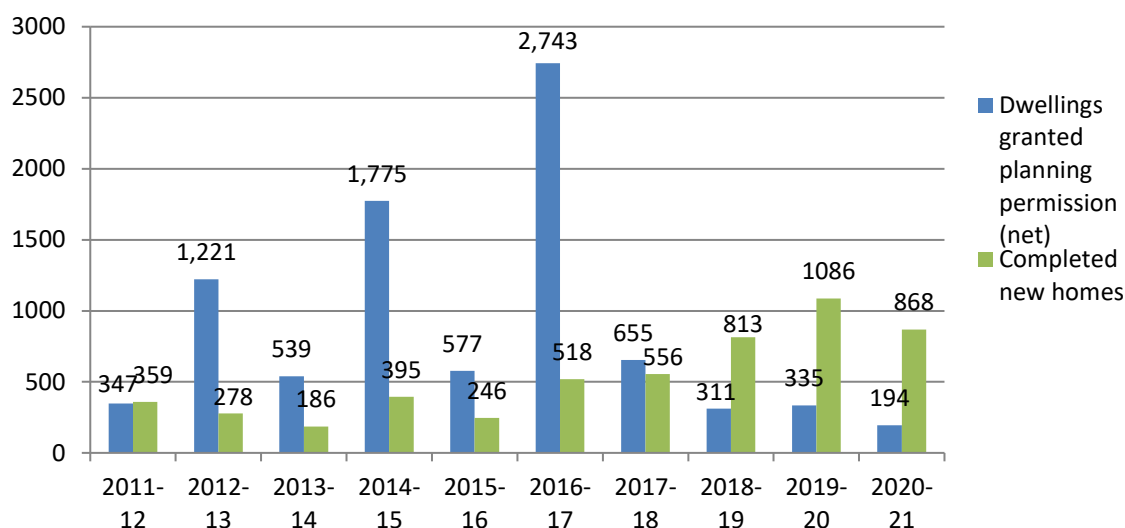


Figure 12: Residential permissions and completions 2011 - 2021

- 215 (25%) of completed dwellings were on previously developed (brownfield) land.
- Of the 868 dwellings completed in 2020/21, 352 were on allocated sites. This included:
 - 116 at North Curbridge (West Witney)
 - 86 at West of Thornbury Road, Eynsham (part of the West Eynsham SDA)
 - 51 at Land south of Banbury Road, Chipping Norton (part of East Chipping Norton SDA)
 - 33 at Land east of Woodstock
 - 29 at Former Stanton Harcourt Airfield
 - 24 at West of Minster Lovell
 - 13 at REEMA Central
- The total number of affordable housing completions in 2020/21 was 335 (38.6% of overall completions).
- 223 dwellings were granted permission, (a net total of 194, taking account of superseded permissions / amended schemes resulting in a net change of extant permissions).
- Previous AMRs have reported the proportion of dwellings granted permission that were on previously developed (brownfield) sites. This indicator is no longer

reported on as a result of this information no longer being provided consistently through planning application forms submitted to the Council.

- The breakdown of residential permissions by property size revealed a higher proportion of 1, 2 and 4+ bedroom properties compared to the Local Plan's indicative housing mix guidelines and a lower proportion of properties approved with 3 bedrooms, as set out below.

Local Plan 2031 property size guidelines	4.8% 1 bed	27.9% 2 bed	43.4% 3 bed	23.9% 4+ bed
Housing permissions 2020/2021 property sizes	15%	30%	26%	29%

- Permission was granted for the provision of four residential caravan pitches as part of a change of use from agricultural land to enlarge an existing traveller community site at Minster Lovell.
- Between 1 April 2020 and 31st March 2021, there were 94 entries onto the Council's Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Register.
- Between 1st April 2020 – 31 Mar 2021 there was an increase in the number of people presenting themselves as homeless to the Council. This was a consequence of the pandemic and significant health implications on single person households remaining in informal sofa surfing arrangements with vulnerable relatives, and the [Governments 'Everyone In' directive](#). Throughout the year, an average of around 50 households at any one time were in some form of emergency accommodation. This represents an average increase of around 50% from previous years. With the added combination of the Eviction Ban and Housing Associations pausing all but essential repairs, moving people into longer term accommodation proved to be difficult with many households remaining in emergency accommodation for much longer than would have been the case pre-pandemic. Since the easing of the latest round of lockdown and Covid measures, numbers in emergency accommodation have stabilised to pre-pandemic levels.
- The number of empty homes in the District at 1st April 2021 was 532.

