

Public Document Pack



Tuesday 6 February 2024

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EXECUTIVE

You are summoned to a meeting of the Executive, which will be held in The Upper Hall, Chipping Norton Town Hall, High Street, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire OX7 5NA on **Wednesday 14 February 2024** at **2.00pm**.



Giles Hughes
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Executive:

Councillors: Andy Graham, Duncan Enright, Alaric Smith, Joy Aitman, Charlie Maynard, Andrew Prosser, Geoff Saul, Lidia Arciszewska and Tim Sumner.

Recording of Proceedings – The law allows the public proceedings of Council, Executive, 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. **Apologies for Absence**

To receive any Apologies for Absence from Members of the Executive.

2. **Declarations of Interest**

To receive any Declarations of Interest from Members of the Executive on any items to be considered at the meeting.

3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting (Pages 7 - 12)**

To approve the minutes of the previous meeting, held on Wednesday 17 January 2024.

4. **Receipt of Announcements**

To receive any announcements from the Leader of the Council, Members of the Executive or the Chief Executive.

5. **Participation of the Public**

Any member of the public, who is a registered elector in the District, is eligible to ask one question at the meeting, for up to three minutes, of the Leader of the Council, or any Member of the Executive on any issue that affects the district or its people.

Notice, together with a written copy of the question, must be provided to Democratic Services, either by email to:

democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk

or by post to:

Democratic Services, West Oxfordshire District Council, Woodgreen, Witney OX28 1NB.

Questions are to be received no later than 2.00pm two clear working days before the meeting (e.g. for a Wednesday meeting, the deadline would be 2.00pm on the Friday before).

A response may be provided at the meeting, or within three clear working days

of the meeting. If the topic of the question is not within the remit of the Council, advice will be provided on where best to direct the question.

The appropriate Executive Member will either respond verbally at the meeting or provide a written response which will be included in the minutes of the meeting.

6. **Reports from Overview and Scrutiny**

7. **Matters raised by Audit and Governance Committee**

8. **West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041 Update (Pages 13 - 122)**

Purpose:

To provide an update on the progress of the new West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041 including the outcome of recent public consultation and the revised timetable for taking the plan through to adoption.

Recommendations:

That the Executive Resolves to:

1. Note the content of the consultation summary report attached at Annex A, in particular the key themes arising which will be reflected in the next stage of Local Plan consultation;
2. Agree to approve the updated Local Development Scheme (LDS) attached at Annex B.

9. **Nature Recovery Plan and Nature Recovery Officer (Pages 123 - 186)**

Purpose:

To present the West Oxfordshire District Council Nature Recovery Plan, which is proposed to be adopted and resourced by the Council from April 2024, and to set out the business case to appoint a new Nature Recovery Officer.

Recommendations:

That the Executive Resolves to:

1. Approve the West Oxfordshire District Council Nature Recovery Plan and recommend to Council that it is adopted as part of the Council's compliance with the new biodiversity duty;
2. Agree to part-fund a Nature Recovery Officer at a cost to the Council of £39,039.00 over 24 months.

10. **Climate Change Officer (Pages 187 - 190)**

Purpose:

To set out the business case to make the Climate Change Officer post permanent.

Recommendation:

That the Executive Resolves to:

1. Agree to make the Climate Change Officer post permanent at a total cost of £50,155 per annum.

11. **Improving Youth Participation and Development (Pages 191 - 198)**

Purpose:

To set out the Council's approach to supporting young people and building on the results and findings of the recent Youth Needs Assessment.

Recommendations:

That the Executive Resolves to:

1. Agree to the recruitment of a dedicated Youth Development Officer on a full time, 2-year fixed term contract;
2. To note that £60,000 external funding from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) will be used to support the post;
3. Approve up to £28,000 from the Council Priority fund to meet the balance needed for the post;

4. Approve the use of the £20,000 COMF budget allocated to youth activities to enable test and learn opportunities as developed by the postholder, which tackle the barriers faced by young people, to access activities, services and opportunities.

12. Waste Fleet Purchase Strategy (Pages 199 - 206)

Purpose:

To update the Executive on progress on the review of the West Oxfordshire waste fleet, and to seek approval to purchase 4 standard fuel general waste refuse collection vehicles, and when necessary, hire 2 standard fuel general waste refuse collection vehicles, whilst research is undertaken into options to use more environmentally sustainable vehicles such as electric vehicles.

Recommendations:

That the Executive Resolves to:

1. Agree to purchase 4 x 28 tonne standard fuel general waste refuse collection vehicles (RCV's) for use on frontline collections; and
2. Agree to hire 2 x 28tonne standard fuel general waste refuse collection vehicles when needed whilst research is undertaken during the next financial year into options to use more environmentally sustainable vehicles such as electric vehicles.

13. Budget 2024/25 and Medium Term Financial Strategy (Pages 207 - 286)

Purpose:

To provide an update on the budget for 2024/25, following the government funding settlements of 18 December 2023 and 24 January 2024, and to consider:

- 1) The draft base budgets for 2024/25;
- 2) The Council's Capital Programme for 2024/25 to 2032/33;
- 3) The level of Council Tax for 2024/25;
- 4) The Medium Term Financial Strategy;
- 5) The responses from the statutory budget consultation.

Recommendations:

That the Executive Resolves to:

- 1) Note the Parish Precepts and Tax Levels set out in Annex I;

And Resolves to Recommend to Council to:

- 2) Approve the General Fund revenue budgets as summarised in Annex B;
- 3) Approve the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy in Annex C;
- 4) Approve the Capital Programme for 2024/25 to 2032/33 as set out in Annex E;
- 5) Approve the Fees and charges for 2024/25, as detailed in Annex J and K;
- 6) Approve the Council's Pay Policy Statement as set out in Annex M;
- 7) Approve the level of District Council Tax for 2024/25 for a Band D property of £124.38 as shown in Annexes F-H.

14. **Exclusion of Press and Public**

If the Executive wishes to exclude the press and public from the meeting during consideration of any of the items on the exempt from publication part of the agenda, it will be necessary for the Executive to pass a resolution in accordance with the provisions of the Paragraph 4(2)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012 on the grounds that their presence could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in specific paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

15. **Exempt Annex K - Trade Waste Fees & Charges - Budget 2024/25 (Pages 287 - 288)**

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WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the
Executive.

Held in Committee Room One, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB at 2.00pm on
Wednesday 17 January 2024.

PRESENT

Councillors: Andy Graham (Leader), Duncan Enright (Deputy Leader), Joy Aitman, Charlie Maynard, Andrew Prosser, Alaric Smith, Geoff Saul and Tim Sumner.

Officers: Madhu Richards (Director of Finance), Andrea McCaskie (Director of Governance), Frank Wilson (Interim Managing Director – Publica), Phil Martin (Assistant Director – Business Support Services), Mandy Fathers (Business Manager, Environment, Welfare and Revenue Services), Andrew Brown (Business Manager, Democratic Services), Chris Hargraves (Planning Policy Manager), Max Thompson (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Andrew Thomson (Planning Policy Officer) and Anne Learmonth (Democratic Services Officer).

Other Councillors in Attendance: Michele Mead, Liam Walker, Dan Levy, Harry St. John, Julian Cooper and David Melvin.

128 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillor Lidia Arciszewska.

129 Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest made by Members of the Executive.

130 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Councillor Andy Graham proposed that the minutes of the previous meeting, held on Wednesday 13 December 2023, be agreed by the Executive as a true and accurate record, and signed by the Leader of the Council.

This was seconded by Councillor Duncan Enright, was put to a vote, and was unanimously agreed by the Executive.

The Executive **Resolved** to:

1. Agree the minutes of the previous meeting, held on Wednesday 13 December 2023, as a true and accurate record.

131 Receipt of Announcements

Councillor Andy Graham, Leader of the Council, welcomed all attendees to the meeting, and thanked members of the public for attending. The Leader also welcomed the public watching proceedings on the Council's website.

The Leader gave the public and officers in attendance an overview of the way that the meeting would run. Public attendees were also advised that Members of the Executive would remain in attendance after the meeting had concluded, so that those in attendance could meet each other on an informal basis.

The Leader further advised that the final Agenda Item contained commercially sensitive information and details of a private nature, and if the meeting required such action, the meeting would need to agree to enter private session, with the appropriate juncture being highlighted when necessary.

The Leader stated that the next meeting of the Executive would be held on Wednesday 14 February 2024, starting at 2.00pm and would be held in the Upper Hall, at the Town Hall in Chipping Norton.

The Leader informed the meeting of the intention to appoint a Publica Programme Director in the week following the meeting, as a result of a recent recruitment exercise. The Publica Programme Director would take up post upon the completion of successful pre-employment checks and would oversee the transition of council services and the transfer of employees to the Council from Publica.

The Leader informed the meeting of the appointment of Dr. Christine Gore to the position of Chair of the Publica Board, following the departure of Sally Walker, who held the role previously. The Leader stated there had been unanimous support across partner councils for the appointment of Dr. Gore to the Chair.

The Leader congratulated Frank Wilson on his appointment as Interim Managing Director of Publica, following the departure of the previous Managing Director, Jan Britton, in December 2023. The Leader stated there had been unanimous support across partner councils in the appointment of Mr. Wilson to the position of Interim Managing Director.

Councillor Tim Sumner, Executive Member for Leisure and Major Projects, stated that refurbishment works had begun at the Chipping Norton Leisure Centre and that work was progressing well.

There were no other announcements made by the Executive.

Phil Martin, Assistant Director for Business Support Services, provided an update on the ongoing Agile Working Project, which included renovation works and modernisation changes at the Woodgreen, Elmfield and Welch Way Council Offices. The works included the renovation of the Council Chamber, a new reception area, and proposed renovation work to the Council's committee rooms. The Assistant Director stated that the overall project was on track for completion in March 2024, and was currently on budget.

132 Participation of the Public

There was no public participation at the meeting.

133 Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)

Councillor Charlie Maynard, Executive Member for Planning and Sustainable Development, introduced the report, which considered the Council's Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report for the two-year period 2021-2023.

Non-Executive Members addressed the Executive about the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The Planning Policy Manager stated that consultants were routinely producing viability evidence relating to the Levy, and that results were anticipated in the coming weeks. A report to the Executive on the subject matter was anticipated in Spring 2024.

The Executive welcomed the introduction of new employment sites around the town of Witney, and agreed there were common aims to continue to make the West Oxfordshire local economy vibrant. The Executive further highlighted logistical problems associated with the district, and how this had resulted in larger scale employers not basing themselves in the district.

The Executive also confirmed intentions to ask the Local Plan Cross Party Member Working Group to discuss the Annual Monitoring Report, in conjunction with the Planning Policy Manager.

Councillor Charlie Maynard proposed that the Executive agree to the recommendations as listed on the report. This was seconded by Councillor Andy Graham, was put to a vote, and was agreed unanimously by the Executive.

The Executive **Resolved** to:

1. Note the content of the report.

134 Oxford City Local Plan 2040 - Regulation 19 Consultation

Councillor Charlie Maynard, Executive Member for Planning and Sustainable Development, presented the report which sought to agree West Oxfordshire District Council's response to the Oxford Local Plan 2040 Regulation 19 consultation.

In debate, Executive Members stated that they were encouraged by the positive and collaborative tone of the proposed response to the Oxford City Council (OxCC) 2040 Local Plan. Work undertaken in conjunction with neighbouring Council's would be of a constructive nature and completed within statutory timescales.

Councillor Liam Walker addressed the meeting and queried whether the Council was obliged to agree to accommodate additional housing from Oxford's unmet need within the district. The Planning Policy Manager stated that the Council had a duty to co-operate, but had no duty to agree when discussing matters surrounding residual housing numbers.

Councillor Charlie Maynard proposed that the Executive agree to the recommendations as listed on the report. This was seconded by Duncan Enright, was put to a vote, and was agreed unanimously by the Executive. The Executive Member for Planning and Sustainability thanked the Planning Policy Team for their ongoing work on the subject.

The Executive **Resolved** to:

1. Note the content of the report;
2. Approve the draft response, attached at Annex A of the original report.

135 Draft Budget 2024/25 - Version 2 (including Local Government Finance Settlement)

Councillor Alaric Smith, Executive Member for Finance, introduced the report, which provided an update on the developing Budget for 2024/25.

The Executive Member gave a detailed overview of the second version of the developing Budget, which had come before the Executive following receipt of a Local Government Funding Settlement, since its last meeting on 18 December 2023.

The Executive Member for Finance stated that they had received a recommendation from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee requesting that the Executive Member write to Simon Hoare MP, Minister of State for Local Government, to request that future Local Government Funding Settlements are received earlier in the budget setting process in future years. The Executive Member confirmed that the Executive agreed with the recommendation.

Executive

17/January2024

Councillor Julian Cooper addressed the meeting and queried the increase in payments made to external auditors. The Executive Member for Finance stated that increases were as a result of increased inflationary rises and a perceived increase in difficulty of hiring auditors to carry out such work.

Councillor Cooper also queried the re-opening of the outdoor swimming pool located in Woodstock. The Director of Finance referred to a decision taken by Cabinet in 2021, which had reduced the opening hours of the pool. The financial burdens rested with the Council, rather than the Council's leisure provider GLL, and opening the pool for prolonged periods over summer months was not considered to be financially viable.

Councillor Harry St. John queried ongoing pension contributions relating to the Publica Review and Transition, investment properties voids and rent-free periods, and funding for temporary officer posts, for example in the Economic Development department. The Executive Member for Economic Development highlighted that budget deficiencies from investment properties would be kept as low as possible, but it was highly unlikely that deficiencies would never fall away overall. The Director of Finance stated that the relevant information would be disseminated to the appropriate non-Executive Member outside of the Executive meeting.

Executive Members also discussed the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, stating that the strategy is based on the best information available at the time of budget setting, and that communication issues surrounding the base on which Council Tax is set, had been an ongoing problem for a significant period.

Councillor Alaric Smith proposed that the Executive agree to the recommendations as listed on the report. This was seconded by Councillor Andy Graham, was put to a vote, and was agreed unanimously by the Executive.

The Executive **Resolved** to:

1. Approve the draft fees and charges for 2024/25, as detailed in Annex G, for inclusion as part of the Budget recommendations to Council on 28th February 2024.

And Resolved to Recommend to Council to:

2. Approve the Council Tax Base shown in Annex F, calculated as £47,841.03 for the year 2024/25;
3. Authorise the Director of Finance to submit the National Non-Domestic Rates Return I (NNDRI) to Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities by the submission date of 31 January 2024.

136 Business Rates Discretionary Rate Relief Reconsideration

Councillor Alaric Smith, Executive Member for Finance, introduced the report, which reconsidered an application for Discretionary Rate Relief, submitted under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1998 for the financial year 2023/24.

Councillor Alaric Smith proposed that the Executive agree to the recommendation as listed on the report. This was seconded by Councillor Andy Graham, was put to a vote, and was agreed unanimously by the Executive.

Executive

17/January2024

The Executive **Resolved** to:

- I. Uphold the original decision not to award an additional 10% Discretionary Rate Relief submitted under S47 due to sufficient surplus held by the organisation.

137 Exclusion of Press and Public

This agenda item was not considered at the meeting.


138 Exempt Annex A - Business Rates Discretionary Rate Relief Reconsideration

This agenda item was not considered at the meeting.

The Meeting closed at 2.56pm.

CHAIR

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 <p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>	<p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>
<p>Name and Date of Committee</p>	<p>EXECUTIVE – 14 FEBRUARY 2024</p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN 2041 UPDATE</p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>Accountable Member</p>	<p>Councillor Charlie Maynard – Executive Member for Planning and Sustainable Development. Email: charlie.maynard@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Accountable Officer</p>	<p>Charlie Jackson – Assistant Director, Planning and Sustainability. Email: charlie.jackson@publicagroup.uk</p>
<p>Report Author</p>	<p>Chris Hargraves – Planning Policy Manager, Email: chris.hargraves@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Purpose</p>	<p>To provide an update on the progress of the new West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041 including the outcome of recent public consultation and the revised timetable for taking the plan through to adoption.</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p>Annex A – Consultation Summary Report – February 2024 Annex B – Local Development Scheme (LDS) Update – February 2024</p>
<p>Recommendations</p>	<p>That the Executive resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the content of the consultation summary report attached at Annex A, in particular the key themes arising which will be reflected in the next stage of Local Plan consultation; and 2. Agree to approve the updated Local Development Scheme (LDS) attached at Annex B.
<p>Corporate Priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting Residents First • A Good Quality of Life for All • A Better Environment for People and Wildlife • Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency • Working Together for West Oxfordshire
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>No</p>

Exempt	No
Consultees/ Consultation	<p>Annex A provides a detailed summary of the previous Local Plan public consultation which took place from 30 August – 25 October 2023.</p> <p>The emerging Local Plan will be the subject of further informal public consultation in June/July 2024 as part of the Regulation 18 plan preparation stage.</p> <p>It is anticipated that there will then be a further, statutory 6-week period of public consultation at the formal Regulation 19 stage in November 2024.</p>

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Members will be aware that the District Council is in the process of producing a new Local Plan, which, when adopted, will replace the current Local Plan adopted in September 2018.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to summarise the progress which has been made to date and to explain the new timetable for taking the Local Plan forward to adoption.

2. PROGRESS TO DATE

- 2.1 The new Local Plan is currently at the 'plan preparation' stage, under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 2.2 This is essentially the period within which the Council scopes the content of the plan and tests different options with a view to identifying a preferred approach.
- 2.3 Two major public consultations have been carried out so far including 'Your Voice Counts' in August 2022 and 'Your Place, Your Plan' in August 2023.
- 2.4 The purpose of the first consultation in 2022 was to seek early views on the scope of the new Local Plan asking a series of questions on potential areas of focus under six key themes.
- 2.5 The consultation attracted a very good level of response and a summary report highlighting the key issues raised has been published [online](#)
- 2.6 The second consultation in 2023 was intended to move the discussion on, looking at draft local plan objectives and policy topics as well as potential patterns of growth. It also included a call for sites, ideas and opportunities.
- 2.7 Section 3.0 below provides an overview of the second consultation.

3. 'YOUR PLACE, YOUR PLAN'

- 3.1 The 'Your Place, Your Plan' consultation took place over a period of 8-weeks from 30 August – 25 October 2023.
- 3.2 The consultation comprised a mixture of digital engagement via the Council's online platform 'CitizenLab' and various 'in-person' events, including workshops and public exhibitions.
- 3.3 The consultation focused on three specific areas:
 - Draft local plan objectives – a series of draft objectives to help guide the future direction and content of the local plan;
 - The future pattern of development – 8 different scenarios for how future growth across the District might be distributed; and
 - A call for sites, ideas and opportunities – seeking views on how land within the District could be used in the future.

3.4 In terms of submitted responses, the consultation generated a total of almost 2,000 comments from around 450 individuals and organisations, broadly grouped as follows:

- General public
- Landowners, developers and agents
- Local interest groups
- Statutory consultees
- Other local authorities
- Town and Parish Councils

3.5 A consultation summary report has been produced and is attached at Annex A. The report provides a detailed summary of the responses received with a brief overview also set out below.

Draft Local Plan Objectives

3.6 In general terms, of the 30 draft objectives identified, many respondents expressed strong support, particularly for those relating to climate change, healthy place shaping, environmental protection, housing and job growth and ensuring strong local communities.

3.7 It was notable that a number of respondents, whilst supporting the general sentiment of the draft objectives, felt that they were too numerous, involved an element of repetition/overlap and in some cases potentially conflict with each other and/or lack precision.

3.8 This suggests that there would be merit in ‘streamlining’ the draft objectives, potentially reducing them in number and ensuring that each one is internally consistent and sufficiently clear in terms of what it is seeking to achieve and the policies and proposals that flow from it.

3.9 The detailed feedback received will be considered by Officers as the objectives are refined and used to inform the proposed policy content of the plan as it starts to take shape.

Pattern of Development

3.10 The consultation sought views on 8 potential scenarios that could form the basis of the pattern of development (spatial strategy) for the new Local Plan. The scenarios included:

- Scenario 1 - Hierarchical approach
- Scenario 2 - Main Service Centre Focus (Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton)
- Scenario 3 - Witney Focus
- Scenario 4 - Carterton Focus
- Scenario 5 - Dispersed Growth
- Scenario 6 - Village ‘Clusters’
- Scenario 7 - New Settlement
- Scenario 8 - Public Transport Focus

- 3.11 These were included to stimulate some broad discussion around the respective merits of each approach. It was noted that the scenarios are not mutually exclusive and it may be that a combination of different approaches will ultimately be taken forward depending on feedback and evidence.
- 3.12 In purely quantitative terms, the scenarios which attracted the greatest degree of support from respondents included Scenarios 1, 2 4 and 8, whilst the scenarios which attracted the least support were 3, 5, 6 and 7.
- 3.13 138 separate emails were received in relation to Scenario 8, expressing particular support for the reinstatement of a railway line from Carterton to Oxford.
- 3.14 The detailed comments received will be considered by Officers along with supporting evidence in order to determine a preferred approach which will be the subject of further consultation later in the year.

Call for Sites, Ideas and Opportunities

- 3.15 The third aspect of the consultation consisted of an open invitation for stakeholders to put forward thoughts on how land in the district might be used in the future such as new housing, employment, infrastructure, community use, green space, nature recovery and renewable energy.
- 3.16 A large number of suggestions were put forward, ranging from specific sites to more general ideas and opportunities. A schedule of these is included in the consultation summary report at Annex A.
- 3.17 The majority of suggested sites relate to proposed housing and employment uses and the relative merits of these will be assessed as part of the evidence base underpinning the new Local Plan. This will include further engagement with Town and Parish Councils.
- 3.18 The various other suggestions received will also be taken into account through the development of the plan itself and through the preparation of relevant supporting evidence including in relation to infrastructure planning.

4. TAKING THE LOCAL PLAN FORWARD TO ADOPTION

- 4.1 Building on the success of the first two stages of public engagement, Officers are keen to accelerate the progress of the new Local Plan and are now scoping the anticipated policy content taking account of previous feedback, national policy, best practice and emerging technical evidence.
- 4.2 The intention is that a series of preferred policy approaches will be the subject of further, informal Regulation 18 consultation in June 2024.
- 4.3 It is anticipated that this will lead to formal Regulation 19 public consultation on a submission draft version of the Local Plan in November 2024 and depending on the outcome of that stage, Officers anticipate being able to submit the draft plan for examination by April 2025 (or sooner if possible).
- 4.4 This would lead to examination hearing sessions in summer 2025.

- 4.5 This proposed timetable is set out in more detail in the updated Local Development Scheme (LDS) attached at Annex B.
- 4.6 The LDS has also been updated to reflect the current position on a number of other planning policy documents including the Salt Cross Area Action Plan (AAP) and the Developer Contributions and Combe Village Design Statement Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which were formally adopted in July 2023.
- 4.7 Subject to the approval of Members, the updated LDS will be published online and made physically available at a number of locations across the District.

5. NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 By way of immediate next steps, both the consultation summary report (Annex A) and the updated LDS (Annex B) will be published online.
- 5.2 Officers will then scope and begin to draft the next consultation paper in advance of planned consultation in June. Supporting technical evidence on key topics such as housing and employment needs, sustainability and infrastructure delivery will be prepared in parallel.

6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 6.1 The District Council could choose not to progress with an update of the Local Plan. However, local authorities are required to keep plans up to date, typically reviewing them every 5-years or so.
- 6.2 The Regulation 10A review of the current Local Plan carried out in September 2023 highlighted a number of policies which require updating, including those relating to housing provision.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The preparation and adoption of a new Local Plan has significant financial implications with provision for this having been made through the District Council's budget setting process.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The report raises no direct legal implications. The Local Plan will be prepared in accordance with legislative requirements and when considered at examination, the appointed Planning Inspector will determine whether or not the District Council has fulfilled those requirements.

9. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 The report presents no significant risks.

10. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 10.1 It is intended that an Equalities Impact Assessment will accompany the next stage of public consultation in June 2024.

11. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The climate and ecological emergencies will form a central component of the new Local Plan and the policies contained therein.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 None.

(END)

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West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041
‘Your Place, Your Plan’
Focussed Consultation: Ideas and Objectives



Consultation Summary Report

February 2024

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Schedule of submissions (sites, ideas and opportunities)

Appendix 2 – Table Notes from Town and Parish Council Event – 10 October 2023

Appendix 3 – Table Notes from Town and Parish Council Event – 18 October 2023

Appendix 4 – Table Notes from District Council Member Workshop – 26 October 2023

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Council is preparing a new Local Plan which will help shape the future of West Oxfordshire to 2041.
- 1.2 Having an up-to-date plan in place is vital because it provides a vision and framework to guide decisions on how, where and when development can come forward and how we can protect and enhance our surroundings for current and future generations.
- 1.3 Preparing a Local Plan falls into two main stages:
 - **Plan preparation** (known as the Regulation 18 stage) when the Council carries out informal engagement on the potential scope and content of the plan and explores different options to help identify a preferred approach.
 - **Publication** (known as the Regulation 19 stage) when the Council carries out formal consultation on the final draft version of the plan which it considers to be 'sound' and intends to submit for examination.
- 1.4 The Council is currently at the Regulation 18 plan-preparation stage and has held two separate public consultations to date.
- 1.5 In August 2022, an initial [scoping consultation](#) took place, seeking general views on the potential areas of focus for the new Local Plan.
- 1.6 Subsequently, in August 2023 a further consultation [‘Your Place, Your Plan’](#) took place seeking views on draft local plan objectives, the potential pattern of development and potential sites, ideas and opportunities.
- 1.7 The purpose of this report is to provide a detailed overview of the second consultation including how and when it took place and the main messages arising from the responses received.

2. Consultation Overview

2.1 The 'Your Place, Your Plan' consultation took place over an 8-week period from 30 August – 25 October 2023.

2.2 Views were sought on 3 particular elements:

- **Draft local plan objectives** – a series of draft objectives to guide the future evolution of the plan in terms of its overall approach and anticipated policy content.
- **The future pattern of development in West Oxfordshire** – different scenarios for how and where we might look to focus future growth in the period up to 2041.
- **Call for sites, ideas and opportunities** – an open invitation for stakeholders to put forward thoughts on how land in the district might be used in the future such as new housing, employment, infrastructure, community use, green space, nature recovery and renewable energy.

2.3 The consultation comprised a mixture of online material via the Council's [digital engagement platform](#) and a number of 'in-person' events as detailed below.

Public Exhibitions

- Carterton Public Exhibition – 26 September 2023
- Woodstock Public Exhibition – 3 October 2023
- Witney Public Exhibition – 16 October 2023
- Chipping Norton Public Exhibition – 23 October 2023

Town and Parish Council Workshops

- 'Uplands' Town and Parish Council Event – 10 October 2023
- 'Lowlands' Town and Parish Council Event – 18 October 2023

Other Events

- Chipping Norton Stakeholder Event – 12 October 2023
- District Council Member Workshop – 26 October 2023

2.4 In terms of submitted responses, the consultation generated a total of almost 2,000 comments from around 450 individuals and organisations, broadly grouped as follows:

- General public
- Landowners, developers and agents
- Local interest groups
- Statutory consultees
- Other local authorities
- Town and Parish Councils

2.5 Sections 3 – 7 of this report provide a detailed summary of the main issues raised in the following order:

- Section 3 - Draft local plan objectives
- Section 4 - Pattern of development
- Section 5 - Sites, ideas and opportunities
- Section 6 - Other general comments
- Section 7 – Stakeholder events

3. Draft Local Plan Objectives

3.1 As part of the consultation, views were sought on 30 draft local plan objectives, set out under six themes:

- Tackling the climate and ecological emergency.
- Healthy, safe, strong and inclusive communities.
- An enhanced natural and built environment.
- Attractive, accessible and thriving places.
- Meeting the housing needs of all.
- A vibrant, resilient and diverse local economy.

3.2 These themes were well-supported through the previous consultation in 2022 and were considered to provide a good basis to start exploring the key objectives of the new local plan.

3.3 For each draft objective, the consultation explained why it had been identified and what potential policies might be put in place to help deliver it.

General Feedback on Draft Plan Objectives

3.4 Many respondents supported the draft objectives in principle. Particular issues that respondents felt should be robustly addressed through the new local plan included:

- Sustainable development
- Building to high environmental standards
- Climate change
- Reducing environmental impact
- Minimising speculative development
- Ensuring good access to services, facilities and amenities
- Walking and cycling
- Improving public transport, particularly in more rural areas
- Providing high quality new homes to meet various needs
- Timely and consistent delivery of new homes
- The provision of supporting infrastructure (health, education, transport, utilities, green space, community etc.)
- Boosting the economy and supporting local businesses, including the creation of new job opportunities
- Supporting the rural economy
- Preservation of the rural character of the District including the Cotswolds National Landscape
- The need for new development to be carefully balanced with protecting the intrinsic value of the countryside

- High-quality design
- Making the most efficient use of land including previously developed (brownfield) land

3.5 It was notable that a number of respondents, whilst supporting the general sentiment of the draft objectives, felt that they were too numerous, involved an element of repetition/overlap and in some cases potentially conflict with each other and/or lack precision.

3.6 This suggests that there would be merit in ‘streamlining’ the draft objectives, potentially reducing them in number and ensuring that each one is internally consistent and sufficiently clear in terms of what it is seeking to achieve and the policies and proposals that flow from it.

3.7 Set out below is the more specific feedback received on the six themes and draft objectives.

Tackling the climate and ecological emergency

3.8 Many respondents advocated for climate change mitigation as part of new developments along with promoting ecological conservation. Strong support was expressed for carbon reduction, energy-efficient buildings, renewable energy integration and biodiversity enhancements.

3.9 There were calls for some flexibility in policies to adapt to rapid advancements and the importance of sustainable transport solutions, emphasizing the significance of balancing environmental goals with housing and economic growth.

3.10 Support was expressed for development that is both sustainable and inclusive, ensuring developments are accessible via public transport, facilitate active travel, and provide amenities within walking or cycling distance. Additionally, comments highlight the need for environmentally friendly building methods and technologies that contribute to net-zero emissions and resilient infrastructure.

3.11 Several comments indicate the importance of supporting the rural economy and tourism sector. Respondents suggest that policies should enable growth in these areas, considering their contribution to local economies, employment, and cultural value.

3.12 Some concerns were expressed about introducing overly stringent environmental policies that may impede development, especially when dealing with existing buildings or areas with heritage value. The need for viable, feasible standards consistent with national regulations to prevent negative economic impacts was also stressed.

Objective 1 – To minimise the impact we are having on our changing climate by reducing carbon emissions across all sources, with a particular focus on transport, housing, industry and energy.

What we said

- 3.13 Reducing the impact we are having on climate change by cutting carbon emissions is a core component of national and local policy and is critical if we are to help tackle the ongoing climate and ecological emergency.
- 3.14 Potential policies might include sustainable construction, renewable energy provision and retrofitting and ensuring that the location and design of new development promotes more active and healthy travel.

What you said

- 3.15 There was strong consensus on the importance of addressing climate change and reducing carbon emissions, emphasizing the role of local planning in mitigating impacts. The focus should be on policies that would reduce emissions through various forms of development, especially in transport, housing, industry, and energy.
- 3.16 Substantial support was expressed for achieving net zero carbon in new builds, enhancing energy performance, and utilizing renewable energy, while also considering the effect of these policies on viability and delivery of other objectives such as affordable housing.
- 3.17 The importance of adopting a holistic approach, considering the role of building regulations and national standards, and engaging in cross-boundary cooperation for strategic planning was highlighted.
- 3.18 Support was expressed for housing developments that take into account carbon emissions and accessibility to services including the need for strategic, sustainable locations to encourage use of public transport and create 20-minute neighbourhoods. The importance of aligning housing development with jobs and infrastructure, while not compromising on other needs like rural development viability was also highlighted.
- 3.19 Multiple comments from the development industry emphasise that enhancements in building regulations are driving energy efficiency, suggesting that local plans should not overstep or contradict these regulations. The Future Homes Standard is mentioned as a significant step in energy efficiency for new buildings. There was a particular call for clarity and consistency in policy definitions and requirements that reflect national standards to ensure viability and effectiveness.

- 3.20 Strong support expressed for the promotion of sustainable transport methods as part of the strategy to reduce carbon emissions. Improving public transport infrastructure, establishing 20-minute neighbourhoods and promoting active travel including walking and cycling are seen as crucial steps. There is a desire for development strategies that balance public transport options with feasibility, cost, and the transition to electric or alternative fuel vehicles.
- 3.21 Many comments highlight the urgency of addressing the ecological emergency alongside climate goals. They endorse biodiversity initiatives such as net gains for nature and the integration of environmental considerations in policy making to ensure the viability of developments does not threaten ecological goals. Emphasis should be placed on protecting rural environments and water resources, suggesting a need for policies that encourage nature recovery and avoid deterioration.

Objective 2 - To facilitate the roll out of clean, renewable energy at a range of different scales in suitable, appropriate locations across the District.

What we said

- 3.22 Shifting away from the use of fossil fuels and towards more renewable and low carbon energy solutions is a key aim of national and local policy and one of the Council's corporate priorities.
- 3.23 Potential local plan policies might include the allocation of sites for renewable/low-carbon energy use (or general criteria to guide such proposals) community-led initiatives, energy requirements for new buildings and support for retrofitting energy solutions in existing properties.

What you said

- 3.24 A common theme across comments is the support expressed for renewable energy use and the associated challenges related to grid capacity. An emphasis is placed on not considering these issues in isolation and the need for flexibility in policy to adapt to emerging technologies. Accompanying these discussions are considerations for viability and the deliverability of the overall plan, particularly relating to new build developments.
- 3.25 Several comments address the need for rollout of clean, renewable energy at various scales in appropriate areas. There is a call for criteria-based approaches and local engagement in the planning process to ensure developments are well-situated and take into account environmental, social, and economic factors.

- 3.26 Explicit concerns exist about the economic viability and practical feasibility of policies related to renewable energy. Respondents felt that new policies must balance various factors and be feasible considering the economic realities, highlighting the importance of flexible policy wording to account for these concerns.
- 3.27 There is a collective concern about renewable energy projects having a negative impact on the countryside, biodiversity, and local ecosystems. The importance of considering biodiversity, protecting landscapes, and avoiding large-scale developments that could harm scenic and natural value is stressed.
- 3.28 A focus on increasing energy efficiency and retrofitting of low and zero carbon energy solutions in existing buildings and infrastructure is highlighted. The integration of renewable energy into new and existing constructions, while avoiding damage to heritage and natural landscapes, is considered key.
- 3.29 Comments indicate a desire for community-led and supported initiatives in the planning and implementation of renewable energy projects. The inclusion of local knowledge and preferences in planning is seen as vital for the success and acceptance of energy projects within the district.
- 3.30 There is a repeated call for solar panels on new builds, particularly on commercial properties and public buildings. Retrofitting schools with solar panels is also mentioned, along with the careful placement of solar parks to avoid negative impacts on productive agricultural land and the landscape.

Objective 3 - To respond and effectively adapt to the consequences of climate change that are already happening, building resilience and wherever possible, reversing harmful impacts, including nature's decline.

What we said

- 3.31 Planning has a key role to play in responding and adapting to the effects of climate change that are already happening such as increased temperatures and flood risk. It can also help to reverse some of those impacts including through the recovery of nature.
- 3.32 Potential policy topics related to this include flood risk, the design of new development, green infrastructure provision and biodiversity net gain (BNG).

What you said

- 3.33 Particular emphasis given to the importance of responding to climate change by building resilience and adapting to its impacts; this includes managing flood risk, promoting sustainable building design that prevents overheating and increases ventilation, and promoting water efficiency measures.

- 3.34 Nature-based solutions such as urban cooling, habitat restoration, carbon sequestration, and natural flood defence were frequently cited along with the necessity of considering viability and deliverability of related policies.
- 3.35 Many comments support policies focused on nature recovery, including biodiversity net gain initiatives and enhancing habitat connectivity. There's an emphasis on the value of integrating these elements into new developments, using green infrastructure and protecting existing natural features. Additionally, the importance of developing holistic policies that consider ecological and biodiversity impacts is highlighted.
- 3.36 Sustainable building designs that meet the challenges posed by climate change, such as energy efficiency, proper insulation, and renewable energy sources, are encouraged. A consistent note across comments is the importance of aligning with national building regulations and standards with any additional local requirements needing to be backed by strong feasibility and viability evidence.
- 3.37 A few responses are sceptical of the public sector's ability to manage renewable energy effectively, doubting the cost-effectiveness and resources available to local councils for such endeavors. There are also some doubts raised about the Government's commitment to renewable energy policies and the practicality of certain technologies in the UK climate.

Objective 4 - To make the most efficient use of land, buildings and natural capital and ensure that waste is minimised whilst being seen as a valuable resource.

What we said

- 3.38 Making the most efficient use of our assets and reducing waste is a key component of sustainable development and of particular relevance to Oxfordshire as the county seeks to 'decouple' growth from the consumption of finite resources.
- 3.39 Potential policies in this area include those relating to natural capital, the density of development, re-use of previously developed (brownfield) land and the use of 'circular economy' principles.

What you said

- 3.40 Comments express broad support for the efficient use of land, including maximizing the potential of brownfield sites before considering greenfield development. Constraints such as respecting local character, considering site-specific constraints, and balancing development densities are also mentioned.

- 3.41 The importance of a 'sequential approach' and the inevitability of having to allocate some greenfield sites due to the insufficiency of brownfield sites to meet housing needs are emphasized.
- 3.42 The complexity and cost of brownfield redevelopment are also noted, particularly in the context of affordable housing delivery and local plan trajectories.
- 3.43 Natural capital and waste minimisation are recurrent issues, with some comments advocating for natural capital-based approaches and circular economy principles in new development.
- 3.44 Many comments highlight housing density concerns, advocating for developments with suitable densities to optimize land use while also providing green infrastructure or amenities.
- 3.45 Some felt that development should align with NPPF criteria and consider retrofitting, low-rise flats for better use of urban spaces, and a focus on smaller homes to cater to pressing housing needs. Intertwined with these ideas are suggestions for a design-led approach to ensure that development is context-specific and manages growth capacity adequately.
- 3.46 Some comments support the adoption of a natural capital-led approach to development. They highlight the need for improvement in biodiversity and suggest that developments, especially on greenfield sites, can contribute to natural capital through biodiversity net gains.
- 3.47 Incorporating natural capital considerations into planning decisions and actively enhancing the environment through development are proposed. However, caution is advised against undermining biodiversity conservation and oversimplification of natural capital assessments, calling for a balanced approach that recognizes the intrinsic value of nature beyond economic metrics.

Healthy, Safe, Strong and Inclusive Communities

- 3.48 Numerous comments stress the importance of fostering healthy, safe, strong, and inclusive communities through new developments that provide convenient access to services, facilities, and recreational opportunities. The need to support physical and mental well-being by offering various amenities, such as green infrastructure, public open spaces, and opportunities for active lifestyles, is highlighted as a way to enhance the quality of life for residents and reduce social isolation.
- 3.49 Several respondents advocate for the development of sustainable transportation options, including rail and bus services, as well as the promotion of walking and cycling. Emphasis is placed on the connection between transport and development location to facilitate easy access to employment and day-to-day services while minimizing dependence on cars.
- 3.50 Support is indicated for new developments that can improve employment prospects, underpin economic vitality, and align with local industry strategies. Providing diverse employment opportunities and supporting training and skills development are seen as critical for the aspiration and success of communities.
- 3.51 The historic and cultural environment is noted for its contribution to individual and community well-being. The inclusion, diversity, and educational value of heritage sites and their role in promoting knowledge and understanding are recognized.
- 3.52 Infrastructure is a recurring topic, with many respondents calling for the strategic planning and timely delivery of infrastructure and community services. This encompasses health and educational facilities, public open spaces, utilities, and the role of new residential development in supporting local services.

Objective 5 - To help achieve thriving communities where people can lead healthy, happy and sustainable lives, going about their daily activities in well-designed, safe, crime-free, inclusive and accessible environments.

What we said

- 3.53 Planning has a key role to play in promoting the health of our local communities and tackling inequalities and deprivation through the promotion of healthier lifestyles and improved accessibility and inclusivity.
- 3.54 Potential policies to address this include the adoption of local healthy place shaping principles, the concept of 'living local', design quality standards and the use of health impact assessments.

What you said

- 3.55 Many comments support the vision of creating healthy, happy, and sustainable communities. They emphasise the need for high-quality design in new developments, green spaces, and easy access to amenities and local services. A common suggestion is for these spaces to be within a 20-minute walking distance, aligning with the '20-minute neighbourhood' concept.
- 3.56 Comments widely support fostering environments conducive to active travel and physical activity. This includes the integration of cycling and pedestrian routes, access to public transport, and the provision of sports and outdoor recreational facilities. Several comments also stressed the importance of connecting new developments with existing routes and enhancing green infrastructure.
- 3.57 A recurrent theme in the comments is the need for high design quality and adherence to local standards in new developments. Mention of local design codes suggests a desire for developments to reflect local context and diversity, with some pointing out the need for these design codes to be flexible enough to cater to varying local characteristics.
- 3.58 Several comments highlight the contributions that new residential developments should make towards creating and funding local infrastructure, green spaces, and leisure facilities. Notably, there are suggestions regarding the use of Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds and the necessity for these contributions to meet regulatory tests.
- 3.59 Numerous comments stress the importance of locating new developments near facilities and amenities to promote sustainable communities. This includes ensuring that schools, shops, and healthcare services are easily reachable, minimizing car dependence, and linking these with reliable public transport.
- 3.60 There is a call from some respondents for new developments to undergo Health Impact Assessments (HIAs) to ensure that they contribute to health outcomes. Yet, a counterpoint is raised suggesting that separate HIAs for developments that align with the local plan may not be necessary, particularly if a plan-wide HIA has been completed.
- 3.61 A view that arts, entertainment, and culture play a crucial role in fostering community well-being and social interaction is expressed. Emphasis is placed on the need for planning policies to recognize and support arts and cultural organizations as part of the strategy for building healthy and happy communities.

- 3.62 Comments highlight the importance of early planning and protecting spaces for sports pitches and natural green areas, including the need for access standards to natural spaces and local recreational facilities.

Objective 6 - To create environments that support and encourage healthy lifestyles through promoting physical activity for people of all ages and abilities, including maximising safe and convenient opportunities for walking, cycling and the use of public transport and the provision of sport, recreation and play facilities and high quality green space.

What we said

- 3.63 Promoting and enabling opportunities for increased physical activity is a vital component of promoting good mental and physical health and also reducing car dependence.
- 3.64 Potential policies include those relating to standards of provision for leisure facilities and green space, the adoption of active design principles and the use of local design codes.

What you said

- 3.65 Many comments advocate for healthy, sustainable communities, with emphasis on quality design and provision in new developments that contribute to physical activity, meeting spaces, and relaxation.
- 3.66 There is support for incorporating local standards informed by national guidance for leisure, open space, and green infrastructure, acknowledging the relationship between new housing and community well-being.
- 3.67 Contributions through Section 106, CIL, and proactive policy measures are seen as means to fund and deliver such facilities, ensuring they are accessible and meet local needs.
- 3.68 The considerations for health impact assessments and local design codes addressing diversity in West Oxfordshire are highlighted, suggesting these should be practical, not onerous, and reflect local context.
- 3.69 References were made to design quality expectations for new neighbourhoods and the importance of good design for promoting sustainable and active travel modes. This extends to a recognition of the value in integrating heritage appreciation and local distinctiveness in design, with a call for a flexible policy approach that allows for site-specific innovation and character.

- 3.70 Recognition of West Oxfordshire's diversity in terms of design codes is a repeated point, suggesting that any codes should be sensitive to the variety of local contexts to avoid hindering development schemes.
- 3.71 Several comments discuss Health Impact Assessments, with strong sentiment that plan-wide assessments should suffice for developments in accordance with the Local Plan. Additional HIAs for applications are seen by some as redundant unless for large, unallocated sites with unforeseen impacts. A preference for embedding HIAs into validation requirements for planning applications is expressed, allowing for easier updates as metrics and toolkits evolve.
- 3.72 Emphasizing the benefits of high-quality green spaces for health and community engagement, these comments underline the need for contributions toward sustainable and biodiverse environments. The protection and enhancement of natural landscapes, particularly within the Cotswolds National Landscape, are touched upon as critical for leisure and recreation, suggesting policy support to increase access and improve the ecological value of green spaces.
- 3.73 Some comments highlight the role of arts, culture, and social activities in supporting community well-being, suggesting that policies should explicitly recognize and integrate these elements. The potential for arts and culture to contribute to vibrant, socially interactive, and inclusive communities is noted, but there is a concern about the lack of clear prioritization for the sector in the current plan.
- 3.74 Endorsements for adopting Active Design principles in new developments to create healthy and active communities suggest an overarching support for incorporating initiatives that promote physical activity.

Objective 7 - To deliver integrated and inclusive environments that promote good mental health and wellbeing for those living, working and visiting West Oxfordshire and help tackle mental health issues.

What we said

- 3.75 Mental health issues are increasingly common and can have significant, long-lasting impacts. The local plan has an important role in helping to address issues such as isolation and loneliness through the creation of well-designed, accessible places, service provision and inclusive design.
- 3.76 Potential policies include those relating to the provision of high-quality, accessible spaces and social infrastructure, improved access to services and design measures to address issues such as crime and the fear of crime and the needs of different people (e.g. dementia-friendly spaces and buildings).

What you said

- 3.77 Several comments emphasize the importance of planning and development policies in promoting good mental health and well-being. Comments suggest that creating inclusive and integrated environments, providing high-quality public spaces, and ensuring access to green spaces are crucial. The role of design codes, financial contributions, and detailed design assessments are highlighted to ensure developments contribute positively to mental health.
- 3.78 Comments point to the need for accessible community infrastructure that can be achieved through developer contributions. The integration of safe, well-lit, and functional spaces is mentioned alongside the need for improved access to services and cultural activities.
- 3.79 There is mention of the importance of having connected neighborhoods with day-to-day facilities to foster social connections and inclusivity. The development and growth should focus on these aspects to support the vitality and viability of communities and combat loneliness.
- 3.80 A need for design criteria focusing on safety, addressing crime, and anti-social behavior is discussed to ensure residents feel secure. This would involve assessing such criteria in detail at the design stage and establishing principles at the outline planning application stage.
- 3.81 The comments place an emphasis on creating and linking homes to quality green spaces. There is a call for policy measures to uphold green space standards, which are seen as essential for mental and physical well-being.
- 3.82 Comments suggest that policies should support the growth of rural settlements to maintain local amenities and services. The importance of affordable housing and providing access to safe green spaces to enhance community resilience is stressed.
- 3.83 Comments express a strong need for policies that support and protect community and cultural facilities, such as pubs, which are vital for social interaction and combating loneliness. Community support for such venues is evident, and their contribution to social fabric is deemed immense.

Objective 8 - To create a healthier food environment, with the opportunity for people to make better food choices, including growing and consuming healthy food locally.

What we said

- 3.84 Poor diet is a major risk factor for ill health and premature death and West Oxfordshire performs less well than other areas, with a higher proportion of overweight adults compared to the county average. Improving the consumption and production of healthier food is a countywide priority.
- 3.85 Potential policies include community growing spaces and edible planting, the provision of multi-purpose hubs, protection of the best and most versatile agricultural land and support for sustainable farming enterprises.

What you said

- 3.86 Comments reflect strong support for the Council's objectives to foster healthier food environments and provide opportunities for local food growing. Suggestions include incorporating orchards, allotments, and community gardens in new developments, promoting regenerative farming practices, and ensuring local food production is considered in planning policies. Conservation of high-quality agricultural land and additional support for local farmers are also highlighted.
- 3.87 Several comments emphasize the potential community and health benefits of integrating spaces for local food production into new developments. The idea of community orchards, allotments, and farmer markets not only supports local food consumption but also strengthens community bonds, fosters mental health, and can offer educational and employment opportunities.
- 3.88 While there is general support for better food choices and local food production, some comments raise concerns about the challenges in enforcing these policies. The practicality of implementing initiatives like foraging, community orchards, and protection of agricultural land against development pressure, as well as balancing them with other policy requirements, are questioned.
- 3.89 A few comments connect the objective of a healthier food environment with broader environmental and educational initiatives. Suggestions include creating educational opportunities around local food production, incentivizing biodiversity-friendly farming, and working with schools to link local agriculture with nutritional education.

- 3.90 Comments reflect a strong endorsement for initiatives promoting local, sustainable agriculture, including agro-ecological and regenerative farming. There is a consensus on the importance of these practices for soil health, climate change mitigation, and sustainable food production. Integrating tree and shrub farming with traditional agriculture (agroforestry) is also highlighted for its comprehensive benefits.
- 3.91 Several comments emphasize the need to expand green community spaces. Suggestions include community orchards, gardens, and the utilization of 'redundant' spaces. Joining these spaces into nature corridors is also mentioned for enhancing biodiversity.
- 3.92 There is a shared interest in promoting biodiversity and nature conservation through the establishment of species-rich hedgerows and fruiting trees within developments, streets, and parks.

Objective 9 - To identify and secure the timely investment in infrastructure needed for health and wellbeing and the care system, including measures for the prevention of health related problems.

What we said

- 3.93 Ensuring that our local communities benefit from proper investment in supporting infrastructure is a core component of national and local policy and a corporate priority for the District Council.
- 3.94 The Local Plan has a key role to play in making sure that future growth is properly supported by new and enhanced infrastructure so that existing services and facilities are not put under strain and that new development is able to be accommodated.
- 3.95 Potential policies include site-specific infrastructure plans and phasing strategies for larger developments and the provision of multi-functional, shared, adaptable infrastructure (e.g. community hubs).

What you said

- 3.96 Several comments emphasise the importance of investing in infrastructure to support health and wellbeing. They articulate support for delivering these improvements through new residential developments, Section 106 contributions, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments, and alignment with Local Plans. Community engagement and collaboration with service providers like the NHS are considered critical to facilitate appropriate provisions.

- 3.97 Comments stress the necessity of timely and appropriate infrastructure development to support new and existing communities. This includes the creation of site-specific Infrastructure Delivery Plans (IDP), the importance of robust viability work to support policy decisions, and the potential for schools and communal spaces to share resources for adaptability.
- 3.98 The comments reflect a concern for adequate infrastructure planning and community services in relation to new housing developments. There is a specific emphasis on ensuring that all developments, not just large ones, are considered in infrastructure plans.
- 3.99 Comments mention the need for local sewage treatment plants to handle additional waste and for new developments to include necessary services such as GP surgeries, pharmacies, and dental practices. They advocate for conditions such as Grampian conditions to preclude occupancy until infrastructure is completed and for endowments to manage provisions sustainably.
- 3.100 Many comments mention the need for local community engagement in developing policies for health and wellbeing infrastructure. However, they also recognize that local aspirations may sometimes differ from national-level policy provisions. The balance between local desires and overarching national objectives requires careful consideration and dialogue among stakeholders.
- 3.101 Some comments express concern over the economic impact of new developments on local communities, including infrastructure funding. They highlight the issues of affordability for local people, the regulatory framework to ensure viability and the potential of new developments to assist in funding essential infrastructure without undermining plan deliverability.
- 3.101 Respondents point to the need for detailed, site-specific viability analyses to support the planning process, ensuring that contributions from development are realistic and enforceable.
- 3.102 There is also a call for infrastructure, such as school facilities and community hubs, to be multi-functional, shared, and adaptable. This would help to future-proof investments by allowing for easy adaptation and evolution, reducing the need for costly modifications and addressing embedded carbon concerns.

An enhanced natural and built environment

- 3.103 Comments emphasise a strong alignment between environmental preservation and enhancements and the local plan. The importance of protecting rural landscapes, existing green spaces, Green Belt areas, and designated heritage assets is noted. Stress is laid on the integration of nature into urban planning through connected green spaces. Conservation of biodiversity and natural environments is seen as intrinsic to the health and wellbeing of West Oxfordshire's communities.
- 3.104 Respondents express support for proactive, locally driven approaches to conserving and enhancing biodiversity. They suggest embedding nature recovery plans, adopting local guidelines, and recognizing the benefits of ecosystem services. Some criticism is directed at the inadequacy of current strategies or lack of implementing such nature-conscious policies. Adherence to existing national policies or initiatives, such as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Oxfordshire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy, is recommended.
- 3.105 Comments reflect the tug-of-war between economic development needs and the environmental aspirations of preserving and enhancing biodiversity. While some appreciate the economic success that can come from utilising natural environments, they also stress that it should not compromise sustainable development. Acknowledgment of and flexibility in policy are sought to ensure developments contribute positively to biodiversity and environmental goals.
- 3.106 The need for broader community education regarding biodiversity's importance and the danger of its decline is highlighted. There is a call to raise public awareness and to ensure residents understand the policies' tangible benefits. The participation of local councils in nature recovery efforts and the necessity for them to reflect and enhance local biodiversity within their strategies is stressed.

Objective 10 - To conserve and enhance the intrinsic character and beauty of West Oxfordshire's countryside, at both a strategic level (e.g. the Cotswolds) and a local level, recognising its contribution to people's quality of life and the area's social and economic wellbeing.

What we said

- 3.107 National policy and initial feedback on the local plan so far emphasise the need for the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside to be recognised, protected and wherever possible enhanced. This is a particularly important issue for West Oxfordshire which has distinctive and varied countryside, contributing to the district's character including the Cotswolds National Landscape.

3.108 Potential policies include locally specific measures to conserve character and beauty of the countryside and landscape, rural design quality, Green Belt and support for landscape-scale initiatives.

What you said

- 3.109 The majority of comments underscore the importance of preserving and enhancing the natural and historic landscape of West Oxfordshire, recognizing its intrinsic beauty and contributions to people's quality of life and the area's social and economic wellbeing. Comments suggest balancing landscape conservation with the need for housing development, highlighting opportunities for developments to include biodiversity net gain, strategic green infrastructure networks, and careful rural designs to positively enhance the character of an area.
- 3.110 Comments call for strategic planning decisions that weigh the need for new housing against landscape preservation. The overarching consensus is that new developments should focus on areas with the least environmental impact, suggesting that a proper balance between conservation efforts and development needs is crucial.
- 3.111 Several comments emphasise the need for new developments to maintain or improve rural design quality and local character. It is suggested that development should be compatible with existing landscape qualities, using high-quality materials, and that further clarity on rural design requirements and definitions is needed.
- 3.112 Some comments highlight the role that agricultural management plays in conserving and enhancing the countryside's beauty. They stress the importance of enhancing biodiversity as a priority, protecting high-quality agricultural land, and addressing river pollution to maintain ecological health.
- 3.113 Comments express concerns regarding the development within designated landscapes such as the Cotswolds National Landscape, Green Belt, and other protected areas. The consensus is that any development in these sensitive areas should be exceptional and meet specifically identified local needs.
- 3.114 There is a consensus on the need to update existing environmental assessments and strategies to safeguard natural habitats. Support for landscape-scale recovery and protecting natural beauty is also emphasized, as well as the importance of integrating new recovery strategies with local plans.
- 3.115 There is resistance to the installation of solar farms on agricultural land due to perceived inefficiencies and a preference for encouraging alternative uses of land, such as orchards or new crop funding.

- 3.116 A suggestion indicates the need to incorporate Catchment Partnerships as part of initiatives that should be supported and referenced in the planning documents.

Objective 11 - To conserve and enhance biodiversity, supporting resilient habitats for species and robust and valued environments for people, where natural capital and the benefits of ecosystem services are recognised, valued and invested in over the long term and measurable net gains in biodiversity are achieved locally.

What we said

- 3.117 The long-term decline in biodiversity and links to climate change are well documented and understood. The Local Plan has a key role to play in helping nature to recover.
- 3.118 Potential policies include adoption of a natural capital based approach, biodiversity net gain requirements, nature recovery networks and green infrastructure.

What you said

- 3.119 There is a consensus on the importance of ensuring biodiversity net gain through development projects, with discussions centering on meeting or exceeding the 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG) requirement.
- 3.120 A common suggestion is to require a higher percentage of BNG, with some advocating for a minimum of 20%. Flexibility in achieving BNG, such as on-site or off-site solutions, and the viability and the maintenance of biodiversity enhancements are also concerns. The enforcement and clarity of BNG policies are underlined, with calls for the consistent application of BNG and adherence to emerging legislation.
- 3.120 Several respondents emphasize the importance of aligning local policies with national planning policies, such as the NPPF, environmental legislation, and the Environment Act. There is a recurring recommendation to incorporate national guidelines and frameworks to ensure a unified and effective approach to biodiversity conservation and enhancement.
- 3.121 There is a strong advocacy for protecting certain landscapes including the Green Belt, Cotswolds National Landscape, heritage assets, and areas at higher risk of flooding. There should be special consideration and protection measures to preserve these valuable landscapes and prevent development activities that may endanger them.

- 3.122 Comments emphasise the need for local nature recovery strategies and the enhancement of environments to support biodiversity. The importance of BNG contributing to nature recovery, protecting river valleys, parklands, and other significant habitats is highlighted. There's also an interest in integrating nature recovery into Neighbourhood Plans.
- 3.123 A few comments touch upon the conflict between nature conservation and the need for agricultural land for food production. Maintaining the balance between environmental objectives and agricultural requirements is seen as vital, especially considering the value of high-quality agricultural land.
- 3.124 Ideas around urban greening and the inclusion of green infrastructure in development projects are mentioned, suggesting a focus on integrating biodiverse spaces within residential and urban areas for the benefit of residents and local ecosystems.

Objective 12 - To achieve a healthy water environment, where better water management and multiple benefits for people and wildlife are provided, through the use of an integrated water management approach that brings together sustainable water supply, usage and recycling, wastewater disposal, improvement of water quality and flood risk management.

What we said

- 3.125 Water is a vital and finite resource that needs to be protected and managed in an integrated, effective way. Flood risk and water quality are particularly important considerations for West Oxfordshire.
- 3.126 Potential policies include a catchment-based approach to the management of water, design standards, flood risk mitigation, sustainable drainage, water efficiency and supporting infrastructure.

What you said

- 3.127 Respondents emphasise the need for improved water management and infrastructure to support development, including sustainable water supply, efficient wastewater disposal, flood risk management, and maintaining water quality. They call for engagement with water companies, adoption of design standards such as Building with Nature, use of catchment-based approaches to manage water, support for natural flood management, and ensuring water infrastructure can handle new developments. High water efficiency standards are encouraged, noting potential impacts on viability and the necessity for a balance with council priorities.

- 3.128 Multiple comments indicate a need for detailed and robust water cycle studies or reports to inform the local plan and policies. There is a desire for precise, measurable policies relevant to West Oxfordshire to avoid duplicating national policy.
- 3.129 Comments focus on the importance of addressing flood risk through sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and highlight the need to consider flood-related issues such as attenuation of surface water, stormwater storage, gravity systems for foul drainage, and avoiding areas of higher flood risk. There are also suggestions for proactive policies aligned with national frameworks and the incorporation of maintenance arrangements for SuDS.
- 3.130 Concerns are expressed regarding water quality and the impact of development on environmental health. Respondents note the statutory duties to protect and improve water quality and require details for policy options relevant to water quality, as well as support for catchment partnerships working on issues such as water pollution.
- 3.131 Some comments highlight the need for local planning authorities to work closely with regulatory bodies like Thames Water to address infrastructure needs and plan for capacity increases. A proactive engagement with water companies and other stakeholders is necessary to ensure the successful integration of water management aspects in planning processes.
- 3.132 Comments include suggestions for planning authorities to establish requirements for water efficiency, call for policies to reflect the variability in flood risk management solutions, and note the benefits of Grampian conditions to secure infrastructure upgrades. A need for clarity in policy and attention to legal and practical implications of water and wastewater capacities is mentioned.
- 3.133 Some respondents question the practical enforcement of environmental regulations in development and construction, expressing doubt about whether the Council will hold developers accountable for non-compliance.

Objective 13 - Protect and enhance the quality of environmental assets by avoiding harmful impacts of all forms of pollution, especially on local amenity, health, landscape character and biodiversity.

What we said

- 3.134 Not only does the natural environment need to be protected from pollution, its quality needs to be improved. Because new development has the potential to affect the quality of land, soil, air and water, the local plan has a key role to play with air quality, water quality, lighting and noise being of particular relevance to West Oxfordshire.

3.135 Potential policies include measures to minimise pollution and risk, use of air quality and noise assessments, potential identification of dark skies and partnership working to deliver improvements in the quality of local environmental assets.

What you said

- 3.136 Many comments express support for policies aimed at protecting and enhancing environmental quality by avoiding or minimising the impacts of all forms of pollution. This includes detailed considerations for policy requirements on environmental risks assessments, mitigation measures such as detailed noise assessments, and the importance of policies that clarify the level of technical detail expected in proposals for new developments.
- 3.137 Several comments highlight the significance of maintaining dark skies and tranquillity as important aspects of environmental health, with suggestions for sensor-based or minimal lighting policies, and the potential identification and protection of dark sky areas to benefit both human well-being and wildlife.
- 3.138 Comments suggest that further details and clarifications are needed regarding specific policy proposals related to development and pollution control. These details are necessary to guide developers and ensure the effective implementation of measures to protect the environment.
- 3.139 There is concern over water pollution and the need for policies to address water quality in river systems. Comments mention the need to improve and manage sewage systems, prevent misconnections, and enhance overall water quality to protect ecosystems.
- 3.140 Comments indicate the need for consideration of lighting in urban design to address issues like light pollution affecting wildlife and human health, as well as the potential benefits of increased natural light within buildings to mitigate problems like Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD).
- 3.141 There is a concern about various forms of pollution including noise, light, air, and water contamination. The need for strict measures and enforcement to control pollution and protect natural habitats is stressed, highlighting the importance of design consideration and monitoring in both new and existing infrastructure.
- 3.142 Comments highlight a degree of scepticism on the implementation of policies and regulations in practice. There is a call for consistent enforcement and policing of developers to ensure compliance with water usage and pollution prevention.
- 3.143 Concern is raised about worsening air quality due to traffic management changes, and there is a demand for effective pollution monitoring and results publication in areas affected by traffic rerouting.

Objective 14 - Conserve and enhance the character and significance of the historic and cultural environment, recognising and promoting the wider contribution to people's quality of life and social and economic wellbeing and enabling sensitive adaptation in light of climate change.

What we said

- 3.144 West Oxfordshire has a rich and varied historic environment that contributes to the area's distinctive character and to its culture, economy and the quality of life of residents and visitors. The Local Plan has a key role to play in setting a positive approach to conservation and enjoyment, with a focus on enhancement, and considering the natural and historic environment, as well as climate change, in an integrated way throughout the plan.
- 3.145 Potential policies include the historic environment, use of heritage impact assessments and conservation management plans, adoption of whole building approaches and the Blenheim Palace World Heritage site.

What you said

- 3.146 Many comments express broad support for enhancing the character and significance of the historic and cultural environment, emphasizing its contribution to quality of life, social, and economic wellbeing. They acknowledge the need for the local Plan to be consistent with national policy and not to replicate it.
- 3.147 A number of respondents call for more detailed information on proposed policies, such as Design Coding for historic places, ensuring context and character-led development, and Heritage Impact Assessments. There is a call for policies that address archaeology and the integration of fabric measures and renewable energy solutions for climate change adaptation.
- 3.148 Comments highlight the importance of new development contributing positively to the historic and cultural environment. This includes suggestions for improving pedestrian and cycle linkages, enabling sensitive adaptation to climate change, and supporting economic development while respecting historic significance.
- 3.149 There is recognition that while conservation is crucial, there must be a balance that allows the built environment to evolve to meet modern needs, especially regarding decarbonisation, energy efficiency, and the need to retrofit listed buildings to accommodate renewable energy sources.
- 3.150 Certain comments underline the necessity for policies that recognize the role of the historic and cultural environment in rural tourism and local business support, benefits of estate contributions, and the economic advantages of leveraging historic and natural beauty for diverse job creation.

- 3.151 Respondents stress the importance of not only protecting heritage assets but also their settings, calling for policies and appraisal processes that ensure development is sensitive to the character and significance of conservation areas and the wider historic environment.
- 3.152 A few comments specifically mention the importance of not only focusing on built heritage but also considering archaeological aspects in policy development, indicating a need for comprehensive heritage preservation that includes below-ground heritage.
- 3.153 The comments suggest there is a need for policies to support measures tackling heritage at risk, indicating an awareness of the challenges facing historic assets that may be vulnerable.

Attractive, Accessible and Thriving Places

- 3.154 Comments emphasize the importance of creating developments that are not only sustainable but also accessible. These developments should provide access to services and public transport to reduce reliance on private vehicles. Sustainable design and the efficient use of land are key aspects highlighted.
- 3.155 There is a recurring theme of supporting community-led plans including neighbourhood plans, suggesting that involving the community in the planning process improves social well-being and ensures developments meet local needs.
- 3.156 Comments stress the importance of revitalizing town centres, maintaining or increasing core services, and supporting the viability of smaller settlements, indicating that investments and developments should aim to sustain and benefit these locations.
- 3.157 References to innovative architecture and climate resilience suggest a desire for modern approaches that are environmentally responsible and contribute to the attractiveness and uniqueness of the area.
- 3.158 The need for improved transport connections, including bus, shuttle, and cycling routes, is mentioned as a key component for sustainable growth and ensuring the accessibility of developments.
- 3.159 Incorporating green spaces and waterways into development is highlighted as vital for creating distinctive and attractive places, suggesting the integration of natural elements into urban design.
- 3.160 Comments advocate for the exploration of various spatial options to adopt the most sustainable and sensible approach to development, ensuring that different needs and characteristics are addressed.

- 3.161 The significance of arts and cultural activities in creating attractive and thriving places, indicating a consideration for social aspects in development is highlighted.

Objective 15 - To provide a framework within which West Oxfordshire's resident communities and businesses are able to thrive across a network of attractive, safe and inclusive, vibrant and well-connected market towns and villages.

What we said

- 3.162 Planning policies should support strong, vibrant and healthy communities and aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places. There should be an emphasis on promoting social interaction and our surroundings should be safe and accessible.
- 3.163 Potential policies include the pattern of development (spatial strategy) adoption of 20-minute neighbourhood principles, improved access to services, design and digital connectivity.

What you said

- 3.164 Comments consistently highlight the importance of integrating sustainable and active travel options such as pedestrian and cycle paths, public transport and traffic-calming measures.
- 3.165 Many comments point to the need for high-quality public spaces, local shops, community halls, and green spaces in new developments to foster vibrant, inclusive, and integrated neighbourhoods, also highlighting the role of infrastructure in supporting development.
- 3.166 There is a theme around the importance of new developments in supporting and sustaining local services and facilities, including shops, meeting places, and cultural environments, with some emphasis on the need to create a framework for businesses to thrive.
- 3.167 Comments reflect the desire to conserve and enhance the character and distinctiveness of local areas in light of new developments, addressing design criteria for safety, creation of attractive places, and reflection of local character.
- 3.168 Several respondents stress the need for improved digital connectivity to support communities, and its importance for businesses and the overall quality of life in both existing and new developments.
- 3.169 A recurring theme expresses support for creating communities that are safe, inclusive, vibrant, and well-connected, suggesting an inclusive approach to planning where development meets diverse needs and supports social interaction.

3.170 Comments highlight the necessity of a robust growth strategy that supports the economic and social wellbeing of communities by providing employment opportunities, local amenities, and facilities which contribute to a vibrant local economy.

Objective 16 - To ensure that all new development in West Oxfordshire is underpinned by a high quality, innovative and inclusive approach to design.

What we said

3.171 The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places being fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.

3.172 Potential policies include design vision, principles and expectations, local design policies and standards, use of local design codes/guides and the preparation of Village Design Statements and Neighbourhood Plans.

What you said

3.173 Many comments emphasise the aspiration for high-quality, innovative, and inclusive design in new developments. The recurring mention of inclusivity and the need for developments to respect and enhance local character and heritage indicate a strong desire for thoughtful design practices.

3.174 Numerous comments reference the importance of local design codes and guides, indicating support for their use but also signaling a need for consistency, efficiency in delivery, and flexibility so as not to hinder development progress or innovation.

3.175 There is concern expressed in some comments that while pursuing high design standards and inclusivity, the preparation, and implementation of design guides, statements, and plans should not significantly delay the delivery of schemes due to council resourcing or policy complexity.

3.176 Several comments highlight the national frameworks for design, expressing support but also emphasizing the need for local adaptation, as well as caution that policies should not be overly prescriptive and still permit viable and innovative development.

3.177 The importance of design that is reflective of local context and heritage is stressed, with suggestions to incorporate local distinctiveness, including the use of materials like Cotswold stone, and to ensure that developments within the setting of heritage assets are designed to complement and enhance their surroundings.

3.178 Responding to the climate change and ecological emergencies, comments show support for sustainable design and construction, underlining the need to integrate ecological considerations such as tree planting and carbon-efficient building practices into new developments.

3.179 Comments suggest that green infrastructure should be integrated into good design and that there should be a strong emphasis on the importance of adequate long-term maintenance.

Objective 17 - To create a safe, welcoming and accessible environment in which West Oxfordshire's town and village centres can adapt and prosper, taking advantage of changing trends and shopping habitats to ensure they remain a destination of choice.

What we said

3.180 National policy emphasises the importance of fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces. It also emphasises the importance of creating places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being.

3.181 Potential policies include Town and Village centres, retention and enhancement of markets, re-use of previously developed land, commercial and mixed-use development, adaptation of existing space.

What you said

3.182 Multiple comments discuss the importance of enhancing and supporting the town and village centres of West Oxfordshire. There is a common understanding that growth and development should contribute to the vitality of these areas by increasing footfall to support existing services and facilities, adapt to changing consumer behaviors, and ensure they remain destinations of choice.

3.183 Numerous comments highlight the necessity of planning for safe and connected communities that foster a sense of belonging, empowerment, and mental wellbeing. The importance of developing strategies that encourage social interactions through events, clubs, and groups, and creating policies that allow for the evolution of town and village centres in line with consumer demand and the market is emphasised.

3.184 Several comments suggest residential growth as a means to support the economic vitality of the centres, through direct support of existing businesses and facilities due to an increased customer base. Moreover, there is support for putting vacant retail units to residential use, which can also incentivize the revival of town centres and support local economies.

3.185 Comments address the need for clear and specific policies, including a strategy for town and village centres, parking management, and timely investment in school infrastructure to support community growth. They also touch upon the importance of adapting to changing shopping habits and the role of town centres in supporting healthy lifestyles.

Objective 18 - To achieve equality and inclusivity within our local communities by ensuring that everyone is able to access the core services and facilities that they need to meet their daily needs.

What we said

- 3.186 The rurality of the district and sparsity of some communities will have an adverse effect on some residents if key services related to retail, banking, social activities and health are not provided locally.
- 3.187 Potential policies include the pattern of development (spatial strategy) 20-minute neighbourhoods ('living local') provision and protection of community services and facilities, supporting infrastructure and provision of multi-functional buildings and spaces.

What you said

- 3.188 Comments emphasize the importance of ensuring equality and inclusivity by facilitating access to core services and facilities within communities. They suggest that developments should be strategically placed to provide access for all, including rural areas, and recognize both physical proximity and various forms of accessibility, such as transport networks.
- 3.189 Comments reflect support for a holistic approach in development that prioritises sustainable planning. This involves integrating housing, jobs, and transport networks to create 15-minute neighborhoods and ensure developments do not neglect rural areas or the unique needs of the District.
- 3.190 Several comments point out the need to allow appropriate levels of development in rural areas to support existing services and potentially add new ones. They advocate for policies that understand the economic drivers of rural amenities and consider their viability.
- 3.191 Comments indicate a need to address the role of educational facilities within the community planning process, highlighting the importance of schools in decision-making for housing locations and the challenges of school transport.
- 3.192 Comments show support for the role of communities and volunteer organizations in maintaining and providing amenities and services, suggesting a requirement for district support and potentially subsidies or grants for volunteer-run amenities.
- 3.193 Respondents express a desire for strategies to support local shopping, recognizing the benefits of decreased car reliance and community growth but also noting the current lack of resources and need for substantial investment and imaginative planning.

Objective 19 - To empower and enable local communities to positively shape and influence the future of their area from the 'grass roots' up.

What we said

- 3.194 National and local policy emphasises the importance of supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities including through neighbourhood planning and other processes.
- 3.195 Potential policies include community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, use of local design codes, village design statements (VDS) neighbourhood plans and long-term maintenance and stewardship in new development.

What you said

- 3.196 Many comments emphasise the importance of empowering and engaging local communities in the planning process. There is a clear support for the idea that residents should have a say in shaping their local areas.
- 3.197 Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) and other planning documents such as Local Design Guides and Village Design Statements are listed as tools for involving communities, but some concerns are raised about the time it takes to prepare these documents and their potential to delay development.
- 3.198 There is a call for sufficient guidance at the district level to avoid a vacuum in decision-making while waiting for community-led documents. Furthermore, flexibility in management, maintenance, and stewardship arrangements is considered crucial.
- 3.199 Comments suggest that long-term management, maintenance, and stewardship of new developments should be flexible to account for site-specific circumstances. Flexibility is crucial for using management companies and other options that can adapt to the unique needs of each site, which is preferred by some stakeholders.
- 3.200 Strong support is voiced for providing strategic direction and support to local communities, especially in relation to Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs). The need for local plans to inform and guide communities on development needs is emphasized to ensure that NDPs are in line with the broader strategic policies and support sustainable development objectives.
- 3.201 There is an aspiration to make the planning process inclusive, ensuring that local views are considered and respected. The inclusivity theme is about avoiding mere lip service to community engagement and ensuring that the views of the local people, including those in smaller communities and villages, are genuinely taken into account when making planning decisions.

- 3.202 Some respondents express the need for local-level planning and development to support and retain vital services and facilities in their communities. They emphasize the importance of local shops, pubs, and other services, and reflect on the loss of these amenities over time.
- 3.203 There is a concern about the reduced accessibility of community resources, such as school facilities, due to governance changes, which affects local community cohesiveness and utility.
- 3.204 Respondents express the need for local communities to have a greater say and involvement in shaping their own areas. They highlight the importance of acknowledging local knowledge and allowing communities to influence decisions.

Meeting the Housing Needs of All

- 3.205 Comments reflect concerns over housing affordability exacerbated by a lack of supply. Some consider there to be an identified need for a significant increase in housing to match job growth and economic projections.
- 3.206 Failure to provide ample housing can lead to increased in-commuting and affordability issues, as well as a strain on local resources. Multiple comments suggest the need for a diverse mix of affordable homes to meet various demographic needs.
- 3.207 The comments highlight the relationship between housing and the local economy, suggesting that adequate housing is essential for economic growth and prosperity. The need for heritage-led regeneration and connecting housing strategies to job creation is also mentioned.
- 3.208 Comments address the need for strategic planning in housing, taking into account job market trends and economic assessments to forecast housing needs. Concerns are raised about meeting medium-to-long term housing needs, and ensuring the plan remains flexible to accommodate future growth.
- 3.209 Several comments emphasise the importance of providing housing that meets the specific needs of local demographics such as younger people, older people, and people with disabilities. This includes ensuring a diversity of house sizes and types and recognizing the need to adhere to local plans.
- 3.210 Other comments focus on the balance between protecting the environment, specifically within National Landscapes, and providing for housing needs.

Objective 20 - To enable the delivery of a continual supply of high quality, well-designed and sustainable new homes to meet identified housing needs in the period 2021 – 2041.

What we said

- 3.211 National policy emphasises the importance of significantly boosting the supply of new homes and the current Local Plan has not kept pace with the required trajectory, with delays experienced at the larger strategic allocations.
- 3.212 Potential policies include an overall housing requirement, timing/phasing of delivery, agreed distribution of homes, site allocations, design quality expectations and sustainable construction standards.

What you said

- 3.213 Respondents are concerned with the ability of the Local Plan to ensure a continuous and sufficient supply of high-quality, well-designed, and sustainable housing.
- 3.214 Many developers argue for a housing requirement that goes beyond the standard method and aligns with the anticipated economic growth of Oxfordshire. They advocate for planning that considers the likely need for more homes to support regional economic ambitions and the shortfall from Oxford City, with a housing requirement reflective of growth strategies and economic potential. Many suggest that the focus should be on small to medium-sized site allocations to address shortfalls quickly.
- 3.215 Some respondents felt that the plan should include strategies to keep up with housing demand while balancing environmental constraints, considering brownfield first, and taking a cautious approach to the number of houses due to uncontrollable market forces.
- 3.216 Respondents highlight the importance of balancing housing growth with the preservation of green spaces, focusing on brownfield development before greenfield, and ensuring that new housing does not detrimentally affect the Cotswolds National Landscape and other environmentally sensitive areas. They stress that housing strategies must consider local needs and avoid over-reliance on strategic, larger sites that may not align with sustainability goals.
- 3.217 Respondents highlight the need for affordable housing options that cater to local needs, which includes providing social housing, homes aimed at first-time buyers, and smaller homes for aging populations. There is an emphasis on ensuring affordability and integrating new residents within existing communities, with suggestions for redevelopment, splitting larger homes into smaller units, and a focus on planning for housing types suitable for the local demographic.

- 3.218 There is significant concern regarding the sufficiency of local infrastructure—like roads, schools, and hospitals—along with services such as sewage treatment and transportation, especially in relation to new housing developments.
- 3.219 Comments call for proactive engagement between the council, developers, and infrastructure providers like Thames Water to ensure that developments are supported by necessary upgrades and services. The timing and capacity for delivering infrastructure are key considerations, with a need for careful planning to support sustainable growth and avoid overburdening the current network.

Objective 21 - To ensure that new homes in West Oxfordshire are genuinely affordable over the short and longer-term to a broad range of people, including those who are not able to afford market priced housing to buy or rent.

What we said

- 3.220 National policy requires us to consider the housing needs of different groups including those who require affordable housing. In 2021, West Oxfordshire’s housing affordability ratio suggested that full-time employees can expect to spend around 11.4 times their annual earnings on buying a home - higher than the national average of 9.1
- 3.221 Potential policies include affordable housing provision in new development, rural exception sites, housing mix, custom and self-build housing and construction standards in new build development.

What you said

- 3.222 Many comments emphasize the importance of delivering affordable housing to address affordability issues and support diverse communities in West Oxfordshire. Comments highlight that affordability ratios are high and stress the need for the Council to establish the scale of affordable housing needs.
- 3.223 There are suggestions for housing policy to include a certain proportion of affordable homes in market developments, the importance of affordable housing allocation in planning, and the possibility of 'uplifting' overall housing requirements.
- 3.224 Concerns are raised about the delays in delivering affordable housing and how this impacts local communities. There are calls for housing that is affordable in perpetuity and affordable for a broad range of people, with suggestions to involve registered providers and to prioritize social rented housing. Additionally, there is commentary on the distinction between market affordability and the delivery of affordable homes.

- 3.225 There is an emphasis on the need for housing to be priced within reach for local residents, first-time buyers, and various demographics. Respondents highlight affordability as a significant factor for community wellbeing and cohesion, and some suggest that official definitions of 'affordable housing' need to be carefully considered to ensure they align with local income levels and market conditions.
- 3.226 Several comments advocate for smaller-scale housing developments, which are seen as more swiftly deliverable, and emphasize the role of small or medium-sized developers and landowners in delivering high-quality, energy-efficient housing.
- 3.227 References are made to the ability of these types of developments to adapt to changing needs and contribute to the diversity of housing supply, thereby increasing affordability through a more rapid response to market demands. They also discuss the benefits of sustainable building practices, the support of local services, and the avoidance of infrastructure overloads.
- 3.228 Some comments discuss the viability of affordable housing policies, emphasizing the need for an evidence-based and realistic approach. The need to ensure that policies do not undermine the deliverability of the plan and the importance of plan viability testing is particularly noted. Some comments suggest that fiscal strategies, such as lower Council Tax for sustainable homes, adjusting mortgage lending criteria to factor in low running costs of sustainable homes, and lobbying the government for changes in central policy, may improve affordability.
- 3.229 There are calls for the Council to identify specific sites for self and custom build projects rather than integrating them within larger housing developments, and to work with landowners to facilitate these types of builds. The comments suggest that self and custom build housing can offer both market and affordable housing solutions, potentially including specific site allocations, and emphasize the importance of a flexible approach to planning that accommodates self-built homes.

Objective 22 - To make sure everyone is able to access the home that they need.

What we said

- 3.230 National policy requires us to consider and plan for the housing needs of different groups of society. More locally, the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision looks to improve health and well-being and reduce inequality including the provision of homes to meet all people's needs.
- 3.231 Potential policies include housing mix, custom and self-build housing, adaptability of properties, provision of specialist housing, rental provision and provision for travelling communities.

What you said

- 3.232 Comments express a consensus about supporting the council's objective of providing suitable, high-quality homes that cater to the regional demographics including the need for market and affordable housing, accessibility, adaptability, and provisions for older persons. A significant focus on ensuring a variety of housing options to address affordability issues and supporting the development of a broad mix of housing within new developments is highlighted.
- 3.233 There is a repeated affirmation of the core objective to ensure everyone has access to the home they need. While the principle is widely supported, there are questions regarding the practicality and resources needed to ensure this objective is met, with some suggestions for policy specifics and criticisms of the current approach.
- 3.234 Comments call for clarity and action on land allocations, particularly advocating for the allocation of suitable sites for developments, the active role of the council in selecting and directing new allocations, and concern for maintaining local control. There is also a reflection on the type of developments to be prioritized, such as self-build, community-led housing, and the role of small and medium-sized sites in early plan delivery.
- 3.235 Some commentary is devoted to the integration of housing developments within the local community context, emphasising not just the provision of housing but also the importance of residents' participation in local affairs, especially in the context of travelling communities.
- 3.236 Comments highlight the necessity for proper planning to accommodate the growing number of older individuals who require a variety of housing solutions that cater to their specific needs. The references to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) emphasize the critical need for constructing suitable housing for the elderly, including adaptable and accessible homes as well as specialized accommodations with care services. The comments also discuss the socio-economic and health benefits of providing such housing, suggesting policy directions for local authorities.
- 3.237 Some concern is raised regarding the additional financial burden placed on residents of rental properties, particularly in new developments, stemming from high management fees for amenities like car parks and gardens.

Objective 23 - To ensure that the type, size and tenure of new homes coming forward helps to create a balanced and sustainable mix of opportunities and encourages community cohesion and well-being.

What we said

- 3.238 National policy emphasises the importance of creating mixed and balanced communities and more locally the Oxfordshire Strategic Vision aims to achieve flourishing, diverse and vibrant communities with new homes of the right type, size and tenure to meet the needs of our growing economy, young people, residents and future generations.
- 3.239 Potential policies include housing mix, mixed-use developments and the adoption of locally specific healthy place shaping principles.

What you said

- 3.240 Many comments emphasize the need for new developments to offer a diverse and sustainable mix of housing that fosters community cohesion and well-being. Various sizes, types, and tenures of homes are mentioned to cater to different demographics and needs. The importance of locational distribution across the district to ensure balance is highlighted, as is the need for flexibility to adapt to evolving housing requirements, especially post-COVID-19.
- 3.241 Several comments note the dynamic nature of housing mix and the importance of policies having the flexibility to respond to changing housing needs over time. Flexibility to adapt to local circumstances and market conditions is a recurring point, with suggestions to set 'indicative' mixes and guidance for developers to tailor dwelling mixes based on local evidence.
- 3.242 Comments identify the need for inclusive housing strategies that address the needs of specific groups such as younger people, older people, people with disabilities, and those in need of affordable housing. Emphasis is placed on the provision of different types of housing, specifically smaller units and adaptable homes that cater to a broad spectrum of society and local needs.
- 3.243 Several comments recognize the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on how we use our homes, including increased levels of home and hybrid working. This has led to a call for increased flexibility in home design to ensure they can meet a variety of evolving needs.
- 3.244 A number of comments call for local policies on housing mixes to reflect national guidance, such as the National Design Space Standards, ensuring high-quality design and adaptability for future needs. Any deviations should be justified by local evidence to ensure appropriate standards are met.

- 3.245 There is a consensus on the need for a sufficient supply of affordable housing to meet local demands and support diverse demographics. Comments often reiterate the importance of policy flexibility to adapt to market conditions and to ensure that a variety of housing types and tenures are available.

Objective 24 - To make the most efficient use of the District's current housing stock and maximise the opportunities presented by existing and previously developed land and buildings.

What we said

- 3.246 National policy emphasises the importance of using natural resources prudently, encouraging the re-use of existing resources including the conversion of existing buildings and making as much use as possible of previously developed or 'brownfield' land.
- 3.247 Potential policies include the re-use of / alterations to existing residential and non-residential buildings, development densities, efficient use of resources and re-use of previously developed land and buildings.

What you said

- 3.248 Many comments stress the importance of making efficient use of existing housing stock and previously developed land (brownfield sites). While there is strong support for prioritising the redevelopment of such sites, there are concerns about the challenges this may bring, including complexity, cost, and viability issues, especially related to the delivery of affordable housing. There is a recognition that brownfield development alone cannot meet housing needs, thus necessitating a balance with greenfield development.
- 3.249 Several comments express uncertainty about the degree to which planning policies can affect existing land uses and the significance of these policies in improving existing housing stock, particularly in areas such as energy efficiency. The limitations of planning policies, which are generally focused on new developments, lead to scepticism about their impact on current properties.
- 3.250 Comments raise concerns about the economic viability of redeveloping brownfield sites. The redevelopment is considered more complex, expensive, and time-consuming than greenfield development, impacting the potential delivery of affordable housing and other planning obligations. Insufficient availability of such land to meet housing needs is noted, suggesting the need for a mixed strategy including greenfield sites.

- 3.251 The limitation and sometimes non-existence of previously developed land in rural areas is a concern for some respondents, who suggest policy wording to support the reuse of redundant agricultural sites and buildings. There is some caution against policies that might hinder housing development due to over-emphasis on using existing land, thus affecting rural sustainability.
- 3.252 Some contributors discuss the need for an approach that incorporates both greenfield and brownfield development. They highlight that while brownfield sites have potential, they may not offer the same opportunities for sustainable and environmentally friendly development as greenfield sites, which can include more innovative design and renewable energy solutions.
- 3.253 Comments indicate a preference for retaining, reusing, and adapting historic buildings to augment housing stock and commercial spaces, thus preserving embodied carbon, historical heritage, and contributing to climate change mitigation.
- 3.254 Contributors emphasise the importance of managing the existing housing stock to prevent under-utilization, suggesting improvements to accommodate greater occupancy, such as for HMOs, and policies to limit the conversion of permanent housing into short-term lets.

A Vibrant, Resilient and Diverse Local Economy

- 3.255 Comments emphasise the importance of fostering an economy in West Oxfordshire that is dynamic and robust, with the recognition of the need for job growth and the support of housing and sustainable travel to accommodate this. Emphasis is also given to the benefits of leveraging RAF Brize Norton and the region's reputation for innovation, as well as improving connectivity with local and neighbouring business parks and employment areas.
- 3.256 Several comments focus on strategic planning needs for employment and housing. This includes identifying and assessing current and future employment sites, ensuring flexibility to adapt to changing work patterns and economic needs, and integrating housing development with economic growth to provide both direct and indirect employment opportunities.
- 3.257 Comments suggest the importance of improved connectivity and accessibility for supporting the local economy. This encompasses both physical transport means, such as proximity to Oxford city centre by rail and bus services, as well as embracing remote and hybrid work models through adaptable homes with working spaces.

3.258 There is an acknowledgment of the necessity to develop workforce skills, especially in areas where there is a shortfall of highly skilled candidates. The importance of policies that encourage apprenticeships and that create training and employment opportunities local to both large and smaller developments is highlighted.

Objective 25 - To provide the framework within which the West Oxfordshire economy can thrive and diversify, building on its inherent strengths and capitalising on future growth potential to increase economic productivity, well-being and resilience.

What we said

3.259 Significant weight must be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity and the approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future.

3.260 Potential policies include an overall economic vision and strategy.

What you said

3.261 There is a consensus on the need to support jobs and economic investment within the Local Plan. Commentators suggest aligning policies with the Oxfordshire Local Industrial Strategy and the Strategic Economic Plan, recognising service industry and diverse rural economies, and considering employment growth alongside housing and infrastructure needs.

3.262 Multiple comments emphasise the importance of diversifying the economy to enhance economic productivity, wellbeing, and resilience, suggesting frameworks to build on inherent strengths and capitalize on growth potential.

3.263 Several comments highlight tourism as a key industry that should be protected and enhanced. There are calls for policies supporting tourism development, heritage-led regeneration, and addressing heritage at risk, while ensuring retention of the rural and historic character of the District.

3.264 Comments express the need for local economic initiatives, support for local businesses including non-knowledge-based employment like skilled trades, public transport improvements, retention of banking services, and partnerships between local authorities and employers.

3.265 The need to align job creation with housing growth scenarios is stressed, ensuring that economic growth strategies are supported by adequate housing and infrastructure planning.

Objective 26 - To enable the delivery of a balanced portfolio of high quality employment land to provide flexibility, meet identified needs and cater for a broad range of user requirements over the plan period.

What we said

- 3.266 National policy requires us in preparing the Local Plan, to have a clear economic vision and strategy and a good understanding of anticipated needs over the plan period so that criteria can be set or sites identified to meet those needs. National policy also highlights the importance of supporting the rural economy.
- 3.267 Potential policies include the pattern of development (spatial strategy) provision of new business land, adaptation and expansion of existing premises, mixed-use development and the provision of supporting infrastructure.

What you said

- 3.268 A number of commenters express strong support for the objective to deliver a balanced portfolio of high-quality employment land. They emphasize the need for flexibility, meeting identified needs, and catering to a diverse range of user requirements. There is consensus on ensuring that employment land is adaptable and can respond to demand from both enduring and new commercial sectors.
- 3.269 Comments highlight an alignment with the vision of economic growth that co-locates new homes and jobs. The comments propose that employment land should be allocated in important locations, and sustainable development practices should be followed to maximize efficiency and reduce commuting.
- 3.270 Several respondents emphasise the need for improvements in infrastructure, including public transport and reduction of congestion, to accommodate economic growth. The lack of available employment land, particularly around key areas including Witney, is highlighted, with calls for the identification of new sites to better serve increased demand and strategic corridors.
- 3.271 Some respondents point out the need for diverse and inclusive economic opportunities that are not only focused on knowledge-based or graduate-level jobs. There is mention of the importance of apprenticeships and accessible employment options, as well as support for local business expansion and tourism as a means to strengthen the local economy.
- 3.272 There are opinions suggesting the need for strategic planning in terms of development patterns and mixed-use developments, including the location of jobs close to homes and the co-location of facilities.

- 3.273 A few comments reinforce the significance of heritage impact assessments, proposing that they should be considered for employment land allocations as they are for housing allocations. Additionally, there are suggestions for incorporating green initiatives like mandatory energy generation and rainwater collection for commercial buildings.
- 3.274 Some respondents advocate for using high-density development approaches such as high-rise buildings to limit land take and maximize the efficiency of space usage, including suggestions for placing parking underneath buildings and re-purposing town centres, partially for housing.
- 3.275 Comments include recommendations to support specific sectors such as science and business parks expansion, tourism, and rural enterprises, acknowledging their roles in supporting the local economy and providing employment.

Objective 27 - To support West Oxfordshire's existing and future economic assets by providing the right infrastructure, land and premises, enabling them to improve, expand and adapt as appropriate and ensuring they are not lost to other uses where they have an important economic, social and environmental role to play.

What we said

- 3.276 As well as influencing the delivery of new business and employment land opportunities, the Local Plan has a role to play in supporting the District's existing economic assets both in our urban and rural areas.
- 3.277 Potential policies include the adaptation and expansion of existing premises, redevelopment of existing business premises to other uses and the provision of supporting infrastructure.

What you said

- 3.278 Many comments emphasise the importance of supporting existing and future economic assets in West Oxfordshire by providing infrastructure, land, and premises. They advocate for these assets to be improved, expanded, and adapted, stressing not to lose them to other uses.
- 3.279 The significance of infrastructure development in planning and executing local projects is recurrently highlighted as critical for economic growth.
- 3.280 Several respondents are concerned about the lack of adequate public services such as transport and communal spaces. They express a need for young and elderly populations to have better access to recreational and essential services, and suggest that accommodating flexible workspaces, including conference rooms for hire, could benefit local businesses and communities.

- 3.281 There is a clear push for policies to help local businesses grow, including facilitating a diverse range of employment opportunities and supporting the trend of remote work. Comments acknowledge the shift to work from home due to COVID-19 and suggest the importance of Internet-based business facilities and the adaptation of premises for mixed-use development, such as live-work spaces.
- 3.282 Comments underline the necessity for local plans to include the adaptation and expansion of businesses, preventing a default conversion to housing and seeking to ensure the availability of quality business premises. Respondents also mention supporting infrastructure as a critical aspect.
- 3.283 Some comments call for sustainable development by considering the current state and future requirements of water drainage and sewage treatment infrastructure. The environmental aspects and the need for sustainable economic development are recognized as essential factors in planning.
- 3.284 A couple of comments focus on the situation of unused shops and holiday homes, proposing that these could be repurposed for residential use or redesigned to support internet-based businesses, reflecting a shift in the traditional use of properties.
- 3.285 Sport is suggested as an overlooked employment sector that is estimated to employ more people and generate higher economic and health benefits compared to traditional industries in the region.

Objective 28 - To provide flexibility to be able to respond to future trends and technological changes to support working practices such as increases in remote, hybrid and co-working.

What we said

- 3.286 National policy emphasises the need for planning policies to be flexible enough to accommodate unforeseen needs, allow for new and flexible working practices (such as live-work accommodation), and to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances.
- 3.287 Potential policies include the use of innovation plans in new developments, flexible working spaces, re-purposable space, provision of supporting infrastructure and the conversion and re-use of existing buildings.

What you said

- 3.288 Comments underline the importance of adapting to future trends, particularly with the incorporation of flexible workspaces, to accommodate remote, hybrid, and co-working practices. There is a consensus that strategic planning should ensure that developments are adaptable to changes, with broadband infrastructure being a key component.
- 3.289 Several respondents advocate for maintaining a balance between traditional employment spaces, like offices and workshops, and the growing demand for remote working capabilities in homes. It is important to ensure home working does not dominate to the detriment of traditional workspaces.
- 3.290 Comments express a desire for the development of supporting infrastructure with a strong emphasis on high-quality broadband connectivity. This infrastructure is regarded as crucial for supporting new working trends and businesses.
- 3.291 Comments emphasise recognition of the hybrid roles homes play and the need for sufficient flexibility to meet changing needs. There is mention of site-specific opportunities to deliver working spaces in line with this recognition.
- 3.292 The concept of the 15-minute neighbourhood is supported, tying in the importance of sustainable settlements where services are accessible and homeworking is feasible. Yet, there is a need to strike a balance with traditional working environments.
- 3.293 Comments suggest that facilitating live-work spaces can reduce the need for commuting, aligning with the support for hybrid working and home office setups.

Objective 29 - To ensure that all residents of West Oxfordshire are able to benefit from improved education, training and skills opportunities to enhance their economic and social well-being to strengthen the local economy and benefit small and start-up businesses.

What we said

- 3.294 The Oxfordshire Strategic Vision stipulates that by 2050, the County will have improved educational attainment and a skills system aligned to the needs of business and communities, helping to provide the conditions in which all Oxfordshire's people can benefit and thrive.
- 3.295 Potential policies include the pattern of development (spatial strategy) 20-minute neighbourhoods, provision of supporting infrastructure, the use of community employment plans and safer routes to schools.

What you said

- 3.296 Comments consistently stress the importance of enhancing education, training, and skills opportunities coinciding with new developments. Emphasis is on ensuring these opportunities contribute to economic and social well-being, enhance the local economy, and are sustained through strategic planning.
- 3.297 Multiple comments support the sustainable growth and diversification of the rural economy, highlighting support for farmers, rural businesses, and the visitor economy. Development in rural areas also includes a focus on meet local business needs and encouraging sectors like heritage skills.
- 3.298 Infrastructure is seen as a critical factor for enabling educational opportunities as well as economic growth. Concerns are expressed about issues such as A40 congestion being a 'handbrake' to prosperity and the need for supportive infrastructure such as superfast broadband.
- 3.299 Comments express support for sustainability, highlighting the importance of utilizing existing buildings, focusing on green jobs and skills, and the strategic placement of land-use. There is also a call for nature recovery planning and leveraging agricultural land use for biodiversity and climate goals.
- 3.300 Several comments focus on the role of rural heritage and tourism, suggesting policies should adapt to demand and changing trends in tourism, including diversification of rural businesses and promoting rural attractions through proactive expansions like extending the Cotswolds National Landscape.

Objective 30 - To celebrate the rurality of our District, enabling the sustainable growth, expansion and diversification of the rural economy and providing support for farmers and other rural businesses including those linked to the visitor economy.

What we said

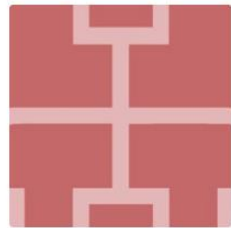
- 3.301 Through our initial consultation in 2022, strong support was expressed for sustainable tourism, supporting local farmers, potentially greater dispersal of smaller employment sites across rural areas, re-using previously developed land and buildings and the need to support rural land-based businesses, the local food economy and rural tourism.
- 3.302 Potential policies include the conversion and re-use of existing buildings, small-scale business uses in rural areas, farm/estate diversification, flexible working spaces, sustainable tourism and leisure provision and the provision of supporting infrastructure.

What you said

- 3.303 Comments emphasize the importance of utilizing local heritage, agriculture, tourism, and skills development as a means of promoting economic growth and job creation within West Oxfordshire. Strategic support for the heritage skills sector, agriculture's role in meeting biodiversity and climate goals, and the promotion of nature trails, farm shops, and community employment plans are highlighted. The creation of opportunities through training and support for local businesses is also stressed.
- 3.304 There is a call to address environmental challenges, particularly emissions from agriculture, through the promotion of nature trails and local food initiatives. The objective of expanding areas of natural beauty is mentioned to enhance ecological value and support sustainable tourism.
- 3.305 Comments suggest that local government support, such as funding for training and community projects, as well as reduced rates for small businesses, is essential to cultivate a vibrant local economy. Encouragement for farming diversification and the development of local food industries is also noted.
- 3.306 Several comments point to the importance of protecting and promoting the cultural and historical aspects of West Oxfordshire, such as through the expansion of the Cotswolds National Landscape and the recognition of the region's potential in heritage skill sectors like stone masonry and horticulture.

4. The Pattern of Development

- 4.1 The Local Plan is a 'spatial' document, dealing with the distribution of different land uses across the District (e.g. housing, green space, infrastructure).
- 4.2 As part of the consultation, views were therefore sought on the potential 'pattern of development' that could underpin the new plan.
- 4.3 8 potential scenarios were identified:
- Scenario 1 - Hierarchical approach
 - Scenario 2 - Main Service Centre Focus (Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton)
 - Scenario 3 - Witney Focus
 - Scenario 4 - Carterton Focus
 - Scenario 5 - Dispersed Growth
 - Scenario 6 - Village 'Clusters'
 - Scenario 7 - New Settlement
 - Scenario 8 - Public Transport Focus
- 4.4 These were included to stimulate some broad discussion around the respective merits of each approach. It was noted that the scenarios are not mutually exclusive and it may be that a combination of different approaches will ultimately be taken forward depending on feedback and evidence.
- 4.5 In purely quantitative terms, the scenarios which attracted the greatest degree of support from respondents included Scenarios 1, 2, 4 and 8, whilst the scenarios which attracted the least support were 3, 5, 6 and 7. This is illustrated overleaf.
- 4.6 It should be noted however that this only reflects the number of people who chose to use the voting button feature on the Council's digital engagement platform.
- 4.7 There were for example a further 138 separate emails received in relation to Scenario 8, expressing particular support for the reinstatement of a railway line from Carterton to Oxford.

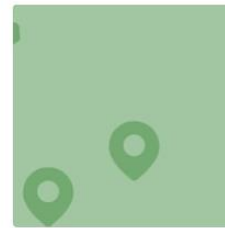


Scenario 1 - Hierarchal approach

 Planning Policy West Oxfordshire District Council · 5 months ago Under Scenario 1, we...

 118  25  104

[SCENARIO](#)



Scenario 2 - Main Service Centre Focus (Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton)

 Planning Policy West Oxfordshire District Council · 5 months ago Scenario 2 would...

 109  27  48

[SCENARIO](#)



Scenario 3 - Witney Focus

 Planning Policy West Oxfordshire District Council · 5 months ago Scenario 3 would see...

 42  61  57

[SCENARIO](#)



Scenario 4 - Carterton Focus

 Planning Policy West Oxfordshire District Council · 5 months ago Under Scenario 4, mos...

 78  29  44

[SCENARIO](#)



Scenario 5 - Dispersed Growth

 Planning Policy West Oxfordshire District Council · 5 months ago Scenario 5 would...

 9  140  71

[SCENARIO](#)



Scenario 6 - Village 'Clusters'

 Planning Policy West Oxfordshire District Council · 5 months ago Like Scenario 5...

 6  162  95

[SCENARIO](#)



Scenario 7 - New Settlement

 Planning Policy West Oxfordshire District Council · 5 months ago Scenario 7 would see...

 37  97  74

[SCENARIO](#)



Scenario 8 - Public Transport Focus

 Planning Policy West Oxfordshire District Council · 5 months ago Under this final...

 103  48  117

[SCENARIO](#)

- 4.8 Below is a summary of the responses received in response to the 8 different scenarios.

Scenario 1 – Hierarchal approach

What we said

- 4.9 Under Scenario 1, we would roll forward the strategy of the current local plan which adopts a ‘hierarchal’ approach, steering most development towards the District’s larger towns and villages, with proportionately less development taking place in smaller villages, hamlets and the open countryside.
- 4.10 Such an approach would help to reduce car use, ensure good access to services and facilities and provide good opportunities to re-use brownfield land, whilst still supporting the vitality of smaller settlements.

What you said

- 4.11 Respondents provided a wide range of feedback on Scenario 1, which advocates for a hierarchical approach to development.
- 4.12 A common theme across many responses is the concern for infrastructure and the need for it to be in place before or in conjunction with new housing development.
- 4.13 Many respondents express concerns about the strain on roads, schools, healthcare services, and sewage systems, with some specifically mentioning the inadequacy of the current infrastructure to handle additional development.
- 4.14 The preservation of the rural character of smaller villages and the avoidance of urban sprawl are also significant concerns. Respondents emphasise the need for any development in villages to be proportionate and sympathetic to their existing character.
- 4.15 The environmental impact of new developments is another recurring topic, with calls for mandatory inclusion of renewable energy sources like solar panels and sustainable water management in new housing.
- 4.16 Transport issues are frequently mentioned, with many advocating for improvements in public transport and the creation of better road networks to alleviate congestion, particularly on the A40. Many people suggest that development should be focused on areas with good public transport links.
- 4.17 Affordability and the provision of housing for first-time buyers and young families are also highlighted as important considerations.

- 4.18 Overall, while there is a strong level of support for the hierarchical approach as it builds on existing infrastructure and services, there is also a strong call for a more balanced and sustainable development strategy that addresses infrastructure needs, preserves the rural character, and includes environmental considerations.
- 4.19 There is a clear demand for development to be managed in a way that does not compromise the quality of life for existing residents or the environment.

Scenario 2 – Main Service Centre Focus (Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton)

What we said

- 4.20 This scenario would involve focusing growth more specifically at the District’s three main towns of Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton, with less development taking place at the other larger towns and villages and continuing the current restrictive approach to development in the more rural parts of the District.
- 4.21 This approach would help to ensure good access to services and facilities, provide good opportunities for re-using brownfield land and would help to avoid the Cotswolds National Landscape where the scale and extent of development is expected to be limited.
- 4.22 It would however mean further development at Witney and Carterton (which have already accommodated significant growth in recent years) and would reduce the opportunity to provide new affordable homes in other locations.

What you said

- 4.23 Respondents have provided a range of feedback on Scenario 2 with the most common themes revolving around the need for improved infrastructure, particularly transport, to support any new housing developments.
- 4.24 Many responses emphasize the necessity of enhancing active travel opportunities and public transport to reduce car dependency and carbon emissions.
- 4.25 A significant concern is the capacity of the A40, with calls for a new river crossing and major road developments to alleviate congestion. There is also a strong view from some that without major infrastructure improvements, housing growth should be limited.
- 4.26 The need for additional services such as doctors, dentists, and schools to accompany housing growth is frequently mentioned, with some respondents noting that current facilities are already overstretched.

- 4.27 Several responses support the idea of focusing development around Carterton, Witney, and Chipping Norton, as these service centres have reasonable infrastructure and employment opportunities. However, there are also concerns about the scale of development and its integration with existing towns and villages.
- 4.28 The feedback includes a strong desire to preserve green spaces and the rural character of the area. Some respondents argue for modest development in villages to maintain sustainability and avoid forcing residents into large, impersonal developments.
- 4.29 Some views were expressed that Eynsham should not take on more development than its existing commitments, as it already has significant planned growth.
- 4.30 The potential for a Carterton-Oxford railway line is mentioned as a positive development, provided it does not lead to further overdevelopment.
- 4.31 In summary, while there is support for focused development in service centres, there is a clear demand for infrastructure improvements, particularly in transport, to precede or accompany housing growth.
- 4.32 There is also a desire to maintain the character and sustainability of smaller communities and to ensure that new developments include necessary services and do not overwhelm existing facilities.

Scenario 3 – Witney Focus

What we said

- 4.33 Scenario 3 would see most future development focused narrowly at Witney as the District's largest settlement and main service centre.
- 4.34 Witney enjoys good access to the A40 and offers a broad range of services and facilities. There are also opportunities to re-use brownfield land and development here would avoid the more sensitive Cotswolds National Landscape.
- 4.35 However, Witney has accommodated a significant amount of development in the last 20 – 30 years and there are known concerns around traffic congestion and air quality.

What you said

- 4.36 Respondents have expressed a range of concerns and suggestions regarding Scenario 3. A recurring theme is the need for infrastructure improvements before any further development takes place.
- 4.37 Many respondents are worried about the capacity of sewage facilities, the impact on local wildlife, and the loss of the area's character. There is a strong sentiment against overdevelopment and a desire to preserve the natural beauty and identity of the town.
- 4.38 The inadequacy of enforcing and monitoring Section 106 obligations is highlighted, with a call for these obligations to be fulfilled before construction begins. The potential combination of s106 and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is also discussed.
- 4.39 Transport is a major concern, with many comments on the inadequacy of the A40 for current traffic, let alone additional loads from new developments. The lack of alternative river crossings and the need for a multi-centre approach to avoid creating 'one big town' are also mentioned.
- 4.40 Some respondents agree with the need for a fair distribution of growth across multiple service centres. The need for improved sewage works and infrastructure before allowing new developments is strongly emphasised.
- 4.41 There are some calls for a focus on Witney due to its services and access, which could reduce transport on congested roads. However, concerns about housing being built on areas near rivers causing downstream problems and the lack of amenities for new builds are prevalent.
- 4.42 The lack of suitable educational placements for young SEN adults and the strain on local services are also highlighted. The use of brownfield sites for development is suggested as a preferable alternative to new estates.
- 4.43 In summary, respondents are calling for a halt to further development until infrastructure issues are addressed, a fair distribution of growth, and the preservation of the local environment and character.
- 4.44 There is a strong demand for improvements in transport, education, health services, and community amenities to support existing and future residents.

Scenario 4 – Carterton Focus

What we said

- 4.45 Under Scenario 4, most future development would be focused narrowly at Carterton as the District’s second largest town and service centre. The town offers a good range of services and facilities, does not suffer from significant traffic congestion and provides good opportunities for the re-use of brownfield land. It also lies away from the more sensitive Cotswolds National Landscape.
- 4.46 However, there is no direct A-road access and there are relatively few job opportunities, leading to out-commuting. The impact of noise and lighting from RAF Brize Norton has previously been raised and focusing development in one location would naturally limit the opportunity to provide new homes elsewhere in the District.

What you said

- 4.47 Respondents have expressed a wide range of opinions and concerns regarding the development of Carterton in the context of Scenario 4.
- 4.48 The overarching theme is a strong sentiment that infrastructure and public services must be significantly improved before any further expansion of housing. Many respondents are worried about the current inadequacies in healthcare, particularly the lack of doctors and the long wait times for appointments. There is also a call for more variety in shopping options and the need for a bank and better pharmacy services.
- 4.49 Transport is another major concern, with respondents highlighting the poor public transport links, the absence of a quick bus service to Oxford, and the lack of rail connections.
- 4.50 The existing roads are described as congested, and there is a demand for better road connections to the A40 and beyond.
- 4.51 The idea of a new rail line from Oxford to Carterton and Witney is often mentioned as a potential improvement.
- 4.52 The Town Centre is considered too small for the current population, and there is a desire for its expansion and revitalization. The loss of various shops and services over the years is noted, and there is a call for the development of more convenience and dining options, as well as leisure activities like a cinema.
- 4.53 There is a strong sentiment against developing on greenfield sites, especially if it would lead to the merging of Carterton with neighbouring villages, creating urban sprawl.

- 4.54 Instead, there is a preference for using brownfield sites within Carterton for development. However, some respondents point out that there are limited brownfield sites available, and those that are available are not large enough for significant development.
- 4.55 The need for more employment land is also mentioned, with some noting that there is an imbalance between homes and jobs in the town. The potential for light industry to provide employment for people leaving the forces is suggested.
- 4.56 In terms of housing, there is a call for high-density, small, affordable, and well-designed housing to improve the aesthetic and vibrancy of the town. However, there is also a concern that the town is already overburdened with housing and that more housing would exacerbate existing problems.
- 4.57 Overall, respondents are calling for a holistic approach to development that addresses current deficiencies in infrastructure and public services, improves transport, revitalises the Town Centre, and uses land responsibly.
- 4.58 There is a desire for the town to develop in a way that is sustainable and enhances the quality of life for its residents.

Scenario 5 – Dispersed Growth

What we said

- 4.59 Scenario 5 would involve a more ‘dispersed’ approach to the future pattern of development with smaller towns and villages expected to accommodate a greater proportion of future growth than has previously been the case.
- 4.60 This could facilitate housing delivery (smaller sites often being quicker to bring forward) provide a broader range of opportunities and offer a greater degree of local influence (e.g. through neighbourhood planning).
- 4.61 However, it could place pressure on the more sensitive Cotswolds National Landscape and potentially lead to greater reliance on the private car and increased carbon emissions. There is also a risk of cumulative strain being placed on local infrastructure.

What you said

- 4.62 Respondents have expressed strong concerns about the proposed development of dispersed growth in rural villages. The overwhelming sentiment is that such development would be detrimental to the character and infrastructure of the villages.

- 4.67 Many responses highlight the lack of adequate facilities and infrastructure to support additional housing, including concerns about increased traffic, inadequate public transport, and strained local services such as sewage, medical facilities, and schools.
- 4.68 Respondents are particularly worried about the impact on the environment, with increased carbon emissions and potential loss of biodiversity due to more car usage as public transport options are limited or unreliable.
- 4.69 There is also a fear that the rural landscape and the unique character of villages will be lost if they are transformed into small conurbations or towns.
- 4.70 Several responses call for a focus on fixing existing infrastructure before any new development is considered, suggesting that proper sewage facilities, alternative transport access, and well-maintained footpaths are necessary pre-requisites.
- 4.71 The idea of proportionate development is also mentioned, with suggestions that any new housing should be in keeping with the existing scale and character of the village.
- 4.72 A few responses suggest that instead of rural development, towns that already have the necessary infrastructure should be the focus for new housing, which would be less damaging to the environment and less disruptive to smaller communities.
- 4.73 There is also a call for a more level playing field in development, with some villages within the Cotswolds National Landscape being considered for less development than those outside, which is seen as unfair.
- 4.74 In summary, the responses indicate a strong preference for preserving the rural character of villages, improving infrastructure, and focusing development on urban areas where facilities and services are already in place.
- 4.75 There is a clear call for sustainable development that does not overburden local services or the environment.

Scenario 6 – Village ‘Clusters’

What we said

- 4.76 A similar approach to Scenario 5, with future growth being more dispersed than previously but instead of villages being treated separately, they would be considered collectively in ‘clusters’ based on the services and facilities they are able to cumulatively offer.

- 4.77 Such an approach would reflect national policy which recognises that development in one village may support services in a village nearby. It could also support increased community cohesion and bring forward opportunities in locations not previously considered – thus helping them to thrive.
- 4.78 However, it could also lead to concerns around the loss of settlement identity and encourage car use by allowing development in locations that are often poorly served by public transport, walking and cycling.

What you said

- 4.79 Respondents have expressed strong opposition to Scenario 6, which involves the development of village clusters. The predominant concerns revolve around the potential loss of individual village identities, increased urban sprawl, and the erosion of the rural character of West Oxfordshire.
- 4.80 Many responses also highlight the lack of infrastructure to support such growth, with frequent mentions of inadequate public transport, road congestion, and insufficient local facilities such as schools, medical centres and shops.
- 4.81 Residents are particularly concerned about the strain on existing services and the environment, including the handling of sewage and the impact on local rivers. The increase in housing without corresponding investment in infrastructure is seen as a significant issue, with many villages already experiencing growth without the necessary support systems.
- 4.82 The concept of 'village clusters' is criticized for potentially leading to alienation between villages rather than fostering community cohesion. The lack of economically viable public transport options is also a concern, as it would likely lead to increased car use and a higher carbon footprint.
- 4.83 Several responses suggest that development should focus on existing towns with the necessary infrastructure, rather than small villages that are ill-equipped to handle growth.
- 4.84 The idea of 'clustering' is seen by some as a potential backdoor for additional house building, leading to confusion and potential conflict over which Parish Council should make decisions.
- 4.85 Overall, the responses indicate a strong desire to preserve the unique identities and rural nature of West Oxfordshire's villages. There is a call for more thoughtful, sustainable development that respects the character of the area and addresses the infrastructure needs before any new housing is built.