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 79% of **planning applications** were determined by the Council in the target timescale (see annual break-down in Figure 13).

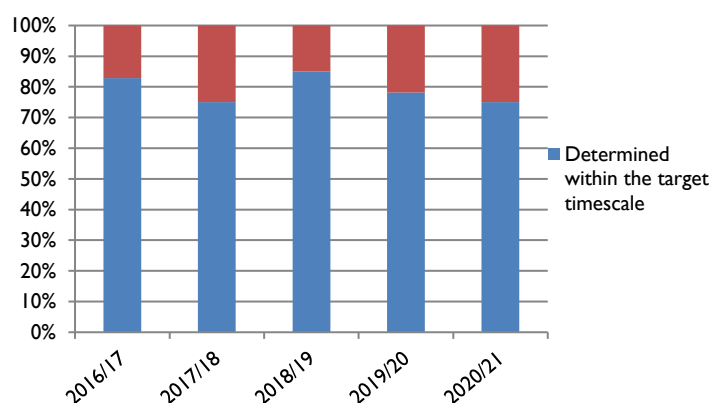


Figure 13: Planning application determinations

- 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 82% of **Building Control Full Plans** were checked within 21 calendar days of receipt (see annual break-down in Figure 14).

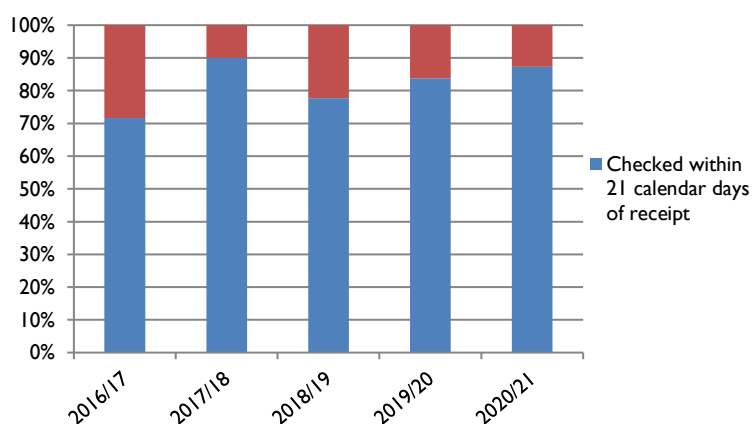


Figure 14: Building Control Full Plan checks

- As of 30 April 2021, West Oxfordshire District Council owned 282 land/building holdings, of which 252 were freeholds and 30 were leaseholds.

What's happened in 2020/21?

- No new Supplementary Planning Documents were adopted during the monitoring period 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021. However, good progress was made towards adoption of the Developer Contributions SPD and Affordable Housing SPD.
- The Council's current LDS (May 2021) identifies a further SPD for the Hanborough Station Masterplan, the timetable for its production to be confirmed. For further information and document timetables in full, please refer to the Council's Local Development Scheme approved in November 2020.
- A total of 1,369 planning applications were determined in 2020-21, 75% of which were determined within the target timescale (down 3% from 2019-20). 9% of applications were refused.
- 87.3% of building control full plans were checked within 21 calendar days of receipt.
- 99.7% 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 Authorities¹⁰ 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.

¹⁰ Oxfordshire County Council, Oxford City Council, Cherwell District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council

Appendix I

Carbon Account Breakdown: By Scope

Table I: Total Emissions by Scope

01 April 2020 to 31 March 2021	Kg CO ₂ e
Scope 1	1,617,853
Scope 2	217,742
Scope 3	474,371
TOTAL	2,309,967

Scope 1 emissions, associated with gas and liquid fuel, account for 70% of Council emissions.

Scope 2 emissions associated with the purchase of electricity from the National Grid account for 9% of Council emissions.

Scope 3 emissions associated with the transport of gas, electricity and liquid fuel (referred to as T&D, transport and distribution, and WTT, well-to-tank), water consumption, and transport miles for staff and Councillors account for the final 21% of Council emissions.

Figure 2: Total Emissions by Scope

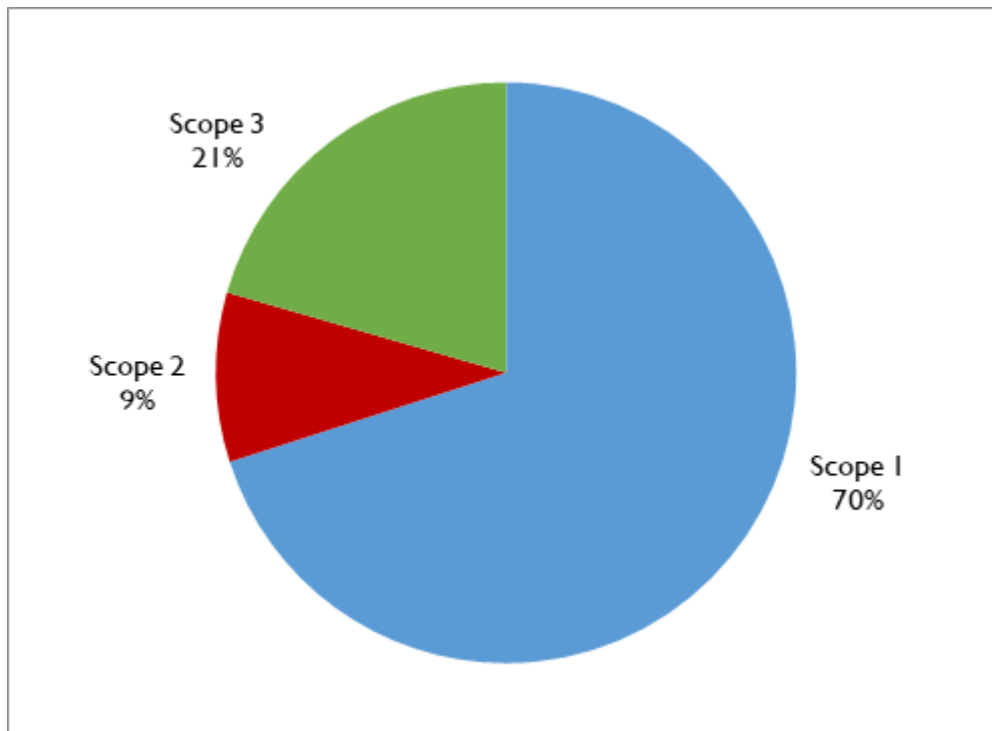
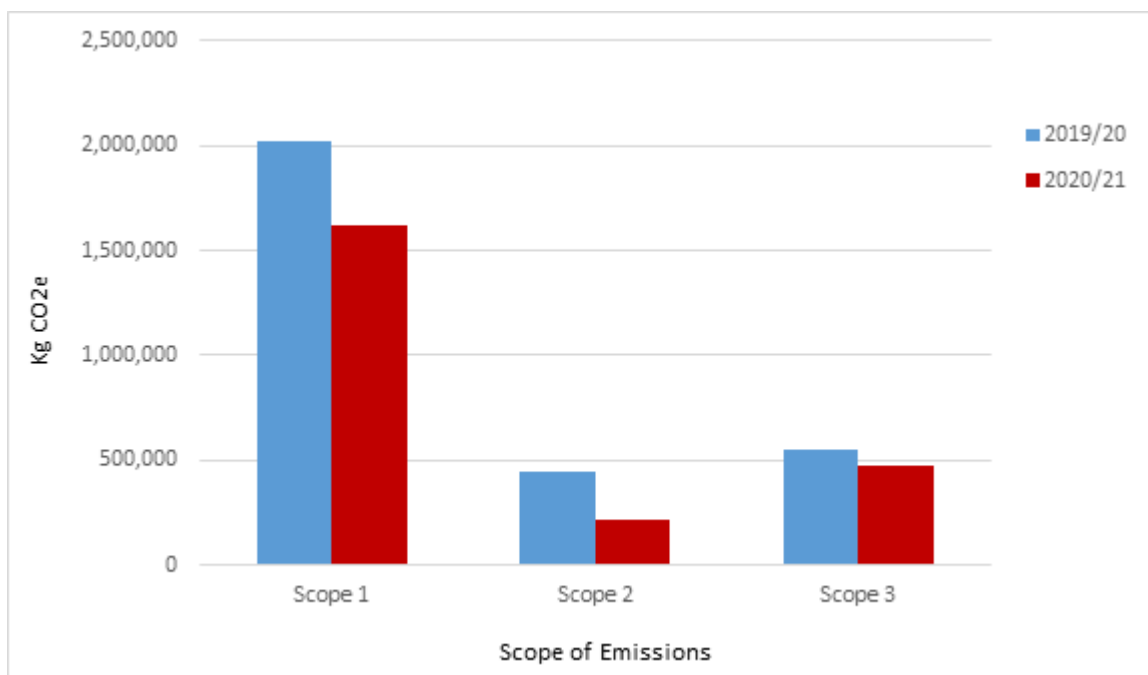