Scenario 7 – New Settlement

What we said

- 4.86 Under this scenario, future growth would be focused primarily at a large, purpose-built new settlement somewhere in the District. The principle of such an approach is supported by national policy and has already been established in West Oxfordshire through Salt Cross Garden Village. It also provides the opportunity to deliver significant investment in infrastructure and place-making as well as reducing development pressures on other parts of the District.
- 4.87 However, development at this scale takes considerable time to come forward as larger sites tend to be more complex to assemble and deliver. There is also inevitably the potential for significant environmental, social and economic impacts.

What you said

- 4.88 Respondents have expressed a range of concerns and ideas regarding the development of a new settlement and also the expansion of existing settlements in West Oxfordshire.
- 4.89 A recurring theme is the need for adequate infrastructure to support new housing developments. Many responses highlight the lack of healthcare facilities, schools, supermarkets, and water sources to accommodate the growing population. There is also some scepticism about the delivery of promised infrastructure improvements, such as additional river crossings and road upgrades.
- 4.90 Several respondents question the need for another new settlement like Salt Cross Garden Village, pointing out the long-term nature of such projects and their impact on green spaces and food production. Others suggest that before committing to new settlements, the outcomes of Salt Cross should be evaluated.
- 4.91 The idea of a new settlement is of more interest to others, with the potential to plan infrastructure from the start. However, there is a strong call for enforcement of planning requirements to ensure developers deliver on their promises.
- 4.92 Concerns about the environmental impact of new developments are also mentioned, with respondents emphasising the need to preserve green spaces and habitats. The importance of public transport and reducing reliance on private cars is also noted.
- 4.93 Some responses call for a more strategic approach to development, suggesting that the focus should be on where new facilities can be built rather than just determining the number of houses needed. The idea of using brownfield sites and preserving the rural nature of the Cotswolds is preferred by some.

- 4.94 In summary, respondents are concerned about the impact of new housing developments on infrastructure, the environment, and the character of existing communities.
- 4.95 There are calls for careful planning, enforcement of developer commitments, and consideration of the long-term implications of new settlements. There is a desire for sustainable development that includes robust public transport and preserves green spaces, with some scepticism about the ability of the Council and developers to deliver on these goals.

Scenario 8 – Public Transport Focus

What we said

- 4.96 This final scenario would see future development focused along key public transport corridors and around public transport hubs - both existing and potential (e.g. taking account of the potential for a new railway line solution from Carterton and Witney to Oxford).
- 4.97 Such an approach would encourage modal shift away from the private car, thereby reducing carbon emissions and alleviate pressure on the A40 which is already predicted to be at capacity by 2031, with car journeys taking around 30 minutes longer than at present.
- 4.98 However, coverage of public transport across the District is variable and much of the Cotswold rail line runs through the Cotswolds National Landscape where the scale and extent of development is expected to be limited. The potential Carterton – Oxford rail line is also at the feasibility study stage only.

What you said

- 4.99 The responses to Scenario 8 reveal a complex array of opinions.
- 4.100 Many respondents support the idea of new housing being built where there is good public transport provision, but there is also a concern that the current provision is inadequate and that significant investment would be needed before new housing developments.
- 4.101 There is a clear call for infrastructure improvements, including better bus services, especially in rural areas and for cycling and walking paths. The cost of public transport and its reliability are also mentioned as factors that need to be addressed to encourage its use over private cars.

- 4.102 The most recurrent theme across the responses is the need for improved public transport infrastructure, particularly the restoration of a railway link between Carterton and Oxford via Witney and Eynsham, which is seen as a potential solution to alleviate the congestion on the A40.
- 4.103 The potential for a new railway line is met with both enthusiasm and scepticism. While some see it as a green and fast transport solution, others question the financial viability of such a project and whether it would actually lead to urban sprawl and loss of rural character.
- 4.104 Concerns are raised about the actual number of houses needed to fund it and whether developers would support the necessary level of investment.
- 4.105 Concerns about the environmental impact of new developments and the need to protect rural areas are also prominent. There is a sense of urgency for solutions that can be implemented in the short to medium term, rather than waiting decades for a perfect solution.
- 4.106 The inadequacy of current public transport provisions is a recurring concern, with many calling for immediate improvements to bus services, particularly in rural areas.
- 4.107 Many respondents are in favour of developing housing around existing and potential public transport hubs, such as railway stations, to alleviate traffic and promote sustainable travel.
- 4.108 The need for infrastructure development, including sewage, water, and healthcare, to precede or coincide with new housing is also emphasised throughout the responses received. Responses also touch on broader issues such as the affordability of housing, the role of developers in funding infrastructure, and the need for a more holistic approach.
- 4.109 Overall, while there is a consensus on the need for improved public transport and infrastructure before further housing development, opinions vary on the best approach to achieve this.
- 4.110 While there is support for the idea of a public transport-focused development strategy, there is also a clear demand for a realistic, financially viable, and immediate plan to address the existing infrastructure deficits and improve public transport services across West Oxfordshire.
- 4.111 There are also some views that the focus on Oxford-centric transport solutions neglects the needs of those travelling in other directions or using the A40 as a through route.

5. Sites, Ideas and Opportunities

- 5.1 The third aspect of the consultation was an open invitation for stakeholders to put forward their thoughts on how land in the district might be used in the future such as new housing, employment, infrastructure, community use, green space, nature recovery and renewable energy.
- 5.2 A large number of suggestions were put forward, ranging from specific sites to more general ideas and opportunities.
- 5.3 A schedule of these is attached at Appendix 1.
- 5.4 The majority of sites which were put forward relate to housing and employment uses and the relative merits of these will be assessed as part of the evidence base underpinning the new Local Plan. This will include further engagement with Town and Parish Councils.
- 5.5 The various other suggestions received will also be taken into account through the development of the plan itself and through the preparation of relevant supporting evidence including in relation to infrastructure planning.

6. Other General Feedback

6.1 As with any consultation, a number of other, more general comments were also received which are very helpful as the scope and content of the new Local Plan starts to take shape.

6.2 Key points to note are summarised below.

General Comments Received

6.3 Respondents expressed a variety of concerns and proposals regarding the development and planning policies in their area. The most recurrent themes include the need for improved infrastructure to support new housing, the preservation of green spaces and the countryside, and the prioritization of brownfield sites for development.

6.4 Many respondents emphasise the importance of infrastructure development, such as roads, public transport, healthcare, and education, before or alongside new housing projects.

6.5 There is a strong sentiment against building on greenfield sites, with a preference for using brownfield locations and retrofitting existing buildings with solar panels.

6.6 Concerns about the impact of development on the natural environment and local wildlife are also prevalent, with calls for sustainable farming methods and the protection of biodiversity.

6.7 Transport issues are a major focus, with numerous calls for the restoration of the Witney-Carterton-Oxford railway line to alleviate traffic problems on the A40 and to provide a green transport solution. The need for better public transport services and the promotion of active travel, such as walking and cycling, are also highlighted.

6.8 Several responses address the issue of housing, advocating for the construction of affordable homes tailored to the needs of local residents rather than serving as second homes or holiday rentals. There is also a call for policies that prevent the monopolization of land development by single entities, which can hinder the timely delivery of housing.

6.9 The preservation of the Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site and its setting is another concern, with objections to development that could harm its significance.

6.10 In summary, respondents are advocating for a balanced approach to local planning that prioritises sustainable development, protects the environment, and ensures that infrastructure keeps pace with housing growth. They are seeking a future where green spaces are conserved, local needs are met, and the unique character of their communities is maintained.

7. Stakeholder Events

- 7.1 To complement the digital engagement which took place, a series of in-person events were run including public exhibitions and workshop-type discussions.
- 7.2 Two sessions were held with Town and Parish Councils on the 10th and 18th October respectively, with both sessions stimulating a good level of debate focused on the three main aspects of the consultation.
- 7.3 Tables were facilitated by Officers and notes taken on the main topics of discussion. The table notes for the session held on 10th October are attached at Appendix 2 and for the session on the 18th October at Appendix 3.
- 7.4 A further District Council Member workshop was held on the 26th October and stimulated an equally useful level of debate and discussion. Again, tables were facilitated by Officers and notes taken (see Appendix 4).

8. Next Steps

- 8.1 The 'Your Place, Your Plan' focused consultation attracted a very good level of response and generated valuable feedback which will now be used by Officers to start shaping the structure and content of the new Local Plan.
- 8.2 In terms of next steps, it is envisaged that a further Regulation 18 consultation will take place in June 2024.
- 8.3 The primary purpose of this further consultation will be to set out a series of preferred policy approaches drawing on the feedback received to date and supporting technical evidence.
- 8.4 Beyond this, Officers hope to be in a position to formally consult on the final draft plan in late autumn 2024 and then submit it for examination in spring 2025.

Appendix 1 – Schedule of submissions (sites, ideas and opportunities)

Agent/Landowner	Site name/address	Site Size (where specified)	Proposed use
Abbeymill Homes	Land rear of 44 Common Road, North Leigh	0.6 ha	Residential – up to 15 dwellings
Abbeymill Homes	Land east of Greenwich Lane, Leafield	Not specified	Residential
Ainscough Strategic	Land north of the Worcester Road, Chipping Norton	8.5 ha	Residential
Ainscough Strategic	Land east of Witney Road, Ducklington (The Moors)	Not specified	Residential – 120 dwellings
Arc Planning on behalf of Socially Conscious Capital	Land west of Curbridge	31 ha	Residential – 400 dwellings
Armstrong Rigg on behalf of Manor Oak Homes	Land south of New Yatt Road, North Leigh	1.6 ha	Residential – 43 dwellings
Arron Twamley Planning on behalf of Mac Mic	Land at the Downs, Standlake	29 ha	Residential – 490 dwellings
Berkeley Strategic	West Eynsham SDA	Not specified	Extension of existing West Eynsham SDA boundary to enable provision of western spine road
Bluestone Planning on behalf of landowner	Land at the corner of School Lane, Finstock	0.96 ha	Residential

Agent/Landowner	Site name/address	Site Size (where specified)	Proposed use
Bluestone Planning on behalf of Hall Group Ltd	Burford Laundry, Tannery Yard, Burford	0.31 ha	Residential
Bluestone Planning on behalf of Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance	Glebe Field, north of Ascott Road, Shipton under Wychwood	0.93 ha	Residential – 26 dwellings
Bluestone Planning on behalf of Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance	Glebe Field, south of Bampton Road, Aston	0.77 ha	Residential – 16 to 20 dwellings
Bluestone Planning on behalf of Oxford Diocesan Board of Finance	Rectory and Glebe Field, south of Enstone Road, Westcott Barton	0.40 ha	Residential – 8 to 10 dwellings
Brown and Co.	Land at West End Farm, Shilton	1.34 ha	Residential – 25 dwellings
Brown and Co.	Land west of Shilton Road, Carterton	25.27 ha	Residential
Brown and Co.	Land adjacent to Rectory Farm, Alvescot	2.77 ha	Residential – 50 dwellings
Bryan McNamara	Land south of Old Witney Road, Eynsham	Not specified	Residential
Carter Jonas on behalf of Bloombridge	Land at Kilkenny Farm, north of Carterton	40 ha	Residential – 750+ dwellings
Carter Jonas on behalf of David Wilson Homes	Land south of Witney at Ducklington	104 ha	Residential – up to 1,800 dwellings
Carter Jonas on behalf of landowner	Land south of Sheep Street, Burford	20 ha	Residential

Agent/Landowner	Site name/address	Site Size (where specified)	Proposed use
Carter Jonas on behalf of the Mawle Trustees	Land east of Witney	Not specified	Residential, community and employment
Chadwick Town Planning on behalf of Lincoln College	Land at Station Road, Kingham	2.99 ha	Residential
Cornbury Park Estate	Land north of High Street, Finstock	Not specified	Residential
Cornbury Park Estate	Land east of London Lane, Ascott under Wychwood	Not specified	Residential
David Locke Associates for Hallam Land	Land north of Holliers Crescent, Middle Barton	8.72 ha	Residential – 80 dwellings
David Locke Associates for Hallam Land	Land west of Downs Road, Witney	32.8 ha	Residential – up to 600 dwellings
David Locke Associates for Hallam Land	Land west of Witney, south of Burford Road	51.6 ha	Residential, community and employment – 700 dwellings with 4 – 8 ha of employment
David Wilson Homes – Southern	Land north of Price Way, Carterton	18.16 ha	Residential
Ken Dijkman Planning	Land at Milking Lane, Witney	7.86 ha	Residential – 190 dwellings
Edgars Ltd on behalf of landowner	Enstone Business Park	16.5 ha	Intensification and expansion of Enstone Business Park
Edgars Ltd on behalf of R&RW Homes	Land north of Milton Road, Shipton under Wychwood	1.4 ha	Residential – 22 dwellings

Agent/Landowner	Site name/address	Site Size (where specified)	Proposed use
Framptons	Land east of Worton Road, Middle Barton	Not specified	Residential
Gladman Developments	Land at Barnard Gate	304.21 ha	Mixed-use residential
Gladman Developments	Land north of Burford Road, Witney	61 ha	Residential – up to 900 dwellings
Graham Soame Planning and Development Ltd.	Land south of Combe Road, Stonesfield	Not specified	Residential
Green and Co.	Common Farm, Common Road, North Leigh	Not specified	Residential – 8 dwellings
Hextall Twiddy on behalf of landowner	Land north of Main Road, Curbridge	0.93 ha	Residential (self-build)
Hextall Twiddy on behalf of landowner	Land west of Bridewell Close, North Leigh	3.2 ha	Residential
Hourigan Planning on behalf of Anwyl Land Ltd	Land west of Mount Owen Road, Bampton	10.27 ha	Residential – 75 dwellings approx.
Jake Collinge Planning	Land at Foxburrow Lane, Hailey	Not specified	Residential – 15 plots for self-build / custom-build housing
Jake Collinge Planning	Land south of Main Road, Curbridge	Not specified	Residential
Jonathan Hayes	Land at Upavon Way (Sunset View) Carterton	Not specified	Residential

Agent/Landowner	Site name/address	Site Size (where specified)	Proposed use
JPPC on behalf of Adalta Real	Land north of Chapel House Farm, Chipping Norton	2.3 ha	Employment comprising mixed-use commercial
Land and Mineral Management on behalf of Smiths (Gloucester)	Former Enstone Quarry, Enstone	9 ha	Employment – industrial and commercial
Lichfields on behalf of Jansons Property	West Eynsham SDA	Not specified	Extension of existing SDA boundary to include land at the Long Barn
Louise Perrin	Land north of Eynsham Road, Cassington	2.81 ha	Residential
Marrons on behalf of Bellway Homes Ltd.	Land south of Shilton	25.2 ha	Residential
Marrons on behalf of Bellway Homes Ltd.	Land to the west of Shilton Road, Carterton	5.6 ha	Residential
McLoughlin Planning for Castlethorpe Homes	Land west of Hailey Road, Hailey	1.2 ha	Residential – 25 – 30 dwellings
McLoughlin Planning for Mackenzie Miller Homes	Land south of High Street, Milton u Wychwood	10 ha	Residential – 35 dwellings
Mike Gilbert Planning on behalf of the landowners	Land rear of 27, 29 and 33 Corbett Road, Carterton	0.8 ha	Residential – 12 houses (or greater number of flats)
Nexus Planning for CEG and the Blenheim Estate	Land at Hanborough Station	33 ha	Residential – 600 dwellings

Agent/Landowner	Site name/address	Site Size (where specified)	Proposed use
Nexus Planning for Lone Star Land and Graftongate	Land east and north of Carterton	Not specified	Employment
Nexus Planning on behalf of Gleeson Land	Land east of Burford Road, Chipping Norton	5.1 ha	Residential – 104 dwellings
Oxfordshire County Council Property and Estates	Land at North Farm, Aston (Site A)	0.7 ha	Residential
Oxfordshire County Council Property and Estates	Land at North Farm, Aston (Site B)	0.96 ha	Residential
Oxfordshire County Council Property and Estates	Land at North Farm, Aston (Site C)	1.09 ha	Residential
Oxfordshire County Council Property and Estates	Land at North Farm, Aston (Site D)	17.4 ha	Residential
Oxfordshire County Council Property and Estates	Burford Wysdom Caravan Park	0.5 ha	Residential
Oxfordshire County Council Property and Estates	Land at Ticknell Piece, Charlbury	1.85 ha	Residential
Oxfordshire County Council Property and Estates	Land at Banbury Road, Chipping Norton	0.4 ha	Residential
Oxfordshire County Council Property and Estates	Rockhill Farm, Chipping Norton	1.2 ha	Residential
Oxfordshire County Council Property and Estates	Land at Green Lane, Milton u Wychwood	0.45 ha	Residential

Agent/Landowner	Site name/address	Site Size (where specified)	Proposed use
Oxfordshire County Council Property and Estates	Land north of Burford School, Burford	3.23 ha	Residential
Oxfordshire County Council Property and Estates	Land at Fairspear Road, Leafield	0.3 ha	Residential
Oxfordshire County Council Property and Estates	Land at Dark Lane, Witney	0.2 ha	Residential
Oxfordshire County Council Property and Estates	Land north of Medcroft Road, Tackley	0.27 ha	Residential
Oxfordshire County Council Property and Estates	Land south of Medcroft Road, Tackley	0.37 ha	Residential
Oxfordshire County Council Property and Estates	Land west of Rousham Road, Tackley	2.9 ha	Residential
Pegasus Group on behalf of Spitfire Homes	Land east of Wroslyn Road (and south of Pigeon House Lane) Freeland	5.3 ha	Residential – 80 dwellings
Persimmon Homes Wessex	Land south of Hailey Road, Witney	5.5 ha	Residential – 130 dwellings
Planning Prospects on behalf of landowner	Land between Banbury Road and Oxford Road, Enstone	Not specified	Residential
Planning Prospects on behalf of landowner	Land at Chapel Lane, Enstone	0.65 ha	Residential – 8 dwellings
Rectory Homes	Land north of Woodstock Road, Stonesfield	6.2 ha	Residential – 50 dwellings approx.

Agent/Landowner	Site name/address	Site Size (where specified)	Proposed use
Ridge Planning	Land west of Common Road, North Leigh	3.85 ha	Residential – 88 dwellings
Robert Wilson	Land north-west of Stanton Harcourt	Not specified	Residential
Rural Solutions on behalf of the Eynsham Park Estate	The Sawmill, West of Cuckoo Lane	2 ha	Commercial/tourism/leisure
Rural Solutions on behalf of the Eynsham Park Estate	North Leigh Football Club	6 ha	Residential and/or tourism (with football club relocated)
Rural Solutions on behalf of the Eynsham Park Estate	Land south of A4095, North Leigh	7 ha	Relocation of football club with ancillary / supporting uses
Rural Solutions on behalf of the Eynsham Park Estate	Osney Hill Farm Business Centre, south of A4095	2.25 ha	Employment – expansion of existing business centre
Rural Solutions on behalf of the Eynsham Park Estate	Land at Osney, north of A4095	37 ha	Renewable energy (solar)
Rural Solutions on behalf of the Eynsham Park Estate	Land south of Freeland	3 ha	Mixed-use including commercial or tourism/leisure with residential
Rural Solutions on behalf of the Eynsham Park Estate	Land south of Freeland	7.5 ha	Residential with strategic public open space
Rural Solutions on behalf of the Eynsham Park Estate	Land north of the A40, west of Barnard Gate	40 ha	Renewable energy (solar)
Rural Solutions on behalf of the Eynsham Park Estate	Land at Barnard Gate	0.6 ha	Residential (custom build or affordable) and/or holiday cottages
Rural Solutions on behalf of the Eynsham Park Estate	Paddock off Station Road, South Leigh	0.4 ha	Residential
Rural Solutions on behalf of the Eynsham Park Estate	Land off Station Road, South Leigh	0.6 ha	Residential

Agent/Landowner	Site name/address	Site Size (where specified)	Proposed use
Rural Solutions on behalf of the Eynsham Park Estate	Land off Chapel Road, South Leigh	1.8 ha	Residential
Rural Solutions on behalf of the Eynsham Park Estate	Land at Church End, South Leigh	0.9 ha	Residential
Ruth Bailey	Land rear of 80 Brize Norton Road, Minster Lovell	2.55 ha	Residential – 40 dwellings
Savills on behalf of Christ Church and Bloor Homes	Land north of Brize Norton and Carterton (Foxbury Farm)	275 ha	Mixed use including residential - up to 3,000 dwellings
Savills on behalf of the Church Commissioners for England	Land west of Station Road, Bampton	33.27 ha	Residential
Savills on behalf of the Church Commissioners for England	Land east of Station Road, Bampton	34.2 ha	Residential
Savills on behalf of Harper Crewe (Charlbury) Ltd	Land off Forest Road, Charlbury	Not specified	Residential – 37 dwellings
Savills on behalf of landowner	Newland Sports Ground, Witney	Not specified	Residential
Savills on behalf of Lioncourt Strategic Land	Land west of Common Road, North Leigh	11.33 ha	Residential – 70 to 150 dwellings
Savills on behalf of Mac Mic	Land at Curbridge Downs Farm, Witney	22.55 ha	Residential – up to 400 dwellings
Savills on behalf of the landowner	Land south of B4027, Wootton	5.5 ha	Residential – 40 to 50 dwellings

Agent/Landowner	Site name/address	Site Size (where specified)	Proposed use
SF Planning	Land north-west of High Street, Milton under Wychwood	Not specified	Residential
SF Planning	Land off Ticknell Piece Road, Charlbury	1.96 ha	Residential
SF Planning	Land north-east of Fairspear Road, Leafield	0.29 ha	Residential
Stantec on behalf of Lagan Homes	Land at Jefferson's Piece, Charlbury	1.8 ha	Residential – 43 dwellings
Stantec on behalf of Sharba Homes	Land south-west of Charlbury Road, Hailey	5.3 ha	Residential – 50 dwellings
Sworders on behalf of the landowner	Land south-east of Church Street, Kingham (Lockwoods Orchard)	3.5 ha	Residential – 20 dwellings
Terence o Rourke on behalf of the Blenheim Estate	Land to the north-west of the Green, Cassington	3 ha	Residential
Terence o Rourke on behalf of the Blenheim Estate	Land east of the Green, East End	6.2 ha	Residential
Terence o Rourke on behalf of the Blenheim Estate	Land north of Stonesfield Road, Combe	7.3 ha	Residential
Terence o Rourke on behalf of the Blenheim Estate	Land north of Cassington	18.8 ha	Residential
Terence o Rourke on behalf of the Blenheim Estate	Land at Alma Grove Farm, Combe	4.9 ha	Residential

Agent/Landowner	Site name/address	Site Size (where specified)	Proposed use
Terence o Rourke on behalf of the Blenheim Estate	Land south of Charity Farm, Stonesfield	1.8 ha	Residential
Terence o Rourke on behalf of the Blenheim Estate	Land north and east of Banbury Road, Woodstock	59.8 ha	Residential
Terence o Rourke on behalf of the Blenheim Estate	Land to the south-west of Charlbury	21.9 ha	Residential
Terence o Rourke on behalf of the Blenheim Estate	Land at (west of) Cassington	20.6 ha	Residential
Terence o Rourke on behalf of Pye Homes	Land east of Wroslyn Road, Freeland	5.15 ha	Residential
Turley on behalf of Bewley Homes	Land south of Aston Road, Bampton	9.3 ha	Residential – 60 dwellings
Turley on behalf of L&Q Estates	Land north of Aston Road, Bampton	20.64 ha	Residential – up to 300 dwellings
Turley on behalf of Rainier Developments	Land adjacent to East Chipping Norton SDA	22.64 ha	Residential – 450 dwellings
Turley on behalf of Victoria Land	Land south of Standlake Road, Ducklington	1.88 ha	Residential – 40 dwellings approx.
Union4 Planning on behalf of Welbeck CP	Land to the north/west of Garnes Lane, Fulbrook	0.3 ha	Residential – 4 dwellings

Agent/Landowner	Site name/address	Site Size (where specified)	Proposed use
Union4 Planning on behalf of Welbeck CP	Land to the north of the A361, Fulbrook	Not specified	Residential
Walsingham Planning on behalf of Catesby Estates	Land east of Mount Owen Road, Bampton	5.78ha	Residential – 100 dwellings
Walsingham Planning on behalf of Catesby Estates	Land west of Minster Lovell	73 ha	Mixed-use including 950 – 1,250 dwellings
Walsingham Planning on behalf of Obsidian	Land west of London Lane Ascott u Wychwood	3.7 ha	Residential
Walsingham Planning on behalf of Obsidian	Land west of Burford Road, Chipping Norton	34 ha	Residential – 200 dwellings
WWA on behalf of David Carrington	Land north of the A40 adjoining Esso service station	4.7 ha	Residential
WWA on behalf of Kinglerlee Homes	Land east of Main Road, Stanton Harcourt	1.69 ha	Residential – 20 dwellings
WWA on behalf of Oxford Diocese	Land adjoining St. Giles Church, The Downs, Standlake	9.57 ha	Residential

Other general suggestions

- Pedestrian/cycle route to allow safe cycle commuting towards Abingdon
- Converting the site of Judd's Garage on the A44 road near Duke of Marlborough pub for another small business opportunity
- Improved cycle provision between Witney and Wolvercote
- Cycle and pedestrian provision from Salt Cross Garden Village to Hanborough Station via Lower Road
- Community hydropower on the Upper Thames weirs
- Restore Thames path along the Thames
- Footpath from Bradwell Village to Burford
- Truckstop/garage/shop at Stanton Harcourt for lorry drivers
- Horticulture and regeneration north and east of Brize Norton
- Cemetery expansion – Stanton Harcourt
- Cycle Path along A4095 at North Leigh
- More footpaths around Wootton
- The larger settlements should all be fully connected by safe cycle ways
- Re-direct through traffic around Chipping Norton
- Converting the recently Wootton by Wootton School for a blend of uses either for social uses such as education skill training, office space, café etc.
- Better public access for unpowered craft to the Thames
- Pedestrian and bicycle bridge at Bablock Hythe
- Transport hub for Carterton, Brize, Curbridge and other nearby villages.
- More effective use of landfill area – Stanton Harcourt
- Greater understanding of Oxfordshire's Nature Recovery Network
- A new sewage plant in Church Hanborough
- Better sewerage infrastructure for Long Hanborough
- Relocate existing Boxing Club from Bampton to Carterton
- Non traffic light controlled access across the Thames at Newbridge
- White lining at the edge and/or centre of Buckland Road
- Exploiting Big Chalk initiative for an ambitious 'Wychwood Forest' vision

- A village car park for parents collecting from school in North Leigh
- Coach Parking and Visitor Welcome Area – Langdale Hall Witney
- All green areas could include both orchard trees and community vegetable and wild flower gardens in a part of the area that would not prevent balls games etc. Examples are the green running up from witney town centre, Eastfield road, Taphouse avenue, Burwell meadow, Deer Park, The leys, Langle Common, Next to Woodgreen school playing fields, Madley park school, Windrush valley. ALSO in Witney even smaller green spaces on places such as Thorney Leys, Burwell Drive, Burwell meadow, Windrush place.
- Recreation lake off Stanton Harcourt Road
- Link the current bypass roundabout to the south leigh bend, or even across to the A40
- Cycle path to Eynsham around land approved for gravel extraction
- Eynsham to Botley Community Path
- Improved leisure facilities at Greystones, Chipping Norton
- Elevated Train/Light Railway to link Standlake, Northmoor, Stanton, Eynsham
- Renewable heat network for Clanfield
- Off road option to connect Fawler with Finstock station
- Footpath from Bampton to Bampton Garden Plants
- Traffic prioritisation in north of Chipping Norton
- Cycle path on verge space from Stanton to Standlake
- Phone/communications tower at Stanton Harcourt Church
- Reedbed/wetland buffer zones between local sewerage works and the Evenlode river

Appendix 2 – Table Notes from Town and Parish Council Event – 10 October 2023

TABLE 1 – Summary notes

Parishes: Kingham, Swinbrook and Widford, Astall Leigh, Chilson, Charlbury

Topic 1 – Draft Local Plan Objectives

- Design code and local vernacular – should strengthen with new policies;
- Scope to look at what is/is not acceptable for listed/historic buildings and in conservation areas;
- Even within the historic core we need to move towards zero carbon;
- Should integrity of historic environment trump other considerations, especially climate change/energy efficiency measures e.g. charging points – should they be allowed? Ugly on the highway;
- What is more important – the ‘look’ of the built environment or future proofing? Agreed it is a nuanced judgement – difficult to have a blanket policy;
- WODC needs to be cleverer than current Local Plan and better define infrastructure need – provide hooks for negotiating for infrastructure from the outset – less room for developers to ‘wriggle’ out of their obligations;
- Infrastructure delivery helps to integrate new development with existing settlement – it is an opportunity. Larger scale developments have to be designed as something more than a high-density housing estate bolted on to the side of a settlement;
- Grampian conditions – make use in terms of water/waste resource investment in particular;
- Thames Water – wide discussion, not just about water quality and sewage treatment, but also working closer with them;
- Charlbury – in order to support the community we need affordable housing – can we take the objectives further and restrict large houses?
- Design code could promote smaller houses as these would better help meet housing demand and also be consistent with historic vernacular/patterns of development;
- We tend to overlook the hideous post-war development in our villages – could this be redeveloped with denser, more energy efficient properties?
- Encourage delivery of affordable rent properties;
- Issue of second homes/Airbnb although the former is less corrosive to communities especially if the owners use them regularly;
- Consider option of Council Tax on second homes to offset the negative impacts – funds go back into the community the property is located in.

Topic 2 – Pattern of Development

- Unanimous support for current Hierarchical approach;
- Benefit of hierarchical approach is the role this plays in supporting the facilities within the rural service centres e.g. Charlbury, Bampton, Burford, Woodstock. The rural service centres themselves could not sustain these services – rely on the surrounding villages to do so;
- Hierarchical approach but no development within the floodplain. NB Factor in implications of climate change;
- What are the demands we are responding to when considering patterns of development?
- Empty offices – an opportunity for town centre living;

- Discomfort with ‘new town’ approach;
- Within the 570 per annum we need to prioritise meeting WODC need not that of Oxford;
- Limited public transport means a challenge to reduce reliance on cars;
- Road system – the challenge lies in getting past Oxford rather than trying to get into Oxford;
- No to village clusters;
- No support for new housing estates with their own services – sucks the life out of village/town centres;
- Challenge – how to integrate the housing in with the existing – so as not to ‘dilute’ the character of the settlement – the hierarchical approach would be the most sympathetic option to achieve this.

Topic 3 – Call for Sites, Ideas and Opportunities

- Supporting land for agriculture/food production is a laudable objective although not at the expense of wildlife and we should not pretend that it is compatible with farming on the site;
- Seek opportunities for habitat connectivity at a local and strategic scale;
- Solar fields not supported – certainly not while new development is constructed without renewable energy and high levels of energy efficiency.

TABLE 2 – Summary notes

Parishes: Chastleton, Churchill, Bruern, Ascott, Milton

Topic 1 – Draft Local Plan Objectives

- Nothing objectionable about the objectives but what do these mean in reality?
- There are quite a lot of objectives – could these be condensed down?
- How will the various objectives be prioritised?
- Infrastructure not given a strong enough emphasis in the objectives. Where is this mentioned?
- Need vastly improved public transport across the District as a whole but particularly in the villages;
- Water environment is critically important. There is great concern regarding sewerage and also flooding;
- Grampian conditions – felt that no houses should be constructed until the necessary upgrades are carried out by Thames Water;
- Strong concerns regarding piecemeal development as this results in limited infrastructure to support the growth which cumulatively has a significant impact;
- The issues of Air BnBs in villages was raised which has a significant impact on communities in terms of housing availability and a sense of place. Too many holiday lets can destroy a community.

Topic 2 – Pattern of Development

- No general consensus regarding a preferred approach;
- A lot of negativity regarding the village cluster scenario – perception that this means development between the villages so they would lose their identity;
- Very limited support for new settlement option;

- Also relatively limited support for the public transport focussed scenario as it was felt that transport infrastructure is not strong enough to support this approach;
- Villages are at capacity – spaces are limited at schools and roads are congested.

Topic 3 – Call for Sites, Ideas and Opportunities

- Encourage small scale business expansion in the villages as well as business adaptation;
- Seek opportunities for biodiversity net gain and nature recovery. Needs to be considered more holistically;
- Solar should be incorporated on buildings – not in green fields.

TABLE 3 – Summary notes

Topic 1 – Draft Local Plan Objectives

- Are developers adhering to planning conditions? Is this being monitored and are local plan policies dictating obligations, especially in terms of infrastructure on new developments?
- Are overall quality standards of build being met, particularly in the sector of affordable housing?
- More control needed over planning sites and there must be mandatory compliance particularly in the areas of renewable energy and low carbon – net zero;
- Policies should be adopted on new schemes to include areas such as energy efficiency, charging points, heat and air source pumps, solar panels.
- Renewables do need rolling out and reviewed on a site-by-site basis to ensure the criteria met in terms of climate change. Climate Policy to be enforced.
- Agriculture – what role in terms of reducing carbon emissions? A role for re-generative farming and right to roam?
- Infrastructure a major problem across the county and this should be given priority at the beginning of a development not the end. Roads and footpaths need general improvement.
- Improvements to public transport across the district – more buses, cycle paths – consider Cotswold train line re-instatement or tram? New links to be established.
- School provision/transport across area to be considered as no funding in some rural villages;
- There is concern regarding sewerage and flooding, although National and Local policies dictate the risk.
- Integrated approach to be included in new plan to include water recycling, etc. Boundaries needed to be pushed for water environment and biodiversity – evidence based on supply. Thames Water still discharging.
- Dark skies and light pollution a problem in some areas.

Topic 2 – Pattern of Development

- Shortage of homes for younger people due to affordability – make properties affordable by adopting modern methods of construction such as kit housing and contemporary architecture;
- S106 payments – is system robust enough – is developer contribution formally adopted?
- Are there planning restrictions on short term lets such as Air BnBs and short term lets – can this be controlled, and the use class changed?

- What is the rural tourism legislation or perhaps a covenant considered? There are pros and cons to this as it can boost economy and income;
- Agriculture offers artisan employment.

Topic 3 – Call for Sites, Ideas and Opportunities

- Share in growth – distribute equally. Consider hybrid options;
- Balanced mix of sites catering for all ages and types.

Other points raised

- Look at statistics for young people – where do they work and travel to? Can they work from home to reduce travel? More employment opportunities needed, perhaps consider apprentices in rural trades and farming.

Appendix 3 – Table Notes from Town and Parish Council Event – 18 October 2023

TABLE 1 – Summary notes

Parishes: South Leigh, Aston and Coate, Bampton, Curbridge, Ducklington, Asthall Leigh

- Villages don't want to lose their identity – village cluster concept threatens that;
- District Cllr Lysette Nicholls (Aston, Standlake and Stanton Harcourt) supported a shorter Local Plan term – five years;
- Conversely, the Aston and Coate Clerk reported that her two new Councillors felt that the term of the Local Plan was too short and should be looking to 2051 if it is to be truly strategic and planning for the future. Supported the concept of a new settlement but didn't like development patterns 5 & 6;
- S106 – frustration that infrastructure delivery can fall outside the parish where the housing is accommodated;
- Some concern that WODC does not have sufficient influence over OCC S106 negotiations;
- South Leigh – concern about the burden on Parish Councils to engage in the planning process – skills and volunteer capacity ... is there scope to band together?
- The term 'limited development' needs to be better defined within the new Local Plan as this is currently exploited by developers to proposed schemes which too large/imposing out of scale with the settlement;
- The concept of good 'transport links' is a double-edged sword – there are implications to good transport links – good and bad;
- Considered premature to use 'Public Transport' to steer pattern of development in this Local Plan as some of this is not yet in existence e.g. trainline along A40;
- Would a new train line really be delivered? Doubt that adequate partnership working arrangements between OCC, WODC, Network Rail and train companies exist – want full disclosure of financial implications to the public;
- Asthall – concern about size/tenure of housing delivered – the lifestyle expectations that are generated by new developments. Who can really afford these? Perpetuates second home ownership issue;
- Asthall – genuine need to provide suitable retirement accommodation – two bed-homes with large gardens;
- Is there a role for covenants to restrict ownership/occupation to address AirBNB/second home ownership?
- WODC needs to challenge Thames Water – Grampian Conditions are positive;
- WODC needs to challenge Environment Agency – particularly in relation to their review of levels of flood risk;
- Need to be more imaginative in terms of active travel options;
- South Leigh – generally happy with the breadth of objectives in this Local Plan consultation;
- WODC should be engaging Witney College in Local Plan – young persons input is essential;
- Is the location of growth within villages sustainable?
- Bampton – doesn't want any more growth as time needed to assimilate new people who have moved into recently built homes into the community;
- Infrastructure first – transport, schools, dentists;
- Design Code role – specify phasing to enhance delivery of infrastructure ... but who enforces this? Believe WODC should take a much stronger enforcement role;

- Ducklington – biggest concern is losing local distinctiveness and sense of community;
- There was some aversion to the pattern of development scenarios 5 & 6 from other attendees.

TABLE 2 – Summary notes

Parishes: Fifield, Woodstock, Bladon, Chipping Norton, Carterton, South Leigh, Brize Norton, Long Hanborough, Ramsden.

Draft Objectives

- Tourism is important to the economy so need a balance where it avoids destroying communities but we also need to recognise the benefits. In Carterton, some individuals let out rooms in their house and this is important to serve RAF personnel so need to avoid blanket restrictions.
- The importance of infrastructure is not to be underestimated. This includes health care provision, education, highways etc. Infrastructure needs to be provided at an early stage to create sense of community and to promote good habits in terms of active travel etc.
- Importance of early engagement with infrastructure providers was stressed. Particularly health care providers, Thames Water etc.
- Need stronger emphasis on healthy place shaping in terms of building communities.
- Need stronger policies on design and sustainability.
- Settlement boundaries may have some value.

Pattern of Development

- There is little land in Carterton so no ability to expand without encroaching into neighbouring parishes. Need denser development on brownfield land within the town as part of REEMA, alongside facilities and services for young families in particular.
- Why is a 'Chipping Norton focus' not included as a scenario?
- Sprawl along the A40 and other transport corridors should be avoided as no sense of community.
- Instead of building out – look at regeneration opportunities.
- Many of the key towns have expanded out beyond capacity and now not walkable.
- New community – benefit would be that we could seek a higher level of infrastructure.

Call for Sites, Ideas and Opportunities

- Will windfarms be considered?
- As a rural district we must protect farming land in order for the country to be as self-sufficient as possible.

Other general issues

- How have we engaged young people? Need better youth representation.
- Very little confidence in the planning system and infrastructure providers (particularly TW).
- As a Council, we need to be stronger in terms of taking action against providers who do not comply with their requirements.

TABLE 3 – Summary notes

Draft Objectives

- Where is the housing demand coming from? Is it a combination of people moving into the county and district? National Statistics confirm that Oxfordshire County has had more houses built than any other area, but people are not being helped to get affordable housing. It looks as if more households are demanded for the same number of people due to lifestyle changes such as living longer and divorce and separation.
- Infrastructure a major problem across the county and this should be given priority at the beginning of a development not the end. Development is not supporting water/sewers and transport networks. Utility companies need to come in at beginning prior to development. Contributions to improve infrastructure should be made by developments linking A40. Education and health being affected by lack of infrastructure.
- Improvements to public transport across the district – more buses, cycle paths – consider rail line re-instatement or tram? New links to be established. A40 is getting slower so what impact is accepting new houses in the area having?
- Area needs preserving and provision made for people to live within their means. Currently applications are being approved for small extensions in back gardens as younger people can not afford to move home. Jobs need to be made available more locally.
- Balance needed for rural and urban areas as policy was not clear and was too focused on urban ideas. Clusters could not work as small villages being put together as none of them have the services.
- Salt Cross legal challenge was discussed in terms of the Inspectors decision being challenged with regards zero carbon. It was noted going forward that ambitious targets could get challenged or delayed, although other counties were getting approval on similar applications.

- How were change of policies dealt with as difficult to predict what may happen – partial updates could be made within local plan. Local neighbourhood plans would not be affected by the new local plan.

Patterns of development

- Shortage of homes for younger people due to affordability – younger people want to be in the centre of towns but no affordable housing available and affordable needs to be liveable in terms of size and space. A youth needs assessment was conducted recently and is available to review.
- S106 payments – is system robust enough? Not a clear process and more transparency is needed.
- Patterns of development means areas are being force fed. In the current Local Plan, what is defined by limited development is not clear – any growth needs defining, and the level more clearly stated.
- No more housing into small villages as they are losing their characters and becoming dormitory. Growth to go to larger areas where facilities and infrastructure already exists.

Call for Sites, ideas and opportunities

- Criteria for sites should be fully met in terms of the community and facilities.
- Safeguards should be in place to ensure developers build as agreed at application approval stage. Planning conditions need monitoring and enforcing.

Other key points

- Long discussion about the potential Carterton – Oxford railway line and the cost of approximately six hundred million. Feasibility study conducted by the county council and proved it a positive approach. The first part of the line if approved could be in place by 2031.

Appendix 4 – Table Notes from District Council Member Workshop – 26 October 2023

Table 1 – Summary Notes of Discussion

Infrastructure

- A problem across the county and should be given priority at the beginning of a development. Need supporting water/sewers, transport networks, roads, schools, and services such as doctors and dentists.
- S106 come with the housing and be running in parallel. WODC must enforce legal requirement by developers to provide necessary infrastructure.
- There cannot be situations arising such as currently on the Windrush development where services and facilities have still not been provided although a legal requirement, likewise at Colwell Green.
- How do we get more infrastructure? There does not appear to be any spare capacity.
- Clear policy to identify areas where there is capacity. This already happens on strategic sites but is harder to determine on smaller sites.
- Where new infrastructure is achieved, it is still reliant on others as issues such as staffing, particularly with GP's and dentists, etc.

Standards of Construction

- If zero net carbon cannot be achieved because of government policy, can it be made achievable within the local plan?
- Can it be made mandatory to build with solar panels, etc? Also, a policy is required for solar farms and all renewables.
- Retro-fitting – the local plan needs to cover this
- Guidance is required and to obtain a supporting document into a design code or level.

Pattern of Development

- Hierarchical approach favoured.
- Keeping communities intact – by building further away from centres it means people travel away and go elsewhere for shopping, etc which means they are not part of their settlement.
- The contribution of openness needs to be looked at and how it benefits the area and why it should be kept (like a buffer zone by default). Brize Norton are trying to incorporate a buffer zone in their neighbourhood plan.

- Boundaries are set naturally and not at parish level and the government cannot change this, although this is reviewed every 10 years and is not to be decided politically and the council can only work within the existing rules.
- A new settlement may be the way forward if a site could be found. It could be planned and take a large amount of the new housing required. Salt Cross could be expanded as infrastructure already in place. Discussion about the timescale of a local plan (e.g. new settlement needs to be looking longer term, so too new railway) and the ease of review to address new issues.
- Affordable housing needs looking at, particularly the type/sort of houses – are they appropriate for the needs of the population and the nuances – it's not just how they are built but also the internal plan.
- Are housing needs considered and the nature of them such as disability? Salt Cross has policies in place to address housing needs – e.g., mobility. Ageing population – should we be explicit by encouraging one level living and opportunities for down-sizing?
- Shortage of homes for key workers – is this scheme still available and if so, what is the definition?

Other key points

- Not enough emphasis on heritage and tourism.
- Policy to replace a house not clearly defined as to what is allowed. Also, if your house is changed in any way the policy is not clear or specific and you have to read between the lines and adapt sections from other policies – should be made clearer.
- Need local design codes.

Table 2 – Summary Notes of Discussion

Pattern of development

- Cluster scenario has been negatively received. Concern that this means ‘filling in the gaps’ between settlements and the resultant loss of identity. Terminology not helpful and should be reconsidered to avoid this misconception.
- Facilities are already shared to some extent between rural communities such as schools. Can this be improved through better planning and funding?
- Villages to remain villages but do need some development to sustain village life. Links to empowerment of local communities and potentially a stronger approach to neighbourhood development plans (NDPs).
- Strong infrastructure evidence needed.

Culture and heritage

- This is a key element of what makes West Oxfordshire distinctive. We should celebrate our identity, history and culture in a more proactive and positive way.
- Part of this is considering new uses (e.g. community uses) for heritage assets where they are in danger of becoming derelict or to make them more relevant to today’s society.
- Also opportunities to improve their sustainability credentials should be explored in more detail whilst respecting their history and fabric.
- Links to the positive strategy for the historic environment required by the NPPF.
- Strong connection between tourism and heritage.

Green Infrastructure

- Green spaces are often lacking to serve existing and new communities. Need more publicly accessible greenspace.
- Opportunities to improve spaces and networks through the new local plan, linked to healthy place shaping. However, need to be wary of developers using this as an argument for reducing their highway related infrastructure requirements.
- Greater recognition needed in relation to the importance of climate change adaptation.

Implementation

- A key issue which needs a stronger focus within the local plan.
- More robust approach in terms of infrastructure delivery is required and the phasing requirements should be set out in more detail.

Community services and facilities

- Public houses and other rural facilities are an important element of maintaining a sense of community in rural settlements, yet we continue to see a loss of these across the district.
- We need to explore how these can be supported in a positive and innovative way. Solutions such as allowing some flexibility to strengthen individual uses or supporting the community hub concept were discussed.

Changing role of technology

- This has impacted on so many aspects of our lives and is accelerating, including shopping habits and working arrangements so we need to adapt to this.
- Need to be open to new approaches to re-purpose high streets and make these more robust to future changes.

Role of neighbourhood plans in empowering communities

- General agreement that the development of neighbourhood plans and village design statements should be positively encouraged.
- Officers to consider how we can pro-actively support this including potential briefings and awareness raising sessions.



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
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ANNEX B

West Oxfordshire Local Development Scheme (LDS)

February 2024

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This is the West Oxfordshire District Council Local Development Scheme (LDS). It explains what planning policy documents the Council already has in place and what will be prepared during the three-year period February 2024 – February 2027.

2. West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031

- 2.1 The current [West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031](#) was formally adopted on 27 September 2018. The plan provides an overall framework for growth in the period up to 2031.
- 2.2 Because the Local Plan became five years old in September 2023, a [formal review](#) was undertaken in accordance with Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 2.3 The review concluded that although the adopted local plan policies remain generally consistent with national policy, many of them could usefully be strengthened and updated, in particular those policies relating to the plan's housing requirement given they are based on evidence dating from 2014.
- 2.4 Work on a new Local Plan to 2041 is therefore now well underway as outlined below.

3. West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041

- 3.1 The District Council is currently in the process of producing a new Local Plan covering the period up to 2041.
- 3.2 The plan is currently at the Regulation 18 'plan preparation' stage, with two rounds of initial stakeholder engagement carried out in October 2022 and October 2023 respectively.
- 3.3 The first consultation sought general views on the overall scope of the new Local Plan. A [consultation summary report](#) has been made available online.
- 3.4 The second consultation started to explore draft plan objectives and potential patterns of development. It also included a specific call for sites, ideas and opportunities. A consultation summary report has again been made available online.
- 3.5 In terms of next steps, it is envisaged that a further Regulation 18 consultation will take place in June 2024. The primary purpose of this will be to set out a series of preferred policy approaches drawing on the feedback received to date and supporting technical evidence.
- 3.6 Depending on the outcome of that consultation, it is anticipated that the Regulation 19 pre-submission draft plan will be published in November 2024.

- 3.7 The Council should then be in a position to formally submit the draft Local Plan for examination by April 2025 with a view to examination in summer 2025.
- 3.8 Further information on the purpose, scope and timing of the Local Plan 2041 is set out at Appendix I.

4. Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan (AAP)

- 4.1 A key element of the adopted Local Plan is the allocation of land to the north of the A40 near Eynsham for a new garden village of around 2,200 homes, together with business space and other supporting uses and facilities. The proposal is being supported by central Government through its locally led garden village, towns and cities programme.
- 4.2 The planning of the garden village is being led by a separate [Area Action Plan](#) (AAP) which, when adopted, will form part of the statutory development plan for West Oxfordshire.
- 4.3 The AAP was formally submitted for examination in February 2021, with examination hearing sessions held in June/July 2021. Following the hearing sessions, the appointed Planning Inspector wrote to the Council, effectively ‘pausing’ the examination and requesting further work on the phasing of infrastructure.
- 4.4 Subsequently, the Inspector wrote to the District Council on 26 May 2022 confirming that the AAP can be made ‘sound’ through a number of Main Modifications. Consultation on those modifications took place from 23 September to Friday 4 November 2022 and the Inspector’s Final Report¹ was received on 1 March 2023.
- 4.5 Subsequently however, a legal challenge was submitted by a third-party organisation called Rights Community Action (RCA). The challenge focused on the conclusions reached by the Inspector in relation to the soundness of AAP Policy 2 – Net Zero Carbon Development.
- 4.6 The case was heard in the High Court in November 2023 and at the time of writing, the written judgement is still awaited. It is for this reason that this LDS update does not indicate the anticipated date of adoption of the AAP (which at this point in time is unknown). This will be included in future LDS updates as appropriate.
- 4.7 Further information on the purpose, scope and timing of the AAP is set out at Appendix I.

¹ <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/djkhe03s/salt-cross-aap-inspectors-report-main-mods-appendix-final.pdf>

5. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

5.1 Supplementary planning documents do not form part of the statutory development plan but are important material considerations in the determination of planning applications. Their main purpose is to elaborate on specific local plan policies and explain in more detail how those policies will operate.

5.2 At present, the Council has four adopted SPDs:

- West Oxfordshire Design Guide SPD – adopted in 2016
- Affordable Housing SPD – adopted in October 2021
- Developer Contributions SPD – adopted in July 2023
- Combe Village Design Statement SPD – adopted in July 2023

5.3 These are all available [online](#).

Hanborough Station Masterplan

5.4 The District Council has previously agreed to provide funding, in conjunction with Oxfordshire County Council, to commission a masterplan for Hanborough Station. Potentially, any such document could be taken forward as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) subject to due process.

5.5 At the current time, discussions remain ongoing between the District Council and County Council on the scope of the work and it is intended to be the subject of further dialogue with the Hanborough Station Sub-Group which will be reconvened in early 2024.

5.6 Once the scope and timing of the project has been agreed, this will be reflected in an updated future iteration of the LDS.

6. Neighbourhood Planning

5.1 Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area.

5.2 There are currently nine adopted Neighbourhood Plans in West Oxfordshire including:

- Cassington Neighbourhood Plan (adopted 26 June 2023)
- Charlbury Neighbourhood Plan (adopted 14 June 2021)
- Chipping Norton Neighbourhood Plan (adopted 15 March 2016)
- Eynsham Neighbourhood Plan (adopted 6 February 2020)
- Hailey Neighbourhood Plan (adopted 2 September 2019)
- Milton under Wychwood Neighbourhood Plan (adopted 26 June 2023)
- Shilton Neighbourhood Plan (adopted 2 September 2019)
- South Leigh Neighbourhood Plan (adopted 8 January 2019)
- Woodstock (adopted 23 January 2023)

5.3 There are six other Neighbourhood Plans currently in progress including:

- Ascott under Wychwood Neighbourhood Plan
- Brize Norton Neighbourhood Plan
- Ducklington Neighbourhood Plan
- North Leigh Neighbourhood Plan
- Stonesfield Neighbourhood Plan
- Wootton by Woodstock Neighbourhood Plan

5.4 Because the progress and timing of neighbourhood plans are beyond the control of the District Council, the LDS does not include any information on their anticipated timetables. Further information can however be obtained from the District Council's [website](#).

6. Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

6.1 A Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) explains how local communities and other stakeholders will be engaged in the preparation of the Local Plan and other related documents. It also provides information about how local communities and other stakeholders will be engaged in relation to the determination of planning applications.

6.2 Local planning authorities are required to review their Statements of Community Involvement every 5 years with the Council's most recent SCI being adopted in February 2020².

6.3 The Council will ensure that the SCI is updated prior to February 2025 – in particular to reflect the increased use of digital engagement tools, with the District Council having secured funding from central Government to develop its approach in this field.

7. LDF Monitoring Report

7.1 In accordance with national planning regulations the Council is required to produce a monitoring report addressing various matters including plan progress and implementation, neighbourhood planning, CIL (where applicable) and the duty to co-operate.

7.2 The Council's most recently published monitoring report covers the period 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2023 and is available [online](#).

² <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/jo0g3prh/statement-of-community-involvement.pdf>

8. LDS availability and updates

- 8.1 The LDS must be made publicly available and kept up-to-date.
- 8.2 In terms of availability, a copy of this LDS is available [online](#)
- 8.3 Hard copies are also available in the locations listed in the following table.
- 8.4 The LDS will be updated annually or more often if there are any significant changes in timescales or documents being prepared.

<p>West Oxfordshire District Council Witney Town Centre Shop 3 Welch Way Witney OX28 6JH Tel: 01993 861000 Open: Monday – Friday 9am to 5pm</p>	<p>Witney Town Council Town Hall Market Square Witney OX28 6AG Tel: 01993 704379 Open: Mon, Tues and Thurs 8.30am to 5pm, Wed 9.30am to 5pm and Fri 8.30am to 4.30pm.</p>	<p>Carterton Town Council 19 Alvescot Road Carterton OX18 3JL Tel: 01993 842156 Open: Monday – Friday 9.30am to 4.00pm</p>
<p>Chipping Norton Town Council The Guildhall Market Place Chipping Norton OX7 5NJ Tel: 01608 642341 Open: Monday – Friday 9am to 1pm</p>	<p>Bampton Library Old Grammar School Church View Bampton OX18 2NE Tel: 01993 850076</p>	<p>Burford Library 86A High Street Burford OX18 4QF Tel: 01993 823377</p>
<p>Carterton Library 6 Alvescot Road Carterton OX18 3JH Tel: 01993 841492</p>	<p>Charlbury Library Charlbury Community Centre Enstone Road Charlbury OX7 3PQ Tel: 01608 811104</p>	<p>Chipping Norton Library Goddards Land Chipping Norton OX7 5NP Tel: 01608 643559</p>
<p>Eynsham Library 30 Mill Street Eynsham OX29 4JS Tel: 01865 880525</p>	<p>North Leigh Library Memorial Hall Park Road North Leigh OX29 6SA Tel: 01993 882935</p>	<p>Stonesfield Library Village Hall Longore Stonesfield OX29 8EF Tel: 01993 898187</p>
<p>Witney Library Welch Way Witney OX28 6JH Tel: 01993 703659</p>	<p>Woodstock Library The Oxfordshire Museum Fletcher's House Park Street Woodstock OX20 1SN Tel: 01993 814124 07759 140531</p>	<p>Wychwood Library 29 High Street Milton-under-Wychwood OX7 6LD Tel: 01993 830281</p>

Appendix I – Document Profiles

West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041	
Status	Development Plan Document (DPD)
Overview	The Local Plan will set out the overall framework for future growth in West Oxfordshire to 2041. This is expected to include strategic policies dealing with the overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development as well as non-strategic policies dealing with other matters including site allocations and development management policies.
Geographical coverage	District-wide
Timetable	<p>Regulation 18 initial scoping consultation – August - October 2022 (COMPLETE)</p> <p>Regulation 18 focused consultation on draft plan objectives and spatial strategy options along with a ‘call for sites’ exercise – August – October 2023 (COMPLETE)</p> <p>Regulation 18 consultation on preferred policy options/approaches – June 2024</p> <p>Publication of pre-submission draft Local Plan (Regulation 19) – November 2024</p> <p>Submission of pre-submission draft Local Plan (Regulation 22) – April 2025</p> <p>Examination and adoption - 2025</p>
Conformity	Prepared in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).
Management arrangements	Document production to be led by the Council’s Planning Policy Team under the direction of the Planning Policy Manager. Cross Party Member Working Group established to oversee the process.
Resource requirements	Internal resources comprise the Council’s Planning Policy Team with input from other teams and services as appropriate via Local Plan Officer Working Group. External resources will be drawn upon in terms of the production of supporting technical evidence.