Table 2: Comparative Emissions between 2019/20 Baseline Year and 2020/21

Scope	Kg CO ₂ e 2019/20	Kg CO ₂ e 2020/21	Change in Kg CO ₂ e	Percentage Change
Scope 1	2,020,220	1,617,853	402,367	-20%
Scope 2	447,126	217,742	259,384	-51%
Scope 3	554,853	474,371	80,482	-14.5%

Figure 3: 2020/21 Emissions by Scope Compared to 2019/20 Baseline Year



Scope 1 emissions have fallen 20% from the baseline year as a result of reductions in gas consumption from leisure centres.

Scope 2 emissions have fallen 51% from the baseline year. This reduction in electricity use reflects the reduced building usage during the pandemic as more people stayed at home.

Scope 3 emissions have fallen 14.5% from the baseline year. This reflects reductions in T&D and VTT emissions which fall in line with energy consumption in Scope 1 and 2. There has also been a reduction in business travel among staff and councillors.

Carbon Account Breakdown: By Location

Table 3: Total Emissions by Location

01 April 2020 to 31 March 2021	Kg CO2e
Council offices, property and sites (excluding leisure)	311,805
Leisure centres and facilities	432,673
Council vehicle fleet and transport	1,565,489

TOTAL

2,309,967

Council offices, property and sites represent 13% of total emissions across Scopes 1, 2 and 3.

Leisure centres and facilities account for 19% of Council emissions, across all scopes.

Council vehicle fleet, machinery and transport, including Council-owned waste trucks currently operated by Ubico, account for 68% of Council emissions.

Figure 4: Total Emissions by Location

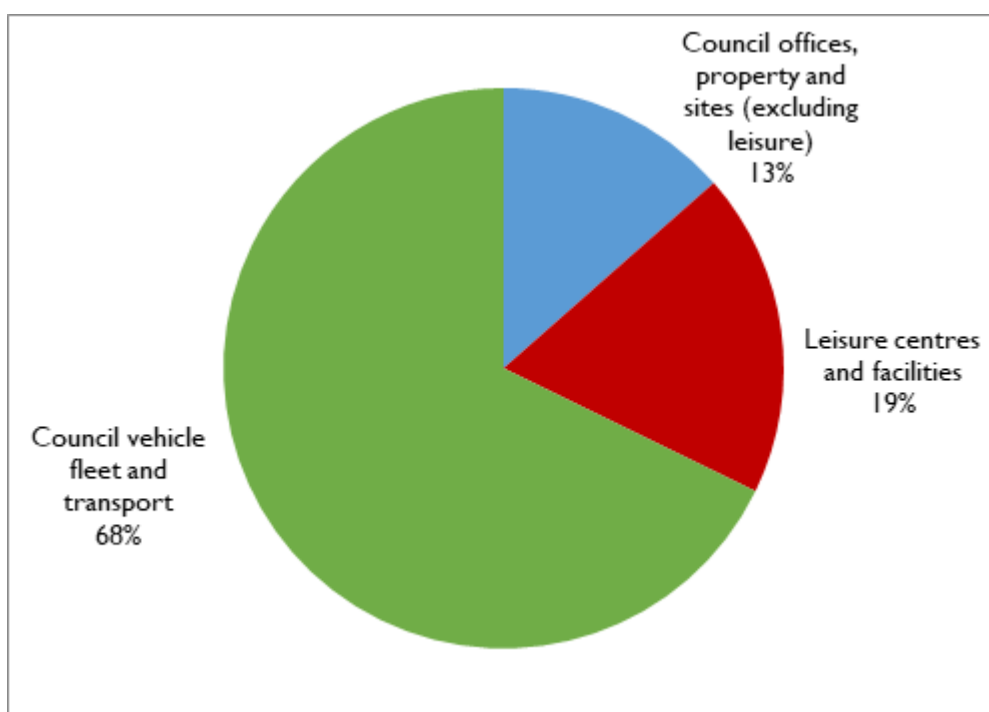
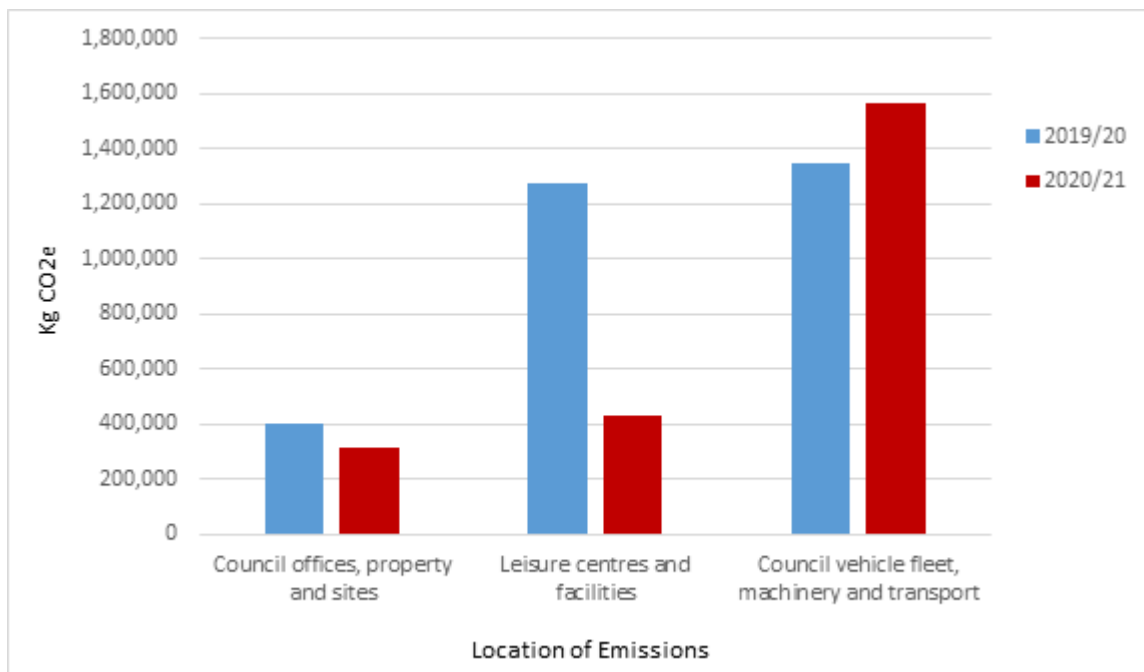


Table 4: Comparative Emissions between 2019/2020 Baseline Year and 2020/21

Location	Kg CO ₂ e 2019/20	Kg CO ₂ e 2020/21	Change in Kg CO ₂ e	Percentage Change
Council offices, property and sites (excluding leisure)	400,418	311,805	-88,613	-22%
Leisure centres and facilities	1,276,260	432,673	-843,587	-66%

Council vehicle fleet and transport	1,345,521	1,565,489	219,968	16%
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Figure 5: 2020/21 Emissions by Location Compared to 2019/20 Baseline Year



Emissions from Council offices, property and sites (excluding leisure) have fallen 22% from the baseline year. This is considered to be a result of changes in behaviour during the pandemic which resulted in reduced building use.

Emissions from leisure centres and facilities have fallen 66% from the baseline year as a result of reduced energy consumption during the pandemic.

Emissions from Council vehicle fleet, machinery and transport have increased 16% from the baseline year. This is due to the Council-owned waste trucks, currently operated by Ubico, accommodating the increased waste flows during the pandemic as more residents stayed at home.