Community engagement	Engagement to be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).
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Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan (AAP)

Status	Development Plan Document (DPD)
Overview	Supplements the Local Plan 2031 providing additional detail on the Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village Strategic Location for Growth (SLG) – now referred to as Salt Cross Garden Village. The AAP will establish a vision for the garden village, supported by a series of core objectives and policies arranged on a thematic basis. A key focus of the AAP will be delivery and implementation.
Geographical coverage	Oxfordshire Cotswolds Garden Village Strategic Location for Growth (SLG) north of Eynsham
Timetable	<p>Submission – February 2021 (COMPLETE)</p> <p>Examination hearings – June/July 2021 (COMPLETE)</p> <p>Consultation on Main Modifications – September/November 2022 (COMPLETE)</p> <p>Inspector’s Report received – March 2023 (COMPLETE)</p> <p>Adoption – Dependent on outcome of legal challenge</p>
Conformity	Prepared in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) and the West Oxfordshire Local Plan (2031).
Management arrangements	Document production to be led by the Council’s Planning Policy Team under the direction of the Planning Policy Manager.
Resource requirements	Internal resources comprise the Council’s Planning Policy Team with input from other teams and services as appropriate. External resources will be drawn upon in terms of the production of supporting technical evidence.
Community engagement	Engagement on the preparation of the document to be carried out in accordance with the requirements of the adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

Appendix 2 – Overall Timetable

Document	Feb-24	Mar-24	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Apr-25
West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041					IC					FC					S
Salt Cross Area Action Plan (AAP)	DATE OF ADOPTION TBC - SUBJECT TO OUTCOME OF LEGAL CHALLENGE														
Key: IC = Informal Consultation; FC = Formal Consultation; S = Submission															

 <p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>	<p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>
<p>Name and Date of Committee</p>	<p>EXECUTIVE – 14 FEBRUARY 2024</p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p>NATURE RECOVERY PLAN AND NATURE RECOVERY OFFICER</p>
<p>Wards Affected</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>Accountable Member</p>	<p>Councillor Andrew Prosser – Executive Member for Climate Change. Email: Andrew.Prosser@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Accountable Officer</p>	<p>Charlie Jackson – Assistant Director, Planning and Sustainability. Email: charlie.jackson@publicagroup.uk</p>
<p>Report Author</p>	<p>Rachel Crookes – Biodiversity and Countryside Land Management Officer. Email: rachel.crookes@publicagroup.uk</p>
<p>Purpose</p>	<p>To present the West Oxfordshire District Council Nature Recovery Plan, which is proposed to be adopted and resourced by the Council from April 2024, and to set out the business case to appoint a new Nature Recovery Officer.</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p>Annex A – West Oxfordshire District Council Nature Recovery Plan; Annex B – Outline Resourcing Plan; Annex C – KPI Tracker; Annex D – Summary of Consultation Responses.</p>
<p>Recommendations</p>	<p>That the Executive Resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the West Oxfordshire District Council Nature Recovery Plan and recommend to Council that it is adopted as part of the Council's compliance with the new biodiversity duty. 2. Agree to part-fund a Nature Recovery Officer at a cost to the Council of £39,039.00 over 24 months.
<p>Corporate Priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting Residents First • A Good Quality of Life for All • A Better Environment for People and Wildlife • Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Together for West Oxfordshire
Key Decision	YES
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The West Oxfordshire District Council Nature Recovery Plan has been developed in close consultation with key officers, stakeholder partners and Councillors within the Council to inform the proposals within this report and Annexes. A six week long public consultation has been undertaken on the Council's online consultation platform, with 177 respondents. Consultation responses are summarised in Annexe D. • Councillor Andrew Prosser.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1** In June 2019, West Oxfordshire District Council passed a motion to declare a climate and ecological emergency, leading to the development of a Climate Change Strategy (2021-2025). A key theme within this strategy is the Protection and Restoration of Natural Ecosystems. Strategic objectives were outlined within this theme, including the protection and restoration of Council land and a desire to engage, support and communicate good practice for biodiversity and nature recovery with the West Oxfordshire community. This strategy runs to 2025, and good progress has been made on the objectives – a new Biodiversity and Countryside Land Management Officer post was created, and new habitat management plans were implemented across WODC owned and managed land.
- 1.2** The West Oxfordshire District Council Nature Recovery Plan (the Plan) has been developed to take forward and expand on the Climate Change Strategy’s objectives and outline the specific objectives and actions that the Council will take to support nature recovery across the district to 2030. The separation of the nature recovery actions from the Climate Change Strategy will give a more focussed and detailed approach, although links between the two are still strong.
- 1.3** The Plan sets out ambitious yet achievable aims and actions to tackle biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation across the district and the wider inter-connected landscape. With the introduction of the Environment Act 2021, local authorities must also comply with the new, strengthened ‘biodiversity duty’, where public authorities who operate in England must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity – the Plan will demonstrate to central government that the Council complies with this new duty. The Plan also delivers on the Council’s climate and ecological emergency commitments, which have the overarching aspiration to achieve district-wide carbon neutrality and climate change resilience by 2050.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1** The district is rich in locally distinctive habitat types such as grasslands, woodlands, wetlands, parkland, and agricultural land - a large number of areas and sites across the district have been designated due to their importance for wildlife on local to national scales. Like much of the country, the district’s biodiversity has suffered overall declines during the last few decades due to cumulative factors such as habitat loss and fragmentation, pollution, agricultural intensification, and climate change.
- 2.2** The process of “nature recovery” involves the building of resilient landscapes for the future through natural restoration. It involves identifying where both healthy and degraded wildlife habitats already exist, how they can be improved and made bigger, and how they can be connected to produce a more resilient landscape using nature-based solutions that introduce natural processes to the landscape.
- 2.3** The Plan aims to take forward and expand on the Climate Change Strategy’s objectives and outlines the specific objectives and actions that the Council will take to support nature recovery across the district to 2030. As its overall vision, the Plan adopts the same message as is set out for the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership – to “Radically enhance nature, its

positive impact on our climate and the priority it's given, helping to make West Oxfordshire a place where people and nature thrive”.

- 2.4 The actions outlined in the Plan will be taken both in the short term over the next 1-3 years, and as part of multi-year programmes to support longer-term success. The Plan has been informed by plans and policies from local to national levels, data from the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre, the expertise of officers within the Council and local communities and residents through consultation.
- 2.5 Although the delivery of the Plan will be led by the Council's Biodiversity and Countryside Land Management Officer and climate officers, the success of the Plan will be underpinned by collaboration with local environmental groups, policy makers and residents. The district is fortunate to have organisations and experts currently working to support nature's recovery including the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership, river catchment partnerships, Lower Windrush Valley Project, Wild Oxfordshire, the Wychwood Forest Trust, and others. Working with these groups will help to develop and deliver existing and new nature initiatives across the district.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 There are three key areas identified within the Plan in which the Council can advance nature recovery across the district and encourage others to participate in landscape-scale positive change. The Council can:
 - 3.2 **Protect and enhancing biodiversity on Council owned sites.** WODC owns and manages approximately 106ha of green space, which includes parks, fields, greens, and public open spaces within housing estates. Although work has been done to improve these sites for wildlife and people in recent years through working with Ubico and volunteer groups, there is more that can be done to protect and restore habitats and species across the Council's landholdings. There are also new opportunities that the Council can take to expand and improve Council landholdings and connect with others to better improve habitats across the district.
 - 3.3 **Safeguard and enhance biodiversity through policies and development.** As a local authority, WODC can ensure that biodiversity is protected and enhanced within the planning system and deliver the key principles for biodiversity set out in national planning guidance. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a new approach to development that aims to leave nature in a measurably better state than it was beforehand on a site – a 10% improvement will be mandatory for major schemes from January 2024, and most other schemes from April 2024. The Council's planning team is currently collating an evidence base to propose a 20% net gain for major schemes. The Council's planning teams are working to ensure BNG is delivered and monitored effectively through the planning system, and developers are well informed through Design Guides and Design Codes to support this. There are also opportunities through the development of the new Local Plan to strengthen policies around ecological protection and recovery, drawing from best practice guidance.
 - 3.4 **Facilitate communities and partnerships for landscape-scale recovery.** West Oxfordshire has a wealth of local environmental groups and knowledge that the Council can potentially link in

with to develop and deliver existing and new initiatives on a landscape-wide scale. By collaborating with groups, the Council can facilitate the restoration of natural ecosystems, improve habitat connectivity, and implement nature-based solutions to help mitigate against climate change. There are also organisations that specialise in data collection and collation that can inform a better understanding of trends of key habitats and species across the district.

- 3.5** The Plan is centred around these three areas of action, and the workstreams within it all align with Lawton’s “Making Space for Nature” principles of creating ‘More, bigger, better, more joined up’ spaces for nature.
- 3.6** It is hoped that in following the Plan, by 2030 groups across the district such as residents, landowners, Town and Parish Councils and community groups will have come together to help deliver a measurable improvement in the extent and quality of priority habitats and populations of priority species. Wildlife habitats will be protected, enhanced and where possible expanded and linked. There will be a greater awareness and understanding of biodiversity, with opportunities to be involved and collaborate in local wildlife enhancement projects and monitoring. Residents will also benefit from nature recovery activities through co-benefits such as natural flood management, carbon sequestration, cleaner water, and the improvement of their local green spaces and improved access to nature.

4. NATURE RECOVERY OFFICER

- 4.1** The Biodiversity and Countryside Land Management Officer will lead the delivery of the Plan; however, additional officer resource is required to assist with implementation.
- 4.2** The Nature Recovery Officer position will provide opportunities for collaboration with external partners on biodiversity enhancement projects and nature recovery. This will include running volunteer sessions to enhance Council sites, coordinating biodiversity related communications, working with Town and Parish Councils, and overseeing events to increase the public’s engagement with the natural world.
- 4.3** This new post will also deliver the Council’s Coronation Living Heritage Fund Community Orchard Scheme (2024-25) and monitor long-term progress of the scheme.
- 4.4** Part of the new officer’s role will be to secure funding for projects that will deliver against the Plan.
- 4.5** The post will be advertised as a full-time position with a 24-month fixed contract, ideally suited to a graduate with an ecology background and an interest in climate change. The Council can look to make this post permanent once its value has been demonstrated overtime.
- 4.6** The post will be seed funded from Innovate UK’s (IUK) Fast Followers programme (0.8 FTE) for 15 months from 1 April 2024 to 30 June 2025. As part of the IUK project, the officer will be required to take part in the Fast Followers events such as carbon and nature finance training that will equip the officer with relevant skills.
- 4.7** The Council would need to fund 0.2 FTE for 15 months (1 April 2024 – 30 June 2025) then a full-time post for nine months (1 July 2025 – 31 March 2026).

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 5.1 The Council does not adopt the Plan. This risks a lack of clarity on the Council’s contribution to the new biodiversity duty to central government, which will first need to be reported in 2025. There may also be reputational risks to this course of action, especially due to the wide publicity of the online consultation and public declaration of the Council’s commitment to tackling the climate and ecological crises.
- 5.2 The Plan could also be scaled down from its current level of ambition to smaller projects and a shorter timeframe. However the public consultation and personal communications with internal officers indicate that the Plan as it stands is both ambitious and achievable.
- 5.3 Not employing a Nature Recovery Officer would provide insufficient resource to deliver the Plan.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The Council has committed to responding to the climate and ecological emergencies by taking climate and nature action.
- 6.2 The Council has a biodiversity duty to consider what can be done to conserve and enhance biodiversity in the district. The Plan will deliver against this biodiversity duty and facilitate landscape-scale nature recovery.
- 6.3 A Nature Recovery Officer is required to deliver the Plan and achieve nature recovery across the district.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Securing resources to deliver the actions outlined in the Plan will be critical to achieve nature recovery across the district. Actions may require separate Council approvals to secure funding and resources to implement them. This will be understood in more detail at the scoping stage of each project – there are therefore no capital funds are being requested for the 2024/25 budget.
- 7.2 Oxfordshire’s Local Nature Partnership are undertaking work to investigate the financing of nature’s recovery using private sources of finance such as private investors carbon credits, and BNG offset funding, and working with businesses to address material risks and dependencies on the landscape. Grants have historically been used to deliver ecology projects across the district – these range from a local level (e.g. Trust for Oxfordshire’s Environment) to a national level (Esme Fairburn and the National Heritage Lottery fund). There are also opportunities to use funding from other internal WODC teams if working on collaborative projects, for example within communities and leisure, and funding can also be acquired through Westhive to fundraise for specific projects in partnership with local communities.
- 7.3 The following actions tare proposed for delivery in the financial year of 2024/5 with associated costs outlined below. Capital items are to be funded through the Climate reserves in this financial year.

Action	Cost
Undertake botanical surveys of key council sites in 2024 and 2030: Deer Park Wood and South, Kilkenny Lane Country Park, North Leigh Common, Witney floodplain meadows	£6,000.00

Provide annual funding to volunteer groups managing WODC sites e.g. Friends of North Leigh Common, Kilkenny Lane Conservation volunteers, Witney Woodland Volunteers	£750.00
Run an annual BioBlitz to promote wildlife recording at different Council-owned sites	£750.00
Total	£7,500.00

7.4 The costs of a Level 1 specialist are:

	Year 1	Year 2	Total
Employee costs	£38,345.00	£39,212.00	£77,557.00
Grant funding 80% in first 15 months	£30,676.00	£7,842.00	£38,518.00
Council funded	£7,669.00	£31,370.00	£39,039.00
	£38,345.00	£39,212.00	£77,557.00

7.5 It might be possible to stretch the grant funding to cover 100% of employee costs in the first 15 months; however, this is not yet confirmed.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 With the introduction of the Environment Act 2021, local authorities must also comply with the new, strengthened ‘biodiversity duty’, where public authorities who operate in England must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity. As a local authority, the Council must consider relevant strategies: Local Nature Recovery Strategies, species conservation strategies and protected site strategies and:

- Understand their relevance to the Council.
- Be aware of how these strategies affect land that the Council owns or manages and actions that can be taken to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- Consider how the Council can contribute to the strategy.

8.2 Adopting and implementing the Plan will ensure that the Council is complying with the new biodiversity duty. The Plan and associated KPI tracker will function as a reporting tool to feed back to central government on action taken by the Council in connection with this.

9. RISK ASSESSMENT

9.1 There is a reputational risk to the Council if it does not use its position to influence positive change for nature recovery, especially considering the new statutory biodiversity duty and its commitment to the ongoing climate and ecological emergency.

9.2 Some actions do not have funding allocated to them for delivery. It should be noted that is a risk that not all the actions will be completed by 2030, due to the existing lack of officer and financial resources to support all projects incorporated.

10. EQUALITIES IMPACT

10.1 Adopting and implementing the Plan for the Council will see positive action to improve the biodiversity and value of nature across the district and will have a shared benefit for all.

11. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATION

- 11.1** Adopting and resourcing the Plan will see benefits to local wildlife populations, such as new and improved areas of habitat for species to live, feed and breed. This will also help the natural world adapt to a changing climate and other pressures on the environment.
- 11.2** As well as improved habitats, actions within the Plan will also deliver co-benefits such as natural flood management, carbon sequestration, cleaner water, and the improvement of their local green spaces and improved access to nature.
- 11.3** A Nature Recovery Officer will support the Biodiversity and Countryside Land Management Officer in delivering the actions set out in the Plan to achieve nature recovery across the district.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1** None

(END)



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West Oxfordshire District Council

Nature Recovery Plan 2024 – 2030

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Common abbreviations

BBOWT - Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust

BNG – Biodiversity Net Gain

LNP – Local Nature Partnership

LWVP – Lower Windrush Valley Project

OCC - Oxfordshire County Council

TVERC - Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre

WFT – Wychwood Forest Trust

Introduction

West Oxfordshire is comprised of a mosaic of farmland, semi-natural grassland, woodland, and watercourses. There is also a varied built environment from the district's largest towns of Carterton and Witney to rural towns and villages such as Burford, Charlbury and Eynsham which all contain features which contribute to overall biodiversity resource. The natural environment in the district has experienced large changes over the past century with industrialisation, agricultural intensification and urbanisation, in common with most of south-eastern England. However, there remains a diverse natural environment in the district, rich in different habitats and species.

In June 2019, West Oxfordshire District Council passed a motion to declare a climate and ecological emergency, leading to the development of a Climate Change Strategy. A key theme within this strategy is the Protection and Restoration of Natural Ecosystems. Several strategic objectives were outlined within this theme, including the protection and restoration of Council land and a desire to engage, support and communicate good practice for biodiversity and nature recovery with the West Oxfordshire community. This strategy runs to 2025, and good progress has been made on the objectives – a new Biodiversity and Countryside Land Management Officer post was created, and new habitat management plans were implemented across WODC owned land.

This document aims to take forward and expand on the Climate Change Strategy's objectives and outline the specific objectives and actions that the Council will take to support nature recovery across the district to 2030. The separation of this Nature Recovery Plan from the original climate change strategy will give a more focussed and detailed approach, although links between the two are still strong.

A vision for WODC's nature recovery

The Council fully supports the vision that has been set out for the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership, and adopts its message for this Nature Recovery Plan:

“Radically enhance nature, its positive impact on our climate and the priority it's given, helping to make West Oxfordshire a place where people and nature thrive”.

By 2030, groups across the district such as residents, landowners, Town and Parish Councils and community groups will have come together to help deliver a measurable improvement in the extent and quality of priority habitats and populations of priority species. Wildlife habitats will be protected, enhanced and where possible expanded and linked. There will be a greater awareness and understanding of biodiversity, with opportunities to be involved and collaborate in local wildlife enhancement projects and monitoring. Residents will also benefit from nature recovery activities through co-benefits such as natural flood management, carbon sequestration, cleaner water, and the improvement of their local green spaces and improved access to nature.

Purpose of document

The purpose of this plan is to set out ambitious yet achievable aims and actions to tackle biodiversity loss and ecosystem degradation across the district and the wider inter-connected landscape. This plan delivers on the Council's climate and ecological emergency commitments, which have the overarching aspiration to achieve district-wide carbon neutrality and climate change resilience by 2050.

Biodiversity across West Oxfordshire

What is biodiversity and nature recovery?

Biodiversity is a term used to describe the variety of life including all plants, animals, their habitats and the natural systems that support them.

Biodiversity is fundamental to both planet and people. In addition to its key importance, biodiversity also provides a host of services and functions that bring value to our lives, including:

- Provision of food, water, timber and fibre (provisioning services).
- Helping to regulate climate change, floods, disease, waste, and water quality (regulating services).
- Providing recreational, aesthetic and cultural benefits (cultural services).
- Supporting soil formation, pollination, photosynthesis (supporting services).

Nature recovery involves the building of resilient landscapes for the future through natural restoration. This process involves identifying where both healthy and degraded wildlife habitats already exist, how they can be improved and made bigger, and how they can be connected to produce a more resilient landscape using nature-based solutions that introduce natural processes to the landscape.

Undertaking landscape-scale nature recovery will lead to the creation of a Nature Recovery Network - a joined-up system of places needed to allow nature to recover and thrive. The network will provide more space for wild species to live, feed and breed, and help the natural world to adapt to a changing climate and other pressures on the environment.

Biodiversity across West Oxfordshire

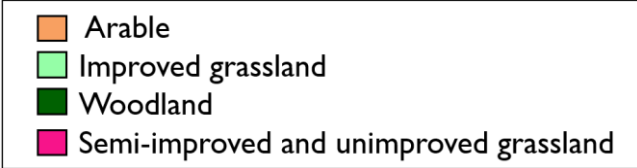
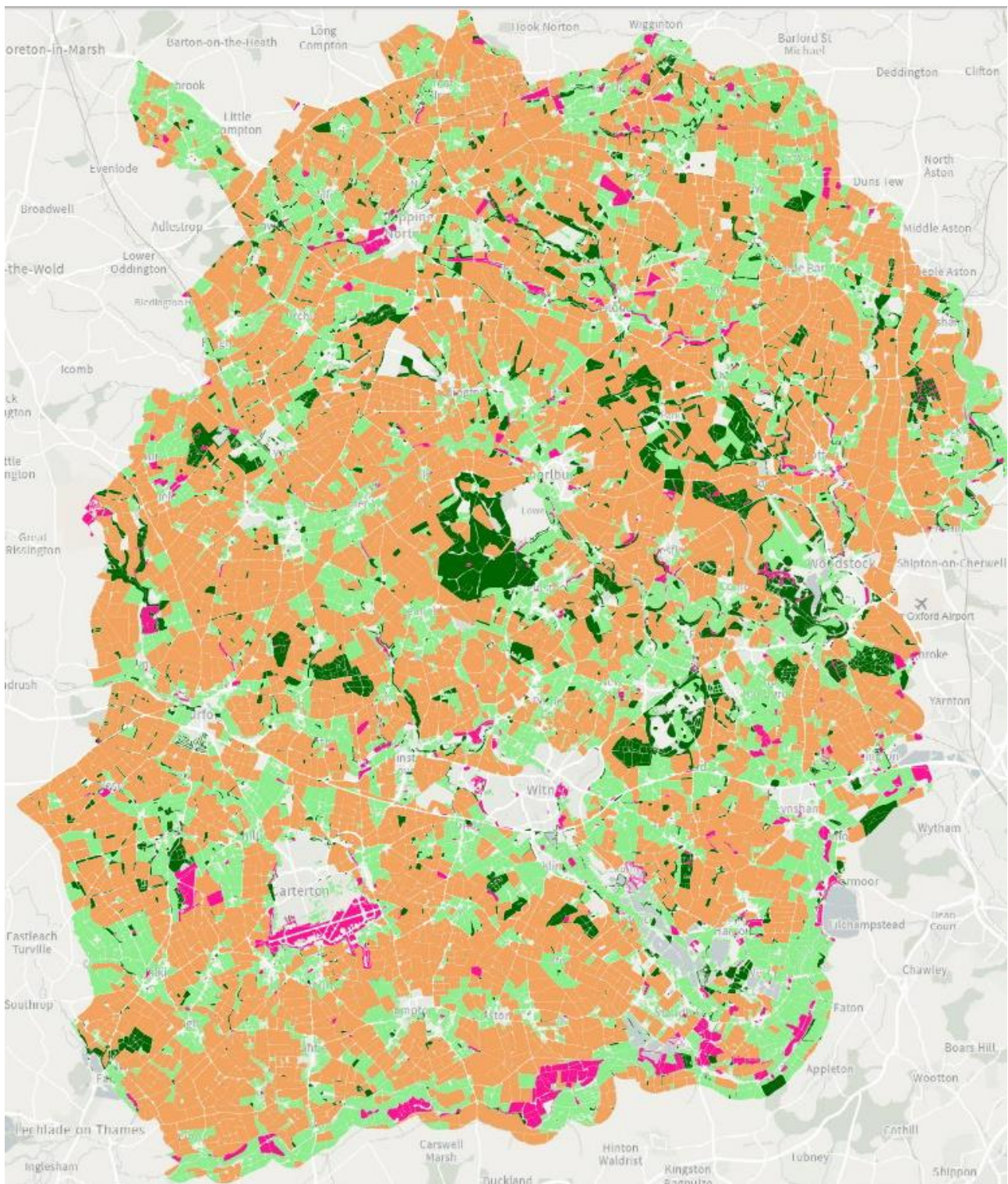
West Oxfordshire is rich in locally distinctive habitat types, including grasslands (including lowland meadows, calcareous and acid grasslands), woodlands (including ancient woodland, lowland mixed deciduous woodland and wet woodland), heathland, wood pasture, parkland and traditional orchards. These in turn are home to a diverse mix of locally distinctive flora, including for example valuable hay meadow and limestone grassland species in the Cotswolds and river meadowlands.

West Oxfordshire is predominantly farmed landscape, with a topography and geology that lends itself well to growing crops; high Agricultural Land Class Grades are found in the south of the district in particular. Over half of the district is made up of arable land (56%), in addition to a significant area of improved grassland (around 23%) that is largely managed as permanent pasture for livestock or cut for silage.

Semi-natural and unimproved grassland is a rarer but more valuable habitat across the district. Small areas of limestone grassland can be found along river and stream valleys, which support a diverse mix of invertebrates and bird life. Floodplain meadow areas along West Oxfordshire's rivers and tributaries are biodiverse habitats, especially where managed traditionally to encourage the growth of rare wildflowers such as snake's-head fritillary and great burnet.

The district has small but important areas of woodland, making up around 5% of the district's land area. These are generally found on the ridges that lie between river valleys and are associated with historic parklands – these include Wychwood Forest that lies within the Cornbury Park Estate and Eynsham Hall, and Blenheim. These woodland areas are generally made up of ash, oak and elm, and in well managed areas host associated flora such as violets and helleborines. Clusters of ancient trees are also present in these estates.

Figure 1: Largest areas habitat types across WODC



West Oxfordshire lies within the River Thames catchment area, with the Thames itself and its tributaries, including the River Evenlode and River Windrush, running through the area. Other key watercourses include the River Dorn, River Glyme, Coombe Brook and Shill Brook – all of these and their associated riparian habitat support a wide range of species including otters, kingfishers and rare freshwater invertebrates. The district’s rivers are surveyed for water voles on a regular basis by BBOWT – numbers have generally remained stable over the last 10 years, with the River Windrush identified as a particular stronghold for this species (BBOWT, 2023). As well as these key habitats, smaller areas of habitats including scrub, parkland, lakes and fen are also present in small quantities, each with their characteristic associated flora and fauna.

The district’s biodiverse landscape intrinsically holds value in the form of natural capital – this is described as “elements of nature that directly or indirectly produce value to people, including ecosystems, species, freshwater, land, minerals, the air and oceans” (Natural Capital Committee, 2013). From natural capital assets such as habitats, water and ecosystems, we derive benefits in the form of ecosystem services – these can either directly provide resources, e.g. timber and fish production, regulate our environment, e.g. improving air and water quality, or give cultural benefits such as a sense of place or aesthetic beauty. Residents across the district will be receiving multiple benefits from it’s habitats – in particular, with its floodplain meadow and riverine areas, the valley is likely to be providing a wide range of regulating ecosystem services including carbon storage, water quality, flood resilience and pollination.

Like much of the county, the district’s biodiversity has suffered overall declines during the last few decades (Wild Oxfordshire, 2017). Several key factors that have impacted on a wide range of West Oxfordshire’s species populations include:

- Habitat loss – Losses of large areas of semi-natural grasslands and floodplain meadows are mainly due to agricultural intensification from the mid-20th century onwards. This was further worsened by losses through sand and gravel extraction, urban and industrial development and hydrological changes to river floodplains. (Rothero et al., 2016).
- Habitat fragmentation - The continuing fragmentation of the landscape through the removal of hedgerows, and increase in infrastructure and other development, has increased the isolation of remaining patches of good habitat and the species they support. In turn this increases the probability of further extinctions of the district’s rarer species (Butaye et al., 2005). The losses and fragmentation of semi-natural grasslands, in combination with climate change impacts, are thought to have contributed to the local extinction and decline of some invertebrate species, including butterflies (Van Dyck et al., 2015) and bumblebees (Rothero et al., 2016).
- Climate change - Climate change causes changes in temperature and rainfall leading to shifts in species composition. Changes in the frequency of intense rainfall events, particularly following periods of dry weather, contributes to increased soil loss and related nutrient runoff from agricultural land. This affects local water quality as well as putting strain on local biodiversity and ecosystems (Defra, 2012). Regular summer flooding in Oxfordshire on the scale of 2007 could threaten the conservation value of semi-natural grasslands (BBOWT, 2010).
- Pollution – Water quality and river habitats have been severely impacted by historic modifications to watercourses and pressures from human activity. In recent years, sewage treatment works and Combined Sewage Overflows across the district’s rivers are having long term negative effects on aquatic and riparian species. Riverfly monitoring by volunteers (in 2018, 2019) has indicated a reduction in invertebrate diversity and abundance in the River Windrush, and macrophytes in the reach between Burford and Witney have also seen

dramatic declines (Windrush Catchment Partnership Plan, 2021). Grayling, probably the best indicator of water quality, have almost completely disappeared from the River Windrush and populations of coarse fish species such as roach and barbel have notably declined (Cotswold Rives Trust, pers. comms). Other forms of pollution can also have negative impacts on local wildlife populations, such as light pollution and air quality.

- Agricultural intensification – A significant area of the district is used for agriculture. Intense farming practices have resulted in the loss of hedgerows on farms, and increased nitrogen on surrounding environments. The use of pesticides is also having significant negative impacts on pollinator communities (Godfray H.C.J., 2014).
- Disease - The impact that disease has on the landscape has also been significant in recent years. In addition to highly destructive Dutch Elm disease which has killed millions of trees over the last 50 years, ash dieback is expected to kill 95-99% of ash trees in Britain (Hill et al, 2019), changing the composition of large areas of woodland across the district and beyond.

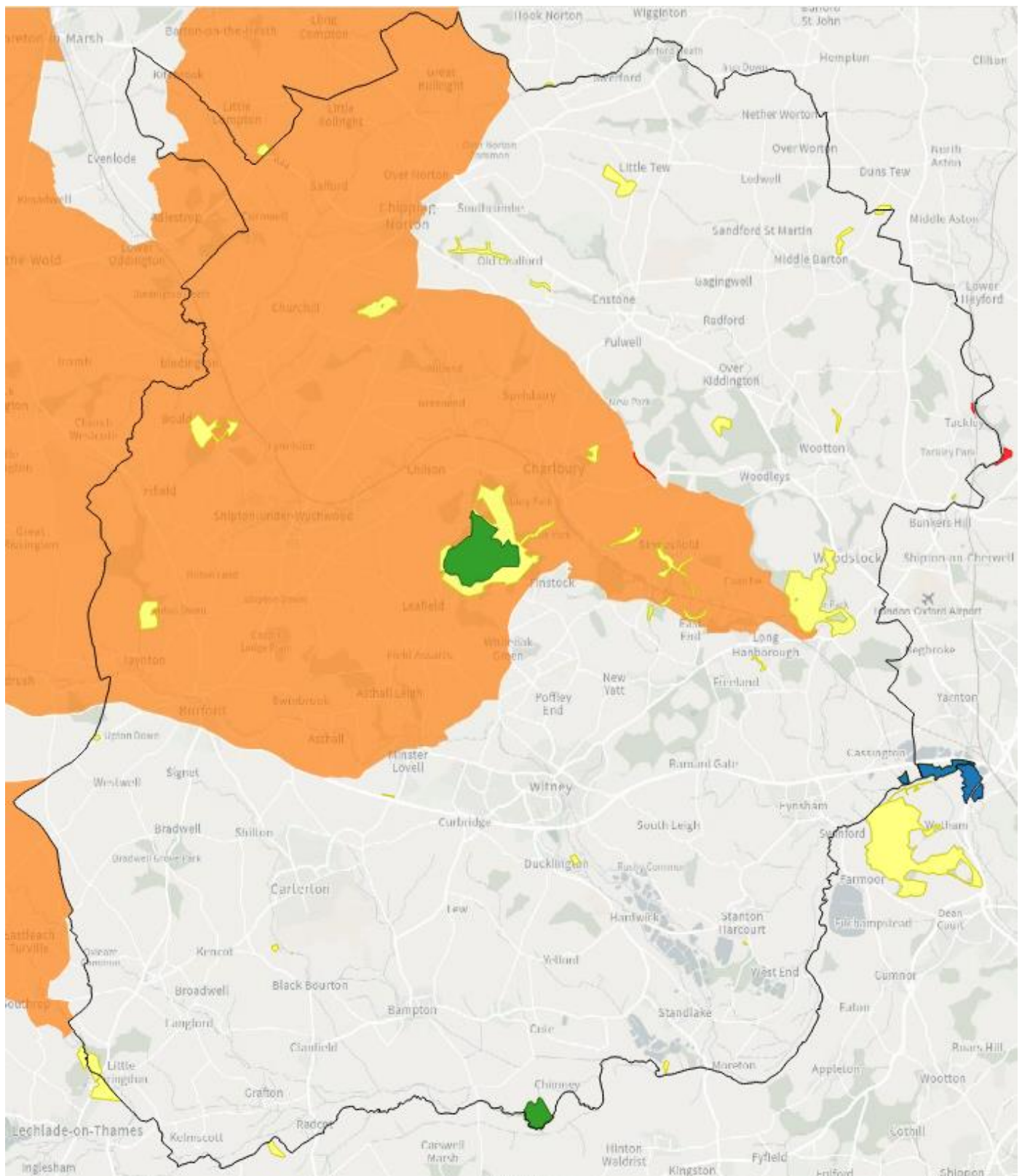
Statutory and non-statutory sites for nature

A large number of areas and sites across the district have been designated due to their importance for wildlife on local to national scales. Key statutory (i.e., those protected by law) and non-statutory sites are summarised below, with maps illustrating their locations in Figures 2 and 3:

Statutory sites

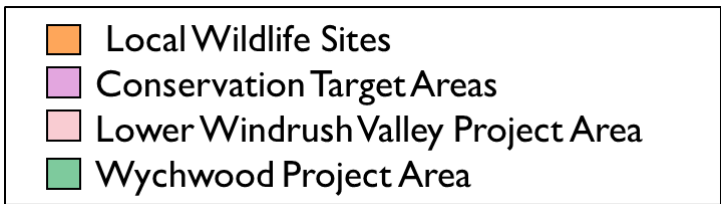
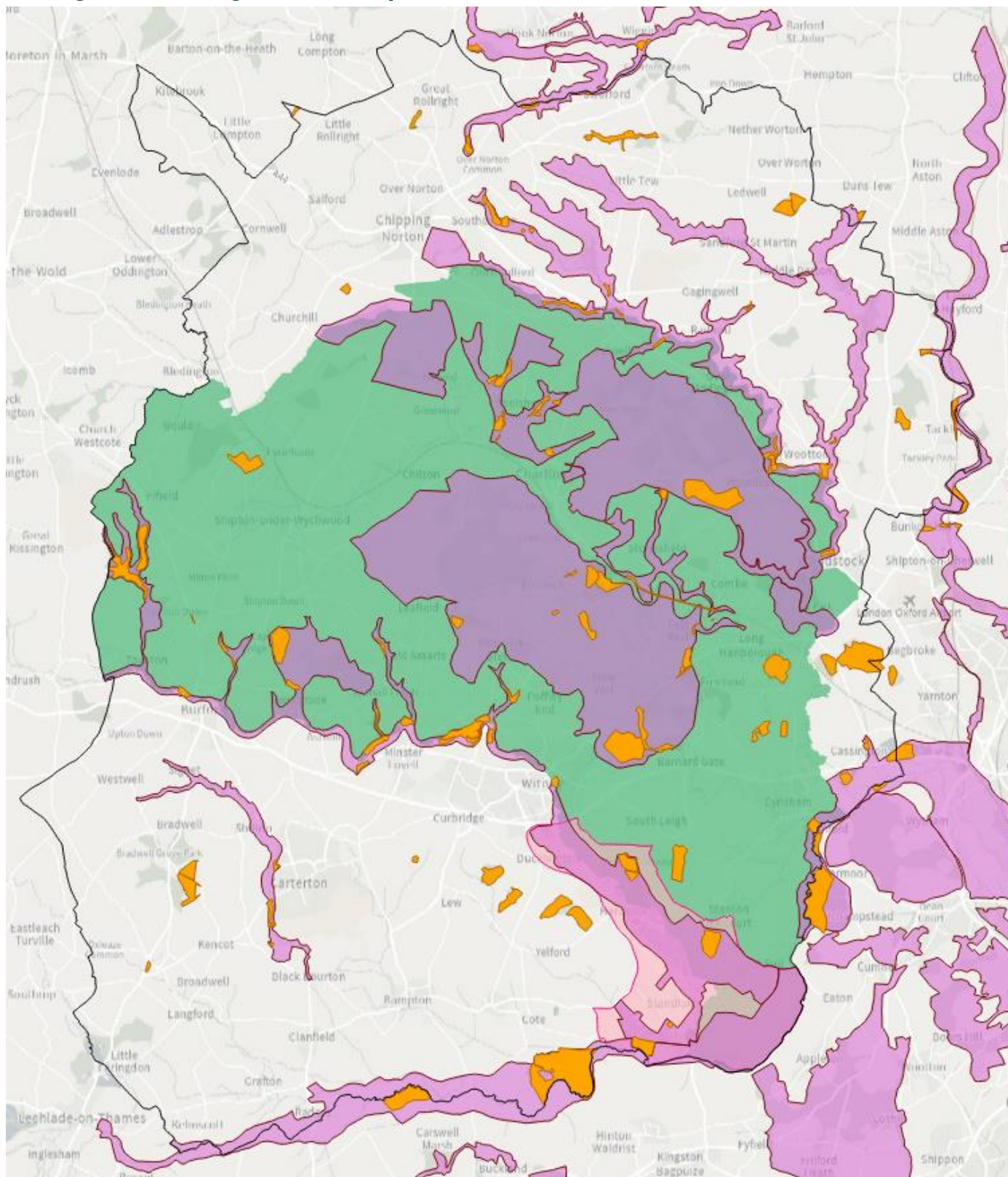
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – part of the Oxford Meadows SAC, Cassington Meadows, lies partially within West Oxfordshire's boundaries. This area consists of a cluster of neutral hay meadows and fen, which are surviving remnants of semi-natural vegetation in an area now characterised by intensive arable farming and gravel extraction.
- Local Nature Reserves (LNR) – these sites are designated for their special local interest either biologically or geologically. The district has two LNRs – Crecy Hill LNR, which has a diverse flora and invertebrate population on its calcareous grassland habitat, and Saltway LNR which has the largest known British colony of the very rare downy woundwort.
- National Nature Reserves (NNR) – two sites have received this statutory designation, the Wychwood NNR and Chimney Meadows NNR. The Wychwood NNR is one of the largest areas of ancient semi-natural oak and ash broadleaved woodland in Oxfordshire, with large herds of fallow deer and notable flora including early purple orchid and less common plants such as herb paris and autumn crocus. Chimney Meadows NNR is located in the floodplain of the River Thames and has a spectacular display of wildflowers during the summer months and often provides a safe haven for breeding curlew.
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) – there are 44 SSSIs across the district, so designated for a wide range of habitats including floodplain meadow, woodland and acid grassland and fen.
- Cotswolds National Landscape – the CNL sits across a large proportion of the north and west of the district, covering around a third of its area. It is the largest National Landscape in England and Wales and was primarily designated for the rare limestone grassland habitats as well as the old growth beech woodlands that typify the area.

Figure 2: Existing statutory site locations



- Cotswold National Landscape
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest
- Local Nature Reserves
- Special Areas of Conservation
- National Nature Reserves

Figure 3: Existing non-statutory site locations



Non-Statutory sites

- Conservation Target Areas (CTAs) – the CTAs identify some of the most important areas for wildlife conservation in Oxfordshire, where targeted conservation action has the greatest benefit. Eight CTAs are present across the district, centred primarily around its rivers and woodland areas.
- Local Wildlife Sites – these are sites that have been surveyed and selected by the Oxfordshire Wildlife Sites Project, jointly run by BBOWT and TVERC, as some of the country's most valuable wildlife areas. There are 100 Local Wildlife Sites in West Oxfordshire, totalling 1583 hectares of habitat.
- Wychwood Project area – this area and associated project aims to restore the landscape character and mix of habitats associated with the Royal Hunting Forest of Wychwood.
- Lower Windrush Valley Project area – this strategic area has a network of important habitats including floodplain meadows and lakes formed by the gravel extraction that has occurred in the valley. It has particular importance for resident migratory waterfowl.
- Windrush in Witney Project area – this area consists of a network of floodplain meadows and pathways into the Lower Windrush Valley, fundamental component of the town's landscape character.

Local groups and partnerships

The district is fortunate in having a number of local groups and initiatives currently working to support nature's recovery;

- Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership – the OxLNP is an organisation of key partners working together to radically enhance nature. It aims to develop strategies and plans, influence relevant local and national government policy and legislation; establish voluntary working groups and task and finish groups as required; and lever resources into the sector. The partnership's outputs guide and influence the work of LNP members and others.
- Evenlode and Windrush Catchment partnerships – hosted by Wild Oxfordshire and Cotswold Rivers Trust respectively, the catchment partnerships help local people and organisations work together to improve river water quality, enhance biodiversity, improve flood management and resilience to climate change, and build greater community engagement with the river and its tributaries.
- Wychwood Forest Trust - this conservation charity works with local communities to protect and restore the spaces once part of the historic Wychwood Forest - 120 square miles and 41 parishes in West Oxfordshire. They also run projects promoting the Wychwood's unique cultural identity and help people learn traditional rural skills and crafts such as dry-stone walling and hedgelaying.
- Lower Windrush Valley Project – set up in 2001 following extensive mineral extraction works across the valley, the LWVP works with environmental organisations, mineral operators, landowners and communities to deliver a wide range of initiatives that aim to strengthen and develop the evolving landscape of the valley, protect and enhance the biodiversity it supports, and improve opportunities for people to access and enjoy the countryside.
- Wild Oxfordshire – this charity seeks to create a more natural, resilient, and biodiverse Oxfordshire for the benefit of all and primarily collaborates with individuals, communities and organisations offering expert and bespoke ecological advice through their community ecology programme. They also carry deliver targeted conservation action with initiatives such as the Curlew Recovery Project and the Oxfordshire Hedgerow Heroes Project.

- Cotswolds National Landscape – this organisation works to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the Cotswolds AONB, increase understanding and enjoyment of its special qualities, and foster the social and economic well-being of local communities. Their network of over 400 wardens enables them to have wide-reaching impact across their area.
- North East Cotswold Farmer Cluster – this group is made up of 137 farms covering 42,000 hectares with a vision to lead landscape-scale regeneration of the farmed environment and local food networks through collaboration and knowledge exchange.
- Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) – West Oxfordshire is located in the western-most area that this Wildlife Trust covers, with sites such as Chimney Meadow and Foxholes nature reserves managed by its volunteers and staff. BBOWT also manages the Oxfordshire Local Wildlife Sites Project provides free wildlife surveys and information about conservation.

The groups listed above are some of the larger organisations that operate within the district; many others also work more locally to deliver significant impacts such as local Nature Recovery Groups, Long Mead, Burford Environment Action Group, Green Fifield.

Key policy influences

This Nature Recovery Plan does not sit in isolation - it considers and is aligned with a range of national, regional, and local policies and plans to ensure cohesion and a net positive contribution to wider strategic initiatives across the district and beyond.

National policies

Environment Act 2021 – this national framework for environmental protection aims to improve air and water quality, tackle waste, improve biodiversity and make other environmental improvements. Key drivers of action around nature recovery include:

- Biodiversity Net Gain - this is a new approach to development that aims to leave nature in a measurably better state than it was beforehand with onsite ecological enhancement, using off-site measures as a last resort. Using habitat data, a site's biodiversity value can be quantified both before and after a development has been delivered. A minimum biodiversity gain of 10% will be mandatory for major developments from January 2024, with requirements for minor developments coming later in the year.
- Local Nature Recovery Strategies – this is a new, England-wide system of spatial strategies that will establish priorities and map proposals for specific actions to drive nature's recovery and provide wider environmental benefits. An Oxfordshire LNRS is being produced by a partnership of organisations, co-ordinated by OCC, which WODC will feed in to as a key stakeholder – a Nature Recovery Network will also be created as the spatial element of the plan.

Natural England has also recently introduced the Green Infrastructure Framework. This provides a number of tools and guides for planners, developers and communities investing in nature in urban areas and creating climate resilient towns across England. Mapping tools, green infrastructure standards and principles, and process journeys all form part of the Framework.

With the introduction of the Environment Act 2021, local authorities must also comply with the new, strengthened 'biodiversity duty', where public authorities who operate in England must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity. As a local authority, the Council

must consider relevant strategies: LNRs, species conservation strategies and protected site strategies and:

- Understand their relevance to the Council.
- Be aware of how these strategies affect land that the Council owns or manages and actions that can be taken to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- Consider how the Council can contribute to the strategy.

Local policies

Oxfordshire Net Zero Route Map and Action Plan, 2023-2050 – this document, commissioned by the Future Oxfordshire Partnership, includes a route map and joint climate and nature-based actions that the Oxfordshire local authorities can take together to provide a catalyst for positive action across the region. The most relevant action is Action 12, which seeks to “Explore opportunities to enhance carbon sequestration through land use change, including targeted habitat restoration and creation”.

West Oxfordshire District Council Plan 2023-2027 – the Council Plan documents key aims and priorities to improve the district for its residents. Relevant priorities include:

- Priority 2 – “Enabling a Good Quality of Life for All”, with actions including “Ensure the timely provision of built and green infrastructure which meets the needs of existing and incoming residents and that supports health and care to enable physical and mental well-being, community cohesion and delivers a high quality of life.”
- Priority 3 – “Creating a Better Environment for People and Wildlife”, with actions including “Work with others, and fulfil our statutory obligations, to ensure that land, air and water support biodiverse habitats, reduce pollution and bring about nature recovery to the District, putting it at the forefront of local decision making.”
- Priority 4 – “Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency”, with actions including “Encourage the use of nature based solutions to sequester carbon and combat the risks arising from climate change at a river catchment scale, such as restoration of meadows and trees to reduce flooding and improve water quality.”

West Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan 2031 – The West Oxfordshire Local Plan sets out a vision of the district to 2031 and provides an overarching framework to guide and deliver that vision. Relevant policies include:

- Policy EH2: Landscape character
- Policy EH3: Biodiversity and geodiversity
- Policy EH4: Public realm and green infrastructure

The new West Oxfordshire District Council Local Plan 2041 is currently being prepared to update planning policies and proposals, ensuring they effectively tackle vital issues like nature recovery and climate change.

WODC Carbon Action Plan – this document is due to be published in 2024, and sets out actions to reduce the Council's carbon footprint and to carbon inset/offset residual emissions.

Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan 2023-2025 – this is a statutory plan, which sets out the vision, outcomes and policies for the management of the Cotswolds National Landscape

for the period 2023-2025. The plan defines the landscape's key qualities, and sets out its key issues including the climate emergency, Nature's decline and the Ecological Crisis and Health and societal changes. Key relevant policies include;

- Policy CE7: Biodiversity and nature recovery
- Policy CE8: Rural land management policy
- Policy CE9: Problem species, pests and diseases

Cotswolds Nature Recovery Plan 2021 – this plan was developed by the Cotswolds National Landscape in partnership with the Cotswolds Nature Recovery Forum. It gives details on the species and habitats of the Cotswolds, and what action can be taken to help them flourish and spread across the landscape.

Our work to date and role as a Council

WODC produced its first Climate Change Strategy in 2020, with “Protection and Restoration of Natural Ecosystems” as one of its key themes. A full time, permanent Biodiversity and Countryside Land Management Officer has been employed since its publication, who has led on different initiatives and made progress against the strategy's objectives. Key actions within this are listed below:

- A review of land management practises across key sites has been undertaken to improve them for both people and wildlife. Working with the ground's maintenance team at Ubico, grass cutting and vegetation management regimes have changed to allow for longer flowering periods for pollinators and more traditional management of wildflower meadows.
- A series of biodiversity projects were undertaken in 2022 to kick-start the Council's response to the ecological emergency – these include:
 - Setting up a hedgehog highways scheme, where residents are invited to create a hedgehog hole in their gardens to improve connectivity for urban hedgehog populations
 - Creating wildflower meadows across our public open green spaces.
 - Planting hedgerows and trees in strategic locations across our estates with the help of volunteer groups, schools and Council employees.
 - A BioBlitz at Kilkenny Lane Country Park to encourage members of the public to observe wildlife at the site and collect data for the local environmental records centre.
 - Establishing a new conservation volunteer group at Kilkenny Lane Country Park.
 - Expanding the reach of the Witney Woodland Volunteers with a licence to manage Deer Park South.
 - Providing tools and training to the Witney Woodland Volunteers to better manage Deer Park Wood.
- Connections to other environmental organisations such as the Wychwood Forest Trust, Wild Oxfordshire and Lower Valley Windrush Project have been strengthened with new projects and partnership work.

- Advice has been given to several Town and Parish Councils on land management, and where relevant worked with Ubico to change maintenance regimes on their land to improve habitats on Council owned land.
- Officers are members of the Windrush and Evenlode Catchment Partnerships, shaping catchment plans and reviewing project work delivered by these groups.
- WODC is a member of the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership, sitting on several of the sub-groups that guide the partnership's activities.
- WODC financially supports groups such as Wild Oxfordshire, the Wychwood Forest Trust, TVERC and the Local Wildlife Sites Partnership

The Council's Planning Service also continue to assess the ecological impacts of planning applications that are submitted across the district. Key actions from this team over the last few years include:

- Biodiversity Officer Capacity to assess planning applications has increased.
- Guidance around biodiversity net gain and its best practice use has been developed by the Council's planning ecologists and is used to secure tangible improvements to developments' green infrastructure and ecological value.
- The Salt Cross Area Action Plan was accepted by the Planning Inspector with a policy requiring the scheme to achieve 25% biodiversity net gain.
- Officers have helped to shape county-wide policies, and continue to input into the Oxfordshire LNRS and LNP.

In addition to the work above, the Council has worked to ensure that biodiversity is considered in its decision-making processes. Each report and decision brought to the Council's Executive and Cabinet meetings includes a section on the proposal's climate and ecological emergencies implications – here officers detail any anticipated impacts on land use, wildlife and habitats as a result of the proposal.

Consultation

This Nature Recovery Plan has been prepared in consultation with key officers, Councillors, local environmental groups and local communities, to gain a full understanding of the barriers and opportunities available to delivering the plan.

One of the key changes following the local environmental group consultation was the change in name from "Biodiversity Action Plan" to "Nature Recovery Plan". This was made after suggestions that the term "Biodiversity Action Plan" is a more antiquated environmental term, and new name would be more positive and forward looking, to signal the alignment with the new Local Nature Recovery Strategy and a wider reinvigorated conservation effort. Additional actions and clarification were added in the document where deemed appropriate.

The public consultation feedback generally reflected diverse opinions on biodiversity and environmental strategies. Positive responses highlighted eagerness to collaborate, emphasizing partnerships with community groups aligned with the plan's goals. Participants emphasized the necessity of promoting biodiversity education in schools and extending the plan's coverage to include all new housing developments. Some respondents also highlighted the need for a comprehensive approach to address challenges such as climate change effects, waterway clean-up,

and collaborative efforts with local landowners and farmers. The feedback generally indicated a desire for tangible, measurable actions, greater collaboration with local communities and stakeholders, and a stronger focus on immediate environmental concerns while balancing long-term biodiversity preservation.

Aims and objectives

There are three key areas within which WODC can advance nature recovery across the District, and encourage others to participate in landscape-scale positive change. The District can:

1. Protect and enhance biodiversity on sites owned and managed by the Council.
2. Safeguard and enhance biodiversity through policies and development.
3. Facilitate communities and partnerships for landscape-scale recovery.

1. Protect and enhancing biodiversity on Council owned sites

WODC owns and manages approximately 106ha of green space, which includes parks, fields, greens and public open spaces within housing estates. Although work has been done to improve these sites for wildlife and people in recent years through working with Ubico and volunteer groups, there is more that can be done to protect and restore habitats and species across the Council's landholdings. There are also new opportunities that the Council can take to expand and improve Council landholdings and connect with others to better improve habitats across the district.

2. Safeguard and enhance biodiversity through policies and development

As a local authority, WODC is able to ensure that biodiversity is protected and enhanced within the planning system, and deliver the key principles for biodiversity set out in national planning guidance. BNG is a new approach to development that aims to leave nature in a measurably better state than it was beforehand on a site – a 10% improvement will be mandatory for major schemes from January 2024, and the majority of other schemes from April 2024. The Council's planning team is currently collating an evidence base to propose a 20% net gain for major schemes. The Council's planning teams are working to ensure BNG is delivered and monitored effectively through the planning system, and developers are well informed through Design Guides and Design Codes to support this. There are also opportunities through the development of the new Local Plan to strengthen policies around ecological protection and recovery, drawing from best practice guidance.

3. Facilitate communities and partnerships for landscape-scale recovery

As outlined in the "Local groups and partnerships" section above, West Oxfordshire has a wealth of local environmental groups and knowledge that the Council can potentially link in with to develop and deliver existing and new initiatives on a landscape-wide scale. By collaborating with groups, the Council can facilitate the restoration of natural ecosystems, improve habitat connectivity, and implement nature-based solutions to help mitigate against climate change. There are also organisations that specialise in data collection and collation that can inform a better understanding of trends of key habitats and species across the district.

Connections within the District Council's teams, such as Estates, Communities, Development Planning and Flooding can continue to be strengthened, through collaborative projects of mutual benefit. WODC Communications team uses several platforms on which the Council can promote opportunities for conservation volunteering and share best practice with others. Bespoke outreach activities could also take place to encourage residents to better engage with the natural world.

These three focus areas form the structure of Nature Recovery Plan, set out in the section below. All actions set out within this align to Lawton's "Making Space for Nature" principles of 'More, bigger, better, more joined up', - delivering action on a landscape scale will lead to more resilient, healthy and connected ecosystems, and improve habitat quality and species populations across the district.

Nature Recovery Plan

The purpose of the Nature Recovery Plan is to provide direction for the Council, local groups, officers and Councillors, giving a comprehensive set of actions to achieve nature recovery across the district and deliver on the three key areas outlined above. The Plan outlines actions that both contribute to and go beyond the Council's biodiversity duty.

The actions will be taken both in the short term over the next 1-3 years, and as part of multi-year programmes to support longer-term success. The Plan has been informed by the plans and policies outlined above, data from TVERC, the expertise of officers within the Council and local communities and residents through consultation. The success of the Nature Recovery Plan will be underpinned by collaboration with local environmental groups, policy makers and residents.

Delivering the plan

The delivery of the Nature Recovery Plan will be led by WODC's Biodiversity and Countryside Land Management Officer and other members of the Council's climate team. A large number of the actions rely on partnerships with other local groups and Council teams – this collaborative effort will help us extend action beyond Council land. The roadmap below sets out an indicative timeline of how some of these actions could be delivered to 2030.

Monitoring and reporting

Actions will be monitored using a series of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and progress reported annually. This process will help identify actions which require further support and others where more ambitious targets can be developed as delivery progresses and recognise actions that are looking unlikely to be achieved. The Nature Recovery Plan sets out actions required over the next seven years to support nature recovery across the district; however, the plan will be a flexible and living document. It will be reviewed and updated in response to changes in the policy and legislative climate, future opportunities and the results of annual monitoring.

Resourcing implications

The workstreams outlined below demonstrate the extensive actions that WODC can take to improve biodiversity on Council owned land and beyond. Securing resources to deliver these actions will be critical to achieve nature recovery across the district. Actions may require separate Council approvals to secure funding and resources to implement them. This will be understood in more detail at the scoping stage of each project.

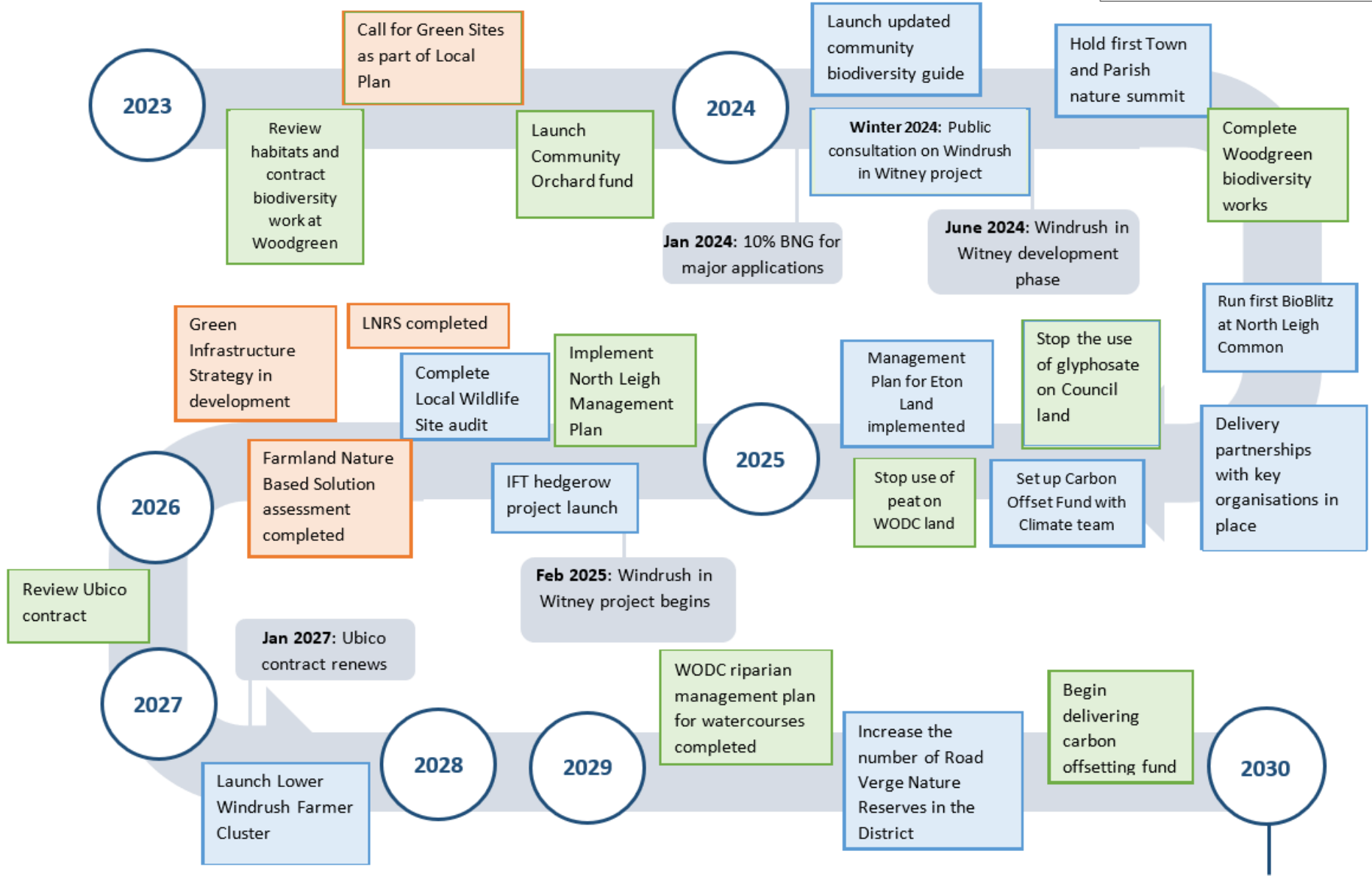
Work is being undertaken by Oxfordshire's LNP to investigate the financing of nature's recovery using private sources of finance such as private investors carbon credits, and BNG offset funding, and working with businesses to address material risks and dependencies on the landscape. This is best articulated in the Oxfordshire Nature Finance Strategy. Grants have historically been used to deliver ecology projects across the district – these range from a local level (e.g. Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment) to a national level (Esme Fairburn and the National Heritage Lottery

fund). There are also opportunities to use funding from other internal WODC teams if working on collaborative projects, for example within communities and leisure, and funding can also be acquired through Westhive to fundraise for specific projects in partnership with local communities.