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**WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL**

CABINET (EXECUTIVE) WORK PROGRAMME

INCORPORATING NOTICE OF DECISIONS PROPOSED TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE SESSION AND NOTICE OF INTENTION TO MAKE A KEY DECISION

FEBRUARY 2022 – MAY 2022

To be published 18 January 2022

By virtue of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, local authorities are required to publish a notice setting out the key executive decisions that will be taken at least 28 days before such decisions are to be taken. The Regulations also require notice to be given of any matter where it is proposed that the public will be excluded during consideration of the matter.

This Forward Plan incorporates both of these requirements. In the interests of transparency, it also aims to include details of those items to be debated by the Cabinet that relate to either policy/budget formulation, matters which will be subject to a recommendation to the Council, and other matters due to be considered by the Cabinet. This programme covers a period of four months, and will be updated on a monthly basis. The timings of items may be subject to change.

It should be noted that although a date not less than 28 clear days after the date of this notice is given in each case, it is possible that matters may be rescheduled to a date which is different from that given provided, in the cases of key decisions and matters to be considered in private, that the 28 day notice has been given. In this regard, please note that agendas and reports for meetings of the Cabinet are made available on the Council's website at www.westoxon.gov.uk/meetings five working days in advance of the meeting in question. Please also note that the agendas for meetings of the Cabinet will also incorporate a necessary further notice which is required to be given in relation to matters likely to be considered with the public excluded.

There are circumstances where a key decision can be taken, or a matter may be considered in private, even though the 28 clear days notice has not been given. If that happens, notice of the matter and the reasons will be published on the council's website, and available from the Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxon, OX28 1NB.

Key Decisions

The Regulations define a key decision as an executive decision which is likely –

- (a) to result in the relevant local authority incurring expenditure which is, or the making of savings which are, significant having regard to the relevant local authority's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or*
- (b) to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the authority".*

The Council has decided that a cost or saving of an amount greater than £50,000 is necessary to constitute expenditure or savings which are significant for the purposes of this definition.

Please note that if a matter is approved by the Council following a recommendation from the Cabinet, that decision will not be a key decision.

Matters To Be Considered in Private

The great majority of matters considered by the Council's Cabinet are considered in 'open session' when the public have the right to attend.

However, some matters are considered with the public excluded. The public may only be excluded if a resolution is passed to exclude them. The grounds for exclusion are limited to situations where confidential or exempt information may be disclosed to the public if present and, in most cases involving exempt information, where in all the circumstances of the case the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information. The definitions of these are set out in the Council's Constitution.

Documents and Queries

Copies of, or extracts from, documents listed in the programme and any which subsequently become available are (subject to any prohibition or restriction on their disclosure), obtainable from the following, and this contact information may also be used for any queries.

Democratic Services
West Oxfordshire District Council
Council Offices
Woodgreen
Witney
Oxon
OX28 1NB

Email: democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk

Tel: 01993 861111

West Oxfordshire District Council: Executive Members 2021/2022

Name of Councillor	Title and Areas of Responsibility
Michele Mead (Leader)	Leader of the Council: Policy Framework; Corporate Plan; Executive functions; Representation on Regional and National Bodies; Oxfordshire Partnership Board; Oxfordshire Growth Board; Oxfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership; Oxfordshire Leaders; Publica & Ubico; Democratic Services; Communications; and Afghanistan Resettlement Programme.
David Harvey (Deputy Leader)	Climate Change: Alternative energy; Biodiversity across the District; Carbon Neutral by 2030; Fossil fuel dependence reduction; and Local, National and County wide liaison on climate
Suzi Coul	Finance: Economic Development; Inward investment; Finance & Management; Council Tax and Benefits; Efficiency Agenda; Performance management of the Council; Business Development; Visitor economy; Asset management.
Merilyn Davies	Communities and Housing: Housing Allocations; Homelessness; Provision of Affordable Homes; Sheltered Housing accommodation; Safeguarding; Community Safety Partnership; Crime and Disorder; Neighbourhood Policing; Scrutiny of Police and Crime Commissioner; Voluntary sector engagement; Assets of Community Value; Community and Public Health; and Healthy Communities.
Jane Doughty	Customer Delivery: Parish and Town Liaison; Equality and Diversity; Customer Services; ICT and services; Health and Safety; Councillor Development; Broadband; Sports and Leisure Facilities; Public art; Community; Facilities Grants; and Community Revenue Grants.
Jeff Haine	Strategic Planning: Regional Spatial Strategy; Local Plan; Government planning policies and guidance; Conservation and Design; Design and Historic Environment; Landscape/Biodiversity; Strategic Housing; Development Management; and Ensuring planning policies meet 2030 requirement
Norman MacRae MBE	Environment: Car Parking; Waste Collection and Recycling; Street Scene (Cleansing, Litter and Grounds Maintenance); Energy Advice; Flood Alleviation; Environmental and Regulatory; Environmental Partnership