The Council's climate change team, and other teams within the Council, will continue to seek out and welcome any proposals of partnership working to further nature related actions.

Figure 4: Nature Recovery Road Map

- Protecting and enhancing biodiversity on council owned sites
- Safeguard and enhance biodiversity through policies and development
- Facilitate communities and partnerships for landscape-scale recovery



Protect and enhance biodiversity on Council owned and managed land

1) Protect and enhance biodiversity on sites owned and managed by the District Council	
WODC owns and manages approximately 106ha of green space, which includes parks, fields, greens and public open spaces within housing estates. Although work has been done to improve these sites for wildlife and people in recent years through working with Ubico and volunteer groups, there is more that can be done to restore biodiversity across the Council's landholdings.	
Key delivery partners	
Friends of North Leigh Common, Kilkenny Conservation Group, offset providers, recording groups, Ubico, Witney Woodland Volunteers, Wychwood Forest Trust	
Actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue working with Ubico on Council owned sites to enhance biodiversity across the estate, and extend the areas with targeted biodiversity management • Develop and resource the long-term management of North Leigh Common • Stop the use of glyphosate across all WODC land, and seek alternative weed management strategies such as hot foam or mechanical removal • Stop the use of peat compost across all Council owned land • Employ best practice procedures to eradicate invasive non-native species such as Himalayan Balsam and Japanese knotweed across Council owned sites • Undertake botanical surveys of key Council sites in 2024 and 2030 - Deer Park Wood and South, Kilkenny Lane Country Park, North Leigh Common, Witney floodplain meadows. • Implement biodiversity features at WODC offices at Woodgreen in Witney • Provide annual funding to volunteer groups managing WODC sites e.g., Friends of North Leigh Common, Kilkenny Lane Conservation volunteers, Witney Woodland Volunteers • Develop and resource a management plan for the Eton Land with the WFT • Identify and create community orchards in public estates • Review and potentially expand wildflower areas across Council owned estates in Witney and Carterton • Proactively manage woodland areas within WODC's public estates 	
Key Performance Indicators	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of Land Management Plan actions successfully completed by Ubico annually • m3 of North Leigh Common in active management • Litres of glyphosate used annually by Ubico on Council owned land • Litres of peat compost used by Ubico on Council owned land • m3 of invasive species on Council land • Flora species diversity and abundance at each site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • m3 of habitat enhanced at Council owned offices • £ annually given to groups for maintenance costs • Site in active management • Number of orchards created • m3 of Council owned wildflower meadow areas • Number of proactively manage woodland areas within WODC's public estates
Co-benefits	
Air and water quality, access to public green spaces, carbon sequestration, improved natural flood management	
Risks and dependencies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance between managing spaces for both wildlife and people • Requires coordinated partnerships with multiple stakeholders, including Ubico and volunteer groups • Resourcing of Ubico • Selling or purchasing WODC land 	

Safeguard and enhance biodiversity through policies and development

2) Drive nature recovery through the planning and development process	
<p>The mitigation and enhancement of biodiversity on developments is one of the key functions of WODC’s planning department. The integration of high quality green infrastructure on these schemes is key to ensure they see gains for both people and wildlife.</p> <p>BNG is a new approach to development that aims to leave nature in a measurably better state than it was beforehand on a site – a 10% improvement will be mandatory for major schemes from January 2024, and the majority of other schemes from April 2024. The Council’s planning team is currently collating an evidence base to propose a 20% net gain for major schemes. The Council’s planning teams are working to ensure BNG is delivered and monitored effectively through the planning system, and developers are well informed through Design Guides and Design Codes to support this.</p>	
Key delivery partners	
BNG offset providers, Councillors, developers, Publica BNG lead, WODC planning department	
Actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that planning applications provide high integrity ecological surveys and reports • Implement Oxfordshire’s BNG Guiding principles into the Local Plan, and explore the potential implementation of a higher BNG requirement than the mandatory 10% national benchmark • Feed relevant policies developed by the LNRS into the upcoming Local Plan • Provide regular BNG training opportunities for planners and ecologists • Work closely with offset providers to deliver appropriate gains in strategic locations within the district where BNG offsetting is required • Increase the capacity of our ecology team to effectively evaluate applications for BNG • Keep our biodiversity guidance up to date for developers through SPDs and guidance notes • Monitor on-site BNG to ensure the targeted habitats and conditions are being achieved • Encourage Town and Parish Councils to include policies around biodiversity, nature recovery strategies or Local Green Space within their Neighbourhood Plans 	
Key Performance Indicators	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % BNG in the Local Plan • % of LNRS suggested policies in Local Plan • Ecology training sessions per year • Developer financial contributions towards offsetting through developments • Number of FTE WODC planning ecologists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of years since developer biodiversity guidance updated • % schemes monitored by WODC • Number of Neighbourhood Plans containing policies related to nature recovery
Co-benefits	
Air and water quality, access to public green spaces, carbon sequestration, local cooling, improved natural flood management	
Risks and dependencies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Availability of land for offsetting across the district • Requires co-ordinated partnerships with multiple groups • Resourcing of planning and ecology team 	

3) Take a spatially strategic approach to nature recovery	
There are opportunities through the development of the new local strategic plans to strengthen policies around ecological protection and recovery, drawing from best practice guidance, and deliver gains for biodiversity.	
Key delivery partners	
Communities, farmers, landowners, OCC, residents, Town and Parish Councils, WODC planning department.,	
Actions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the district • Have a call for and include sites identified for nature recovery as part of the next Local Plan and GI Strategy • Undertake an assessment of farm Land Grades across the district for targeted nature based solutions and BNG unit creation, in partnership with Evenlode/Windrush catchment partnership • Consider the purchase of land for biodiversity offsetting purposes 	
Key Performance Indicators	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GI Strategy published • Number of sites identified for nature recovery included within the Local Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Farmland nature based solutions assessment completed • Sites acquired by WODC for purpose of offsetting
Co-benefits	
Access to public green spaces, air and water quality, carbon sequestration, improved natural flood management,	
Risks and dependencies	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resourcing production of plans • Uncertainty around BNG legislation, offsetting payments and conservation covenants • Willingness of landowners to engage in nature recovery 	

Facilitate communities and partnerships in the district for landscape-scale recovery

<p>4) Work with Councils, regional and local partners to identify and deliver strategic opportunities for the restoration of natural ecosystems, improving habitat connectivity, wildlife corridors, and nature-based solutions in land-use management</p>	
<p>WODC has a wealth of local environmental groups and knowledge that we can potentially link in with to develop and deliver existing and new nature initiatives across the district. By collaborating with groups, and facilitating wider action, strategic opportunities for the restoration of natural ecosystems, improve habitat connectivity, and implement nature-based solutions to help mitigate against climate change can be maximised. The Oxfordshire LNP forms a key part in leading and informing action within this priority,</p>	
<p>Key delivery partners</p>	
<p>Community groups, farmers, landowners, OCC, Oxfordshire LNP, residents, schools, Town and Parish Councils, TOE, TVERC, WTC, Witney Woodland Volunteers, Wild Oxfordshire,</p>	
<p>Actions</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and fund the Windrush in Witney Project • Set up delivery partnerships with key organisations such as Lower Windrush Valley Project, Wild Oxfordshire and Wychwood Forest Trust • Continue to feed into the Oxfordshire LNRS and action plans beyond this • Engage in the forming of the final Nature Recovery Network to ensure WODC land with high ecological value or potential is included • Work with OCC with their Woodland Creator Accelerator Fund project • Work with OCC on the Oxfordshire Climate Adaptation Project • Support OLNP on the Enabling Nature-based Carbon Offsetting in Oxfordshire Project, including by helping to identify potential delivery sites • Work with Town and Parish Councils on assessing and enhancing their landholdings for biodiversity • Run WODC “Nature Summit” annual forum to showcase local project work • Facilitate the development of a Windrush Farmer Cluster • Identify land in WODC ownership that could become resident managed for community benefit • Link with International Tree Foundation and Wild Oxfordshire on a district-wide hedgerow planting scheme • Work with OCC to identify more Road Verge Nature Reserves for designation in the District, and support with appropriate management and monitoring of existing verges • Promote and showcase wildflower grasslands and good verge management for biodiversity for town and parish Councils and other land owners 	
<p>Key Performance Indicators</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Windrush in Witney Project delivered • Number of SLAs with environmental groups • Continued WODC contribution at OxLNP meetings and projects • Trees planted in the district through WCAF project • Number of Town and Parish Councils with biodiversity projects 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of nature summits delivered • Formation of a Windrush Farmer Cluster • Number of resident-led land stewardship schemes • Metres of hedgerow planted through planting scheme • Number of RVNRs in active management

Co-benefits
Improved natural flood management, carbon sequestration, air and water quality, access to public green spaces
Risks and dependencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires co-ordinated partnerships with multiple groups • Grant funding may not be successfully secured • Officer resource and capability • Resourcing the long term management of sites and features

5) Improve understanding of the district's habitats and enhancement opportunities
Data is required to gain a picture of how species populations are responding to changes in land use and climate, as well as where funds can best be directed for nature recovery. There are organisations that specialise in data collection and collation that can assist in better understanding ecological trends across the district.
Key delivery partners
BBOWT, offset providers, OxLNP, recording groups, TVERC,
Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resource an audit of the district's Local Wildlife Sites to understand the condition of these sites, and understand where BNG resources could be used • Receive public wildlife records from TVERC on a twice-yearly basis • Support the development and implementation of a green finance strategy across the county
Key Performance Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Local Wildlife Sites surveyed • Receipt and analysis of data from TVERC • Green finance strategy actioned
Co-benefits
Air and water quality, carbon sequestration, improved natural flood management,
Risks and dependencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officer resource and capability • Requires coordinated partnerships with multiple groups • Willingness of landowners to engage in nature recovery and provide access to data

6) Work across Council departments to link the objectives of this Strategy with other Council Plan 2023-2027 priorities
There are connections within the District Council's teams that can be strengthened – there are strong links with our internal teams such as Estates, Communities, Development Planning and Flooding, which can be improved on to develop collaborative projects that benefit each team's agendas.
Key delivery partners
EA, flood management team, healthy place shaping team, NHS, landowners, OCC, residents, tree team, Windrush Catchment Partnership, WODC climate change team
Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Council's communities team to deliver nature and health initiatives in strategic locations, such as the recent UKSPF Deer Park Access improvement project and acting on some of the next steps in the Leverhulme Centre for Nature Recovery's 'equitable distribution of accessible green space' report. • Investigate the potential for green prescribing on a district-wide scale, in partnership with the Council's communities team and ONLP, linking in with the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire Integrated Care Strategy • Work with the flood management team to develop and resource a riparian management plan for watercourses across the Council's estate • Work with the climate change team to develop a carbon offsetting strategy • Work with the Planning Policy team in relation to the development of the emerging Local Plan 2041 and BNG
Key Performance Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of projects completed with communities team • Number of surgeries with green prescribing practices • Local Plan published with strong ecology and BNG policies • Metres of WODC owned riverside in active management for nature • Carbon offsetting strategy successfully completed
Co-benefits
Air and water quality, carbon sequestration, Improved natural flood management, resident mental and physical health
Risks and dependencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Officer resource and expertise • Requires coordinated partnerships with multiple groups

7) Improve communication and community involvement
WODC has a strong Communications team, with several platforms on which the Council can promote opportunities for conservation volunteer and best practice to others. Bespoke outreach activities could also take place to encourage residents to better engage with the natural world.
Key delivery partners
Friends of North Leigh Common, Kilkenny Conservation Group, offset providers, WODC planning team, recording groups, Ubico, Witney Woodland Volunteers, Wychwood Forest Trust
Actions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly promote opportunities for conservation volunteering on the Council’s website, climate bulletin and greenlight nature and climate online hub • Disseminate best practice on creating and managing biodiverse spaces to Town and Parish Councils • Run an annual BioBlitz to promote wildlife recording at different Council-owned sites • Work with schools across the district to deliver biodiversity enhancements on their sites and encourage pupils to interact with the natural world • Encourage Town and Parish Councils to include policies around biodiversity, nature recovery strategies or Local Green Space within their Neighbourhood Plans
Key Performance Indicators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued social posts and bulletin • Number of Town and Parish Councils engaged with WODC on biodiversity • Records collected from BioBlitzs • Number of schools engaged with WODC on biodiversity
Co-benefits
Access to public green spaces, sense of place, enhanced health and wellbeing of local communities
Risks and dependencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires co-ordinated partnerships with multiple groups • Time and resources needed from several parties

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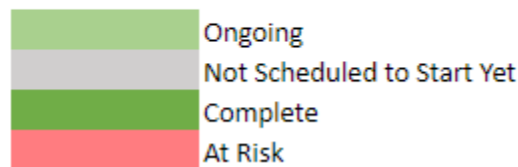
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Activity	Short/medium/long target completion	Current status	Current funding	Indicative cost to 2030	Future funding source	2024 budget request	2025 budget request
1) Protect and enhancing biodiversity on sites owned and managed by the District Council							
a) Protect and improve the existing biodiversity value of land under the Council's stewardship							
Continue working with Ubico on our sites to enhance biodiversity across our estate, and extend the areas with targeted biodiversity management	Medium	Ongoing	Ubico are funded to manage sites in accordance with current LMPs. CDC contracted for tree works.	Biodiversity enhancements have been financed through cost neutral changes to Ubico's contract. Future changes are likely to increase Ubico's contract fees, which will be calculated as part of the LMP review. Contract due to be updated in March 26.	Council funding	Officer to review LMPs.	
Develop and resource the long term management of North Leigh Common	Medium	Not started	Ubico undertake works across c10% of the site's area. FNCL undertake works across c20% of the site's area.	Cost of producing a woodland management plan for North Leigh Common, c£10k. Likely that Friends of North Leigh Common can undertake some management actions. Group should be formalised. Other actions, e.g. tree management, will require additional funding.	Council funding	Officer to coordinate FNCL group.	Cost of tree management works.
Stop the use of glyphosate across all WODC land, and seek alternative weed management strategies such as hot foam or mechanical removal	Short	Not started	Ubico are funded to manage land using glyphosate.	Officer time to assess the extent of glyphosate use and alternative weed management strategies. Additional cost for alternative management regime as minimal cost savings from reducing the purchase and application of glyphosate. Costs can be calculated as part of the assessment.	Council funding	Officer to undertake assessment.	Additional cost of new management regime.
Stop the use of peat compost across all WODC land	Short	Not started		Officer time to assess current use of peat compost, develop new policy and recommend alternatives. Additional cost of alternative products to peat.	Council funding	Officer to undertake assessment.	
Employ best practice procedures to eradicate invasive non-native species such as Himalayan Balsam and Japanese knotweed across Council owned sites	Medium	Ongoing	Ubico are funded to manage sites in accordance with LMPs.	Officer time to coordinate FNLC and Ubico.	Council funding	Officer to coordinate eradication actions.	
Undertake botanical surveys of key council sites in 2024 and 2030: Deer Park Wood and South, Kilkenny Lane Country Park, North Leigh Common, Witney floodplain meadows	Short	Not started		c£12,000 to undertake two surveys at each site in 2024 and again before 2030.	Climate reserve	£6,000	
Implement biodiversity features at WODC offices Woodgreen	Short	Started	Woodgreen enhancements funded through agile working budget.	£16,000 to undertake ecological enhancements at Woodgreen.	Council funding		
Provide annual funding to volunteer groups managing WODC sites e.g. Friends of North Leigh Common, Kilkenny Lane Conservation volunteers, Witney Woodland Volunteers	Medium	Not started		c£5,250 per year to support volunteering work.	Climate reserve/Westhive	£250-£750 for each group.	£250-£750 for each group.
Develop and resource a management plan for the Eton Land with the WFT	Short	Not started		Officer time to develop a management plan for Eton land, likely to include meadow cut and collection, and tree pollarding. Cost of implementing the plan will be calculated as part of the plan.	Heritage Lottery Fund to 2029. SLA post 2029.		
Identify and create community orchards in public estates	Medium	Not started	£49,932 funding secured from Defra.	£49,932 for capital works for delivery October 23. Officer time for delivery.		Officer to deliver phase 2 scheme.	
Review and possibly expand the wildflower areas across WODC owned estates in Witney and Carterton	Long	Not started	Ubico currently plant wildflower areas. £2,000 budgeted for previous wildflower enhancement areas.	Costs can be confirmed once potential additional areas and Ubico capacity have been assessed.	Council funding		
Proactively manage woodland areas within WODC's public estates	Short	Not started		Costs can be confirmed once woodland management plan has been commissioned	Council funding		
2) Safeguard and enhance biodiversity through policies and development							
a) Drive nature recovery through the planning and development process							
Implement Oxfordshire's BNG Guiding principles into the Local Plan, and explore the potential implementation of a higher BNG requirement than the mandatory 10% national benchmark	Short	Not started		Biodiversity/planning officer time to develop BNG principles in the Local Plan.	Council funding		
Feed policies from the Local Nature Recovery Strategy into the upcoming Local Plan	Short	Not started		Biodiversity/planning officer time.	Council funding		
Provide regular BNG training opportunities for planners and ecologists	Short	Not started		Costs can be confirmed once training need and delivery has been identified.	Council funding		
Work closely with offset providers to deliver appropriate gains within our District where BNG offsetting is required	Short	Not started		Biodiversity/planning officer time.	Council funding		
Increase the capacity of our ecology team to effectively evaluate applications for BNG	Short	Not started	0.5 Assistant biodiversity officer for WODC in post, down from 1.5 in 2022. Some funding from DEFRA.	One mid-level biodiversity officer c£35k + NI, pension etc.	Council funding/DEFRA?		
Keep our biodiversity guidance up to date for developers through SPDs and guidance notes	Short	Ongoing		Biodiversity/planning officer time.	Council funding		

Activity	Short/medium/long target completion	Current status	Current funding	Indicative cost to 2030	Future funding source	2024 budget request	2025 budget request
Monitor BNG sites to ensure the targeted habitats and conditions are being achieved	Short	Ongoing	Officers investigating monitoring tools in DM	Officer time to assess 30yr habitat agreement delivery going forward.	DEFRA?		
Encourage Town and Parish Councils to include policies around biodiversity, nature recovery strategies or Local Green Space within their Neighbourhood Plans	Short	Ongoing		Officer time to work with Town and Parish Councils on producing policies around biodiversity and nature	Council funding		
b) Take a strategic approach to development-funded nature recovery for optimum outcomes							
Develop a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the district	Long	Not started		Consultant/TVERC fees to produce GI Strategy, c£25k. Officer time to coordinate input or undertake in-house.	Council funding/central funding?		c£25k for TVERC data and consultancy.
Have a call for and include sites identified for nature recovery as part of the next Local Plan and GI Strategy	Short	Started	Local Plan budget	Planning officer time to process call for sites and develop GI Strategy.	Council funding/central funding?		
Undertake an assessment of farm Land Grades across the district for targeted nature based solutions and BNG unit creation, in partnership with Evenlode/Windrush catchment partnership	Long	Not started		Officer time to analyse data sets and coordinate partnership working	Council funding	Officer to assess agricultural land grades.	
Consider the purchase of land for off-site BNG delivery	Long	Not started		Costs can be confirmed once opportunities for land purchase have been explored.	Council funding		
3) Facilitate communities and partnerships in our district for landscape-scale recovery							
a) Work with councils, regional and local partners to identify and deliver strategic opportunities for the restoration of natural ecosystems, improving habitat connectivity, wildlife corridors, and nature-based solutions in land-use management							
Develop and fund the Windrush in Witney Project	Long	Started		Officer time to develop project, attend steering group meetings.	Heritage Lottery Fund?		
Set up delivery partnerships with key organisations such as Lower Windrush Valley Project, Wild Oxfordshire and Wychwood Forest Trust	Short	Started	Grants	SLAs to be confirmed.	SLAs/central funding?		
Continue to feed into the Oxfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy, and action plans beyond this	Short	Started		Officer time to attend OLNS meetings.	Council funding		
Engage in the forming of the final Nature Recovery Network to ensure WODC land with high ecological value or potential is included	Short	Started		Officer time to attend OLNS meetings.	Council funding		
Work with OCC with their Woodland Creator Accelerator Fund project	Medium	Started		Officer time to contribute to the Woodland Creator Accelerator Fund project.	Council funding		
Work with OCC with their Oxfordshire Climate Adaptation Project	Medium	Started		Officer time to progress the Oxfordshire Climate Adaptation Project.	Council funding		
Support OLNP on the Enabling Nature-based Carbon Offsetting in Oxfordshire Project, including by helping to identify potential delivery sites	Medium	Started		Officer time to drive forward the Enabling Carbon Offsetting in Oxfordshire project.	Council funding		
Work with Town and Parish Councils on assessing and enhancing their land holdings for biodiversity	Medium	Not started		Officer time to undertake site assessments and provide advice to Town and Parish Councils.	Council funding	Officer time to assess land and provide advice.	Officer to assess land and provide advice.
Run WODC Nature Summit annual forum to showcase local project work	Short	Not started		Officer time to organise annual event.	Council funding	Officer to organise event.	Officer to coordinate event.
Facilitate the development of a Windrush Farmer cluster	Long	Not started		Officer time to develop project, apply for grant funding, and work with key stakeholders.	Landscape Recovery Scheme?	Officer to coordinate partnership.	Officer to coordinate partnership.
Identify land in WODC ownership that could become resident managed for community benefit	Medium	Not started		Officer time to assess landholdings, consult communities, set up plans and agreements.	Capital works fund through grants e.g. TOE?	Officer to coordinate engagement.	Officer to coordinate engagement.
Link with International Tree Foundation and Wild Oxfordshire on a District-wide hedgerow planting scheme	Long	Not started		Officer time to work up scheme (similar to community orchards scheme) and capital for hedgerow plants.	TOE funding/external grants?		
Work with OCC to identify more Road Verge Nature Reserve for designation in the District, and support with monitoring existing verges	Long	Not started		Officer time to liaise with OCC on their RVNRs, identify sites and implement new management. Capital funding for verge markers etc.	Council funding	Officer to coordinate with OCC.	Officer to coordinate with OCC.
Promote and showcase wildflower grasslands and good verge management for biodiversity for Town and Parish Councils and other land owners	Short	Not started		Officer time to collate case studies and influence Town and Parish Council verge management	Council funding		
b) Improve understanding of the district habitats and enhancement opportunities							
Resource an audit of WODC's Local Wildlife Sites to understand the condition of these sites, and understand where BNG resources could be used	Long	Not started		Cost can be confirmed once quote received from BBOWT.	Council funding	Officer to undertake assessment.	
Receive public wildlife records from TVERC on a twice-yearly basis	Long	Ongoing	TVERC send data under SLA.	No change - funded by planning policy team.	Council funding		
Support the development and implementation of a green finance strategy across the county	Long	Not started		Officer time go develop a green finance strategy.	Central funding e.g. NEIRF?		
c) Work across council departments to link the objectives of this Strategy with other Council Plan (2023-2027) priorities							

Activity	Short/medium/long target completion	Current status	Current funding	Indicative cost to 2030	Future funding source	2024 budget request	2025 budget request
Work with the Council's communities team to deliver nature and health initiatives in strategic locations, such as the recent UKSPF Deer Park Access improvement project and acting on some of the next steps in the Leverhulme Centre for Nature Recovery's 'equitable distribution of accessible green space' report.	Medium	Ongoing		Officer time to develop and deliver nature and health projects.	Communities funding?	Officer to work with communities team.	Officer to work with communities team.
Investigate the potential for green prescribing on a district-wide scale, in partnership with the Council's communities team and ONLP, linking in with the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire Integrated Care Strategy	Medium	Not started		Officer time to explore opportunities to support green prescribing, possibly with targeted surgeries.	Communities/OCC funding?	Officer to coordinate with OCC.	Officer to coordinate with OCC.
Work with the flood management team to develop and resource a riparian management plan for watercourses across the council's estate	Long	Not started	Ubico undertake drain clearance works, Witney Woodland Volunteers look after Colwell Brook on DPS.	Officer time to assess landholdings, work up plans and agreements.	Council funding		
Work with climate change team to develop a carbon offsetting strategy	Long	Not started		Officer time to work with climate officers on offsetting strategy.	Council funding		
Work with the planning policy team in relation to the development of the emerging Local Plan 2041 and BNG	Short	Not started		Officer time to work with Planning policy team	Council funding		
d) Improve communication and community involvement							
Regularly promote opportunities for conservation volunteering on the Council's website, climate bulletin and greenlight nature and climate online hub	Short	Ongoing	Dedicated climate and waste officer. BLMO feeds into newsletter and greenlight.	Officer time to create content.	Council funding		
Disseminate best practice on creating and managing biodiverse spaces to Town and Parish councils	Short	Not started	Climate budget.	Officer time to identify and communicate best practice to communities.	Council funding		
Run an annual BioBlitz to promote wildlife recording at different Council-owned sites	Short	Not started		Officer time to organised annual event, plus c£750/yr to run with experts.	Climate reserve. TVERC recorders grant (c500/yr)?	£750 and officer to organise event.	£750 and officer to organise event.
Work with schools across the district to deliver biodiversity enhancements on their sites and encourage pupils to interact with the natural world	Medium	Ongoing		Officer time to work up education materials and engage with schools.	Council funding	Officer to coordinate engagement.	Officer to coordinate engagement.

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Activity	Short/medium/ long target completion	Start Date	Due Date	KPI	Current status	Date of Latest Update	Latest KPI Return	Commentary	Theme
1. Protect and enhance biodiversity on sites owned and managed by the Council									
a) Protect and improve the existing biodiversity value of land under the council's stewardship									
Continue working with Ubico on our sites to enhance biodiversity across our estate, and extend the areas with targeted biodiversity management	Short	Mar-23	2030	% of Land Management Plan actions successfully completed by Ubico annually	Ongoing				Ubico
Develop and resource the long term management of North Leigh Common	Medium			M ³ of North Leigh Common in active management	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Habitat delivery
Stop the use of glyphosate across all WODC land, and seek alternative weed management strategies such as hot foam or mechanical removal	Short			Litres of glyphosate used annually by Ubico on WODC land	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Ubico
Stop the use of peat compost across all WODC land	Short			Litres of peat compost used by Ubico on WODC land	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Ubico
Employ best practice procedures to eradicate invasive non-native species such as Himalayan Balsam and Japanese knotweed across Council owned sites	Medium	Mar-22	2030	M ³ of invasive species on Council land	Ongoing				Ubico
Undertake botanical surveys of key Council sites in 2024 and 2030 - Deer Park Wood and South, Kilkenny Lane Country Park, North Leigh Common, Witney floodplain meadows	Short			Flora species diversity and abundance at each site	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Data collection
Implement biodiversity features at WODC offices Woodgreen	Short	Aug-22	24-Mar	M ³ of habitat enhanced	Ongoing				Habitat delivery
Provide annual funding to volunteer groups managing WODC sites e.g. Friends of North Leigh Common, Kilkenny Lane Conservation volunteers, Witney Woodland Volunteers	Medium			£ annually given to groups for maintenance costs	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Internal team working
Develop and resource a management plan for the Eton Land with the WFT	Short			Site in active management Y/N	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Habitat delivery
Identify and create community orchards in public estates	Medium			Number of orchards created	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Habitat delivery
Review and possibly expand the wildflower areas across WODC owned estates in Witney and Carterton	Long			M ³ of WODC wildflower meadow areas	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Habitat delivery

Proactively manage woodland areas within WODC's public estates	Short			Number of proactively manage woodland areas within WODC's public estates	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Habitat delivery
2. Safeguard biodiversity through policies and new development									
a) Drive nature recovery through the planning and development process									
Implement Oxfordshire's BNG Guiding principles into the Local Plan, and explore the potential implementation of a higher BNG requirement than the mandatory 10% national benchmark	Medium			% planning applications using BNG	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Planning and DM
Feed policies from the Local Nature Recovery Strategy into the upcoming Local Plan	Medium			% of suggested policies in Local Plan	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Planning and DM
Provide regular BNG training opportunities for planners and ecologists	Medium			Training sessions per year	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Planning and DM
Work closely with offset providers to deliver appropriate gains within our District where BNG offsetting is required	Medium			% schemes using offsets (NB this is a last resort in the mitigation hierarchy)	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Planning and DM
Increase the capacity of our ecology team to effectively evaluate applications for BNG	Medium			Number of planning ecologists	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Planning and DM
Keep our biodiversity guidance up to date for developers through SPDs and guidance notes	Medium	Feb-23	2030	Number of years since guidance updated	Ongoing				Planning and DM
Monitor BNG sites to ensure the targeted habitats and conditions are being achieved	Short	Jan-23	2030	% schemes monitored by WODC	Ongoing				Planning and DM
Encourage Town and Parish Councils to include policies around biodiversity, nature recovery strategies or Local Green Space within their Neighbourhood Plans	Short			Number of Neighbourhood Plans containing polices related to nature recovery	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Planning and DM
b) Take a strategic approach to development-funded nature recovery for optimum outcomes									
Develop a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the district	Long			GI plan published	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				WODC Strategy
Have a call for and include sites identified for nature recovery as part of the next Local Plan and GI Strategy	Short	Aug-23	Dec-25	Number of Green Sites	Ongoing				WODC Strategy
Undertake an assessment of farm Land Grades across the district for targeted nature based solutions and BNG unit creation, in partnership with Evenlode/Windrush catchment partnership	Long			Assessment completed	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Data collection
Consider the purchase of land for biodiversity offsetting purposes	Long			Sites acquired by WODC for purpose of offsetting	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				WODC Strategy

3. Facilitate communities and partnerships in our district for landscape-scale recovery
a) Work with councils, regional and local partners to identify and deliver strategic opportunities for the restoration of natural ecosystems, improving habitat connectivity, wildlife corridors, and nature-based solutions in land-use management

Develop and fund the Windrush in Witney Project	Long	Mar-22	Mar-29	Project delivered Y/N	Ongoing				External team working
Set up delivery partnerships with key organisations such as Lower Windrush Valley Project, Wild Oxfordshire and Wychwood Forest Trust	Short	Apr-24	2030	Number of SLAs with groups	Ongoing				Internal team working
Continue to feed into the Oxfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy, and action plans beyond this	Short	22-Jul	2030	Continued WODC attendance at meetings	Ongoing				Feeding into other strategies
Engage in the forming of the final Nature Recovery Network to ensure WODC land with high ecological value or potential is included	Short	22-Jul	Jul-25	Continued WODC attendance at meetings	Ongoing				Feeding into other strategies
Work with OCC with their Woodland Creator Accelerator Fund project	Medium	May-23	May-26	Trees planted in WODC	Ongoing				Feeding into other strategies
Work with OCC with their Oxfordshire Climate Adaptation Project	Medium	Jun-23	TBC	Oxfordshire Climate Adaptation Project successfully completed	Ongoing				Feeding into other strategies
Support OLNP on the Enabling Nature-based Carbon Offsetting in Oxfordshire Project, including by helping to identify potential delivery sites	Medium	Jun-23	TBC	Oxfordshire Climate Adaptation Project successfully completed	Ongoing				Feeding into other strategies
Work with Town and Parish Councils on assessing and enhancing their land holdings for biodiversity	Medium			Number of T/PCs with biodiversity projects	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				External team working
Run WODC Nature Summit annual forum to showcase local project work	Short			Number of annual forums delivered	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Engagement
Facilitate the development of a Windrush Farmer cluster	Long			Cluster Y/N	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				External team working
Identify land in WODC ownership that could become resident managed for community benefit	Medium			Number of resident-led schemes	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				WODC Strategy
Link with International Tree Foundation and Wild Oxfordshire on a District-wide hedgerow planting scheme	Long			M of hedgerow planted	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				External team working
Work with OCC to identify more Road Verge Nature Reserve for designation in the District, and support with monitoring existing verges	Long			Number of RVNRs in active management/surveyed	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				External team working
Promote and showcase wildflower grasslands and good verge management for biodiversity for town and parish Councils and other land owners	Short			Number of wildflower grassland case studies reported	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Engagement

b) Improve understanding of the district habitats and enhancement opportunities									
Resource an audit of WODC's Local Wildlife Sites to understand the condition of these sites, and understand where BNG resources could be used	Long			No. of Local Wildlife Sites benefiting from BNG funds	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Data collection
Receive public wildlife records from TVERC on a twice-yearly basis	Long	Feb-21	2023	Receipt and analysis of data from TVERC	Ongoing				Data collection
Support the development and implementation of a green finance strategy across the county	Long				Not Scheduled to Start Yet				WODC Strategy
c) Work across council departments to link the objectives of this Strategy with other Council Plan (2023-2027) priorities									
Work with the Council's communities team to deliver nature and health initiatives in strategic locations, such as the recent UKSPF Deer Park Access improvement project and acting on some of the next steps in the Leverhulme Centre for Nature Recovery's 'equitable distribution of accessible green space' report.	Medium	Feb-22	2023	Number of projects with Communities team	Ongoing				Internal team working
Investigate the potential for green prescribing on a district-wide scale, in partnership with the Council's communities team and ONLP, linking in with the Oxfordshire Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire Integrated Care Strategy	Medium			Number of surgeries with green prescribing practices	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Internal team working
Work with the flood management team to develop and resource a riparian management plan for watercourses across the council's estate	Long			m of WODC riverside in active management	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Internal team working
Work with climate change team to develop a carbon offsetting strategy	Long				Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Feeding into other strategies
Work with the Planning Policy team in relation to the development of the emerging Local Plan 2041 and BNG	Short			Delivery of Local Plan	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				WODC Strategy
d) Improve communication and community involvement									
Regularly promote opportunities for conservation volunteering on the Council's website, climate bulletin and greenlight nature and climate online hub	Short	Feb-21	2023	Social posts	Ongoing				Engagement
Disseminate best practice on creating and managing biodiverse spaces to Town and Parish councils	Short			Town and parish councils engaged with WODC on biodiversity.	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Engagement
Run an annual BioBlitz to promote wildlife recording at different Council-owned sites	Short			Records collected from BioBlitzs	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Engagement

Work with schools across the district to deliver biodiversity enhancements on their sites and encourage pupils to interact with the natural world	Medium			Schools engaged with WODC on biodiversity.	Not Scheduled to Start Yet				Engagement
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Internal officers and Cllrs

General

- Fantastic work on this and I am really supportive, so any help our team can give, please ask. Of course I am most interested in the plan for the Council owned land. If there was any time to use information gathered from improving the habitat enhancement at the Council offices to somehow roll this out to the commercially let sites, such as Des Roches this would be another win. Also how will the community orchards work? Is this something that the Council would provide and maintain?
- It's really good to get all of these things into one document – well done! My main concern would be about raising expectations. How feasible is the BAP within existing resources? Or are you planning to use this document to increase resources and funding?!
- I note the intention to look into the riparian use of the council owned watercourses. I do not have any comments on the document at this time.
- From our perspective we are very happy to work with you as described in the document – look forward to those conversations.
 - I wonder if this document is the right place to have ambitions about food and growing spaces more broadly with reference to the food strategy (Oxfordshire recently won Sustainable Places Silver award <https://gfo.org.uk/blog/oxfordshire-wins-sustainable-food-places-silver-aw/>) – not knowing about biodiversity I'm not sure if it would be appropriate.
 - The UKSPF Carterton Town Strategy work might be an interesting connection as I note your proposed area for non-statutory conservation target areas includes Carterton – be good to ensure that this is live in the thinking of the folks working on that.
 - I think if you're mentioning health I think it might be of value to reference the BOB ICB Strategy in conjunction with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Oxfordshire – also perhaps weaving in mention of Healthy Place Shaping and using phrases like the Building Blocks to Health which is from the H&WB strategy which also acts as the action plan for the ICB strategy. ICB strategy is in place and H&WB strategy has just completed consultation and will be adopted in December. Hope that makes sense. <https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/health-wellbeing>
- Look forward to discussing in more detail. It is a really good report, here are some initial thoughts:
 - Report structure: Would some of the sections in the first part of the report, e.g., information on local organisations and policies, be better as appendices or later sections in the report? It takes a while to get to the core issues and recommendations.
 - Will be good to understand as a next step what TVERC and other national/international organisations are using in terms of existing KPIs, and look at using those. There may also be other broader KPIs that we could consider using going forward, e.g. estimating Glyphosate use across the wider community, vegetation cover (and insect preponderance) across the District, which may need more development and thinking about.
 - Resourcing - could we give some figures/indications of grant money already obtained and won/applied for (e.g. Orchards), Also need to mention Westhive/involvement of communities teams/youth needs/link with leisure, as potential sources of funding to help deliver strategy.
 - Could there be some more context in terms of need to increase vegetation/habitat, but acknowledging that there is also a desire for tidiness and maintenance of vegetation for cycle paths and road visibility in some areas? Ideas on how that should be addressed going forward.
 - Tree management on council-owned and managed land, regular pollarding, wood for beetles, etc.
 - Peat on Council land - can we ban earlier if practical? What are the alternatives?
 - Verges: need to mention link up action with highways management, parishes and land owners across the District even if involvement is limited going forward.
 - Work with developers, e.g. Solar and housing, and other land owners. What role could/should WODC play in enhancing biodiversity beyond the BNG mechanism?
 - BAP 6: mention tool kit/case studies from Wild Oxfordshire contracted project
 - BAP 7: mention how initiatives such as Hedgehog highways and Swift/bird conservation groups, can be really effective in terms of engagement with residents (and link to supporting insect diversity and preponderance)
- One issue is around planning, where you are mainly talking about BNG but there is more to it than that – there is protecting designated and non-designated sites, species protection, ensuring on site landscape or GI provision is good for wildlife etc etc. I would not want Members to think that BNG

was the be all and end all and that we didn't have to worry about anything else, this is far from the truth! It is a really good piece of work and is certainly ambitious – the costs to deliver could be quite high, but we should be aiming high, so well done.

- Understandably, since Rachel wrote the plan, this very much comes across as a BAP focused on her main areas of work but if it is a plan for the whole Council I think we should add in more on the planning side - the work that Janice does + the Biodiversity Officers in Planning + some of the work that Nick does in terms of community etc. Would give a more complete picture.
- We should probably add some wording in the introduction to the consultation to the effect that we intend to review and update the strategy based on feedback from the consultation, our Council priorities, and what is deliverable in terms of Council and partner resources.

Introduction

- Perhaps give Eynsham as an example or another lowland settlement
- Is the above vision that of the OLN and this one is WODC's vision? Perhaps make a little clearer.

Biodiversity across West Oxfordshire

- The term nature recovery is often used - is it worth explaining the relationship with biodiversity here?
- The impact of disease is also significant e.g. Dutch Elm Disease in the past and Ash Dieback now
- Include the National Landscape and its size
- + Nature Improvement Areas
- What about the Windrush in Witney Project Area? Worth mentioning?

Local groups and partnerships

- There are scores of other local groups too. Such as, Long Mead, Eynsham, Nature Recovery Groups (e.g. at Charlbury and Eynsham), Old Woodstock Line Nature Reserve and Woodstock Community Woodland.
- This may be covered later but does this document need to signpost towards the work on nature recovery (mapping etc.) that has been done in support of the now defunct Oxfordshire Plan 2050?
- LWVP was set up with WODC, OCC and possibly Smiths

Document Context

- Perhaps retitle this to 'Key Influences' or something similar?
- Add Natural England GI Framework
- Not essential but you could perhaps cite paragraph 174 (d) of the NPPF here?
- Series of made Neighbourhood Plans (many of which identify areas of Local Green Space and local policies for biodiversity), West Oxfordshire Design Guide, Conservation Area Appraisals.
- Something about the Oxon nature recovery mapping work here perhaps? And also perhaps Salt Cross AAP with the 25% BNG policy having been accepted by the Planning Inspector.
- Does the plan saying anything more specifically about biodiversity or nature recovery that could be quoted here?
- Add CNL Position Statements
- Worth also citing the Cotswolds National Landscape Climate Change Strategy 2022 here. Also the Cotswolds Nature Recovery Plan and Natural Capital Atlas.
- You have mentioned the Environment Act but there are a huge range of legislation and policies such as the Habitats Regs, WCA, NPPF etc - all of which are key

Our work to date and role as a council

- Should we add something here about developing the Salt Cross AAP with our 25% BNG policy having been accepted by the Planning Inspector?
- Should we also mention that the Council has employed a p/t Biodiversity Officer (within the Planning Service) for some years and recently appointed a f/t Assistant Biodiversity Officer (within the planning service). + also the work that people like Nick and Janice do around biodiversity.

- Where do we flag the everyday planning work - run of the mill biodiversity input into planning apps etc?

Aims and objectives

- Is this just about safeguarding? Is it not about positive gains/enhancement?
- The detail of this is included later on (page 14). I would suggest either cross-referring to that detail here or re-ordering the document so that everything on each of the 3 key areas appears in the same place in order.
- Design Guide and Design Code(s) could also be used to provide guidance
- Small Sites and other BNG schemes from April
- The text below could usefully explain what is meant by landscape-scale recovery.

Biodiversity Action plan

- As the whole document is the BAP - should this section be retitled to something like 'Identified or Key Actions'?
- Link to the road map below? Otherwise it has no context.
- Any scope for agri-environment monies?
- I'm not sure that should be limited to the climate change team, everyone involved in biodiversity within the Council should be doing that.

Biodiversity Road Map

- This is good - nice and visual but if it links to actions in the tables below, you need to make it clearer.
- Could add in the April BNG date for all apps other than householders (roughly)

Protect and enhance biodiversity on council owned and managed land

- Would suggest that the list of key delivery partners appears after the key indicators - perhaps with a brief bullet point on their expected role?
- Perhaps give greater emphasis to Ubico's role as this is the one partner that we do have control over!
- Proactively manage woodland areas within WODC's public estates - Good to see this in here
- Number of Proactively manage woodland areas within WODC's public estates - Not sure how easy that would be to measure - might need to be a bit more specific

Safeguard biodiversity through policies and development

- It may well be that not all the policies are relevant to us e.g. for high density development in the city
- Should we be saying something here about looking at taking a holistic landscape-scale approach here? Rather than pockets of improvements here and there.
- As the Government are proposing to do away with SPDs, to future proof this document it might be worth just referring to guidance.
- Are there any other forms of accreditation available? Should we be referencing just one? The AAP Inspector felt we shouldn't back one particular horse and made any references much more general.
- Is another possible indicator the amount (£) of financial contributions received towards offsetting?
- The Local Plan will allocate strategic sites for development. How about the Council committing to adopt the ecological areas to ensure long term management?
- NB The role of Neighbourhood Plans and Local Green Spaces.
- Gi Strategy Good - but who is doing this?
- We have just done a call for sites including nature recovery/biodiversity.
- Define what is meant by a Green Site. This is very general and could include any number of things.
- Is offsetting site acquisition something that is planned?
- I think we are probably focusing too much on BNG, as I said before there is much more to biodiversity and planning. How about -
- "Driving nature recovery through the planning and development process."

- Then in the next paragraph talk more generally about biodiversity, GI and planning before you use the para that you have written here.
- % planning applications with BNG - That is a measure of the development industry and not of our performance.
- % of suggested policies in Local Plan - Not that meaningful as a stat as biodiversity could be covered in lots of short policies or one long policy!
- Financial contributions towards offsetting through developments - What do you mean by that? And how is it different to BNG?
- Do you mean offsetting or do you mean off-site BNG delivery?

Facilitate communities and partnerships in the district for landscape-scale recovery

- KPI What about all the m of hedgerow lost? A net gain figure?)
- KPI Number of LWS surveyed
- Metres of WODC owned riverside in active management - Active management for nature (not active management as a drainage channel)
- Add KPI Neighbourhood Plans containing nature recovery policies and/or Local Green Space
- Number of Local Wildlife Sites surveyed - Who by?
- Box 6 - No mention of planning

eNGOs

General comments

- This is a very good document and we greatly welcome the ambition of what the District is doing.
- More 'Opportunity mapping' to be included in the plan (by overlaying conservation target areas with priority habitats and land use maps). This can direct conservation efforts, to be followed up by rigorous monitoring and evaluation to determine which conservation efforts work, and which do not. This will work well into your adaptive, strategic approach to nature recovery.
- Be ambitious. Set tough (but realistic) targets for the action plan that you can work towards. More definition for your Key Performance Indicators, adding figures to your targets (e.g., instead of % of planning applications with BNG: rather 'we aim to have 95% of planning applications with BNG'? or stating how many planning ecologists do you expect to need?), and how often you plan to report on these Key Performance Indicators. It can be good to have a goal to work towards.
- Perhaps some more on WODC's plans to involve the landowner community, and fast-track the development of the Windrush Farmer Cluster, perhaps through the Rural Enterprise Grant. If 79% of West Oxfordshire is under agricultural management, this is where most land is available for nature recovery—achieved through the promotion of government schemes, events, etc.
- Room for greater focus on WODC's rivers and waterbodies (their current condition, the reasons for this, and steps to address the problem) – backed up by data. E.g., from the river Windrush [cda311_c6239944bde4dfc86348d7a0b72f044.pdf](https://www.windrushwasp.org/cda311_c6239944bde4dfc86348d7a0b72f044.pdf) (windrushwasp.org)
- Data-based evidence of the current habitat conditions. By stating the data as it stands now (e.g., phosphate levels in a river or hectares of woodland management for biodiversity) it will give a baseline which can be used for reference in the future.
- The need to work closely with neighbouring LPAs to ensure a consistent approach, shared learnings, and streamline common responsibilities (especially when it comes to BNG).
- Increase resource allocation where possible for the ecology team to ensure that WODC gets the most out of BNG.
- A name and number for the Biodiversity and Countryside Officer would be useful.
- For BNG monitoring- need to state this as monitoring on ONSITE and separate mention of provision to manage monitoring reports submitted by offset providers- again work across LPA to design a consistent recording, reporting, and management process.
- This document along with the commitment and proactive approach it represents is very welcome and great to see. The comments below should be taken within this overall positive context.
- I am not so sure about the name. Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) are widely seen as dating from the 1990's. The UK Bap is dated 1994 & the Gloucestershire BAP 2000. They represented a great deal of excellent and valuable work though their impact is widely perceived as having been disappointing. Calling this document, a BAP runs the risk of making it appear dated and associated with a process that was to a certain extent not as successful as we hoped it would be.
- I wonder if calling it a Nature Recovery Plan would be more positive and forward looking. It would also further signal the alignment with the new Local Nature Recovery Strategy which the document recognises. Calling it a Nature Recovery Plan distinguishes it from the strategy but signals that it is very much part of a wider reinvigorated conservation effort. All very exciting.
- I support the adoption of the LNP ambition on page 2 and I am pleased to see the name Cotswolds National Landscape (CNL) used throughout. The integration with the LNP, LNRS, CNL & the CNL Management Plan and Nature Recovery Plan is welcome and supported.
- Well done, this is a great piece of work!
- What's in a name? Well, I think calling it the Nature Recovery Plan for West Oxfordshire is a better framing than the BAP, which feels out of date and out of sync with new policy. But it probably doesn't really matter.
- This is a very good document and we greatly welcome the ambition of what the District is doing. It has also been a very interesting document to review
- I'd like to applaud such a helpful document, well organised and written in such clear, accessible style. I feel sure this will be really valuable for local councils and community groups to frequently refer to and use.

Introduction

- Need to reference the LNRS here.

- Worth referencing climate adaptation? Worth mentioning carbon sequestration?
- Apologies if the following is covered in the document, and we have missed it. We do not know if this is already happening as a result of the climate and ecological emergency commitments, but we think it really important that both matters are considered in all council decisions and policies. So with respect to biodiversity, can the document acknowledge that biodiversity should not be considered only in biodiversity or planning policies, but that instead all decisions and policies of the council on all topics should consider impacts on biodiversity and how those areas can contribute to achieving the 30x30 (see comment box on that below) and 2050 targets.

Biodiversity across West Oxfordshire

- A map of the broad habitat types and a table of their coverage (%/hectare) would be useful
- Photos of these habitats in WODC? Some in good condition (maybe some in bad condition?) to show comparison and what can be achieved with good conservation work.
- A map visualising priority habitats/high-quality habitats would focus conservation efforts
- A map of the rivers and water body catchments for the district to encourage river/riparian restoration works. And a map of which water bodies are in what condition
- An opportunity map for ecosystem services and habitats to identify where best to locate different habitat types for different biodiversity services would help concentrate conservation efforts.
- Grayling, probably the best indicator of water quality, have almost completely disappeared from the River Windrush and populations of coarse fish species (Roach, Barbel) have notably declined.
- Unimproved species rich grasslands feature strongly in the description and there are good actions to deliver these on council owned land. It would be good if the Council could be more proactive in helping promote wildflower grasslands more widely. A wildflower grasslands hearts, minds and action campaign taking the grasslands created in public open space as a starting point. In general terms there is a gap between the public sectors promotion of grasslands and woodlands and Plantlife have highlighted this. <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/our-work/the-grassland-gap/>. Including a grasslands campaign based on much of what you plan to do anyway offers the opportunity to put the Council ahead of much of the rest of the sector in this respect.
- This whole section Biodiversity in West Oxfordshire is excellent – a really good Introduction.

Key policy influences (Document Context)

- Urban environments have a disproportionately important role in providing benefits for physical health and mental well-being arising from an improved and biodiverse environment. What are the challenges of working within built environments? What are the District's ambitions for the existing green spaces in urban areas, new green areas being developed, and getting people outside and into these green areas
- Room for expansion in terms of the state of water bodies in WODC E.g. adhering to the EU Water Framework Directive (although UK is no longer an EU member state) to have all water bodies in 'good ecological condition' by 2027
- Can you mention the Oxfordshire Nature Finance Strategy here? <https://www.olnp.org.uk/financing-nature-based-solutions-in-oxfordshire>
- Whilst OCC are key to this as responsible authority, we consider the LNRS is being produced by a partnership of organisations, co-ordinated by OCC as responsible authority. Hence the suggested wording change.
- Document mentions CTA but not NRN. It would be good to explain how this BAP does/doesn't recognise/use Oxfordshire's NRN.
- CAG Oxfordshire is partnering with Natural England on a project researching how best to understand and use NRNs in parish-level planning and action, across Oxon/Bucks. Some resources on this are listed below. Engaging with this could significantly help with local engagement with the BAP. So is there a good way to jointly promote the two in combination? I'd be very happy to include appropriate promotion of the BAP CAG's NRN-related activities between now-March.
- Many parishes now designate blue-green corridors. It would be good to describe (here, or elsewhere in the document) how these can be valuable for planning and strategy (forming a more local complement to CTAs and the County's NRN).
- Parishes (and similar) have a key role to play in planning and action for nature's recovery in their areas. This role will be far more effective if they are properly equipped (with mapping and decision-support tools) and also personal support. It will be important to clearly mention and describe this,

and the help that's available. Clearly this is what CAG's Oxfordshire Nature service provides – but this is not about 'blowing our own trumpet'! Organisations like Wychwood Forest Trust, Wild Oxfordshire and BBOWT and OALC have much to contribute in this.

- It's probably also worth mentioning Charlbury Land and Nature Group, and mid Windrush Valley Land and Nature group alongside the others listed at the end of the page. They will be valuable exemplars whose approach and work can be replicated by other groups.
- Sophus zu Ermgassen and colleagues at Oxford University have been extensively researching BNG, and published an easy-to-use checklist to help Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) and developers ensure that Biodiversity Net Gain plans are correctly completed, feasible and fit the local ecological and local context of the development. Since it would be valuable for parish councillors and others to know about (and use) this, it would be helpful for this document to appropriately reference this; perhaps even summarise key 'check list' questions (perhaps later on document p17)

Our work to date and role as a council

- This is not a comment on the document as such, but just to say that we greatly welcome all this work that is happening that is described in the above section.

Aims and objectives

- Clearly this will come out through the Local Plan process, but as we know 10% won't lead to net gain (DEFRA themselves said that's the lowest level they believe might reasonably be considered to result in no net loss), and as we have an aim to enhance rather than just safeguard, surely, surely, we can go for 20% as a minimum? Possibly the single biggest (and cheapest/easiest) action WODC can take to enhance biodiversity across the district.
- This is not a comment on the document as such, but just to say we greatly welcome the work that is taking place and future work to improve the Council's land for wildlife, and people's enjoyment of wildlife.
- This is not a comment on the document as such, but just to say we greatly welcome the work that is taking place, as described in sections 2 and 3.
- The Lawton principles actually include *four* elements: more, bigger, better, joined up. It would be better to express in this way (rather than just 'bigger, better, more joined up') so that everyone recognises that *more* nature areas is itself also an important element. It would also be very helpful to include the illustrative diagram at this point – a picture is worth a thousand words here!

Biodiversity Action Plan

- Work with businesses to address material risks and dependencies on the landscape. This is best articulated in the Oxfordshire Nature Finance Strategy.
- Can we make this less generic and vague, instead incorporating some SMART goals here?
- I'd recommend setting up some kind of small working group (involving wodc and key external people) to come up with a strategy and specific action points on how best to leverage funding for wodc, by combining wodc financial+in-kind support with other support to multiply/leverage funding in West Oxon particularly.
- Also the big 'elephant in the room' here is that adequately delivering nature's recovery for West Oxfordshire will cost hundreds of £millions (cf OLN's recent assessment of £800million, which itself is far from exhaustive) – whereas the sources of funding listed in this BAP only total a small fraction of this. And of course if we don't adequately resource nature's recovery, we will be paying a much higher price in terms of absent ecosystem services in a degraded future West Oxon. Can we include some words to at least recognise this important resourcing deficit – and hopefully include some pointers to steps that might be taken to address this?

Biodiversity Roadmap

- It is good to see the Local Wildlife site (LWS) audit in the road map and the corresponding action & KPI. I think it would be better if the plan reflected encouraging conservation activity on LWS beyond understanding their condition. The Local Wildlife Sites Partnership both surveys sites and provides conservation advice and support. This could be recognised along with the Council's support of the

Partnership by including it under the local groups and partnerships section. Your support for the Partnership could also be mentioned in the “our work” to date section.

- Suggest your carbon offset fund timeline could be more ambitious. Cherwell are looking to require developers to pay into this for operation carbon of new developers through their local plan. You can probably just nick the ABI approach from OxCity.
- Suggest you aim to stop use of peat sooner - 2025 is the point at which it become illegal - surely the council aims to beat that!
- Very interested in your farmland nbs assessment.
- Lower Windrush Farmer Cluster - clusters need to be led by farmers. If you already know about interested farmers, I suggest you start trying to get them together, perhaps working with a partner org for facilitation? Cotswold Rivers Trust have a new farmer CEO...
- This is very helpful!
- Can we incorporate more on using WODC’s authority and [limited] resources to *catalyse and leverage* greater impact by others?
- Perhaps convening a few key people to brainstorm strategy and produce some achievable actions here would help.
- Could you include a date in the diagram (even if tentative) on BNG for small developments?

Protect and enhance biodiversity on council owned and managed land

- Could also mention looking at private finance - i.e., BNG
- Invasive species - work with owners of adjacent sites, or they will just come back!
- This is not the only place this is relevant to but we would greatly welcome mention of the 30 by 30 target and what the District could do towards that, whether on council owned land (hence us writing it in this section 1.) but also elsewhere, which is more relevant to most of the below sections. These links are just for background info – we are not asking for them to be included:
 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-commits-to-protect-30-of-uk-land-in-boost-for-biodiversity>
 - <https://www.bbwt.org.uk/news/wildlife-trusts-reveal-new-strategy>
 - <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/sites/default/files/2022-04/TheWildlifeTrustsStrategy2030.pdf>
- In this context, perhaps it would be worth considering assessing how land management techniques on council-owned land can deliver nature-based solutions to tackling climate change, or alternatively to consider it as part of 4. which refers to nature-based solutions.
- this and all the following ‘panels’ are very informative, but can we clarify how they relate to the previous body of text?