For further information about the above and all members of the Council please see www.westoxon.gov.uk/councillors

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Likely to be Considered in Private (Yes / No)	Decision – Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer	Consultation	Background Documents
1. Budget 2022/2023 – to include Capital Programme, Council Tax levels, MTFS, Strategies	Yes	No	Cabinet Council	16 Feb 2022	Cllr Coul	Elizabeth Griffiths	Via FMOS – 09.02.22	
2. Fees and Charges 2022/2023	Yes	No	Cabinet Council	16 Feb 2022	Cllr Coul	Elizabeth Griffiths	Via FMOS – 09.02.22	
3. Performance Monitoring Report Q3 – 2021/22	No	No	Cabinet	16 Feb 2022	Cllr Mead			
4. Agile Working project	Yes	No	Cabinet Council	16 Feb 2022	Councillor Mead	Phil Martin / Carl Jones		
5. Allocation of funding for installation of Electric Vehicle Charging Points	Yes	No	Cabinet Council	16 Feb 2022	Councillor Harvey	Claire Locke		Moved from Nov 2021
6. Homelessness Prevention Grant 2022-23 – Spending Proposal	No	No	Cabinet	16 Feb 2022	Councillor Davies	Jon Dearing	Portfolio Holder, S151 Officer, Head of Paid Service, Legal, Monitoring Officer, Group Manager	New

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Likely to be Considered in Private (Yes / No)	Decision – Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer	Consultation	Background Documents
7. Covid -19 Additional Relief Fund (CARF)	No	No	Cabinet	16 Feb 2022	Councillor Coul	Mandy Fathers	Portfolio Holder, Leader, Deputy Leader, Monitoring Officer, Interim head of Legal Services, Group Manager for Resident Services	New
8. Oxfordshire Plan – feedback from consultation	Yes	No	Cabinet	16 March 2022		Giles Hughes	Ec&Soc – February 2022	
9. Consideration of options for the future provision of legal services to the Council	Yes	No	Cabinet	16 March 2022	Councillor Mead	Giles Hughes		
10. Local Development Scheme (LDS) Update	Yes	No	Cabinet	16 March 2022	Cllr Haine	Chris Hargreaves		Slipped from February
11. West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041 – Initial Issues and Scoping Consultation	Yes	No	Cabinet	16 March 2022	Cllr Haine	Chris Hargreaves		Slipped from February
12. Response to OCC's Draft Local Transport & Connectivity Plan (LTCP5)	Yes	No	Cabinet	16 March 2022	Councillor Haine	Chris Hargreaves		New

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Likely to be Considered in Private (Yes / No)	Decision – Maker	Date of Decision	Cabinet Member	Lead Officer	Consultation	Background Documents
13. Oxfordshire Recovery and Renewal Framework	Yes	No	Cabinet	16 March 2022		Frank Wilson		
14. Approval of upgrade to West Oxfordshire's public space CCTV provision and monitoring arrangements	Yes	No	Cabinet	20 April 2022	All relevant Cabinet Members	Andy Barge	Via Ec&Soc O&S	
15. Publica Business Plan	No	No	Cabinet	20 April 2022	All Cabinet Members	Jan Britton / Frank Wilson	Considered by FMOS – 13.04.22	
16. Review of Options- Hensington Road, Woodstock	No	No	Cabinet Council	April / May TBC	Councillor Haine / Councillor Coul	Claire Locke		
17. Allocation of Outside Bodies representatives	No	No	Cabinet	May 2022	Councillor Mead	Amy Bridgewater-Carnall		
18. Approval of Whistle Blowing Policy	No	No	Cabinet	May 2022	Councillor Mead	Emma Cathcart	Legal Services Team, JMT/CMT, Governance Group, Via – Audit and General Purposes Committee April 2022	New

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