Safeguard and enhance biodiversity through policies and development

- Scope for coordination between LPAs? Sometimes there will be a need to place units generated by developments in neighbouring LPAs because the required habitats might not be available in the LPA where there development is being built. Could WODC be front-runners pushing for a standardised s106 agreement that covers Oxfordshire (and beyond!)?
- BNG will be most effective where there is communication and coordination between the planning, legal, and environment departments. Is there scope for regular BNG-related meetings?
- Need to work closely with other LPA's within Oxfordshire to ensure consistent approach, shared learnings and streamline common responsibilities
- Increasing capacity needs to be prioritised/emphasised. Evaluating metrics and habitat management/monitoring plans is extremely time-consuming. The lack of ecological staff and expertise within LPAs will become the bottleneck in WODC's BNG aspirations.
- In the event of habitats not reaching their promised condition/state after the 30-year agreement, will WODC have the legal provision to enforce the necessary remedial action? If not, scope for training/expansion?
- Should say monitor on-site BNG. Separate item for managing and acting on monitoring reports provided by offset providers
- % BNG in the Local Plan Needs to specify how a performance indicator- onsite? Offsite? Area? Habitat type?
- Throughout the document the rate for Biodiversity Net Gain is quoted as the legal minimum of 10%. The Cotswolds National Landscape Management Plan includes an aspiration that within the protected

landscape the rate should be 20%. This is stated within policy CE7.4 - Development proposals should provide a net gain in biodiversity of at least 20% particularly with regard to the species and habitats listed in Appendix 7. Appendix 8 further outlines why biodiversity is an important consideration within the Cotswolds National Landscape.

- Increased ecologist capacity really important
- Monitor BNG sites to ensure the targeted habitats and conditions are being achieved - This is particularly important for onsite.
- Take a strategic approach to development-funded nature recovery - I'm not clear what this means? Funded by new housing/infrastructure development? In which case, can we include 'explore production of a policy requiring developers to offset the first 30 years' operational carbon of their developments via contribution to WODC's carbon offset fund'?
- supporting famers/landowners to create BNG units eg via soft loans – much cheaper than purchase!
- We welcome this proposal. We consider it important to seek a minimum of a 20% net gain.
- Is this still part of 'safeguard and enhance biodiversity through policies and development'? If not, should this 'panel' be a different colour from the previous one, to make this clear?
- Under risks and dependencies, it would again be good to deal with the discrepancy between currently available and needed funding

Facilitate communities and partnerships in the district for landscape-scale recovery

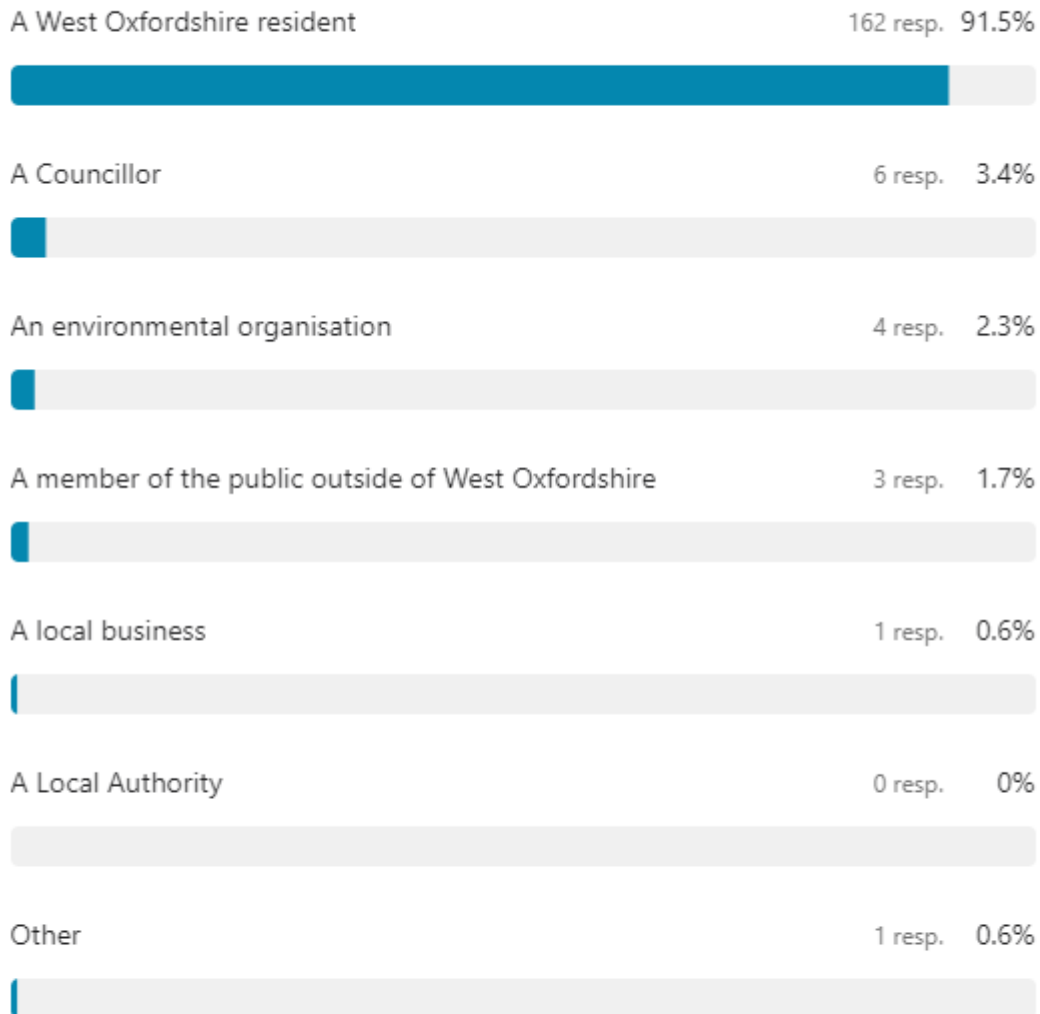
- Continue working with Thames Water to ensure that Thames Water waste water treatment works have the capacity and technology to cope with current and anticipated sewage and thus end the very damaging discharges to West Oxfordshire water courses.
- Good to see an aspiration for more Parish Council biodiversity projects. TOE could be on this list should you wish to utilise the Local Environment Fund.
- Funding Wild Oxfordshire a great idea!
- Windrsh FC - Needs to be sooner than planned- would suggest fund through Rural Enterprise Grant?
- Although bringing all LWS into a favourable condition is completely necessary, I think it would be a missed opportunity if they put all their BNG funds into existing sites rather than creating new sites. Where would the NET GAIN be?
- Supporting the monitoring and conservation of LWSs is one of the key things a local authority can do to support biodiversity & nature recovery. Indeed, only the local authority can emphasise their importance and give them protection through the local plan. You have mapped them and included policies to protect them within the Local Plan. It would be good to refer to and reaffirm this within this plan too. This is a significant element in ensuring compliance with the strengthened biodiversity duty. A clear statement of support for the Local Wildlife Sites Partnership would further strengthen this plan.
- Might this be the right section in which to express LPA support for ensuring availability of sufficient offsite BNG units?
- Oxfordshire LNRS - I suggest this whole point needs to be guided by the LNRS. Its right you need to identify local priorities, but these should be led and informed by LNRS. Many of the groups you want to work with work at a supra-district scale so tying in with county-wide strategy will be vital
- OLNPs has a policy group meeting on this on Weds 22nd, come along if you can/want
- Potentially fund Wild Oxfordshire [...] - Most other points say 'work with...'. This one says 'fund...'. Seems strange to me - I suggest keeping it consistent, and not 'potentially' committing to funding in a doc like this.
- If you include supporting availability of offsite BNG units in this section, then co-benefits include ensuring private funding for nature recovery can remain in the county, as well as helping to ensure there are no delays to the planning system
- Note there is already an Oxfordshire Nature Finance Strategy - <https://www.olnp.org.uk/financing-nature-based-solutions-in-oxfordshire>
- Work with Alison Smith's ecosystem service mapping to assess opportunities for enhancing ecosystem service provision and distribution
- Act on some of the next steps in the Leverhulme Centre for Nature Recovery's 'equitable distribution of accessible green space' report.
- Work with climate change team - , and consider how to link this to planning (note that CDC's local plan included a policy of requiring developers to offset the operational carbon of their development for the first 30 years of its operation)
- Cobenefits - enhanced health and wellbeing of local communities

- We welcome this proposal
- We welcome this proposal. In particular we welcome the ambition in terms of restoring natural ecosystems and improving habitat connectivity. One of our biggest asks of this work is to ask could West Oxfordshire DC consider how, working with partners and neighbouring authorities, it could encourage the creation of a landscape-scale nature reserve or reserves in the District. Both West Oxfordshire and its neighbouring areas could benefit so much from the creation of large nature reserves, potentially with, when appropriate in terms of location and wildlife, well managed visitor access and visitor facilities. This could even lead over time potentially to a project on the scale approaching those found in many other counties in England, like the Great Fen Project <https://www.greatfen.org.uk/> , Wicken Fen Vision <https://www.wicken.org.uk/> or Avalon Marshes <https://avalonmarshes.org/> . An ambitious Vision in the District for this could lead to a landscape-scale nature reserve or reserves that could:
 - Help to provide a home for the many species of wildlife that are not compatible with urban development, as a result of which on-site biodiversity net gain will not help them, because of their incompatibility with urban areas, like curlews and other waders, and many other types of wildlife.
 - Be of great value for helping people experience wildlife. In a county where there is so much development then it is especially important for people to experience wilder places and the wonder of nature at scale. There is currently a deficit locally of nature reserves with visitor centres and other such facilities.
 - Could be of great benefit to the rural economy and the tourism economy.
- We welcome seeing something here on road verges. One of the best ways of maximising the contribution that road verges can make for wildlife, would be to look into schemes that allowed the collection and removal of arisings from verge mowings. This is happening in some parts of the UK and there may already be work on this happening locally so apologies if this is underway in the District and we were unaware. Collection and removal of arisings can greatly increase plant diversity in verges by reducing nutrient build-up. There are proposals we understand in some cases for arisings then being taken to a biodigester to create biogas. We are not fully aware of who is responsible for which verges in the District so whether this is something the District could do directly, or indirectly through influencing others, we would greatly welcome it being considered either way.
- West Oxon now has two parish-cluster 'Land and Nature' groups – one well-established one around Charlbury and one newly forming around Burford. It would be helpful all round to recognise these in the BAP, and devise some strategic actions for leveraging coordination/collaboration between WODC and these groups (alongside all the other great groups in West Oxon). In particular it would help to reference the draft NR plan which Charlbury LNG are in the process of issuing, since it could help inspire similar ones by others.

Public consultation

1) **Please select who you are responding to the survey as:**

177 out of 177 people answered this question



Volunteer at a local charity

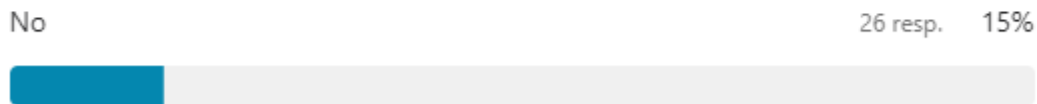
15 days ago

2) The overall vision for the Biodiversity Action Plan is the following:

“Radically enhance nature, its positive impact on our climate and the priority it’s given, helping to make the district a place where people and nature thrive”.

Do you agree with our vision?

173 out of 177 people answered this question

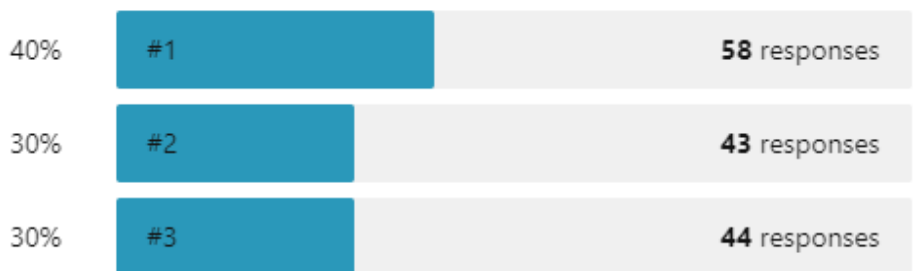


3) Which of these three key actions do you think that Council should prioritise for delivery?

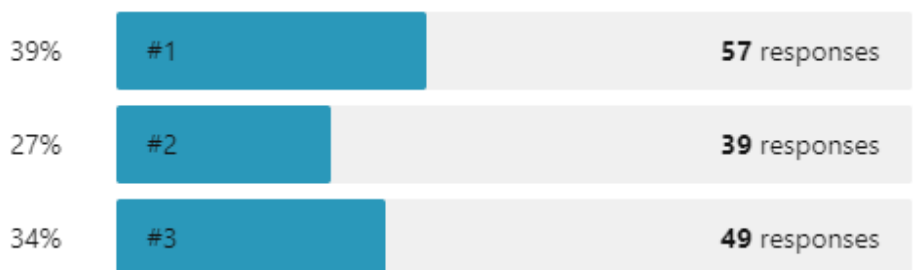
Please rank from most important (1) to least important (3).

145 out of 177 people answered this question

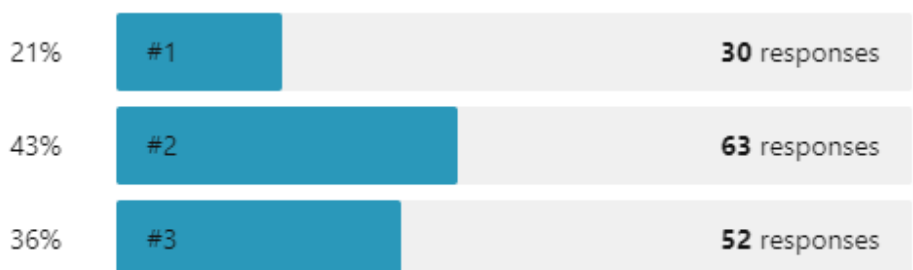
#1 Facilitate communities and partnerships for landscape-scale recovery. #1.9 average



#2 Safeguard and enhance biodiversity through policies and development. #1.94 average



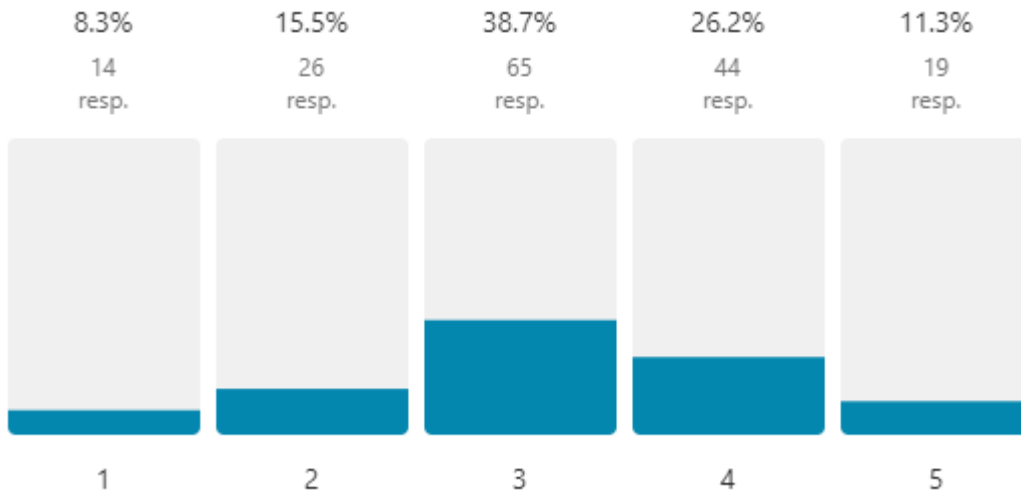
#3 Protect and enhance biodiversity on sites owned and managed by the Council. #2.15 average



4) How ambitious are our proposed priorities?

1 is not ambitious at all, 5 is unachievably ambitious.

168 out of 177 people answered this question



5) Are there any areas of action that we can deliver that are not included within the plan?

Offensive language has been removed from the results

- A longer time-frame. Six years is impossibly short and policies need to be in place for much longer
- Actively promote biodiversity through education in schools.
- All new housing should be covered by the plan.
- Assist decarbonising transport by off street parking charges at all WODC car parks
- be extremely sensitive about granting planning permission for building on agricultural land, land within conservation areas and encourage building on brown field sites.
- be more critical of planning proposals that have a negative effect on the landscape and its biodiversity. e.g. solar panels belong on buildings not in fields
- Better footpaths on country walk. If people are out in nature and able to appreciate it then people might care more
- Bring protection of biodiversity to the forefront when making planning decisions, especially in rural areas
- Can't think of any!
- Communication with communities
- Consider more advice & cooperation with local farmers on hedgerow management to reduce flailing off all the flowering shoots of the hedgerows that they are obliged to maintain along highways and byways.
- cut back the verges and grass in housing areas. It looks a * mess!
- Declare 30%+ BNG on all housing developments
- Deliver what your residents need. Cut back hedges, get rid of LTN areas making life difficult for residents and visitors. You are supposed to supply services. Waste, roads, etc.
- District Heating System
- Do not develop housing beyond kingschool to Hailey road
- Do your actual job. Not this green *
- Don't dare not mow around Witney again
- education on biodiversity, specifically working landowners to manage land to the benefit of nature, vehicles for mainstreaming biodiversity protection - BNG, Carbon Credits etc
- Encourage and support parish level nature recovery plans working with town & parish councils and associated groups (e.g. Charlbury TC Land & Nature Group) and also through Neighbourhood Plans
- Encourage Cottsway to join these actions
- Encourage local communities eg litter collection

- Encourage residents to record wildlife and plants seen in their neighbourhood
- Enhance Witney green spaces to facilitate greater use
- Ensure all developments include robust biodiversity targets that are enforceable
- Ensure native species of trees and shrubs planted at all sites and new developments
- Ensure that companies such as Thames Water are stopped from polluting areas from sewage outlet. eg in Clanfield
- Ensure that you work WITH business and the community to achieve your aims.
- Ensuring new developments are environmentally friendly and landscaped to benefit wildlife and their population
- Ensuring the development of brown field sites is promoted rather than greenfield sites that are rich in biodiversity.
- Firstly, the ranking of your priorities is a bit odd. ALL 3 of them need equal focus as the appalling state of the natural world requires a joined up approach across all areas. Developers need to do far more with habitat protection and creation on developments. We need far more swift bricks, House Martin nesting cups, hedgehog highways, fruiting trees, hedgerows, wildflower areas and also areas that are just 'scruffy' and let go a bit. The over eagerness to tidy and cut and strim is highly detrimental.
- Fix the potholes. More important than the nonsense of net zero, bio diversity and all the other waste of money that you come up with.
- Get solar panels on as many buildings as possible. Stop the use of weed killers and pesticides.
- Getting people to connect with nature
- Given we live in a rural area of England, more support should be given to landowners to help/assist in the protection and promotion of habitat and wildlife
- hedgerow tree planting with parishes and farmers
- Housing plan
- I don't see much in it for young people who are the inheritors of the poor state of nature we have created
- I hope it gets decent funding. So much depends on the on-the-ground implementation. Not sure always about BNG - some losses cannot be compensated for. Would be nice for schools and churches to be explicitly involved. Could be opportunities for creation of employment through apprenticeships in e.g. hedgelaying. Nice to see a KPI for metres of hedgerow planted, but regeneration and sympathetic management of existing hedgerows would have more immediate payoff. Need to prioritise cleanup of rivers, fundamentally reduce pollution by sewage first.
- I think you have too many focus areas to realistically deliver significant change in the period. You should max out on amplifying the impact on non-WODC land with the influence you have. Focusing on the 20% job with you own land is just a PR tool.
- I'm not sure if it's included but clearing out existing ditches and watercourses would be a good place to start to
- Improve traffic flow to improve air quality and actually implement the Shaws Green A40 Junction to take pressure off the town centre and surrounding area.
- Improved education and local information about biodiversity
- In matters of planning wodc is completely lacking
- include the health benefits to individuals of greater access to natural habitats (and don't exclude their pets)
- Investing in renewable, green energy eg solar panels on all new homes, solar arrays on council owned land
- It is necessary to have specific outcomes against which the Indicators of success can be evaluated (e.g. the increase in woodland cover) ; as it stands the strategy / action plan represents a series of worthwhile projects but there is no sense as to whether they are adequate in scale and content to address the issues faced by the WO District. There are also areas of the district that lie outside the project areas for which there is no action proposed. Even though these areas may be of lesser biodiversity they need action (indeed they may be a greater priority than the established project areas because they are of lesser biodiversity value in their existing condition. I was also looking for more understanding of what are the specific actions required to adapt or mitigate the effects of climate change in WO district. May be there are none but given that this strategy is a response to the climate

emergency I wondered whether there were specific actions required and not merely good practice which most of the proposals are.

- It's all very well having solid words that make you sound like you are taking biodiversity and the environment seriously but those are totally worthless if you don't also have practical tangible targets that are measurable. If you did nothing else in the next two years other than clean up the river Windrush and restore the river and its surrounding environment to 'full health' you would have achieved more than any other administration in the last 20 years. Instead you focus too much on trying to sound good and patting each other on the back for saying the right things when only practical ACTION will ever make any real difference.
- Keeping trees from being dangerous, some look like branches are ready to fall
- landscape enhancement around the west side of Clanfield
- legislate to have all new build to have solar panels, to stop solar farms on green field sites
- Management of excessive night-time street lighting that has a negative effect on wildlife.
- Managing footpaths / Rights of Way , maintenance of hedgerows balancing road safety . vision for traffic and pedestrians as well as the health of the hedges (many are dying and DEad Mans Beard and Ivy are smothering the hedges, removal of dead wood to encourage growth, cutting back of road verges ; dominant species such as brambles, nettles and cow parsley are taking over preventing other species from growing and in the countryside making some rural roads narrow and visibility dangerous. In the town the lack of verge cutting is leading to lots of sharp grass seed which has caused problems for dogs. I Witney the verges were not cut between March / April and November!a
- Mandatory natural areas in 33% of new developments.
- More direct action with landowners including farming. We need clean water if we are to protect biodiversity and no bee killing pesticides
- More local involvement
- More maintained paths that allow access during wet flooded areas
- More partnerships with local people .
- No
- No it is too ambitious and will be hard to fund
- No real reference to the significant development of housing and need to ensure infrastructure , eg Thames water can meet need. We must stop polluting the rivers. How can we allow development on Ducklington Moors for example see: <https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/23304421.oxfordshire-villagers-devastated-120-new-homes-built/>
- NOT allow building on green belt
- Not really
- Oppose Botley West Solar Farm otherwise your other plans will be ineffective
- Pest control
- Plan to have large connected areas of green to allow increased animal movement. Improve the health of rivers and legislate such that water use and sewage become high priority
- Plant hedgerow trees and restore ponds
- Please ensure new developments really do have large green spaces and not token tiny areas
- Prevent further development of land within West Oxfordshire by preemptively creating the government required 5 year plan.
- Protect communities from industries
- Protect urban hedges
- Really good, accessible, mapping. It would be so encouraging to see little pockets of green expand and connect.
- Reduce cars and population growth to safeguard nature
- Reduce the amount of housing being built on green field sites
- Reforest, protect against flooding, increase areas of nature reserves etc
- regeneration of the town centre as a shared space
- Reopening the High Street to cars.
- River & riverside maintenance
- River Evenlode needs protection ie solar panel farm

- River health. Links to public health policy. Protection of species such as swifts in danger as old houses reroofed. Hedgerows and verge. Plan to replace trees following ash die back. More prominent mention of working with farmers .
- School involvement
- Sharper focus on catastrophic damage caused by Thames Water, irresponsible housing projects etc.
- Some of this is what you and all of us should be doing as a matter of course. The rest is a pipe dream ... you are not going to (forgive the fatuous phrase) 'save the planet'
- Specific links to planning processes such as implementation of Grampian conditions
- Stick to the stuff we pay you for !
- Stop Botley West Solar Farm
- Stop building houses and park & rides when so much has now been built & destroyed the area for wildlife
- Stop building houses then paying to help nature recover
- Stop building on every available scrap of village land.
- Stop destroying the country side with more houses and instead of paying land owners for solar give home owners free solar
- Stop rogue developers building without infrastructure being in place and ensure they act according to net zero regulations
- STOP Thameswater sewage discharges
- stop using glyphosate; stricter enforcement of lighting rules
- stopping pollution of the rivers and streams
- Take more action to reduce sewage in the rivers
- The plans needs to include town/parish councils, OCC, local nature groups and NGOs such as Wildlife Trust and Wychwood Project,land owners such as Cornbury and Bleheim estates and ALL developers from day one, to ensure that the nature crisis is being addressed with the urgency required.
- The state of the areas rivers are acknowledged, if the CSO's are controlled then an action plan to restore the rivers needs to be in place and actioned (in cooperation with the listed authorities).
- The state of the river windrush
- The state of the water - making Thames Water clear up their mess.
- There doesn't seem to be any overarching method of communicating with the wide range of groups involved, but especially enthusiastic non-specialist volunteers on Parish Councils, about specific actions which have been completed or specific actions which affect their 'patch'
- To restrict human impact on the environment by taking less land to build on to protect habitats and open space
- Use the land that runs alongside the roads and tidy them up to allow biodiversity to organically develop. You don't need to reinvent the wheel just make the best of what already exists.
- We need a plan similar to the very successful plan in the Second World War, that is to grow food on every acre of ground we have, forget hedges and wild flowers we need food so we do not have to import it this is what we should be concentrating on not dreams of long lost past!!
- Yes - the opportunities for action within residential gardens
- Yes, and a good starting point is to remove all the nonsense about West Oxfordshire having any part to play in changing the global climate and instead focus on cleaning our waterways.
- Yes, forget all this nonsense and focus on what Witney really needs, eg economic growth
- yes, please see document which I'll upload or email
- You could start by listening to local residents and not design local plans by submitting to government pressure to build more & more housing thus increasing the already unsolved sewage problems and need for more roads carrying bigger cars adding to air pollution. Think smaller is better for everyone and build for local needs which means social housing not executive housing.
- You mean like the hedgerows along Buckland Road? Full of lovely big red berries that have now been cut down. Fieldfares in particular love these as do a lot of other wildlife.

6) Is there anything else you'd like to add to your response to the Biodiversity Action Plan?


Offensive language has been removed from the results

- I am very pleased to see the ambition in this plan and I am very keen to see Charlbury TC Land and Nature Group included in the list of partnerships at the bottom of page 8. Our nature recovery work in Charlbury, with neighbouring parishes and with other partners is closely aligned to your plan and we would be keen to work with you.
- A lack of public knowledge about who owns what land hinders progress in this area. For example, the dyke that runs around the Henry Box playing field had water voles and kingfishers in it 10 years ago. Yet WODC & the Environment Agency have quibbles throughout that time over who's actually responsible for it, not to mention the County Council (?) owned field. The aforementioned wildlife has now disappeared and I imagine neither you, the Environment Agency nor OCC will take any responsibility for decisions (or lack thereof) that have been taken to lead to that.
- Actually do something to help nature rather than just talk about it and stop allowing vast areas of housing developments that has already ruined this area forever. Too over populated now, it's tragic how this area has changed in such a short time.
- All hugely important and much needed. We are in a real emergency. How can the public monitor the progress? A facebook group or newsletter perhaps?
- Also remove invasive plant species
- Although we can help the environment thrive is a good thing, climate emergency is a fraud, take a look at west Antarctica the temperature has dropped by 2c over the last 20 years no sign of global warming there and the Sahara is shrinking all recorded facts that MSM don't report
- Another plan but resources and action required
- Be careful with the word salad and buzz words - climate, resilience - and make clear, actionable plans for what people can actually see.
- Be more thoughtful about the location of verges left unmown. Away from junctions and approaches to roundabouts for example. Speak with people who know about the countryside. Steer clear of green zelots
- BWSF developers have no evidence that covering 3400 acres of west OXFORDshire countryside will improve biodiversity. Their "mitigation" plans are laughable.
- Comeate waste of time and money. You appear to be owned by the goals set by the World Economic Forum in their document for global goals 2030. For WODC simply maintain what we have better. Plant more trees in the town centres and do not inconvenience those who pay their council tax.
- Communities should be encouraged to keep families small so that human population does not continue to overwhelm the lives of other living things. This is the crux of our all our problems on planet Earth.
- Controlling Residential Development better
- Council, residents and businesses to stop using non-natural pesticides and fertilisers eg ladybirds not glyphosate !!
- Create a database for citizen recordings
- Creation of farmland ponds
- Cut the * grass
- Development of a realistic transition towards more efficient public transport
- Don't forget business and community!
- Don't let everywhere get overgrown in the name of biodiversity, there needs to be a balance.
- Encourage local community to record species and plants seen in their area on a local database
- Encouragement for local people to be active
- Ensure biodiversity and conservation is taught in schools from preschool to college
- Ensure some areas are left untouched so wildlife can thrive
- Establish a "day of action " for community evolvment to promote local actions in relation to biodiversity management.
- Forget it !
- Full awareness for the public - only how? Get out there and talk clearly...
- Get Thames water to stop feeding sewerage into the rivers

- Get the river pollution sorted - it is dreadful & you are not stopping it
- Give support, advice & rats for villages keen to create NRNs
- Greater influence of the council on planning proposals to enhance the environment which I appreciate comes at a cost to the developer but to the benefit of the community
- Green party nonsense.
- Have joined up green areas to allow animals to migrate. Improve river cleanliness, stop sewage being dumped in rivers
- Heat to see the plan but it can be expanded to accommodate land across the county and not just council owned land.
- hedgerow tree planting and pond restoration
- Help local groups to purchase corridors to link up woodland and wildlife areas such as St.Johns Wood with Hailey Community Woodland and Foxborough Wood. However generous, farmers do not have the needs of the community as a priority and expecting them, without remuneration, to leave strips of land for the the benefit of locals is disingenuous.
- Higher focus on river water quality
- How measure change and how create meaningful joined up action. Accountability and levers to move behaviour e.g rivers, farming. Clearer definition of biodiversity and what this means and how impacted. Making clearer roadmaps for change e.g. how can hedgerows be replaced and what are the levers for this for communities - clarifying responsibilities across OCC (highways etc) local parish and WODC. Lots of communities want to do things but it's really hard working out how and who can open up opportunities. Swifts are in danger of being eradicated in this whole area as older rooves are removed and replaced with no nesting space. Can a solution be found that roof holes are retained (as swifts don't adapt to nest boxes easily)
- I don't think the plan is viable.
- I hope it can be achieved and not just talked about and nothing happens
- "I WILL BE TOTALLY REFUSING TO COMPLY. UNTIL YOU SCRAP THIS 20MPH * I WILL NEVER COMPLY WITH ANY COUNCIL INITITIVE EVER AGAIN.
-
- I REFUSE TO RECYCLE, CHUCKING EVERYTHING INTO MY GREY LANDFILL BIN. I ONLY USE FIRST GEAR IN ALL 20MPH * AREAS REVING THE HELL OUT OF IT INCREASING NOISE AND AIR POLLUTUON IF HELD UP AT LESS THAN 30. (I OVERTAKE DAILY ANYONE HOLDING ME UP)"
- If you don't control planning making plans is a waste of time
- In addition to the answers to previous question it would be good to have some measure of the scale of resources required and an evaluation of the adequacy of institutional arrangements (including how it is all going to be coordinated (elsewhere this has required special units to be set up).
- Increase litter picking and grow more trees
- It isn't a plan, just a list of possible activities. A plan requires actions to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound. There are no dates or deadlines for each action, many of them are completely unspecific and none of them have any measures to use to verify that the action has achieved what was intended.
- It needs to be clearly stated that any sites with a biodiversity designation should not be considered for or impacted by development
- It should have been protected before planning was approved for 100's new homes in the area. It's tragic.
- Let's hope something can be done. Unfortunately people see green fields and trees and think we have good biodiversity in West Oxfordshire
- Link to Neighbourhood Plans supporting protection of Green spaces and a large protective zone around blue green corridors
- listen to local residents of many years about how an area "behaves" - don't just rely on high level maps (for example flooding)
- Make explicit actions with surrounding district councils to improve biodiversity in areas such as rivers
- Make more funds available for BAP by reducing wasted monies on unnecessary projects. E.g 20 mph signage, High Street pavement reworking.

- Money invested is essential. Great to see dedicated members of staff but action having to rely on grant applications is not good enough.
- monitoring and only adopt funded or voluntary actions.
- More bins around. The amount of rubbish in fields, bushes, flower beds is horrible to see. In residential areas but also out on footpaths
- More detail around the proposed Riparian Owners management plan
- More ponds
- More urgency
- No
- No
- No
- No
- No solar panels in Botley West. Let Clarkson plant trees.
- No thank you!
- On a very local issue, on Shilton Park we still have hundreds of plastic tree guards, some which must be 20 years old on the estate. Surely, these need to come off ? Also during spring and summer some areas of grass could easily be left 4 weeks + between cuts, IE, one cut each month between May-Sept.
- Pest control
- Plant more trees and wildflowers wherever possible
- Please be practical and action orientated and set measurable goals and if you don't achieve them, all promptly resign
- Prevent Further Building in Green Fields
- Put pressure on Thames water to desist form pollution
- Really great to see you are doing this Needs to be much more protection for privately owned land. Landowners can do just about anything they want in terms of land management without any consequences in my experience
- Really like the aspect of including natural flood management
- Reopen Witney High Street to normal traffic to lessen the traffic congestion elsewhere and return speed limits from 20 to 30 to allow freer movement and less pollution.
- Residents are cutting down hedges for car parking which is a loss to habitat and biodiversity
- Scrap it and spend the money on something useful.
- Seek to do no harm before seeking to mitigate harm
- Seems comprehensive and achievable, look forward to milestone updates.
- Set stiff but achievable goals and you will receive cooperation. Set unachievable goals and you will get resistance.
- Should a BAP be a priority at a time when funds are low and many people are struggling to make ends meet?
- Stop approving every planning application in rural areas.
- Stop building houses instead. WO is full.
- Stop chopping trees down needlessly, too many disappearing lately
- Stop wasting money on green issues at the expense of providing the basic services that residents require.
- support and promote use of allotments (and increase the supply of land for allotments)
- The Council controls little land and has little money to achieve anything on the land of others. Need to be more realistic
- The council need to start listening to residents comments when it comes to housing development applications. Local people know the local wildlife under threat in their area, so it's vital BNG doesn't just become a tick box exercise between the WODC ecologist and developers ecologists.
- The KPIs seem to me to be too focused on activities rather than the outcomes we care about. I would suggest putting more emphasis on tracking the status of species. I care about the status of swifts, swallows, hedgehogs, amphibians, native woodland cover etc, not how many ecology training courses are delivered.
- The river Windrush should be a top priority

- The state of the rivers are key and need more attention. The Botley West Solar Farm will also have a significant environmental impact and is not a "green" solution to energy production, it needs to be stopped.
- The use of BNG as the measure of improvement is too narrow. BNG a poor measure of biodiversity even on a good day, it applies to a limited number of cases, and in practice is not doing the job it was intended for - see e.g. Rampling et al 2023. To ask for BNG of 10% is wholly inadequate given the seriousness of the biodiversity crisis. And while having flow charts and good intentions is useful, in the end the only question is how one achieves a joined-up approach to nature conservation and restoration. Some issues are mundane but critical for success - e.g. cutting verges - if the arisings are not removed this one has no hope of getting more biodiverse plant communities in the verges. This is a matter of machinery and timing and clearly Ubico is not up to it. It is also not effective to have NGOs or 'experts' parachuted in to advise councils or volunteer groups - they have neither the expertise nor the vision, nor the local knowledge, nor any relation to the enthusiasts in the community who want to make a difference. Similarly it is futile to have parish councils lead on nature recovery - they simply don't have the in-house expertise. It seems that NGOs and e.g. Parish Councils want to 'own' a protect rather than be partners with other organisations or landowners and farmers, all of whom are essential partners for any landscape-scale project. Maybe this reflect both economics and vanity. Often these players - farmers, landowners, etc. are either not at the table or at the bottom of the food chain. One might also note that in the present rush to build solar power stations, the economic gradient is in the wrong direction for nature recovery - one can make far more money renting a field to a solar developer than one can get from DEFRA. BNG is no help here either.
- This along with Climate Change needs to be factored in right across the council's actions . We also need far more collaboration with other local councils at all levels.
- This work needs real commitment by key stakeholders to deliver it - I'm concerned that finances and politics will stop it from being fully delivered or supported
- To preserve biodiversity in West Oxfordshire, you have to resist any more new housing. The so-called safeguards around new housing and biodiversity are having no effect at all, as anyone can see from looking at the new housing estates. All concrete and suburbia, and cars. More carbon, more untreated sewage. Less space for wild creatures and plants. If biodiversity means anything in a National Landscape it means preserving that landscape without more built intrusion.
- We are disappointed that the Action Plan only goes as far as saying "Implement Oxfordshire's BNG Guiding principles into the Local Plan, and explore the potential implementation of a higher BNG requirement than the mandatory 10% national benchmark". We call for a stated a action and commitment to Support the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnerships call for a clear requirement on all forms of development to deliver a 20% net gain in biodiversity.
- Woodlands should be managed properly, and possibly dew ponds should be constructed
- yes, please see document which I'll upload or email
- You have to stop development of the flood plain and in particular water meadows such as the Moors in Ducklington which have an enormous impact on biodiversity

 WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and Date of Committee	EXECUTIVE – 14 FEBRUARY 2024
Subject	CLIMATE CHANGE OFFICER
Wards Affected	ALL
Accountable Member	Councillor Andrew Prosser – Executive Member for Climate Change. Email: andrew.prosser@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable Officer	Charlie Jackson – Assistant Director, Planning and Sustainability. Email: charlie.jackson@publicagroup.uk
Report Author	Hannah Kenyon – Climate Change Manager. Email: hannah.kenyon@publicagroup.uk
Purpose	To set out the business case to make the Climate Change Officer post permanent.
Annexes	Nil
Recommendation	That the Executive Resolves to: I. Agree to make the Climate Change Officer post permanent at a total cost of £50,155 per annum.
Corporate Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting Residents First • A Good Quality of Life for All • A Better Environment for People and Wildlife • Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency • Working Together for West Oxfordshire
Key Decision	YES
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Councillor Andrew Prosser

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1** The Climate Change Officer has contributed significantly to the delivery of carbon reduction projects in the West Oxfordshire District Council's Carbon Action Plan and the Climate Change Strategy for West Oxfordshire 2021-25 to date.
- 1.2** The post should be made permanent to retain sufficient resource to continue to deliver projects in the Carbon Action Plan and Climate Change Strategy to meet the Council's 2030 carbon neutrality target and the 2050 district net zero target.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1** West Oxfordshire District Council (the Council) declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2019 and committed to become a carbon neutral council by 2030. This means reducing the council's emissions to as close to zero as possible then offsetting the remainder through verified schemes. The decision was taken at a Full Council meeting on 26 June 2019.
- 2.2** Nature and climate action is one of the Council's five priorities and is a key part of the corporate strategy.
- 2.3** The Carbon Action Plan was approved by the Council on 28 October 2020 and sets out actions to become carbon neutral. An updated plan has been drafted and is being consulted on. It includes actions up to 2030.
- 2.4** The Climate Change Strategy for West Oxfordshire 2021-25 was approved by Full Council on 24 February 2021 and includes actions to meet the 2050 district net zero target.
- 2.5** The Council's greenhouse gas emissions are reported on annually and show progress made towards the Council's carbon neutral target by 2030.
- 2.6** A considerable number of projects in the Carbon Action Plan and Climate Change Strategy are underway and more are in the pipeline.
- 2.7** A Climate Change Officer post was filled on 21 July 2021, under a temporary 24-month contract. In May 2023, the contract was extended by 12 months to 19 July 2024.
- 2.8** The other climate officers in the team are the Climate Change Manager, who has a permanent, full-time contract, and a Climate Support Officer, who is also permanent and works part-time (1.5 days a week) for West Oxfordshire District Council. The Climate Support Officer is a shared resource with Cotswold District Council.

3. MAIN POINTS

- 3.1** The Climate Change Officer has been critical to delivering the Carbon Action Plan and Climate Change Strategy.
- 3.2** The Climate Change Officer has secured external funding far in excess of their cost of employment. There is an increasing number of funding opportunities, and the Climate Change Officer will continue to play an important part in securing these funds.
- 3.3** Main achievements to date are:

- Secured £1.3m Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) 3a funding to decarbonise Carterton Leisure Centre in 2021.
- Secured £1.6m Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) 3b funding to decarbonise Carterton Leisure Centre and submitted a strong application for £1.6m PSDS 3c funding for the decarbonisation of Windrush Leisure Centre.
- Secured £20k of the Low Carbon Skills Fund (LCSF) to commission energy audits for three council owned buildings.
- Submitted a strong Swimming Pool Support Fund (SPSF) application to Sport England for £301,798 to improve the financial viability of the district's leisure centres.
- Redrafted the Carbon Action Plan, including pathways to net zero.
- Lead officer on the Climate Impact Assessment Tool (CIAT). Presented at the APSE Energy conference and to over 100 councils at a follow-up webinar. Shared the tool with more than 40 councils who are exploring its use within their own processes. Winner of bronze award for innovation at the iESE Public Sector Awards.
- Coordinated a review of tenanted buildings across the three councils as part of the Minimum Energy Efficiency Standard (MEES) project.
- Supports the Solar PV project.
- Contributed to the Eynsham Community Action Plan for Zero Carbon Energy (CAPZero), which is the first local energy action plan in the UK developed at a community level and supports the delivery of this plan.
- Continues to improve carbon reporting processes.
- Supported the launch of Greenlight and responsible for project review and content updates.
- Produces the quarterly climate bulletin.

3.4 Making the post permanent will secure resource to continue to deliver the Climate Action Plan and Climate Change Strategy to meet our carbon neutrality and net zero targets.

3.5 The new Carbon Action Plan contains a series of large workstreams that require the Climate Change Officer to drive forward and facilitate. These include:

- Avoid future emissions
- Whole building retrofit of Council sites
- Whole building retrofit of leisure sites
- Whole building retrofit of leased assets
- Minimise water demand at Council sites
- Minimise consumption and waste in Council buildings
- Minimise emissions from grey fleet (business travel)
- Minimise emissions from Council fleet
- Minimise emissions from procurement
- Offset residual emissions.

3.6 The Climate Change Officer's contract expires in July 2024 and due to the increasing demand in this sector the Council is at risk of losing the colleague currently in post to permanent roles offered externally.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 The current fixed term contract for the Climate Officer post could be extended. This is unlikely to retain the existing climate officer or attract talent should this officer need to be replaced. This is because the requirement by other Local Authorities and businesses for expertise within the Climate sector is growing, and candidates are more likely to seek permanent employment.
- 4.2 Not employing a Climate Change Officer beyond the current contract would provide insufficient resource to deliver projects in the Carbon Action Plan and Climate Change Strategy. We would be unable to fulfil the requirements listed in 3.4 and the Council would be at risk of missing set targets or demonstrate that it continues to work towards its priorities around carbon reduction and the declared Climate Emergency.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 The Council is committed to responding to the climate and ecological emergencies by taking climate and nature action.
- 5.2 The new Carbon Action Plan and Climate Change Strategy will include actions up to 2030 and 2050, respectively. A permanent Climate Change Officer is required to deliver the Carbon Action Plan and Climate Change Strategy.
- 5.3 Making the post permanent will help to retain the current Climate Change Officer.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The salary of the Climate Change Officer is £36,450.00 per annum. The total cost of employing the officer is £50,155 per annum. This figure includes the Climate Change Officer's salary (£36,450.00), employer NI contribution (£3,523.32) and employer pension contribution (£1,822.50).

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 None.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT


- 9.1 None.

10. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 A permanent post would secure the delivery of carbon reduction projects and the Council's response to the climate and ecological emergencies.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.
(END)

 <p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>	<p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>
<p>Name and Date of Committee</p>	<p>EXECUTIVE – 14 FEBRUARY 2024</p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p>IMPROVING YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND DEVELOPMENT</p>
<p>Wards Affected</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>Accountable Member</p>	<p>Councillor Joy Aitman – Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities. Email: joy.aitman@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Accountable Officer</p>	<p>Andy Barge – Assistant Director, Communities. Email: andy.barge@publicagroup.uk</p>
<p>Report Author</p>	<p>Heather McCulloch – Community Wellbeing Manager. Email: heather.mcculloch@publicagroup.uk</p>
<p>Purpose</p>	<p>To set out the Council’s approach to supporting young people and building on the results and findings of the recent Youth Needs Assessment.</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p>Nil.</p>
<p>Recommendations</p>	<p>That the Executive Resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree to the recruitment of a dedicated Youth Development Officer on a full time, 2-year fixed term contract; 2. To note that £60,000 external funding from the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) will be used to support the post; 3. Approve up to £28,000 from the Council Priority fund to meet the balance needed for the post; 4. Approve the use of the £20,000 COMF budget allocated to youth activities to enable test and learn opportunities as developed by the postholder, which tackle the barriers faced by young people, to access activities, services and opportunities.
<p>Corporate Priorities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting Residents First • A Good Quality of Life for All

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Together for West Oxfordshire
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	<p>Youth Needs Assessment comprises responses from 3900 young people living locally.</p> <p>Report to the Executive of 11th October 2023 summarised the findings of the assessment, set out how the contents have been disseminated to the wider system and suggested some actions for the Council to consider.</p>

1. CONTEXT

- 1.1 Young people were disproportionately affected by Covid-19, learning was interrupted, opportunities to develop skills were lost and young people had difficulties accessing professional services to support their physical and emotional wellbeing.
- 1.2 Across Oxfordshire we have seen a loss of youth services and providers due to their inability to seek sustainable long-term funding.
- 1.3 The YMCA reported that government funding for youth services saw a significant decrease, with £1.4b in 2010/11 reducing to £430m in 2018/19.
- 1.4 Local authorities have a statutory duty to secure, so far as reasonably practicable, leisure-time activities and facilities for young people aged 13 to 19 and those with learning difficulties or disabilities aged 20 to 24. In two-tier authorities such as Oxfordshire this statutory duty sits with the county council.
- 1.5 Rationale for the duty states that –
 - ‘Over 85% of a young person’s waking hours are spent outside of school and formal education. Recreational and educational leisure-time activities provided during those hours can have a significant effect on young people’s development and well-being’.
- 1.6 Section 507B of the duty ‘requires local authorities to, so far as reasonably practicable, secure access for all qualifying young people to a sufficient quantity of ‘youth services, namely:
 - *a sufficient quantity of educational leisure-time activities which are for the improvement of their well-being and sufficient facilities for such activities and*
 - *a sufficient quantity of recreational leisure-time activities which are for the improvement of their well-being, and sufficient facilities for such activities’*

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council carried out the first Youth Needs Assessment for West Oxfordshire in 2022, surveying young people between January and March of that year. The 3908 paper responses and feedback from focus groups has informed our approach set out in this document.
- 2.2 At the Executive meeting of 11th October 2023 the findings from the Youth Needs Assessment were considered and as a result Executive resolved to ask officers to engage with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) to work up a proposal to create a dedicated youth specialist role for the Council to lead on Young People and carry forward the recommendations of the Youth Needs Assessment. It was agreed that a proposal should come back to the Executive for approval if there are direct financial implications for the Council.

3. MAIN POINTS

- 3.1 Engagement with OCC has been ongoing and will continue. Officers and Councillors have energetically sought financial support from OCC to match funding secured by the Council towards a dedicated youth specialist role. OCC is not able to provide such direct financial support, but it should be acknowledged that over the last two years a West team has been reintroduced.

- 3.2** OCC has agreed that the Council can utilise £60,000 from the remaining Contain Outbreak Management funding (COMF) towards a youth role and a further £20,000 towards projects for young people.
- 3.3** Currently OCC's youth work team in West Oxfordshire comprises one senior youth worker and one junior youth worker. Their workload is completely dominated by work with young people on a 1:1 basis who have been referred by schools. They are extremely busy and it is not felt that this staffing level is adequate in order to meet the current demand from schools. In response the staffing structure of the youth service is being reviewed and likely to increase in capacity to provide a shared youth worker and shared Apprentice youth worker covering north Oxfordshire (Cherwell and West Oxfordshire). It is not clear how long it will take to recruit additional staff and how quickly they will be effective on the ground. The focus of the 1:1 work is on young people who are not currently accessing others services in the hope that by offering some help at this early stage their intervention can make a big difference and achieve a positive outcome. This work takes place on school sites mainly during the day.
- 3.4** Young people are mainly referred in to the service by schools. Currently the team is working in Henry Box and Bartholomew schools and will start to work with Carterton and Burford schools in early 2024. They have connected with the Remix Youth worker in Chipping Norton and can provide support for more complex cases as they arise.
- 3.5** In 2022 the team did some ad hoc detached work as a trial in a range of areas with mixed results. In 2023 the team provided some detached youth work in Witney in the summer holidays after another local youth service ceased operating. They started a group activity linked to a school in Witney in January and utilise the Witney Hub building next to the Windrush Leisure centre. Part of the role of the team is to respond to need identified in neighbourhoods and recently staff from across the county provided youth interventions in the Blackbird Leys area following a stabbing involving a young person.
- 3.6** The universal, open access youth offer in West Oxfordshire is extremely limited and of varying quality. There is no independent dedicated medium scale youth organisation based in or operating across the district. There are a number of small scale, community organised youth clubs in villages and towns in West Oxfordshire. These groups operate largely independently of each other and only a small number are affiliated to and engaged with Oxfordshire Youth. Churches and faith groups also play a part in providing services to young people in West Oxfordshire.
- 3.7** In our main settlements of Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton, town councils have invested in youth provision over recent years but it is more challenging now to identify delivery organisations.
- 3.8** Young people told us through the Youth Needs Assessment that they want to be active and social. They said that activities they want to participate in are not always available locally and public transport can be difficult to access in rural areas. They said that activities can be really expensive to access, with the cost of transport, the activity, equipment and clothing, drinks and snacks. Living rurally can also mean that young people are isolated from friends at the end of the school day.

3.9 The barriers of cost, rurality, isolation and availability of activity affect many young people and will require proactive action on numerous fronts. OCC's service will not be able to provide a solution for all young people.

Type of service	Targeted specialist services and interventions	1:1 youth activities and referred group work, ad hoc detached	Open access youth activities
Delivered by	Commissioned statutory services	OCC	OCC (not active) Voluntary sector, social enterprise and communities
	Operating – high demand	Operating – high demand	Limited operation - at risk

3.10 Furthermore it was identified in the report to Executive of the 11th October that a shift in practice internally by the Council could make a valuable contribution to improving the experience of young people in West Oxfordshire. This could include being ambitious about involving young people in consultation, decision-making processes and policy development at the Council – such as the Local Plan, Climate Strategies and Council Plan; raising concerns at every level over the inadequacy of mental health services in West Oxfordshire for children, young people and parents; and, creating a clear communications plan for engagement with young people which identifies how, where, when and what topics the Council will engage young people in.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 To achieve the shift and approach described at 3.8 and 3.10 it is recommended that Executive approves:

4.1.1 To recruit a dedicated Youth Development officer on a full time basis for 2 years. This role would be sufficiently senior to be able to influence and negotiate with external partners, tackle barriers and recognise and implement appropriate solutions. It will add additional resource to the sector at a time when resources are very limited and stretched. The role would:

- work to tackle the barriers faced by young people as expressed in the Youth Needs Assessment including cost of activity, access to services, isolation and range of provision;
- work externally to grow and develop the offer from local providers, tackle the rural deficit and test new activities to broaden the offer and its distribution;
- work internally in the Council to support and guide officers and members to enable greater youth engagement;

- engage with young people directly;
- link closely with OCC.

4.1.2 To approve the use of the £20,000 COMF budget allocated to youth activities to enable test and learn opportunities as developed by the postholder, which tackle the barriers faced by young people, to access activities, services and opportunities.

4.1.3 To utilise funding from the Council Priority fund to meet the shortfall when the COMF budget for a youth post (£60,000) has been applied. This is estimated at £28,000 over two years.

4.1.4 To review the effectiveness of the role after 12 months.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

5.1 The Council could decide not to recruit to a dedicated post – instead relying on OCC to deliver Youth services in isolation. This would not tackle the barriers set out by young people in the Youth Needs Assessment. Furthermore, it would not see the internal change in approach as there is no alternative specialist officer available.

5.2 The Council could decide to recruit to a part-time dedicated post and keep the level of spend within the £60,000 COMF budget allocation. This option would significantly reduce the impact and achievements possible from a full time resource.

5.3 The Council could decide not to spend the COMF funding in this way. If the COMF money is not allocated or spent by March 2024 OCC has the right to reclaim the money from the Council.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The salary costs for the new role over a 2 year period would be £88,000. There is £60,000 available from COMF leaving a shortfall of £28,000. This sum is being requested from the Council Priority fund.

6.2 A budget of £20,000 for seed funding new activities developed as a result of work by the postholder, will be drawn from external funding set aside within the revised COMF proposal.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 As noted above, the statutory duty to provide youth services falls upon the County Council, not WODC. Nevertheless, if the district council assumes responsibility for the delivery of a statutory service, if it in the future decides to cease that service, it will need to be alive to a possible legal challenge based on the failure to fulfil a legitimate expectation, which is a ground for judicial review.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1 By not taking this action and making this investment the Council will not be tackling the barriers faced by young people and this could have a negative impact on their development and well-being. Additionally failing to take action to address the issues raised by young people may result in the Council being seen in a negative light by young people.

8.2 The Council does not have a statutory duty to carry out this activity and is not an expert in youth work. There is a risk that poor communication and engagement throughout with statutory services might lead to duplication, poorly designed and limited opportunities and ultimately poor outcomes for young people.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT

9.1 The recommendations in this report seek to secure a Youth Development role with funding to deliver opportunities to better meet the needs of young people in West Oxfordshire. This work will be conducted in a manner which is inclusive, and which works to provide open and accessible opportunities to any young person.

10. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The recommendations in this report seek to tackle the barriers faced by young people to access opportunities. These barriers include the cost of travel across our rural district and the location and availability of opportunities. We would encourage public transport use where available including access to community transport providers and explore solutions to address the cost barriers. Furthermore we would look to develop a greater range of opportunities which are available at more locations resulting in shorter journeys.


10.2 Through the Youth Needs Assessment young people identify that they are concerned about Climate Change and motivated to take action in this area. Tapping into this resource could be impactful and should be explored as part of this work and more generally by the Council.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 None

(END)

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 WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and Date of Committee	EXECUTIVE – 14 FEBRUARY 2024
Subject	WASTE FLEET PURCHASE STRATEGY
Wards Affected	ALL
Accountable Member	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska – Executive Member for Environment. Email: Lidia.Arciszewska@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable Officer	Bill Oddy – Assistant Director, Commercial Development. Email: bill.oddy@publicagroup.uk
Report Author	Simon Anthony – Business Manager, Environmental Services. Email: simon.anthony@publicagroup.uk
Purpose	To update the Executive on progress on the review of the West Oxfordshire waste fleet, and to seek approval to purchase 4 standard fuel general waste refuse collection vehicles, and when necessary, hire 2 standard fuel general waste refuse collection vehicles, whilst research is undertaken into options to use more environmentally sustainable vehicles such as electric vehicles.
Annexes	Nil
Recommendations	That Executive resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree to purchase 4 x 28 tonne standard fuel general waste refuse collection vehicles (RCV's) for use on frontline collections; and 2. Agree to hire 2 x 28 tonne standard fuel general waste refuse collection vehicles when needed whilst research is undertaken during the next financial year into options to use more environmentally sustainable vehicles such as electric vehicles.
Corporate Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting Residents First • A Better Environment for People and Wildlife • Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency
Key Decision	YES – Budget expenditure of more than £150,000.

Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	None

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1** This report relates to the procurement of waste vehicles for use by Ubico to deliver the waste collection services across the council area. Waste vehicles have a finite life and need replacing approximately every seven years, some vehicles last longer than the seven years depending on their use and care throughout the seven years. To continue to run an efficient waste service a number of vehicles currently in use require replacing.
- 1.2** For the initial 3-5 years of a waste vehicles life the budget cost of repairs and maintenance is comparatively low. As vehicles age, they require additional repairs and planned preventative maintenance which increases the revenue costs associated with running each vehicle. Older vehicles breakdown more as a result of mechanical failure, this not only impacts on budgets but also frontline service delivery performance with containers missed and rounds not complete.
- 1.3** A modern waste vehicle replacement programme must account for three competing factors; operations, environment, and financial. Vehicles must be operationally robust to allow them to perform a demanding waste service to a high level with preferably minimal repair, breakdown and refuelling requirements. Carbon emissions from vehicles should be reduced where possible, this allows the council to achieve its stated Net Zero goal by 2030. Vehicles should also be affordable, not only to purchase but also to run. The UK waste fleet industry is very much in a 'transition phase' moving away from fossil fuel to renewable energy. Hopefully green fuelled, affordable and reliable Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) will become available on the market in a few years. This report considers options relating to purchase of Refuse Collection Vehicles (RCV's) to use on the councils' frontline waste service, principally for the collection of general waste. The report does not consider fuel type options for these vehicles, although the report sets out a programme of research that will generate an alternative fuel strategy for waste vehicles procured in the future.
- 1.4** All currently used frontline waste collection vehicles are scheduled to reach end of life in 24/25. Having a single point in time for procurement of waste vehicles is sub-optimal in terms of budgeting and operations, the preferred model is a phased procurement profile which allows capital to be spent over a number of years. A phased vehicle replacement profile supports the operational delivery of the service as not all vehicles will require a high level of maintenance at the same time.
- 1.5** This report considers procurement of general waste fleet vehicles. Decisions on purchase of recycling, garden or food waste collection vehicles will be determined following the review of the service provision and alternative fuel options. Existing vehicles will be retained, or if required, short term hire vehicles will be sourced to maintain service stability.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1** The waste service has 35 frontline collection vehicles with all 35 approaching the end of their life in 2024/25. Without replacements, the vehicles, and therefore the service, will become unstable and could result in service disruption and additional costs relating to repairs and maintenance. Waste is the only council provided service that most residents use each week,

having an unreliable vehicle fleet will lead to reputational damage and could lead to significant impact on residents.

- 2.2** A fleet strategy meeting was held on the 28th November with Environment, Climate, Finance, and Waste Officers together with Ubico Fleet Manager and Operational Managers. A further briefing session with Finance, Climate change and Environment Portfolio Holders took place on 18th December 2023. The purpose of these meetings was to determine the next steps for the Council's waste fleet strategy. The three main outcomes of the meetings are as follows;
- Procurement of 4 standard fuel general waste RCV's
 - Hire 2 standard fuel general waste RCV's
 - Undertaking a review into options to use more environmentally sustainable HGV vehicles including electric vehicles

3. PROCUREMENT OF 4 GENERAL WASTE RCV'S

- 3.1** The waste service has 7 general waste collection routes each day, to allow for vehicle downtime including MOT's, breakdowns, and regular maintenance 8 RCV's are needed with one acting as a spare, this is standard industry practice. All general waste RCV's reach end of life in 24/25 and need replacing although two RCV's are of a good standard and will be retained. This section considers the purchase of 4 of the 6 new general waste RCV's required.
- 3.2** Given that vehicles are near the end of life, and there is the need to purchase a number of these, the preferred approach for these vehicles is full procurement (purchase).
- 3.3** There is an increasing body of evidence regarding the operational performance of alternative fuel RCV's, particularly electric versions. One major component the council will need to be aware of is the range these vehicles can travel in a standard working day. It is important to understand that routes are not only from the depot to collections and then return to starting depot. Often, vehicles must travel to a separate tipping point, for example general waste is tipped separately from the starting depot. Any non-standard fuel vehicles will need to be able to complete a full day's work with enough fuel capacity to deal with any unforeseen circumstances like road closures and diversions as well as operate the vehicle hydraulics.
- 3.4** General waste rounds are the most important as all residents use general waste collections whereas other collection services, like recycling, food or garden do not have 100% participation from residents.
- 3.5** Despite procuring the vehicles, this option does allow a degree of flexibility as these vehicles are non-specialist and should hold their value and be saleable should the council wish to sell all standard fuelled vehicles in the coming years. Alternatively, there could be the opportunity to retrofit these vehicles with batteries or similar should the technology and financial business case allow for this option in the future.
- 3.6** Owning these vehicles ensures they are new vehicles and will be reliant from day one. The Council has set aside £2m in 23/24 (as part of its Capital Programme) to procure waste vehicles.
- 3.7** This report recommends purchase of 4 of the 6 required general waste RCV's with an estimated cost of £250,000 per vehicle. The intention is to 'pre-pay' 50% on order during the

financial year 2023/24 funded through current Capital Programme with the balance paid on delivery from the 24/25 Capital Programme, this will smooth out the financial profile.

4. OPTIONS FOR THE REPLACEMENT OF FURTHER GENERAL WASTE RCV'S

4.1 The service requires a further 2 vehicles which can either be procured as the other vehicles referenced above or temporarily hired if necessary. The various pros and cons of each option are set out in Table 1 below.

4.2 Table 1

Option	Buy	Hire
Cost of two vehicles	£97,270 per annum With fuel, repairs and maintenance on top.	£116,656 per annum With fuel and some repairs on top. Most repair and maintenance costs are included.
Financial	Funded through the internal Capital Programme i.e. internal borrowing.	The full cost of vehicle hire is charged to the Council via the Ubico contract sum, impacting the revenue budget.
Operational	New vehicle gives service stability. Increased lead time vs hire.	Hire vehicle will give service stability although not guaranteed it is new. Reduced lead time to deploy on service
Repairs	Full control of repairs.	Lose vehicle to 3 rd party repair.
Environmental	Not as easy vs hire option to transfer to alternative fuel option. Can retrofit with battery or sell for electric alternative	Easy transition to alternative fuel option.

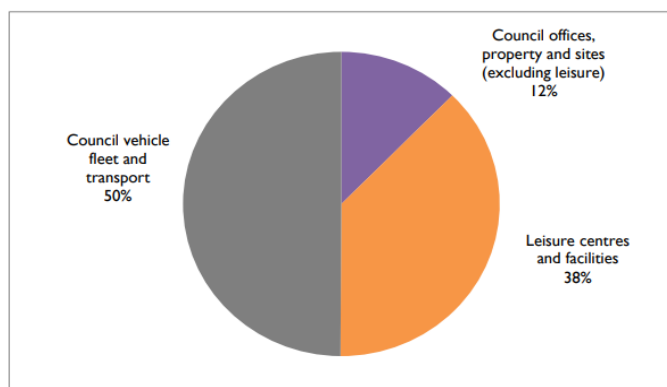
5. This report recommends hire of the 2 remaining general waste RCV's to provide flexibility whilst research is undertaken into options to use more environmentally sustainable vehicles including electric vehicles.

6. REVIEW OF ALTERNATIVE FUEL VEHICLES

6.1 The Council made a commitment to become carbon neutral by 2030 and has declared a climate emergency with carbon the key metric used to track success of this goal. To understand the importance of fuel type for waste vehicles in achieving the carbon neutral objective Graph 1 gives the breakdown of 'Council vehicle fleet and transport' against all other emission types. It is important to note that the waste fleet comprise approximately 90% of the category 'Council vehicle fleet and transport'. Therefore approximately 45% of all Council

emissions are from waste vehicles and as such represent the single largest contributor Council emissions.

Graph 1 Total emissions for 21/22 by location.



6.2 The Council has begun its discovery journey to determine suitability of alternative fuels for its waste vehicle fleet with the November 2023 waste fleet officers workshop the first step on this journey. Officers have established a project team, with support from the Council's project department, to fully explore alternative fuel options, their limitations and suitability for use on West Oxfordshire's waste service. This project will involve the Cabinet Members for Environment, Finance, and Climate Change and will evaluate options against operational and financial limitations to ensure the waste service remains stable. As the current fleet is at the end of its life it is anticipated this initial work will be completed by Q1 (June 2024) and will be the first of a number of reports on vehicle fleet as the picture and options for alternative fuel are likely to evolve significantly over the next 2 years.

7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 7.1 The Council could choose to purchase Euro 6 versions of all waste fleet vehicles. This option would give service stability and fit with the capital programme but it would limit the council's ability to achieve its carbon neutral commitment as it would delay the introduction of alternative fuel options. These vehicles could be swapped out 'mid-life' with alternative fuel equivalents, although doing this with all vehicles has a greater risk as the Council would be attempting to sell a lot of Euro 6 vehicles back into the market when alternative fuel alternatives are more attractive.
- 7.2 The Council could delay purchase of all vehicles until the alternative fuel project is concluded, although this would risk day to day service stability because of the age and reliability of the vehicles. There is no guarantee the alternative fuel project will conclude with a clear direction and viable option within the next year due to the continuing evolution of alternative fuel technology of HGV waste vehicles.

8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 Following meetings and workshops with a full range of Officer and Member stakeholders this report recommends a suite of procurement options that tread the line between service stability and allowing for future flexibility around introducing alternative fuel options.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 These are covered in the main body of the report. There will be reduced repair and maintenance costs following the procurement of new vehicles and the replacement with existing old vehicles.
- 9.2. Some value is likely to be achieved following the sale of existing vehicles to be replaced. Any residual value will be returned to the council.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. Procurement of the vehicles will be undertaken by Ubico on the Council's behalf following a standard procurement regulation complaint process. Ubico will ensure the procurement of new vehicles will not breach their Operators Licence.

11. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 11.1 The risks identified with the recommended approach as detailed in the main body of the report. The alternative fuel project will generate a full risk assessment of fuel types.

12. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 12.1. Not Applicable

13. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS


- 13.1 This is covered in the main body of the report.

14. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 14.1 None.

(END)

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 WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and Date of Committee	EXECUTIVE – 14 FEBRUARY 2024
Subject	UPDATE ON BUDGET 2024/25
Wards Affected	ALL
Accountable Member	Councillor Alaric Smith – Executive Member for Finance. Email: alaric.smith@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable Officer	Madhu Richards – Director of Finance. Email: madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk
Report author	Madhu Richards – Director of Finance. Email: madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To provide an update on the budget for 2024/25, following the government funding settlements of 18 December 2023 and 24 January 2024, and to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The draft base budgets for 2024/25; 2) The Council’s Capital Programme for 2024/25 to 2032/33; 3) The level of Council Tax for 2024/25; 4) The Medium Term Financial Strategy; 5) The responses from the statutory budget consultation.
Annexes	Annex A - Details of Base Budget Changes by Service Area Annex B - Prior Year Comparison Annex C - MTFS 2024/25 Annex D - MTFS Graphs Annex E - Capital Programme 2024/25 Annex F - Council Tax Schedules 1-2 Annex G – Council Tax Schedule 3 Annex H – Council Tax Schedule 4 Annex I - Taxbase 2024/25 Annex J - Proposed Fees and Charges Annex L - Responses from the Annual Statutory Budget Consultation Annex M - Pay Policy Statement EXEMPT Annex K - Proposed Fees and Charges for Trade Waste

Recommendation(s)	<p>That the Executive Resolves to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Note the Parish Precepts and Tax Levels set out in Annex I; <p>And Resolves to Recommend to Council to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2) Approve the General Fund revenue budgets as summarised in Annex B; 3) Approve the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy in Annex C; 4) Approve the Capital Programme for 2024/25 to 2032/33 as set out in Annex E; 5) Approve the Fees and charges for 2024/25, as detailed in Annex J and K; 6) Approve the Council's Pay Policy Statement as set out in Annex M; 7) Approve the level of District Council Tax for 2024/25 for a Band D property of £124.38 as shown in Annexes F-H.
Corporate Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Together for West Oxfordshire
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	<p>Meetings with Assistant Directors, Business Managers, Interim S151 and Chief Accountant. Officers also met with key stakeholders from GLL and Ubico. The Council carried out the annual statutory budget consultation.</p>

1. OVERVIEW

- 1.1 The Council is required to set the budget for 2024/25 by 11th March 2024. The first draft of the 2024/25 budget was presented to the Executive on 13th December 2023, an updated version on 17th January 2024 and this final version, **a surplus of £5,107**, will be considered on 14th February 2024.
- 1.2 The revenue budget and the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) have been prepared against the backdrop of continuing pressure on the Council's finances, both from a softening in some income generating activities and the uncertainty around the timing of fundamental changes to Local Government Finance by central government. Originally these changes were due to be implemented in 2020, along with significant changes to the Retained Business Rates system, with the aim of addressing the cost pressures of Adult Social Care in the sector.
- 1.3 The risk posed in the later years of the MTFS from central government funding changes is the most significant the authority faces to a sustainable financial future as the impact of these changes cannot yet be quantified with any certainty.
- 1.4 For the purposes of the MTFS it has been assumed that there will be a 37.5% reduction in the level of retained Business Rates income from 2026/27 and that the government will provide interim compensation funding to dampen the impact of the changes over the first 3 years. However, it must be emphasised that there is currently no commitment from the government to do so.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In year reporting is forecasting an overspend this financial year of £433,041 over and above the approved deficit budget of £350,129, mainly driven by Investment Property, the Waste contract and some fee generating services.
- 2.2 This draft of the 2024/25 budget, **is a surplus of £5,107**, with the picture from 2025/26 onwards becoming less optimistic with an increasing reliance on the use of reserves to fund front line services and the difficulty in identifying new, sustainable income streams.
- 2.3 While the reserves position for the Council is currently relatively healthy, there remains a financial gap which unless resolved could exhaust reserves over the life of this MTFS.
- 2.4 Single year settlements have exacerbated the financial strain on the Council, restricting our ability to confidently plan for more than one year in advance. Added to the long running uncertainty over the timing of the Business Rates reset, which has been delayed since 2020, and the phasing out of New Homes Bonus, this makes our funding assumptions speculative.
- 2.5 Unavoidable budget pressures, such as general and wage inflation, waste & recycling costs put additional strain on our financial position which we will struggle to offset with ongoing savings or additional income generation.
- 2.6 The Publica review has added a significant element of uncertainty around the financial impact of returning the majority of services back to the Council in terms of both one off and ongoing costs. Initially one off costs will be funded from earmarked reserves and ongoing costs will be included in the 2025/26 base budget.

2.7 The use of reserves to manage short term fluctuations in the Council's financial position is necessary but cannot be sustained over the longer term where the significant budget gap, over a number of years, will exhaust these reserves.

3. ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

3.1 The Local Government Association (LGA), in their letter to Jeremy Hunt on 13th October 2023 referred to the "intense financial pressure" that councils are under and the "ongoing inflationary and pay pressures alongside spiking demand and market challenges This is happening at a time of low financial resilience across the sector following a 27.0 per cent real-terms reduction in core spending power since 2010/11."

3.2 This view of the financial challenges facing councils is reflected in the number of recent s114 notices which have been issued, not all of which can be attributed to decisions made by the management in these Councils. The latest being Nottingham City Council on 29th November 2023.

3.3 The last decade has seen a reduction in core funding for Councils. Single year settlements and uncertainty about the timing and impact of the proposed local government finance reforms creates an ever more challenging financial environment. The prospect of a general election in 2024 may further delay these reforms.

3.4 Interest rates and inflation have been higher than budgeted in the current year. Uncertainty about these continues and assumptions have been made about these for the 2024/25 budget and MTFS.

4. 2024/2025 LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING SETTLEMENT

4.1 The provisional Local Government Funding Settlement was announced on 18th December 2023 with additional funding announced on 24th January 2024.

4.2 The December settlement was in line with the assumptions made for the first draft of the 2024/25 budget, taken to the Executive on 13th December 2023, as the settlement was in line with the Autumn Statement (22nd November 2023) and Policy Statement (5th December 2023).

4.3 There is an 8.8% increase in funding from 2023/24 to 2024/25 (assuming a £5 increase in the Council Tax is enacted) from Council Tax, Business Rates and Government funding.

4.4 There is a significant reduction in the New Homes Bonus, compared to assumptions made for the first draft of this budget, which is temporarily offset by an increase in the funding guarantee. See table below for the funding assumed in the MTFS taken to the Executive in December and the final funding amounts.

MTFS Line item	December MTFS	Final Settlement	Difference
	£	£	£
Revenue Support Grant	230,000	230,095	95
New Homes Bonus	1,579,635	1,009,640	(569,995)
Funding Guarantee	963,864	1,683,079	719,215
Rural & Services Grant	221,000	186,066	(34,934)

- 4.5 There were no changes to the Band D Council Tax Referendum thresholds of £5 or 2.99%, whichever is the higher.
- 4.6 As this was the effectively the second year of a two-year settlement, the key uncertainties around future funding still exist. With the prospect of significant cuts in funding from the local share of business rates and other funding streams, medium- and longer-term financial planning is extremely difficult.
- 4.7 This report provides details of the funding settlements and the assumptions made for both the revenue budget and the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) including the current drivers of growth.
- 4.8 The draft local government settlement has been published and the final retained Business Rates income has been calculated ready for submission to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) on 31st January. The budget for 2024/25 is therefore not subject to any further change.

5. 2024/2025 BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS

- 5.1 The 2024/25 budget setting process has been informed by the financial performance in the current year and the key drivers of variances to budget year to date in 2023/24.
- 5.2 The tables below show the key changes to the budget and expected funding that have changed the £350,129 deficit in 2023/24 to a **£5,107 surplus** budget in 2024/25. In the income and expenditure sections of the budget a negative figure represents a saving and a positive figure additional expenditure. In the funding section, a negative figure represents an increase in funding and vice versa.

TABLE I

2023/24 budget deficit		350,129
Budget Movements	£	£
<u>Changes in expenditure</u>		
Reversal of one off items from 23/24	(1,116,591)	
Publica Review estimate of ongoing pension costs	75,000	
Publica Review one off costs	200,000	

Retained Staff	90,650	
Closure of Elmfield as an operational building	(97,625)	
External Audit fees	132,375	
Marriotts service charges	34,910	
Secondary pension contribution	96,900	
Budget Manager Review	(38,305)	
Publica contract growth	647,452	
Ubico contract growth	826,014	
Additional Legal fees for Planning Appeals/Inquiries	90,000	
		940,780
<u>Changes in income</u>		
Between Towns Road development opportunity	452,037	
Additional Planning Application income	(181,800)	
Investment Property voids	323,850	
Land Charges, Building Control and Stray Dogs fees	176,072	
Green Waste licences - subject to Portfolio holder approval	(165,000)	
Investment Property rent free periods	351,608	
Homelessness Hostels	(43,240)	
Reduction in loss of Housing Benefit subsidy for temp accommodation	(140,846)	
GLL contract income	(449,171)	
		323,510
<u>Changes in funding</u>		
Minimum Reserves Provision movement	(186,775)	
Earmarked reserves funding posts & Publica review one off costs	(807,996)	
Reverse Investment Recovery projected income in 23/24 base	175,000	
Reduction in external borrowing costs	(432,950)	
Council Tax reduction in surplus	75,000	
Treasury Management income	(54,000)	
Council Tax	(330,194)	
Provisional government funding assumptions	(52,504)	
		(1,614,419)
2024/25 DRAFT BUDGET		(0)

TABLE 2

Budget deficit presented to the Executive in December 2023	(0)	
Budget Movements since presentation to Executive	£	£
<u>Revenue Changes</u>		
Legal Services review	74,678	
Fees & Charges	(52,284)	
2 Year Economic Development Post	30,579	52,973
<u>Funding Changes</u>		
Local Government Funding Settlement	(5,129)	
Earmarked Reserves funding Economic Development post	(30,579)	
Council Tax surplus	(31,935)	
		<u>(67,643)</u>
2024/25 REVISED DRAFT BUDGET		(14,670)

TABLE 3

Budgeted surplus presented to Executive in January 2024	(14,670)	
Budget Movements since January presentation	£	£
<u>Revenue Changes</u>		
Secondary pension contribution	20,000	
Climate Change Officer post	33,143	
Overhead charges to Publica	61,212	
Ill Health Insurance	4,981	119,336
<u>Funding Changes</u>		
Reduction in external borrowing costs	(10,325)	
Rural Services Delivery Grant additional settlement	(9,853)	
Funding Guarantee Grant additional settlement	(85,742)	
Services Grant	(13,657)	

Earmarked Reserves funding Climate Change post	(33,143)	
Business Rates	42,947	
		(109,773)
2024/25 BUDGET		(5,107)

5.3 The key changes to the budget from 2023/24 to 2024/25 are as follows:

- The reversal of one-off growth items in 2023/24 which includes the contingency against leisure contract income and the budgeted movement to and from earmarked reserves. Earmarked reserve movements are recalculated every year and are used to fund posts that have been agreed by the Executive in prior years.
- Estimated one off costs of £200,000 associated with the Publica Review have been included to cover external consultancy in the areas of HR, TUPE, Project Management, Legal and Finance, with an additional £75,000 for the ongoing additional pension costs estimated in the Human Engine Report, based on an estimated phase one completion in Q3 of 2024/25.
- Publica contract growth is included in the budget at 5% pay inflation, agreed across the Publica partnership Councils, as an indicative figure in advance of a more developed transition plan becoming available. When more information is available around the timing and structure of phase one of the TUPE of staff back to the Council, these costs will transfer from the Publica contract to the Council's retained staff budget line.
- Extensive work has been undertaken with Ubico on how to most efficiently, effectively and sustainably deliver the Waste Service over the next decade. The growth included in the 2024/25 budget represents wage inflation and the unavoidable impact of the proposed capital fleet replacement programme which will go forward to Members for approval in February 2024.
- For context there are 25 waste and recycling lorries coming to the end of their economic life in 2024, plus 6 ancillary vehicles. A phased replacement programme will allow the Council to take advantage of new technologies as they mature and become more reliable in the next two to three years. Spreading the cost over the next three to four years limits the amount of external borrowing needed at the current higher interest rates. In 2024/25 it is anticipated that the Council will purchase 6 replacement waste vehicles with the remainder of the fleet brought in through contract hire arrangements.
- The revenue costs of the Ubico contract will fall by an estimated £350,000 in 2025/26 as hire vehicles are replaced and repair costs of the existing end of life fleet fall.
- Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) is tasked with appointing external auditors, consulting on and setting the external audit scale fee that is charged to Public Bodies. The PSAA have recognised the increased volume of work required to provide assurance in Local Government audits and has increased the scale fee by 151%.

- Between Towns Road is now empty but discussions have started with a potential partner to investigate the redevelopment of the site to provide temporary emergency accommodation. Whilst these discussions are underway and until development plans are finalised it is expected that the property will remain void throughout 2024/25 with a loss of rental income of £350,000 and additional costs associated with Business Rates liability and making sure the building remains secure.
- An Investment Property portfolio has a natural cycle of voids and rent free periods as tenants move in and out of properties. It is now commonplace that tenants negotiate an initial rent free period at the start of their lease term. A six month rent free period will reduce our income over the course of a 15 year lease by less than 4%.
The revenue budget includes the income foregone for all existing rent free periods in effect into 2024/25 and the expected voids. Rather than calculate voids on a percentage basis over the entire portfolio, it is analysed on a per property basis. These figures will change year on year, with overall income increasing year on year as more voids are tenanted over the next couple of years with either 10 or 15 leases.
- It is proposed that the annual Green Waste licence charge be increased by £5 to £50. A benchmarking exercise on 10 neighbouring Councils shows an average green waste licence cost in 2023/24 of £54.09.
- Fees & charges are reviewed each year on a cost recovery basis and also assessed on whether the income budget is achievable. Land Charges and Building Control have been consistently below their income budget for some years and therefore have been reduced to an achievable level.
The reasons for the fall in income in both areas has been consistently reported in the quarterly budget monitoring reports over the last three years. Unfortunately, remedial action to recover market share has not been successful.
- The budget has been updated to include the full contractual income from the leisure contract net of a contingency of 10%. Discussions are ongoing with our leisure provider to maximise the benefits of the contract for both parties and to ensure the viability of this contract in the future.
- The prohibitive cost of capital has brought the Investment Recovery strategy to a halt for now due to the lack of available opportunities which meet the Council's agreed criteria. The one potential project currently being investigated is the redevelopment of Between Towns Road. The 2023/24 budget assumed a level of Investment Recovery activity that will no longer be achieved with the resultant reduction in both MRP and external borrowing costs in 2024/25.
- The approval by the Executive in October to recruit an additional finance officer in the Homelessness team is expected to reduce our loss of Housing Benefit subsidy on temporary accommodation by £140,000 a year.
- The government announced that there will be a 35% rise in planning fees for major applications and a 25% rise for all other applications from 6th December 2023.
- It is proposed that Council Tax increases by the maximum amount of £5 on a Band D property.

- The following growth requests were not included in the first draft of the budget:
 - i) Posts and case management system resulting from the review of the Legal Service paper approved by the Executive on 13th December meeting (see Table 2 above).
 - ii) Economic Development Team Assistant – two-year fixed term post funded by earmarked reserves (see Table 2 above)
 - iii) Climate Change Officer (see Table 3 above)
- Overhead charges to Publica have been reduced by £61,212 due to all staff moving out of the Elmfield office.
- Actuaries for the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) carry out a triennial revaluation of the fund and set the secondary pension contribution required by the Council to keep the scheme fully funded against past and future liabilities.

6. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1** The timing and impact of local government reforms makes the development of an MTFS a challenging exercise with single year funding settlements adding to the uncertainty in future years.
- 6.2** The MTFS (Annex C) assumes that New Homes Bonus will be paid for the last time in 2024/25 with an assumption that some kind of replacement funding will be rolled into the Settlement Funding Assessment (SFA) in 2025/26.
- 6.3** The business rates reset, delayed since 2020, is forecast to take place in 2026/27 with a possible 37.5% reduction in business rates income as a result as retained business rates are reduced to the baseline funding level.
- 6.4** The MTFS assumes a general inflationary increase of between 4% and 2% will apply to cost of services from 2025/26 onwards, excluding contracts where the actual inflationary increase is known i.e. Ubico contract, salary inflation, Publica contract and some software licence agreements.
- 6.5** Salary inflation over the last 3 years has been higher than we have historically estimated. For 2024/25 there is an assumed 5% increase, but this is expected to fall back over the life of the MTFS.
- 6.6** A Transformation Group has been established to help steer the Council's response to the challenging financial environment, guide the preparation of a sustainable MTFS consistent with the Council Plan, and oversee the delivery of the Council's work programme in terms of service transformation, investment and revenue generation.
- 6.7** This Council, like all local authorities, is facing external budget pressures that will impact the MTFS. Energy prices, inflation and interest rates have all had a significant impact on the financial performance in the current year and will continue to do so in the coming years.
- 6.8** The MTFS is based on the most reasonable forecasts of income and expenditure that can be inferred at this point in time.

7. FEES AND CHARGES

7.1 Fees and charges are set on three separate bases.

- Fees that are set centrally over which the Council has no control i.e. premises licences and penalty notices.
- Fees that are set on a cost recovery basis i.e. Building Control, taxi licences and Street Trading. The Council is required to make sure that fees are set at a level that does not generate a profit compared to the cost of providing the service.
- Fees that are discretionary where the Council has full control. These are the commercial services that operate where the Council is in competition with the private sector i.e. Pre Application (Planning) advice, pest control, trade waste, bulky waste and green waste.

7.2 For the setting of the 2024/25 draft budget a comprehensive review has been undertaken to analyse the fees set on a cost recovery basis. As a result Land Charges and Water Sampling fees will increase by 6.7%

7.3 The government announced an increase in Planning Application fees from 6th December 2023 of 25% and an increase of 35% for major applications. This has increased our budgeted income for 2024/25 by £182,000.

7.4 Other fee generating services i.e. food safety, private water supply testing and licences (excluding premises) were found to be under recovering their costs and therefore the fees have been uplifted as detailed in Annex G.

7.5 A new charging regime for Pre Application Planning Advice is being introduced in 2024/25 which builds on intelligence gathered from a similar exercise undertaken by one of our Publica partner Councils in 2022/23. This regime should provide a modest increase in fee income of £15,000 and will cover the costs of delivering the service.

7.6 Green Waste licences are to increase by £5, generating expected additional income of £165,000. This new licence charge of £50 compares to the average cost across 10 neighbouring Councils of £54.09 in 2023/24.

8. CAPITAL PROGRAMME

8.1 The outturn report for 2023/24 will identify any capital slippage which is requested to go forward into 2024/25. So far this year, there has been significantly lower capital expenditure than was anticipated, due to a lack of viable investment projects given the increase in interest rates.

8.2 A detailed review of the capital programme has been carried out during the 2024/25 budget process. The draft Capital Programme is attached in Annex E.

8.3 The main programmes are the proposed Ubico vehicle replacement strategy, decarbonisation of Council buildings and solar PV schemes.

- 8.4 A Strategic Housing Development & Enabling Manager is included in the revenue budget for 2024/25 and this post will inform a strategic housing capital programme in 2025/26 and beyond.
- 8.5 Similarly, the Transformation Group is reviewing the council's Asset Management Strategy and this work will identify areas of capital spend in future years.
- 8.6 As always, inclusion in the Capital Programme at this stage does not mean that the expenditure is authorised. Identifying the possible spend, and including it in the Capital Programme, ensures that potential borrowing requirements are identified. In most cases, a business case would still need to be prepared and brought forward for review.
- 8.7 The Council has engaged with the Salix on potential decarbonisation programmes for both Witney and Carterton Leisure Centres.

9. RISKS AND MITIGATION

9.1 Local Government Funding

As highlighted earlier in this report, the uncertainty around local government funding from 2026/27 onwards poses a significant risk to the financial sustainability of this and many other Councils due to the reliance on general fund reserves to meet increasing budget gaps. In July 2022/23 the Executive approved the setting up of a specific budget deficit earmarked reserve to reduce the budget gap over the life of the MTFs and it would be prudent to continue to build up this earmarked reserve until the long term impact of funding changes can be accurately assessed.

9.2 Statutory Override for Financial Instruments

The statutory override for Financial Instruments (pooled funds), which requires fair value gains and losses to be taken to an unusable reserve unless the fund is sold, is set to end in 2025/26. The ending of the override would require any gains and losses to be recognised in revenue thus having an impact on our revenue budget. Unrealised losses would reduce available resource to fund core services, while unrealised gains would not represent genuine resource increases that could be utilised.

Our Pooled funds currently have a capital value below their purchase price because of changes in global economic conditions over the last 18 months with rising interest rates and high inflation. We have seen capital values start to recover throughout Q3 with our treasury advisors projecting a full recovery over the next 18 months to 2 years, barring any further economic turbulence.

Any unrealised loss would have to be moved to the General Fund in 2025/26 if the statutory override is not extended and capital values have not fully recovered. It is therefore advised, by our Treasury advisors Arlingclose, that it would be prudent to create an earmarked reserve to smooth out the impact of any such unrealised gains or losses that will have to be accounted for through the General Fund.

9.3 Publica Review

The return of a majority of staff and services to the Council from Publica will of course have a material impact on the revenue budget over the life of the MTFs. In the next 2 years there will inevitably be one off costs relating to the transfer of services but it is not yet known what the full financial impact will be after the transfer is complete. The partner Councils and Publica are at the early stages of the due diligence and planning of the project with more detailed financial information coming forward later in the year. For this reason, the MTFs has been prepared on the basis that employee costs remain within Publica in 2024/25 with a transfer to the Council of expected wage inflation in 2025/26.

The Executive have already approved the use of £200,000 of earmarked reserves for the initial project team set up costs and for external legal and HR advice. As and when more detailed costings become available the requirement for the use of earmarked reserves will be identified.

9.4 Investment Property

Investment Property income is a vital revenue stream to fund front line Council services. The variance to income budget this year is mainly driven by void units in Marriotts, Talisman and Des Roches and the delay in renting out Elmfield. A number of void units have been let during 2023 and positive negotiations are nearing completion with a few possible tenants for Marriotts, subject to Executive approval.

The success of reletting void units comes with the industry standard of an initial rent free period, which over the course of a 10 or 15 year lease represents foregone income forof 3.33% to 5%. Income budgets for 2024/25 have been recast on a property by property basis, taking into account any active rent free periods and any known voids. The most significant void property is the office block at Between Towns Road, let to Oxfordshire County Council until November 2023. In the post pandemic era, the rise of hybrid working has significantly reduced the market demand for large office premises and it is extremely unlikely we would be able to find another tenant.

The Council has entered into discussions with a partner to understand the feasibility of redeveloping the site for the provision of temporary emergency accommodation. As these negotiations mature, a report will come forward to the Executive but this is expected to take some time. For the 2024/25 budget it has been assumed that the building will be empty and the Council will forego £350,000 of rental income and take on the liability of Business Rates and costs to keep the building secure.

The 2024/25 budget assumes rental income from Investment Property of £3.6m with an additional rental income of £1.2m from Marriotts. Marriotts is not classified as an Investment Property as it was bought with the primary objective of regeneration, protecting the High Street and supporting the economic development of the whole of Witney.

Given the natural cycle of voids and rent free periods, it is recommended that an Investment Property reserve is set up to augment the revenue outturn position and reduce reliance on general fund reserves in years where there is significant impact on the revenue budget from voids.

9.5 Reserves and balances

The S151 Officer has undertaken a review of reserves and balances during the budget setting process and has determined that it would be possible and prudent to repurpose some of our existing earmarked reserves which are no longer needed i.e. the Covid reserve, to fund the four specific risk reserves discussed above.

As more information is available around these specific risks, the MTFS and earmarked reserves will be reviewed to ensure that the General Fund balance does not fall below a level deemed safe by the S151 Officer in order to continue to be able to set an annual budget.

10. BUDGET CONSULTATION

- 10.1 The Council's budget consultation, via the online engagement platform CitizenLab, ran from 13th November to 18th December 2023.
- 10.2 The Council used a wide range of communication channels to promote the consultation including media engagement, social media, website, stakeholders and newsletters.
- 10.3 A total of 377 responses (308 for 2023/24) were received as a result of this consultation. Respondents were requested to rank the services provided with 1 being the most important and 10 being the service considered the least important. The responses are summarised in Annex J in order of their importance to residents.

11. BUDGET REVIEW TIMETABLE

- 11.1 A surplus budget of £14,670 was presented to the Executive and Council in January 2024 for approval of the fees and charges, the Council Tax Base and submission of the National Non Domestic Rates 1 (NNDRI) Return ahead of the 31st January 2024 deadline.
- 11.2 This revised budget, a surplus of £5,107, will be presented to the Executive on 14th February 2024.
- 11.3 The final budget will be presented to and debated at Council on 28th February 2024.

12. CONCLUSIONS

- 12.1 This latest version of the budget is a **surplus of £5,107**.
- 12.2 There are significant pressures on the Council's current 2023/24 budget which may mean that the general fund balances will be called upon in the current financial year to bridge the gap.
- 12.3 There are continued uncertainties and cost pressures, as detailed in this report, that will have an impact on the 2024/25 budget and the medium-term strategy.

12.4 The Council will need to set realistic budgets, balancing current need and future financial stability, to ensure that adequate reserves are maintained over the medium term.

13. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no financial implications arising from this paper as it outlines the approach and context of the 2024/25 budget setting process.

14. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

14.1 Apart from the statutory duties and obligations set out in this report, with regards to budget setting process, there are no further implications.

15. RISK ASSESSMENT

15.1 None required as a result of the content of this report.

16. EQUALITIES IMPACT

16.1 No direct equalities impact with regards to the content of this report.

17. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

17.1 None.

18. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Budget Papers – February 2023 and December 2023.

(END)

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Detail of base budget changes by cost centre

Annex A

	2023/24 budget	Pay inflation	Contracts	Reverse one offs	Budget change	2024/25 budget	2022/2023 Actual	2023/2024 Budget	2024/2025 Estimate
Assets	(2,480,306)	64,432		(39,137)	161,139	(2,293,872)	(2,228,555)	(2,480,306)	(2,293,872)
Waste & Environmental	7,092,966	24,811	826,014	(10,250)	(134,773)	7,798,768	7,234,391	7,092,966	7,798,768
Comms & Marketing	176,787	10,169			11,982	198,938	165,399	176,787	198,938
Contracts	314,947	12,144	(441,171)	(575,813)	(2,814)	(692,707)	(80,497)	314,947	(692,707)
Corporate Finance	1,654,621	41,166	275,000	(47,550)	334,558	2,257,795	2,065,229	1,654,621	2,257,795
Corporate Responsibility	1,675,701	34,402		(12,033)	65,211	1,763,281	1,559,769	1,675,701	1,763,281
Customer Experience	1,144,301	78,416		(8,060)	(70,278)	1,144,379	968,552	1,144,301	1,144,379
Development Management	830,162	133,084		(166,000)	(17,330)	779,916	534,327	830,162	779,916
Env'l & Regulatory Services	102,932	6,322			(944)	108,310	95,815	102,932	108,310
Finance	828,270	39,375			5,516	873,161	790,612	828,270	873,161
Insight & Intelligence	594,355	72,829			31,211	698,395	568,609	594,355	698,395
Localities	641,221	20,454			(62,455)	599,220	596,499	641,221	599,220
Operational Services	1,707,271	110,269			(42,575)	1,774,965	1,398,051	1,707,271	1,774,965
People	318,931	18,798			(4,008)	333,721	295,180	318,931	333,721
Technology	1,414,271	86,431			(14,090)	1,486,612	1,158,558	1,414,271	1,486,612
	16,016,431	753,102	659,843	(858,843)	260,350	16,830,883	15,121,938	16,016,431	16,830,883

Assets:

This budget covers our operational buildings, commercial properties and our climate change programme. Investment property voids have been included in the budget on an individual tenancy basis, not as a generic percentage in order to more accurately identify expected rental income in 2024/25. Also included are any existing rent free periods, now an industry standard when establishing a new 10 to 15 year lease. The level of income will ebb and flow over time as premises are vacated and tenanted, but over the life of a 10 year lease the income foregone by the Council for a rent free period is typically 5% of the total.

The Climate Change programme has benefited from significant investment in additional resource in the last financial year in order to help deliver on the Council's Priorities. There is over £100,000 in earmarked reserves which will fund initiatives going forward.

Waste & Environmental:

This budget covers grounds maintenance and waste and contains large parts of the Ubico budget. Work is being carried out to develop a range of options to deliver long term revenue savings from the Waste Service by means of route optimisation, updating the vehicle fleet and exploring cross boundary working.

The income budget for Green Waste has been increased by £165,000 reflecting a proposed uplift of £5 in license fee to £50 a year for 2024/25. This is against the average 2023/24 cost of a licence in our 10 nearest Local Authorities of £54 a year.

The Ubico budget has been increased by £826,014. This figure reflects the general uplift in pay inflation in response to the cost of living crisis and a significant rise in vehicle hire costs to supplement the phasing of the proposed Waste Vehicle replacement programme which will be brought to Executive for approval

Communications and Marketing:

Individual Business Managers have input into their marketing spend but work directly with the specialists in the Comms team who bring their expertise to each task and find the most effective and cost efficient way to reach the largest number of people. It is a priority to increase our engagement with residents via Social Media as well as more traditional channels. There are no material changes to the 2024/25 budget.

Contracts:

The main item in this budget is the Leisure contract. The expected reduction in budget comes from the reversal of an income contingency in 2023/24 of the contracted Management Fee due for the year, shown in the table above. Senior Officers continue to work with our leisure provider, GLL, to stabilise the West Oxfordshire leisure offering and maximise the ability of GLL to remit the full management fee. All realistic options on how the contract is delivered have been assessed with an update coming forward to Members in the new year.

Corporate Finance:

This section covers centralised services like Legal and Treasury. The increase of £275,000 in the table above relates to the expenditure included in the budget for the initial costs of the Publica review which Executive have agreed to fund from earmarked reserves.

Corporate Responsibility:

These are central governance costs, members costs, election costs etc. The budget changes in the above table relate to the pay awards agreed in 2023/24 and a 6% increase in Members allowances - as recommended by the Independent Remuneration Panel and agreed by Council in March 2023.

Customer Experience:

There are a variety of services contained in this area from Customer Services and Front of House to Homelessness. The additional expenditure identified for 2024/25 has been funded by savings in other parts of the service.

Development Management:

Planning applications, appeals, conservation and flood defence are covered by this budget which has seen an increase in both income and costs. The government announced an increase of 25% to planning application fees and a 35% increase for major applications from 6th December 2023. The budget therefore includes increased Planning fee income of £182,000 of which half is lost to an increase in external legal costs to support the Council at Planning Appeals. Each appeal costs on average from £20,000 to £60,000 dependent on the complexity and we have seen these costs rise considerably over the last two years.

Environmental and Regulatory Services:

There are no significant changes to highlight in this budget.

Finance:

There are no significant changes to highlight in this budget, the movement in the above table relates to the pay award agreed in 2023/24.

Insight and Intelligence:

The main focus of this budget is planning policy and economic development. There are two new FTC posts in this area in 2024/25, a Strategic Housing Officer who will work to bring forward a Strategic Housing Plan in the second half of 2024/25 addressing the pressures on the supply of affordable housing in the District and an Economic Development Assistant who will help support local businesses.

Localities:

These are the budgets for communities, arts and tourism. Savings have been identified in legacy budgets, excluding staff, and have been removed in 2024/25. There have been no other material changes to this budget.

Operational Services:

This department covers all aspects of benefit payments and revenue collection, including fraud investigation. It also covers Pollution Control, Food Safety and Markets. There are a number of modest revenue savings that have been identified and removed from legacy budget lines. The number of households presenting as homeless has tripled since March 2020 and is continuing to rise. The Council is able to provide 22 units of homelessness accommodation in its own properties with the excess demand utilising Bed & Breakfasts or Hotels. The approval to make some FTC posts in the Homelessness team permanent in 2023/24 will stabilise the service and allow officers to better support clients and help to move them out of temporary accommodation and into more secure tenancies.

People:

People covers human resources and training. There are no significant changes to highlight in this budget.

Technology:

This budget predominantly covers ICT. There are increases in software licence support & maintenance to reflect the current market rate increases, which are linked to inflation. These rises have been deferred and negotiated down where possible and, as much as we can, we've found or generated savings to offset them. Additional cyber security protection is required to increase the Council's resilience and is included in the base budget as part of the software licence support costs.

2024/25 Proposed Revenue Budget comparison to prior year

Annex B

2022/2023 Actual £	Expenditure by Service Area	2023/2024 Budget £	2024/2025 Estimate £
(2,228,555)	Assets	(2,480,305)	(2,293,872)
7,234,391	Waste & Environmental	7,092,966	7,798,768
165,399	Communications & Marketing	176,787	198,938
(80,497)	Contracts	314,947	(692,707)
2,065,229	Corporate Finance	1,654,621	2,257,795
1,559,769	Corporate Responsibility	1,675,701	1,763,281
968,552	Customer Experience	1,144,301	1,144,379
534,327	Development Management	830,162	779,916
95,815	Environmental & Regulatory Services	102,932	108,310
790,612	Finance	828,270	873,161
568,609	Insight & Intelligence	594,355	698,395
596,499	Localities	641,221	599,220
1,398,051	Operational Services	1,707,271	1,774,965
295,180	People	318,931	333,721
1,158,558	Technology	1,414,271	1,486,612
15,121,939	Total Cost of Services	16,016,432	16,830,883
2022/2023 Actual £	Expenditure by Type	2023/2024 Budget £	2024/2025 Estimate £
1,383,001	Employees	1,258,686	1,449,192
1,779,128	Premises Related Expenditure	1,560,865	1,517,413
4,884	Transport Related Expenditure	16,310	16,310
7,063,527	Supplies & Services	5,077,119	5,813,680
18,826,431	Third Party Payments	20,368,757	22,110,612
19,371,447	Transfer Payments	14,000,000	14,400,000
2,268,477	Capital Charges	1,731,690	1,733,952
50,696,895	Total Cost	44,013,427	47,041,159
(35,574,956)	Income	(27,996,996)	(30,210,276)
15,121,939	Total Cost of Services	16,016,431	16,830,883

2024/25 Proposed Revenue Budget comparison to prior year

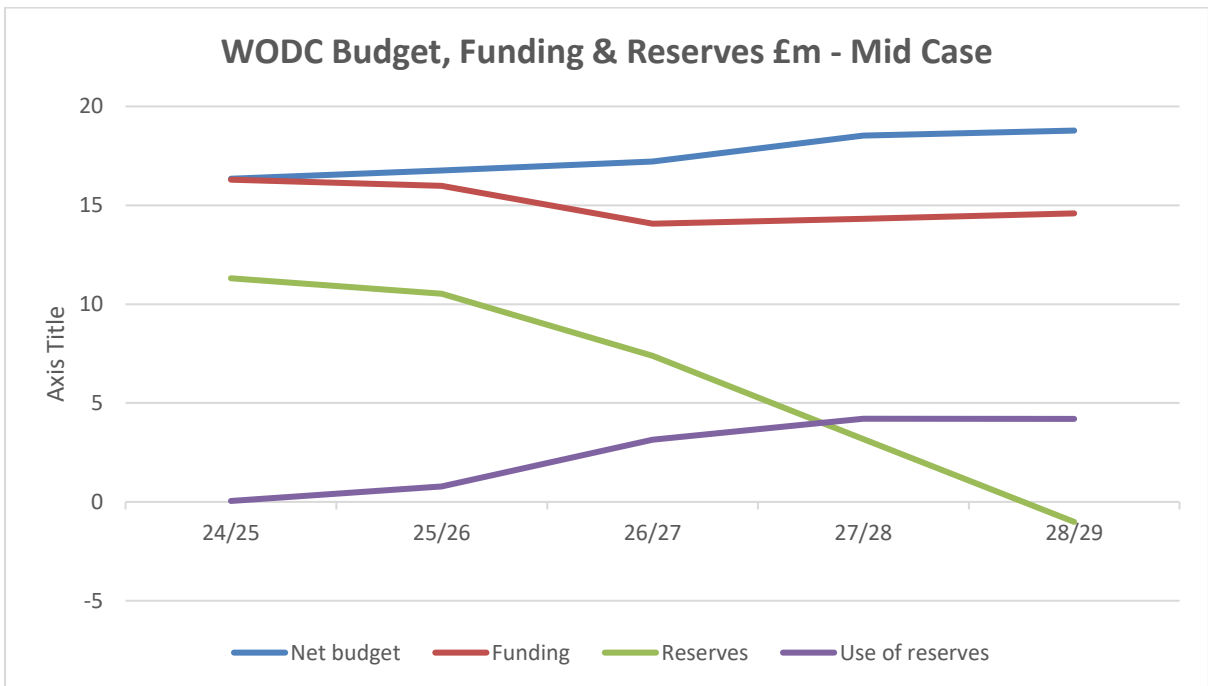
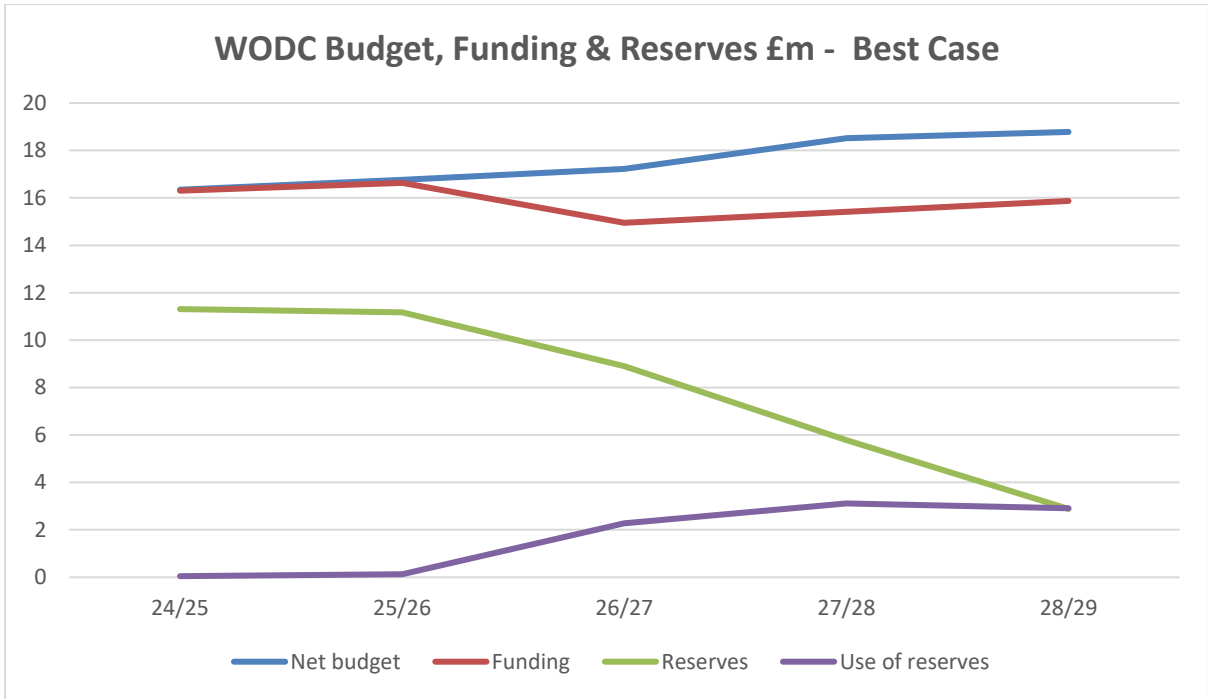
Annex B

	2023/2024 Budget £	2024/2025 Estimate £
Total Cost of Services	16,016,431	16,830,883
Capital Expenditure funded through revenue	540,100	540,100
Minimum Revenue Provision	813,391	626,616
Temporary loans interest	0	0
Interest on Long Term Borrowing	522,375	79,100
Capital charges - depreciation and amortisation	(1,731,690)	(1,731,690)
Net Operating Expenditure	16,160,607	16,345,009
Treasury and Investment Income	(2,157,124)	(1,156,228)
Net Expenditure	14,003,483	15,188,781
<u>Contributions to / (from):</u>		
General Fund Balance	(350,129)	5,107
Net contribution to / (from) Earmarked Reserves	257,748	(45,966)
Balance to be met from Government Grants & Council Tax	13,911,102	15,147,922
Transfers to / (from) Collection Fund	(199,508)	(156,443)
Revenue Support Grant	(215,801)	(230,095)
New Homes Bonus	(1,579,635)	(1,009,640)
Rural Services Delivery Grant	(148,899)	(186,066)
Services Grant	(86,796)	0
Funding Guarantee Grant	(910,864)	(1,683,079)
Renewable Energy Schemes	(272,090)	(298,032)
Retained Business Rates (NNDR)	(4,877,237)	(5,634,100)
Net Requirement	5,620,272	5,950,467
Taxbase	47,078.85	47,841.03
Council Tax (at Band D)	£119.38	£124.38

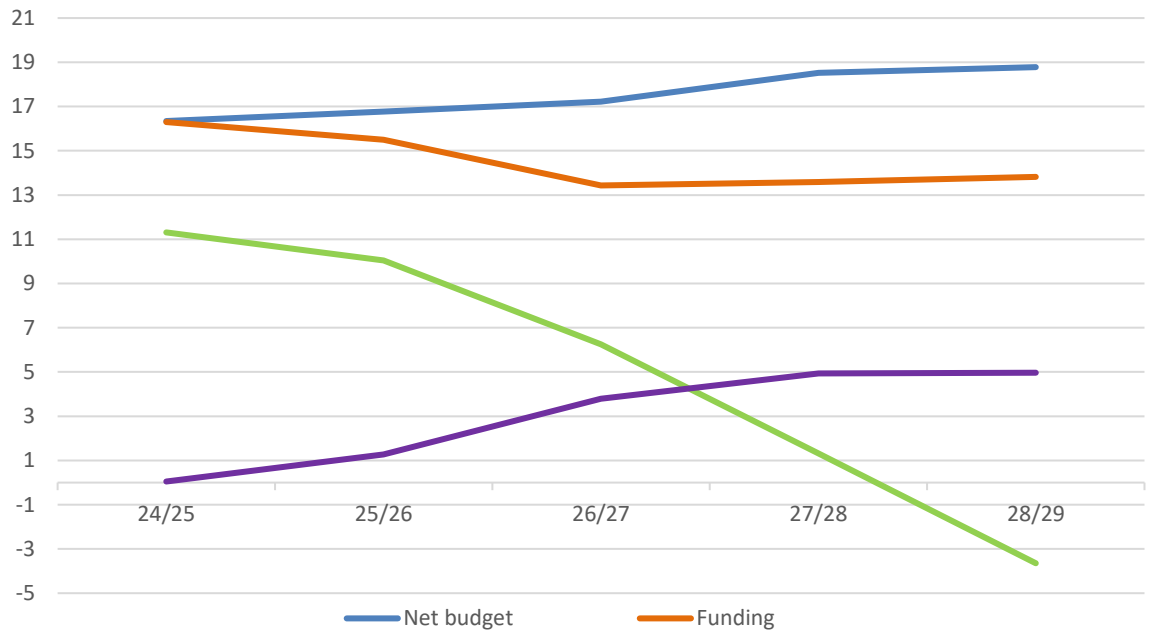
Medium Term Financial Strategy Updated February 2024

	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Inflation		5%	3%	3%	2%	2%
Taxbase	1.0196	1.018	1.016	1.020	1.020	1.020
Base	13,055,622	15,105,712	16,345,008	16,766,223	17,718,712	19,530,147
Inflationary uplift			490,350	419,156	354,374	390,603
Inflation - Publica & Retained Staff	517,120	942,695	650,000	500,000	500,000	500,000
Publica Review		275,000				
Inflation - Electricity & Gas	253,171					
Inflation - Ubico	754,099	826,014	(470,000)			
Leisure contract	558,613	(449,171)			1,000,000	
MRP movement	358,489	(186,775)	112,527			(76,430)
Interest on External Borrowing	419,518	(443,275)	133,338	33,333	(42,939)	(33,439)
One-off growth - reversal of prior year	(772,000)	(858,843)				
Recurring growth	270,081	(43,240)				
Investment Property Voids/Rent Free Periods		1,127,495	(280,000)			
Business Manager Review		272,409	(55,000)			
Budget growth items	745,894					
Fees & Charges		(223,012)	(160,000)			
Investment Strategy income	(1,054,896)					
Target Budget (NOE)	15,105,712	16,345,008	16,766,223	17,718,712	19,530,147	20,310,880
Financed by:						
Revenue Support Grant	215,801	230,095	247,206	(982,900)	(1,009,990)	(1,039,313)
New Homes Bonus	1,579,635	1,009,640				
Funding Guarantee Grant	910,864	1,683,079	2,478,700	5,833,349	4,759,546	3,684,886
Rural Services Delivery & Services grants	235,695	186,066	172,409	172,409	172,409	172,409
Business Rates Share & Renewables	5,149,327	5,932,132	5,932,132	3,716,065	4,152,571	4,700,899
Total Funding from Government & Business Rates	8,091,322	9,041,012	8,830,448	8,738,923	8,074,537	7,518,881
Investment Income - Pooled Funds	1,102,228	1,156,228	1,040,605	936,545	889,717	871,923
Use of earmarked reserves	(257,748)	45,966	(203,338)	700,000	600,000	500,000
Collection Fund	199,508	156,443	120,000	100,000	90,000	85,000
Council Tax	5,620,273	5,950,467	6,282,517	6,629,715	6,996,730	7,374,560
Use of GF reserves	350,129	(5,107)	695,991	613,529	2,879,162	3,960,516
TaxBase	47,078	47,925	48,692	49,666	50,659	51,672
Band D	119.38	124.38	129.38	134.38	139.38	144.38
Tax increase	4.37%	4.19%	4.02%	3.86%	3.72%	3.59%
General fund balance	11,357,177	11,362,284	10,666,293	10,052,764	7,173,602	3,213,086

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WODC Budget, Funding & Reserves £m - Worst Case



Draft Capital programme February 2024

Annex E

Scheme	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31	2031/32	Total £
IT Provision - Systems & Strategy	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	900,000
Solar PV on Council Buildings		276,345								276,345
Update Financial Management System (Agresso)	25,000									25,000
Idox System Upgrade (Planning)	150,000									150,000
Play Parks	100,000									100,000
Weavers Fold	378,000									378,000
Council Buildings Maintenance Programme	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	1,800,000
IT Equipment - PCs, Copiers etc	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000	360,000
Improvement Grants/Disabled Facilities Grants	800,000	880,000	880,000	880,000	880,000	880,000	880,000	880,000	880,000	7,840,000
Community Grants Fund	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000	1,800,000
EVCP Woolgate	167,000									167,000
Affordable Housing	212,125									212,125
Electric vehicle recharging points	200,000									200,000
Replacement dog and litter bins	25,000			25,000				25,000		75,000
Weighbridge at Bulking Station		25,000					25,000			50,000
Replacement Street Sweepers			850,000	260,000		266,000				1,376,000
Ubico Fleet - Replace Vehicle Hire Costs										0
In-cab technology		100,000								100,000
Shop Mobility - Replacement stock	10,000			10,000				10,000		30,000
CCTV upgrading	255,635									255,635
Carterton Swinbrook Public Art (S106)	44,500									44,500
Chipping Norton Creative Project	8,297									8,297
Raleigh Crescent Play Area (s. 106)	75,000									75,000
Agile Working	2,150,000									2,150,000
Chipping Norton LC roof replacement	1,000,000									1,000,000
Madley Park Playing Field project										0
Cottsway - Lavendar Place Affordable Housing										0
Cottsway - Blenheim Court Growth Deal										0
Carterton Leisure Centre Upgrade PSDS	1,300,000									1,300,000
Witney PSDS		1,874,000								1,874,000
Replacement waste and recycling fleet	2,000,000	3,500,000	2,500,000		306,000	500,000		886,000		9,692,000
Town Centre Shop building renovation project										0
Investment Strategy for Recovery	5,000,000									5,000,000
	14,440,557	7,195,345	4,770,000	1,715,000	1,726,000	2,186,000	1,445,000	2,341,000	1,420,000	37,238,902

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BASIC AMOUNTS OF COUNCIL TAX 2024/25

Schedules 1-2

PARISH	TAX BASE	PARISH PRECEPT £	BAND D COUNCIL TAX PARISHES £	BAND D COUNCIL TAX DISTRICT £	TOTAL BAND D COUNCIL TAX £
ALVESCOT	229.46	16,000	69.73	124.38	194.11
ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD	262.99	19,500	74.15	124.38	198.53
ASTHAL	154.08	3,800	24.66	124.38	149.04
ASTON,COTE,SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY	621.93	30,935	49.74	124.38	174.12
BAMPTON	1,343.53	162,815	121.18	124.38	245.56
BLACK BOURTON	125.13	13,924	111.28	124.38	235.66
BLADON	409.24	50,000	122.18	124.38	246.56
BLENHEIM	25.45	0	0.00	124.38	124.38
BRIZE NORTON	670.56	58,654	87.47	124.38	211.85
BROADWELL	71.10	0	0.00	124.38	124.38
BRUERN	40.13	0	0.00	124.38	124.38
BURFORD TOWN COUNCIL	902.02	97,845	108.47	124.38	232.85
CARTERTON TOWN COUNCIL	5,675.92	503,096	88.64	124.38	213.02
CASSINGTON	334.99	62,900	187.77	124.38	312.15
CHADLINGTON	385.89	36,518	94.63	124.38	219.01
CHARLBURY TOWN COUNCIL	1,380.85	145,000	105.01	124.38	229.39
CHASTLETON	69.28	0	0.00	124.38	124.38
CHILSON	57.81	525	9.08	124.38	133.46
CHIPPING NORTON TOWN COUNCIL	2,879.72	375,832	130.51	124.38	254.89
CHURCHILL & SARSDEN	363.18	39,140	107.77	124.38	232.15
CLANFIELD	362.34	24,865	68.62	124.38	193.00
COMBE	341.88	15,197	44.45	124.38	168.83
CORBURY & WYCHWOOD	28.02	0	0.00	124.38	124.38
CORNWELL	26.58	0	0.00	124.38	124.38
CRAWLEY	79.01	2,600	32.91	124.38	157.29
CURBRIDGE & LEW	475.77	25,000	52.55	124.38	176.93
DUCKLINGTON	650.40	42,000	64.58	124.38	188.96
ENSTONE	592.25	42,440	71.66	124.38	196.04
EYNSHAM	2,235.77	276,886	123.84	124.38	248.22

BASIC AMOUNTS OF COUNCIL TAX 2024/25

Schedules I-2

PARISH	TAX BASE	PARISH PRECEPT £	BAND D COUNCIL TAX PARISHES £	BAND D COUNCIL TAX DISTRICT £	TOTAL BAND D COUNCIL TAX £
FAWLER	48.81	0	0.00	124.38	124.38
FIFIELD	110.40	6,000	54.35	124.38	178.73
FILKINS & BROUGHTON	225.55	21,920	97.18	124.38	221.56
FINSTOCK	295.74	25,407	85.91	124.38	210.29
FREELAND	710.14	72,001	101.39	124.38	225.77
FULBROOK	245.05	7,152	29.19	124.38	153.57
GLYMPTON	44.12	0	0.00	124.38	124.38
GRAFTON & RADCOT	30.07	0	0.00	124.38	124.38
GREAT TEW	93.20	0	0.00	124.38	124.38
HAILEY	515.07	41,695	80.95	124.38	205.33
HANBOROUGH	1,425.87	106,800	74.90	124.38	199.28
HARDWICK WITH YELFORD	52.28	0	0.00	124.38	124.38
HEYTHROP	78.14	1,200	15.36	124.38	139.74
HOLWELL	27.22	0	0.00	124.38	124.38
IDBURY	77.07	0	0.00	124.38	124.38
KELMSCOTT	45.24	0	0.00	124.38	124.38
KENCOT	65.28	0	0.00	124.38	124.38
KIDDINGTON WITH ASTERLEIGH	53.50	0	0.00	124.38	124.38
KINGHAM	395.24	30,158	76.30	124.38	200.68
LANGFORD	157.08	6,000	38.20	124.38	162.58
LEAFIELD	376.55	68,512	181.95	124.38	306.33
LITTLE FARINGDON	42.42	0	0.00	124.38	124.38
LITTLE TEW	103.63	1,300	12.54	124.38	136.92
LYNEHAM	88.28	0	0.00	124.38	124.38
MILTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD	809.74	52,000	64.22	124.38	188.60
MINSTER LOVELL	719.00	44,363	61.70	124.38	186.08
NORTH LEIGH	990.19	67,558	68.23	124.38	192.61
NORTHMOOR	190.91	5,295	27.74	124.38	152.12
OVER NORTON	218.66	30,287	138.51	124.38	262.89

BASIC AMOUNTS OF COUNCIL TAX 2024/25

Schedules I-2

PARISH	TAX BASE	PARISH PRECEPT £	BAND D COUNCIL TAX PARISHES £	BAND D COUNCIL TAX DISTRICT £	TOTAL BAND D COUNCIL TAX £
RAMSDEN	185.13	23,000	124.24	124.38	248.62
ROLLRIGHT	240.63	13,056	54.26	124.38	178.64
ROUSHAM	27.28	0	0.00	124.38	124.38
SALFORD	131.41	8,000	60.88	124.38	185.26
SANDFORD ST MARTIN	144.39	9,149	63.36	124.38	187.74
SHILTON	277.72	7,127	25.66	124.38	150.04
SHIPTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD	702.59	38,916	55.39	124.38	179.77
SOUTH LEIGH	167.91	9,866	58.76	124.38	183.14
SPELSBURY	155.72	9,217	59.19	124.38	183.57
STANDLAKE	675.05	30,000	44.44	124.38	168.82
STANTON HARCOURT	523.18	40,000	76.46	124.38	200.84
STEEPLE BARTON	609.04	21,560	35.40	124.38	159.78
STONESFIELD	725.28	39,722	54.77	124.38	179.15
SWERFORD	90.22	8,510	94.32	124.38	218.70
SWINBROOK & WIDFORD	104.57	2,250	21.52	124.38	145.90
TACKLEY	505.67	29,425	58.19	124.38	182.57
TAYNTON	80.11	4,000	49.93	124.38	174.31
WESTCOT BARTON	86.95	1,000	11.50	124.38	135.88
WESTWELL	49.82	0	0.00	124.38	124.38
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL	11,213.75	1,984,834	177.00	124.38	301.38
WOODSTOCK	1,766.38	149,000	84.35	124.38	208.73
WOOTTON	301.50	16,320	54.13	124.38	178.51
WORTON	47.00	0	0.00	124.38	124.38
					0.00
AVERAGE COUNCIL TAX LEVY			106.14	124.38	230.52
TAX BASE FOR THE DISTRICT	47,841.03				
TOTAL PRECEPTS		5,078,072			

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AMOUNTS OF COUNCIL TAX 2024/2025 - DISTRICT COUNCIL AND PARISHES

PARISH	BASIC AMOUNT OF COUNCIL TAX			BANDINGS							
	WODC	PARISHES	TOTAL	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
ALVESCOT	124.38	69.73	194.11	129.41	150.97	172.54	194.11	237.25	280.38	323.52	388.22
ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD	124.38	74.15	198.53	132.35	154.41	176.47	198.53	242.65	286.77	330.88	397.06
ASTHAL	124.38	24.66	149.04	99.36	115.92	132.48	149.04	182.16	215.28	248.40	298.08
ASTON,COTE,SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY	124.38	49.74	174.12	116.08	135.43	154.77	174.12	212.81	251.51	290.20	348.24
BAMPTON	124.38	121.18	245.56	163.71	190.99	218.28	245.56	300.13	354.70	409.27	491.12
BLACK BOURTON	124.38	111.28	235.66	157.11	183.29	209.48	235.66	288.03	340.40	392.77	471.32
BLADON	124.38	122.18	246.56	164.37	191.77	219.16	246.56	301.35	356.14	410.93	493.12
BLENHEIM	124.38	0.00	124.38	82.92	96.74	110.56	124.38	152.02	179.66	207.30	248.76
BRIZE NORTON	124.38	87.47	211.85	141.23	164.77	188.31	211.85	258.93	306.01	353.08	423.70
BROADWELL	124.38	0.00	124.38	82.92	96.74	110.56	124.38	152.02	179.66	207.30	248.76
BRUERN	124.38	0.00	124.38	82.92	96.74	110.56	124.38	152.02	179.66	207.30	248.76
BURFORD TOWN COUNCIL	124.38	108.47	232.85	155.23	181.11	206.98	232.85	284.59	336.34	388.08	465.70
CARTERTON TOWN COUNCIL	124.38	88.64	213.02	142.01	165.68	189.35	213.02	260.36	307.70	355.03	426.04
CASSINGTON	124.38	187.77	312.15	208.10	242.78	277.47	312.15	381.52	450.88	520.25	624.30
CHADLINGTON	124.38	94.63	219.01	146.01	170.34	194.68	219.01	267.68	316.35	365.02	438.02
CHARLBURY TOWN COUNCIL	124.38	105.01	229.39	152.93	178.41	203.90	229.39	280.37	331.34	382.32	458.78
CHASTLETON	124.38	0.00	124.38	82.92	96.74	110.56	124.38	152.02	179.66	207.30	248.76
CHILSON	124.38	9.08	133.46	88.97	103.80	118.63	133.46	163.12	192.78	222.43	266.92
CHIPPING NORTON TOWN COUNCIL	124.38	130.51	254.89	169.93	198.25	226.57	254.89	311.53	368.17	424.82	509.78
CHURCHILL & SARSDEN	124.38	107.77	232.15	154.77	180.56	206.36	232.15	283.74	335.33	386.92	464.30
CLANFIELD	124.38	68.62	193.00	128.67	150.11	171.56	193.00	235.89	278.78	321.67	386.00
COMBE	124.38	44.45	168.83	112.55	131.31	150.07	168.83	206.35	243.87	281.38	337.66
CORNBURY & WYCHWOOD	124.38	0.00	124.38	82.92	96.74	110.56	124.38	152.02	179.66	207.30	248.76
CORNWELL	124.38	0.00	124.38	82.92	96.74	110.56	124.38	152.02	179.66	207.30	248.76
CRAWLEY	124.38	32.91	157.29	104.86	122.34	139.81	157.29	192.24	227.20	262.15	314.58
CURBRIDGE & LEW	124.38	52.55	176.93	117.95	137.61	157.27	176.93	216.25	255.57	294.88	353.86
DUCKLINGTON	124.38	64.58	188.96	125.97	146.97	167.96	188.96	230.95	272.94	314.93	377.92
ENSTONE	124.38	71.66	196.04	130.69	152.48	174.26	196.04	239.60	283.17	326.73	392.08
EYNSHAM	124.38	123.84	248.22	165.48	193.06	220.64	248.22	303.38	358.54	413.70	496.44
FAWLER	124.38	0.00	124.38	82.92	96.74	110.56	124.38	152.02	179.66	207.30	248.76
FIFIELD	124.38	54.35	178.73	119.15	139.01	158.87	178.73	218.45	258.17	297.88	357.46
FILKINS & BROUGHTON	124.38	97.18	221.56	147.71	172.32	196.94	221.56	270.80	320.03	369.27	443.12

AMOUNTS OF COUNCIL TAX 2024/2025 - DISTRICT COUNCIL AND PARISHES

PARISH	BASIC AMOUNT OF COUNCIL TAX			BANDINGS							
	WODC	PARISHES	TOTAL	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
FINSTOCK	124.38	85.91	210.29	140.19	163.56	186.92	210.29	257.02	303.75	350.48	420.58
FREELAND	124.38	101.39	225.77	150.51	175.60	200.68	225.77	275.94	326.11	376.28	451.54
FULBROOK	124.38	29.19	153.57	102.38	119.44	136.51	153.57	187.70	221.82	255.95	307.14
GLYMPTON	124.38	0.00	124.38	82.92	96.74	110.56	124.38	152.02	179.66	207.30	248.76
GRAFTON & RADCOT	124.38	0.00	124.38	82.92	96.74	110.56	124.38	152.02	179.66	207.30	248.76
GREAT TEW	124.38	0.00	124.38	82.92	96.74	110.56	124.38	152.02	179.66	207.30	248.76
HAILEY	124.38	80.95	205.33	136.89	159.70	182.52	205.33	250.96	296.59	342.22	410.66
HANBOROUGH	124.38	74.90	199.28	132.85	155.00	177.14	199.28	243.56	287.85	332.13	398.56
HARDWICK WITH YELFORD	124.38	0.00	124.38	82.92	96.74	110.56	124.38	152.02	179.66	207.30	248.76
HEYTHROP	124.38	15.36	139.74	93.16	108.69	124.21	139.74	170.79	201.85	232.90	279.48
HOLWELL	124.38	0.00	124.38	82.92	96.74	110.56	124.38	152.02	179.66	207.30	248.76
IDBURY	124.38	0.00	124.38	82.92	96.74	110.56	124.38	152.02	179.66	207.30	248.76
KELMSCOTT	124.38	0.00	124.38	82.92	96.74	110.56	124.38	152.02	179.66	207.30	248.76
KENCOT	124.38	0.00	124.38	82.92	96.74	110.56	124.38	152.02	179.66	207.30	248.76
KIDDINGTON WITH ASTERLEIGH	124.38	0.00	124.38	82.92	96.74	110.56	124.38	152.02	179.66	207.30	248.76
KINGHAM	124.38	76.30	200.68	133.79	156.08	178.38	200.68	245.28	289.87	334.47	401.36
LANGFORD	124.38	38.20	162.58	108.39	126.45	144.52	162.58	198.71	234.84	270.97	325.16
LEAFIELD	124.38	181.95	306.33	204.22	238.26	272.29	306.33	374.40	442.48	510.55	612.66
LITTLE FARINGDON	124.38	0.00	124.38	82.92	96.74	110.56	124.38	152.02	179.66	207.30	248.76
LITTLE TEW	124.38	12.54	136.92	91.28	106.49	121.71	136.92	167.35	197.77	228.20	273.84
LYNEHAM	124.38	0.00	124.38	82.92	96.74	110.56	124.38	152.02	179.66	207.30	248.76
MILTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD	124.38	64.22	188.60	125.73	146.69	167.64	188.60	230.51	272.42	314.33	377.20
MINSTER LOVELL	124.38	61.70	186.08	124.05	144.73	165.40	186.08	227.43	268.78	310.13	372.16
NORTH LEIGH	124.38	68.23	192.61	128.41	149.81	171.21	192.61	235.41	278.21	321.02	385.22
NORTHMOOR	124.38	27.74	152.12	101.41	118.32	135.22	152.12	185.92	219.73	253.53	304.24
OVER NORTON	124.38	138.51	262.89	175.26	204.47	233.68	262.89	321.31	379.73	438.15	525.78
RAMSDEN	124.38	124.24	248.62	165.75	193.37	221.00	248.62	303.87	359.12	414.37	497.24
ROLLRIGHT	124.38	54.26	178.64	119.09	138.94	158.79	178.64	218.34	258.04	297.73	357.28
ROUSHAM	124.38	0.00	124.38	82.92	96.74	110.56	124.38	152.02	179.66	207.30	248.76
SALFORD	124.38	60.88	185.26	123.51	144.09	164.68	185.26	226.43	267.60	308.77	370.52
SANDFORD ST MARTIN	124.38	63.36	187.74	125.16	146.02	166.88	187.74	229.46	271.18	312.90	375.48

AMOUNTS OF COUNCIL TAX 2024/2025 - DISTRICT COUNCIL AND PARISHES

PARISH	BASIC AMOUNT OF COUNCIL TAX			BANDINGS							
	WODC	PARISHES	TOTAL	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
SHILTON	124.38	25.66	150.04	100.03	116.70	133.37	150.04	183.38	216.72	250.07	300.08
SHIPTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD	124.38	55.39	179.77	119.85	139.82	159.80	179.77	219.72	259.67	299.62	359.54
SOUTH LEIGH	124.38	58.76	183.14	122.09	142.44	162.79	183.14	223.84	264.54	305.23	366.28
SPELSBURY	124.38	59.19	183.57	122.38	142.78	163.17	183.57	224.36	265.16	305.95	367.14
STANDLAKE	124.38	44.44	168.82	112.55	131.30	150.06	168.82	206.34	243.85	281.37	337.64
STANTON HARCOURT	124.38	76.46	200.84	133.89	156.21	178.52	200.84	245.47	290.10	334.73	401.68
STEEPLE BARTON	124.38	35.40	159.78	106.52	124.27	142.03	159.78	195.29	230.79	266.30	319.56
STONESFIELD	124.38	54.77	179.15	119.43	139.34	159.24	179.15	218.96	258.77	298.58	358.30
SWERFORD	124.38	94.32	218.70	145.80	170.10	194.40	218.70	267.30	315.90	364.50	437.40
SWINBROOK & WIDFORD	124.38	21.52	145.90	97.27	113.48	129.69	145.90	178.32	210.74	243.17	291.80
TACKLEY	124.38	58.19	182.57	121.71	142.00	162.28	182.57	223.14	263.71	304.28	365.14
TAYNTON	124.38	49.93	174.31	116.21	135.57	154.94	174.31	213.05	251.78	290.52	348.62
WESTCOT BARTON	124.38	11.50	135.88	90.59	105.68	120.78	135.88	166.08	196.27	226.47	271.76
WESTWELL	124.38	0.00	124.38	82.92	96.74	110.56	124.38	152.02	179.66	207.30	248.76
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL	124.38	177.00	301.38	200.92	234.41	267.89	301.38	368.35	435.33	502.30	602.76
WOODSTOCK	124.38	84.35	208.73	139.15	162.35	185.54	208.73	255.11	301.50	347.88	417.46
WOOTTON	124.38	54.13	178.51	119.01	138.84	158.68	178.51	218.18	257.85	297.52	357.02
WORTON	124.38	0.00	124.38	82.92	96.74	110.56	124.38	152.02	179.66	207.30	248.76

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AGGREGATE AMOUNTS OF COUNCIL TAX 2024/25

PARISH	BASIC AMOUNT OF COUNCIL TAX				TOTAL	BANDINGS							
	OXON CC	PCCTV	WODC	PARISHES		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p		£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
ALVESCOT	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	69.73	2,014.67	1,343.12	1,566.96	1,790.82	2,014.67	2,462.38	2,910.08	3,357.79	4,029.34
ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	74.15	2,019.09	1,346.06	1,570.40	1,794.75	2,019.09	2,467.78	2,916.47	3,365.15	4,038.18
ASTHAL	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	24.66	1,969.60	1,313.07	1,531.91	1,750.76	1,969.60	2,407.29	2,844.98	3,282.67	3,939.20
ASTON,COTE,SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	49.74	1,994.68	1,329.79	1,551.42	1,773.05	1,994.68	2,437.94	2,881.21	3,324.47	3,989.36
BAMPTON	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	121.18	2,066.12	1,377.42	1,606.98	1,836.56	2,066.12	2,525.26	2,984.40	3,443.54	4,132.24
BLACK BOURTON	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	111.28	2,056.22	1,370.82	1,599.28	1,827.76	2,056.22	2,513.16	2,970.10	3,427.04	4,112.44
BLADON	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	122.18	2,067.12	1,378.08	1,607.76	1,837.44	2,067.12	2,526.48	2,985.84	3,445.20	4,134.24
BLENHEIM	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	0.00	1,944.94	1,296.63	1,512.73	1,728.84	1,944.94	2,377.15	2,809.36	3,241.57	3,889.88
BRIZE NORTON	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	87.47	2,032.41	1,354.94	1,580.76	1,806.59	2,032.41	2,484.06	2,935.71	3,387.35	4,064.82
BROADWELL	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	0.00	1,944.94	1,296.63	1,512.73	1,728.84	1,944.94	2,377.15	2,809.36	3,241.57	3,889.88
BRUERN	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	0.00	1,944.94	1,296.63	1,512.73	1,728.84	1,944.94	2,377.15	2,809.36	3,241.57	3,889.88
BURFORD TOWN COUNCIL	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	108.47	2,053.41	1,368.94	1,597.10	1,825.26	2,053.41	2,509.72	2,966.04	3,422.35	4,106.82
CARTERTON TOWN COUNCIL	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	88.64	2,033.58	1,355.72	1,581.67	1,807.63	2,033.58	2,485.49	2,937.40	3,389.30	4,067.16
CASSINGTON	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	187.77	2,132.71	1,421.81	1,658.77	1,895.75	2,132.71	2,606.65	3,080.58	3,554.52	4,265.42
CHADLINGTON	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	94.63	2,039.57	1,359.72	1,586.33	1,812.96	2,039.57	2,492.81	2,946.05	3,399.29	4,079.14
CHARLBURY TOWN COUNCIL	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	105.01	2,049.95	1,366.64	1,594.40	1,822.18	2,049.95	2,505.50	2,961.04	3,416.59	4,099.90
CHASTLETON	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	0.00	1,944.94	1,296.63	1,512.73	1,728.84	1,944.94	2,377.15	2,809.36	3,241.57	3,889.88
CHILSON	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	9.08	1,954.02	1,302.68	1,519.79	1,736.91	1,954.02	2,388.25	2,822.48	3,256.70	3,908.04
CHIPPING NORTON TOWN COUNCIL	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	130.51	2,075.45	1,383.64	1,614.24	1,844.85	2,075.45	2,536.66	2,997.87	3,459.09	4,150.90
CHURCHILL & SARSDEN	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	107.77	2,052.71	1,368.48	1,596.55	1,824.64	2,052.71	2,508.87	2,965.03	3,421.19	4,105.42
CLANFIELD	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	68.62	2,013.56	1,342.38	1,566.10	1,789.84	2,013.56	2,461.02	2,908.48	3,355.94	4,027.12
COMBE	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	44.45	1,989.39	1,326.26	1,547.30	1,768.35	1,989.39	2,431.48	2,873.57	3,315.65	3,978.78
CORBURY & WYCHWOOD	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	0.00	1,944.94	1,296.63	1,512.73	1,728.84	1,944.94	2,377.15	2,809.36	3,241.57	3,889.88
CORNWELL	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	0.00	1,944.94	1,296.63	1,512.73	1,728.84	1,944.94	2,377.15	2,809.36	3,241.57	3,889.88
CRAWLEY	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	32.91	1,977.85	1,318.57	1,538.33	1,758.09	1,977.85	2,417.37	2,856.90	3,296.42	3,955.70
CURBRIDGE & LEW	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	52.55	1,997.49	1,331.66	1,553.60	1,775.55	1,997.49	2,441.38	2,885.27	3,329.15	3,994.98
DUCKLINGTON	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	64.58	2,009.52	1,339.68	1,562.96	1,786.24	2,009.52	2,456.08	2,902.64	3,349.20	4,019.04
ENSTONE	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	71.66	2,016.60	1,344.40	1,568.47	1,792.54	2,016.60	2,464.73	2,912.87	3,361.00	4,033.20
EYNSHAM	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	123.84	2,068.78	1,379.19	1,609.05	1,838.92	2,068.78	2,528.51	2,988.24	3,447.97	4,137.56
FAWLER	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	0.00	1,944.94	1,296.63	1,512.73	1,728.84	1,944.94	2,377.15	2,809.36	3,241.57	3,889.88
FIFIELD	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	54.35	1,999.29	1,332.86	1,555.00	1,777.15	1,999.29	2,443.58	2,887.87	3,332.15	3,998.58
FILKINS & BROUGHTON	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	97.18	2,042.12	1,361.42	1,588.31	1,815.22	2,042.12	2,495.93	2,949.73	3,403.54	4,084.24

AGGREGATE AMOUNTS OF COUNCIL TAX 2024/25

PARISH	BASIC AMOUNT OF COUNCIL TAX				TOTAL	BANDINGS							
	OXON CC	TVPA	WODC	PARISHES		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p		£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
FINSTOCK	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	85.91	2,030.85	1,353.90	1,579.55	1,805.20	2,030.85	2,482.15	2,933.45	3,384.75	4,061.70
FREELAND	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	101.39	2,046.33	1,364.22	1,591.59	1,818.96	2,046.33	2,501.07	2,955.81	3,410.55	4,092.66
FULBROOK	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	29.19	1,974.13	1,316.09	1,535.43	1,754.79	1,974.13	2,412.83	2,851.52	3,290.22	3,948.26
GLYMPTON	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	0.00	1,944.94	1,296.63	1,512.73	1,728.84	1,944.94	2,377.15	2,809.36	3,241.57	3,889.88
GRAFTON & RADCOT	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	0.00	1,944.94	1,296.63	1,512.73	1,728.84	1,944.94	2,377.15	2,809.36	3,241.57	3,889.88
GREAT TEW	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	0.00	1,944.94	1,296.63	1,512.73	1,728.84	1,944.94	2,377.15	2,809.36	3,241.57	3,889.88
HAILEY	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	80.95	2,025.89	1,350.60	1,575.69	1,800.80	2,025.89	2,476.09	2,926.29	3,376.49	4,051.78
HANBOROUGH	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	74.90	2,019.84	1,346.56	1,570.99	1,795.42	2,019.84	2,468.69	2,917.55	3,366.40	4,039.68
HARDWICK WITH YELFORD	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	0.00	1,944.94	1,296.63	1,512.73	1,728.84	1,944.94	2,377.15	2,809.36	3,241.57	3,889.88
HEYTHROP	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	15.36	1,960.30	1,306.87	1,524.68	1,742.49	1,960.30	2,395.92	2,831.55	3,267.17	3,920.60
HOLWELL	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	0.00	1,944.94	1,296.63	1,512.73	1,728.84	1,944.94	2,377.15	2,809.36	3,241.57	3,889.88
IDBURY	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	0.00	1,944.94	1,296.63	1,512.73	1,728.84	1,944.94	2,377.15	2,809.36	3,241.57	3,889.88
KELMSCOTT	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	0.00	1,944.94	1,296.63	1,512.73	1,728.84	1,944.94	2,377.15	2,809.36	3,241.57	3,889.88
KENCOT	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	0.00	1,944.94	1,296.63	1,512.73	1,728.84	1,944.94	2,377.15	2,809.36	3,241.57	3,889.88
KIDDINGTON WITH ASTERLEIGH	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	0.00	1,944.94	1,296.63	1,512.73	1,728.84	1,944.94	2,377.15	2,809.36	3,241.57	3,889.88
KINGHAM	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	76.30	2,021.24	1,347.50	1,572.07	1,796.66	2,021.24	2,470.41	2,919.57	3,368.74	4,042.48
LANGFORD	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	38.20	1,983.14	1,322.10	1,542.44	1,762.80	1,983.14	2,423.84	2,864.54	3,305.24	3,966.28
LEAFIELD	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	181.95	2,126.89	1,417.93	1,654.25	1,890.57	2,126.89	2,599.53	3,072.18	3,544.82	4,253.78
LITTLE FARINGDON	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	0.00	1,944.94	1,296.63	1,512.73	1,728.84	1,944.94	2,377.15	2,809.36	3,241.57	3,889.88
LITTLE TEW	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	12.54	1,957.48	1,304.99	1,522.48	1,739.99	1,957.48	2,392.48	2,827.47	3,262.47	3,914.96
LYNEHAM	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	0.00	1,944.94	1,296.63	1,512.73	1,728.84	1,944.94	2,377.15	2,809.36	3,241.57	3,889.88
MILTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	64.22	2,009.16	1,339.44	1,562.68	1,785.92	2,009.16	2,455.64	2,902.12	3,348.60	4,018.32
MINSTER LOVELL	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	61.70	2,006.64	1,337.76	1,560.72	1,783.68	2,006.64	2,452.56	2,898.48	3,344.40	4,013.28
NORTH LEIGH	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	68.23	2,013.17	1,342.12	1,565.80	1,789.49	2,013.17	2,460.54	2,907.91	3,355.29	4,026.34
NORTHMOOR	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	27.74	1,972.68	1,315.12	1,534.31	1,753.50	1,972.68	2,411.05	2,849.43	3,287.80	3,945.36
OVER NORTON	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	138.51	2,083.45	1,388.97	1,620.46	1,851.96	2,083.45	2,546.44	3,009.43	3,472.42	4,166.90
RAMSDEN	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	124.24	2,069.18	1,379.46	1,609.36	1,839.28	2,069.18	2,529.00	2,988.82	3,448.64	4,138.36
ROLLRIGHT	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	54.26	1,999.20	1,332.80	1,554.93	1,777.07	1,999.20	2,443.47	2,887.74	3,332.00	3,998.40
ROUSHAM	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	0.00	1,944.94	1,296.63	1,512.73	1,728.84	1,944.94	2,377.15	2,809.36	3,241.57	3,889.88
SALFORD	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	60.88	2,005.82	1,337.22	1,560.08	1,782.96	2,005.82	2,451.56	2,897.30	3,343.04	4,011.64
SANDFORD ST MARTIN	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	63.36	2,008.30	1,338.87	1,562.01	1,785.16	2,008.30	2,454.59	2,900.88	3,347.17	4,016.60

AGGREGATE AMOUNTS OF COUNCIL TAX 2024/25

PARISH	BASIC AMOUNT OF COUNCIL TAX				TOTAL	BANDINGS							
	OXON CC	TVPA	WODC	PARISHES		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p		£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p
SHILTON	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	25.66	1,970.60	1,313.74	1,532.69	1,751.65	1,970.60	2,408.51	2,846.42	3,284.34	3,941.20
SHIPTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	55.39	2,000.33	1,333.56	1,555.81	1,778.08	2,000.33	2,444.85	2,889.37	3,333.89	4,000.66
SOUTH LEIGH	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	58.76	2,003.70	1,335.80	1,558.43	1,781.07	2,003.70	2,448.97	2,894.24	3,339.50	4,007.40
SPELSBURY	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	59.19	2,004.13	1,336.09	1,558.77	1,781.45	2,004.13	2,449.49	2,894.86	3,340.22	4,008.26
STANDLAKE	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	44.44	1,989.38	1,326.26	1,547.29	1,768.34	1,989.38	2,431.47	2,873.55	3,315.64	3,978.76
STANTON HARCOURT	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	76.46	2,021.40	1,347.60	1,572.20	1,796.80	2,021.40	2,470.60	2,919.80	3,369.00	4,042.80
STEEPLE BARTON	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	35.40	1,980.34	1,320.23	1,540.26	1,760.31	1,980.34	2,420.42	2,860.49	3,300.57	3,960.68
STONESFIELD	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	54.77	1,999.71	1,333.14	1,555.33	1,777.52	1,999.71	2,444.09	2,888.47	3,332.85	3,999.42
SWERFORD	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	94.32	2,039.26	1,359.51	1,586.09	1,812.68	2,039.26	2,492.43	2,945.60	3,398.77	4,078.52
SWINBROOK & WIDFORD	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	21.52	1,966.46	1,310.98	1,529.47	1,747.97	1,966.46	2,403.45	2,840.44	3,277.44	3,932.92
TACKLEY	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	58.19	2,003.13	1,335.42	1,557.99	1,780.56	2,003.13	2,448.27	2,893.41	3,338.55	4,006.26
TAYNTON	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	49.93	1,994.87	1,329.92	1,551.56	1,773.22	1,994.87	2,438.18	2,881.48	3,324.79	3,989.74
WESTCOT BARTON	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	11.50	1,956.44	1,304.30	1,521.67	1,739.06	1,956.44	2,391.21	2,825.97	3,260.74	3,912.88
WESTWELL	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	0.00	1,944.94	1,296.63	1,512.73	1,728.84	1,944.94	2,377.15	2,809.36	3,241.57	3,889.88
WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	177.00	2,121.94	1,414.63	1,650.40	1,886.17	2,121.94	2,593.48	3,065.03	3,536.57	4,243.88
WOODSTOCK	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	84.35	2,029.29	1,352.86	1,578.34	1,803.82	2,029.29	2,480.24	2,931.20	3,382.15	4,058.58
WOOTTON	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	54.13	1,999.07	1,332.72	1,554.83	1,776.96	1,999.07	2,443.31	2,887.55	3,331.79	3,998.14
WORTON	1,820.56	0.00	124.38	0.00	1,944.94	1,296.63	1,512.73	1,728.84	1,944.94	2,377.15	2,809.36	3,241.57	3,889.88

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PARISH	TAXBASE		
	← 2023/2024	2024/2025 →	%
	No.	No.	CHANGE
ALVESCOT	211.28	229.46	8.60
ASCOTT-UNDER-WYCHWOOD	254.77	262.99	3.23
ASTHAL	158.45	154.08	(2.76)
ASTON,COTE,SHIFFORD & CHIMNEY	606.48	621.93	2.55
BAMPTON	1,330.46	1,343.53	0.98
BLACK BOURTON	122.69	125.13	1.99
BLADON	400.31	409.24	2.23
BLENHEIM	25.01	25.45	1.76
BRIZE NORTON	583.09	670.56	15.00
BROADWELL	70.31	71.10	1.12
BRUERN	36.53	40.13	9.85
BURFORD	853.24	902.02	5.72
CARTERTON	5,622.36	5,675.92	0.95
CASSINGTON	333.21	334.99	0.53
CHADLINGTON	382.92	385.89	0.78
CHARLBURY	1,362.25	1,380.85	1.37
CHASTLETON	68.84	69.28	0.64
CHILSON	56.34	57.81	2.61
CHIPPING NORTON	2,852.40	2,879.72	0.96
CHURCHILL & SARSDEN	355.97	363.18	2.03
CLANFIELD	363.17	362.34	(0.23)
COMBE	333.63	341.88	2.47
CORNBURY & WYCHWOOD	27.85	28.02	0.61
CORNWELL	26.77	26.58	(0.71)
CRAWLEY	81.15	79.01	(2.64)
CURBRIDGE & LEW	424.78	475.77	12.00
DUCKLINGTON	641.92	650.40	1.32
ENSTONE	581.06	592.25	1.93
EYNHAM	2,142.95	2,235.77	4.33
FAWLER	47.21	48.81	3.39
FIFIELD	105.55	110.40	4.59
FILKINS & BROUGHTON POGGS	218.53	225.55	3.21
FINSTOCK	293.86	295.74	0.64
FREELAND	713.23	710.14	(0.43)
FULBROOK	242.09	245.05	1.22
GLYMPTON	44.60	44.12	(1.08)
GRAFTON & RADCOT	30.48	30.07	(1.35)
GREAT TEW	93.13	93.20	0.08
HAILEY	509.41	515.07	1.11
HANBOROUGH	1,415.17	1,425.87	0.76
HARDWICK WITH YELFORD	51.53	52.28	1.46

PARISH	TAXBASE		
	← 2023/2024	2024/2025 →	%
	No.	No.	CHANGE
HEYTHROP	74.20	78.14	5.31
HOLWELL	26.65	27.22	2.14
IDBURY	74.32	77.07	3.70
KELMSCOTT	44.82	45.24	0.94
KENCOT	65.05	65.28	0.35
KIDDINGTON WITH ASTERLEIGH	51.29	53.50	4.31
KINGHAM	390.91	395.24	1.11
LANGFORD	156.32	157.08	0.49
LEAFIELD	375.73	376.55	0.22
LITTLE FARINGDON	41.67	42.42	1.80
LITTLE TEW	100.78	103.63	2.83
LYNEHAM	86.36	88.28	2.22
MILTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD	798.10	809.74	1.46
MINSTER LOVELL	691.49	719.00	3.98
NORTH LEIGH	994.38	990.19	(0.42)
NORTHMOOR	188.82	190.91	1.11
OVER NORTON	199.42	218.66	9.65
RAMSDEN	182.08	185.13	1.68
ROLLRIGHT	243.36	240.63	(1.12)
ROUSHAM	27.50	27.28	(0.80)
SALFORD	128.18	131.41	2.52
SANDFORD ST MARTIN	137.50	144.39	5.01
SHILTON	282.45	277.72	(1.67)
SHIPTON-UNDER-WYCHWOOD	701.34	702.59	0.18
SOUTH LEIGH	168.93	167.91	(0.60)
SPELSBURY	153.82	155.72	1.24
STANDLAKE	677.59	675.05	(0.37)
STANTON HARCOURT	492.86	523.18	6.15
STEEPLE BARTON	603.38	609.04	0.94
STONESFIELD	718.71	725.28	0.91
SWERFORD	88.65	90.22	1.77
SWINBROOK & WIDFORD	101.54	104.57	2.98
TACKLEY	502.82	505.67	0.57
TAYNTON	79.76	80.11	0.44
WESTCOT BARTON	87.62	86.95	(0.76)
WESTWELL	48.29	49.82	3.17
WITNEY	11,159.31	11,213.75	0.49
WOODSTOCK	1,708.78	1,766.38	3.37
WOOTTON	300.50	301.50	0.33
WORTON	48.60	47.00	(3.29)
TOTAL TAXBASE (No.)	47,078.85	47,841.03	1.62



West Oxfordshire District Council

www.westoxon.gov.uk

Fees and Charges 2024/2025

Planning Services General Administration		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total charge £ p	VAT Status
Access to Information/Inspection of Background Documents	Charge per document (after Committee date)	1.00	1.00	0.00	1.00	Non vatable
	Where documents are listed under a general description (after Committee date) During 5 days prior to Committee date only	8.00	9.00	0.00	9.00	Non vatable
	<i>Note: Members of the public may only inspect background documents 3 days prior to Committee date or thereafter.</i>					
	Administration Charge for Services Rendered	30 percent	30 percent		30 % + VAT	Vatable
Minutes/Agendas	Per Annum	247.00	264.00	52.80	316.80	Vatable
	Single Agenda	7.00	7.00	1.40	8.40	Vatable
Parish/Town Councils Per Annum		25.00	27.00	5.40	32.40	Vatable
Brownfields Register (Hard copy)		15.00	15.00	3.00	18.00	Vatable
Self-Build register	Part 1 – for those who meet criteria (with local connections).	25.00	25.00	5.00	30.00	Vatable
	Part 2 – for those who meet national criteria, but not local connection.	10.00	10.00	2.00	12.00	Vatable

Libraries		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total charge £ p	VAT Status
Dyeline Prints (Any type, with due regard to copyright restrictions)	A2 Size	8.50	9.00	1.80	10.80	Vatable
	A1 Size	10.70	11.00	2.20	13.20	Vatable
	From Paper Roll Larger than A1 Size	13.75	15.00	3.00	18.00	Vatable
Photocopying - (per sheet)	A4 size and foolscap	0.20	0.20	0.04	0.24	Vatable
	A3 size	0.20	0.20	0.04	0.24	Vatable
	A4 & A3 Colour Copies	0.30	0.30	0.06	0.36	Vatable
Local Plan		22.05	25.00	0.00	25.00	Non vatable

Planning Services		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
Planning Applications – Maps	Up to 6 maps (one charge for the set):					
	1:500 scale*	5.00	5.00	0.00	5.00	Non vatable
	plus admin fee #	14.00	15.00	3.00	18.00	Vatable
	1:1250 scale*	19.00	20.00	0.00	20.00	Non vatable
	plus admin fee #	14.00	15.00	3.00	18.00	Vatable
	1:2500 scale*	78.00	83.00	0.00	83.00	Non vatable
	plus admin fee #	13.00	14.00	2.80	16.80	Vatable
*All maps are provided by the National maps Centre and are subject to change if the O.S. increase their fees						
# Only one admin fee is charged regardless of the number of maps purchased.						
Planning Applications - Weekly Press Lists		236.00	252.00	50.40	302.40	Vatable
Planning Decision Notices	Notice requested	14.00	15.00	3.00	18.00	Vatable
Compilation of Agreement. Minimum charge increased at Officer's discretion	Section 52 Agreement Per copy of Agreement	26.00	28.00	5.60	33.60	Vatable
	Section 106 Agreements Per copy of Agreement	23.00	25.00	5.00	30.00	Vatable
Tree Preservation Orders: Per copy of order		22.00	23.00	4.60	27.60	Vatable
Valuation Fee		At Cost	At Cost	-	At Cost	Vatable
High Hedges Complaint- £500- zero-rated VAT		600.00	640.00	0.00	640.00	Non vatable
Planning application fees are set by central government.		Use this link to CLG planning portal.		http://ecab.planningportal.co.uk/uploads/english_application_fees.pdf		

Planning Services		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
Local Search Fees	Con29 only	135.50	144.50	28.90	173.40	Vatable
	Part II	21.50	21.50	4.30	25.80	Vatable
	Additional Questions	21.50	21.50	4.30	25.80	Vatable

Standard Legal and Estates Fees for Property Transactions		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
Legal Fee	New Commercial Lease	500.00	535.00	0.00	535.00	Non vatable
	Renewal Leases	100.00	105.00	0.00	105.00	Non vatable
	Deed of Variation (at Tenant request)	250.00	265.00	0.00	265.00	Non vatable
	Licence to Alter £250 £150 £400	250.00	265.00	0.00	265.00	Non vatable
	Licence to Assign / Underlet £250 £150 £400	250.00	265.00	0.00	265.00	Non vatable
	Deed of Grant/Release £500 £250 £750	500.00	535.00	0.00	535.00	Non vatable
	Deed of Surrender £250 £150 £400	250.00	265.00	0.00	265.00	Non vatable
	Licence for Use £150 £150 £300	150.00	160.00	0.00	160.00	Non vatable
Estates Fee	Disposal - (at other party request) £500 £500 £1000	500.00	535.00	0.00	535.00	Non vatable
	Deed of Variation (at Tenant request)	150.00	160.00	0.00	160.00	Non vatable
	Licence to Alter £250 £150 £400	150.00	160.00	0.00	160.00	Non vatable
	Licence to Assign / Underlet £250 £150 £400	150.00	160.00	0.00	160.00	Non vatable
	Deed of Grant/Release £500 £250 £750	250.00	265.00	0.00	265.00	Non vatable
	Deed of Surrender £250 £150 £400	150.00	160.00	0.00	160.00	Non vatable
	Licence for Use £150 £150 £300	150.00	160.00	0.00	160.00	Non vatable
	Letter Licence n/a £50 £50	50.00	55.00	0.00	55.00	Non vatable
Schedule of Condition: depending on size of property £100 - £500						Non vatable
	Disposal - (at other party request)	500.00	535.00	0.00	535.00	Non vatable

*** Legal and Estates Fee Exclusions:**

Council Contractors occupying property for service provision
Local Charities
Community Organisations (Not for Profit)

Departure from Legal and Estates Fee Schedule

In exceptional circumstances or if it is in the interest of the Council's commercial property portfolio, the Head of Legal Services, in respect of Legal fees or the Assistant Director with responsibility for Assets, in respect of Estates fees, can agree a reduction or waiver of fees, in consultation with the appropriate Executive Member whose portfolio includes Property and Assets.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT – PRE-APPLICATION & DISCRETIONARY FEES		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
PROPOSED FEE LEVELS FOR PRE-APPLICATION (AND RELATED) ADVICE (April 2024)						
Is planning permission required? (to include a search of our records to ascertain whether permitted development rights have been removed)		N/a	62.50	12.50	75.00	Vatable
Is listed building consent required?		N/a	83.33	16.67	100.00	Vatable
Is a building or structure considered to be curtilage listed?		N/a	83.33	16.67	100.00	Vatable
Has a planning condition or S.106 legal agreement clause been complied with? £75 (+ £75 ph) for complicated requests – taking more than 1 hour to be agreed in advance)		N/a	62.50	12.50	75.00	Vatable
		N/a	62.50	12.50	75.00	Vatable
Simple householder advice (does not include advice relating to development proposals for listed buildings)		N/a	83.33	16.67	100.00	Vatable
Complex householder advice (including advice relating to development proposals for listed buildings) +£75 if a site visit is required		N/a	166.67	33.33	200.00	Vatable
		N/a	62.50	12.50	75.00	Vatable
Each subsequent hour of officer time above the stated limit (to be agreed in advance) including specialist officers time.		N/a	41.67	8.33	50.00	Vatable
Any subsequent response to further amendments		N/a	83.33	16.67	100.00	Vatable
Any subsequent meeting or site visit		N/a	125.00	25.00	150.00	Vatable
	1 dwelling (including replacement dwellings and holiday let/tourist accommodation)	N/a	550.00	110.00	660.00	Vatable
	Provision of up to 200 square metres of floor space for other uses e.g. equestrian/retail/commercial/industrial/ mixed development	N/a	250.00	50.00	300.00	Vatable
	Additional hour(s) of officer time (including specialist officers) to be agreed and paid in advance	N/a	41.67	8.33	50.00	Vatable
	Any subsequent response to further amendments	N/a	125.00	25.00	150.00	Vatable
	Any subsequent meeting	N/a	208.33	41.67	250.00	Vatable
	2 - 9 (inclusive) dwellings (including replacement dwellings and holiday let/tourist accommodation)	N/a	833.33	166.67	1,000.00	Vatable
	Development of less than 0.5 hectares for residential use (if number of dwellings/units is not known)	N/a	416.67	83.33	500.00	Vatable
	Provision of 200-1,000 square metres of floor space or 0.5 hectares for other uses (where floorspace not known) e.g. equestrian/retail/commercial/industrial/ mixed development	N/a	416.67	83.33	500.00	Vatable
	Development of land for other uses e.g. equestrian/retail/commercial/industrial/mixed development use with a site area of upto 1 hectare	N/a	416.67	83.33	500.00	Vatable
	Change of use of land or buildings	N/a	416.67	83.33	500.00	Vatable
	Additional hour (s) of officer and specialist time (to be agreed and paid in advance)	N/a	50.00	10.00	60.00	Vatable
	Any subsequent response to further amendments	N/a	125.00	25.00	150.00	Vatable
	Any subsequent meeting	N/a	208.33	41.67	250.00	Vatable
	Major applications (other)	10 – 199 (inclusive) residential units Residential development (where the proposed number of units is not specified), with a site area of 0.5 hectares or more and less than four hectares Provision of 1,000 - 9,999 square metres of floor space for other uses e.g. equestrian/ retail/ commercial/industrial/ mixed development	N/a	1,666.67	333.33	2,000.00
Development of land for other uses e.g. equestrian/retail/commercial/industrial/mixed development with a site area of one hectare or more and less than two hectares		N/a	62.50	12.50	75.00	Vatable
An hour of additional officer (including specialist) time (to be agreed and paid in advance)		N/a	208.33	41.67	250.00	Vatable
Any subsequent response to further amendments		N/a	416.67	83.33	500.00	Vatable
Any subsequent meeting		N/a	416.67	83.33	500.00	Vatable
Major applications	200 or more residential units Residential development (where the proposed number of units is not specified) with a site area of four hectares or more Provision of 10,000 square metres or more of floor space for other uses e.g. equestrian/retail commercial/ industrial/ mixed development	N/a	3,333.33	666.67	4,000.00	Vatable
	Development of land for other uses e.g. equestrian /retail /commercial / industrial / mixed development with a site area of two hectares or more	N/a	416.67	83.33	500.00	Vatable
	Any subsequent response to further amendments	N/a	83.33	16.67	100.00	Vatable
	An hour of additional officer (including specialist) time (to be agreed and paid in advance)	N/a	625.00	125.00	750.00	Vatable

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT - PRE-APPLICATION – Other Discretionary fees		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
General Policy/CIL/S106 related Advice	per hour of officer time. For those requests that will be longer, the fee will be agreed in advance.	N/a	125.00	25.00	150.00	Vatable
General Planning or other related advice not covered above	per hour	N/a	83.33	16.67	100.00	Vatable
Applications directly due to disability, or made by Town and Parish Councils	No charge					
Applications made by Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) or charities	It is at the Development Managers discretion to reduce the rates above for certain types of applications					
Assistance with filling in a planning application form or other related planning document.	per hour	N/a	62.50	12.50	75.00	Vatable
Admin charge for applications not submitted on the Planning Portal i.e postal or email.	per application	N/a	20.83	4.17	25.00	Vatable
Charging for invalid applications (that have not been made valid within 28 days or as indicated/agreed by the Councils validation team).	Householder, advertisements Certificates of Lawfulness & Prior notifications	N/a	41.67	8.33	50.00	Vatable
	Minor Applications	N/a	83.33	16.67	100.00	Vatable
	Major Applications	N/a	166.67	33.33	200.00	Vatable
Copy of Decision Notice, TPO, Appeal Decision Notice, Enforcement Notices, S111 etc	Per document	N/a	25.00	5.00	30.00	Vatable
Copy of S106 or Agreement	Per document	N/a	41.67	8.33	50.00	Vatable
Charges for paper copies of applications	Charge per whole application should all documents be requested. per householder	N/a	20.83	4.17	25.00	Vatable
	per Minor/Other	N/a	41.67	8.33	50.00	Vatable
	per major	N/a	83.33	16.67	100.00	Vatable
Charges per plan are based on the costs to copy and send out the document and are per sheet.	A0	N/a	6.67	1.33	8.00	Vatable
	A1	N/a	5.83	1.17	7.00	Vatable
	A2	N/a	5.00	1.00	6.00	Vatable
	A3	N/a	4.58	0.92	5.50	Vatable
	A4	N/a	3.75	0.75	4.50	Vatable
	A4 – subsequent copies	N/a	0.42	0.08	0.50	Vatable

Resources		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
Administration	Freedom of Information enquiries (charge per hr for search costs over the £450 'Appropriate Limit'):	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	Non vatable
	Freedom of Information photocopying - per sheet	1.00	1.00	0.00	1.00	Non vatable
Summons Costs - Council Tax/NNDR	Council Tax - Summons on application for Liability Order*	65.00	65.00	0.00	65.00	Non vatable
	Council Tax - Costs of Liability Order hearing*	45.00	45.00	0.00	45.00	Non vatable
	NNDR - Summons on application for Liability Order*	75.00	75.00	0.00	75.00	Non vatable
	NNDR - Costs of Liability Order hearing* * As approved by the Magistrates Court	45.00	45.00	0.00	45.00	Non vatable
Miscellaneous properties	Garage rents	13.00	14.00	2.80	16.80	Vatable

Environmental & Regulatory Services: Water Supplies		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
Private Water Supplies	Risk Assessment or Investigation (fee per hour)	62.00	66.00	0.00	66.00	Non vatable
	Sampling – each visit – fixed fee	121.00	129.00	0.00	129.00	Non vatable
	Granting and Authorisation - fixed fee plus hourly rate applies	121.00	129.00	0.00	129.00	Non vatable
Sample Analysis	Taken under Regulation 10 Taken during check monitoring Taken during audit monitoring	at cost	at cost		at cost	Non vatable
Regulation of Pollution from Industrial Sources <i>Fees as laid down by the Secretary of State</i>	- Environmental Permitting Regulations 2010 <i>Please refer to www.gov.uk/local-authority-environmental-permit</i>					
Environmental Information Regulations – Search Fees	Basic administration charge	30.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	Non vatable
	Contaminated Land information request	97.00	80.00	0.00	80.00	Non vatable

Environmental & Regulatory Services: Food Health & Safety		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
Export of Food Products	Food Export Health Certificate (including first hour of officer time)	64.00	70.00	0.00	70.00	Non vatable
	DEFRA Export Health Certificate	126.00	135.00	0.00	135.00	Non vatable
	Officer hourly rate after first hour	45.00	49.00	0.00	49.00	Non vatable
Other Products & Services	E-learning	35.00	37.00	0.00	37.00	Non vatable
	Safer Food, Better Business Information Pack	15.00	16.00	0.00	16.00	Non vatable
	Safer Food Better Business Diary Sheets (per pack)	Na	5.00	0.00	5.00	Non vatable
	Food Hygiene Rating Re-visit	190.00	205.00	0.00	205.00	Non vatable
	Condemned Food Certificate	95.00	102.00	0.00	102.00	Non vatable

Environmental & Regulatory Services: Licencing Animal Welfare		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
Breeding of Dogs ¹	New Application	424.00	466.00	0.00	466.00	Non vatable
	Renewal (1 to 3 years depending on rating + annual inspection)	334.00	367.00	0.00	367.00	Non vatable
Horse Riding Establishments ¹	New Application	485.00	534.00	0.00	534.00	Non vatable
	Renewal (1 to 3 years depending on rating + annual inspection)	334.00	367.00	0.00	367.00	Non vatable
Pet Shops	New Application	327.00	360.00	0.00	360.00	Non vatable
	Renewal (1 to 3 years depending on rating)	279.00	307.00	0.00	307.00	Non vatable
Keeping or Training Animals for Exhibition	New Application	327.00	360.00	0.00	360.00	Non vatable
	Renewal (3 years)	279.00	307.00	0.00	307.00	Non vatable
Home Boarding for Dogs (Day-time or overnight care within the home environment)	New Application	327.00	360.00	0.00	360.00	Non vatable
	Renewal (1 to 3 years depending on rating)	279.00	307.00	0.00	307.00	Non vatable
Providing Boarding in Kennels	Dogs - New Application – up to 50 dogs	327.00	360.00	0.00	360.00	Non vatable
	Dogs - Renewal (1 to 3 years depending on rating) – up to 50 dogs	279.00	307.00	0.00	307.00	Non vatable
	Dogs - New Application – over 50 dogs	382.00	420.00	0.00	420.00	Non vatable
	Dogs - Renewal (1 to 3 years depending on rating)– over 50 dogs	334.00	367.00	0.00	367.00	Non vatable
	Cats - New Application – up to 50 cats	327.00	360.00	0.00	360.00	Non vatable
	Cats - Renewal (1 to 3 years depending on rating) – up to 50 cats	279.00	307.00	0.00	307.00	Non vatable
	Cats - New Application – over 50 cats	382.00	420.00	0.00	420.00	Non vatable
	Cats - Renewal (1 to 3 years depending on rating)– over 50 cats	334.00	367.00	0.00	367.00	Non vatable
Total charge is the amount as shown plus veterinary fees						

Environmental & Regulatory Services: Licencing Animal Welfare		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
Providing Day Care for Dogs	New Application – up to 50 dogs	297.00	327.00	0.00	327.00	Non vatable
	Renewal (1 to 3 years depending on rating) – up to 50 dogs	279.00	307.00	0.00	307.00	Non vatable
	New Application – over 50 dogs	382.00	420.00	0.00	420.00	Non vatable
	Renewal (1 to 3 years depending on rating)– over 50 dogs	334.00	367.00	0.00	367.00	Non vatable
Supplementary Fees	Franchise Licence – Dog Boarding only ¹	133.00	146.00	0.00	146.00	Non vatable
	Host Fee ²		0.00	0.00	0.00	Non vatable
	Additional Activity ³	55.00	61.00	0.00	61.00	Non vatable
	Variation Fee e.g. amendment to a licence	30.00	33.00	0.00	33.00	Non vatable
	Inspection Fee ⁴	146.00	161.00	0.00	161.00	Non vatable
	Re-Rating Fee ⁵	152.00	167.00	0.00	167.00	Non vatable
	Admin Fee (Dog Breeding/Horse Riding Establishment Recharge Admin Fee)	0.00	30.00	0.00	30.00	Non vatable
¹ Host fees will be required in addition to this licence ² Required per host family of a dog boarding franchise ³ Payable in addition to the appropriate licence fees where more than one activity is undertaken at the same premises ⁴ Payable if an inspection is required in addition to the initial inspection required included within the licence fee ⁵ Inspection and licence amendment for re-rating of the current star rating						
Dangerous Wild Animals	New Application ¹	406.00	447.00	0.00	447.00	Non vatable
	Renewal (2 years) ¹	358.00	394.00	0.00	394.00	Non vatable
Zoos	s14(2) dispensation - New Application ¹	1,413.00	1,554.00	0.00	1,554.00	Non vatable
	s14(2) dispensation - Renewal (6 years) ¹	1,910.00	2,101.00	0.00	2,101.00	Non vatable
	No dispensation - New Application ¹	2,256.00	2,482.00	0.00	2,482.00	Non vatable
	No dispensation - Renewal (6 years) ¹	3,177.00	3,495.00	0.00	3,495.00	Non vatable
¹ Total charge is the amount as shown plus veterinary fees						

Environmental & Regulatory Services: Licencing Taxis		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
Drivers Licence	Hackney Carriage / Private Hire / Dual - 3 year – new application	263.00	289.00	0.00	289.00	Non vatable
	Hackney Carriage / Private Hire / Dual - 3 year – renewal	194.00	213.00	0.00	213.00	Non vatable
	Single Private Hire to Dual Licence transfer	57.00	63.00	0.00	63.00	Non vatable
Vehicle Licence – all 1 year	Hackney Carriage vehicle – new application	263.00	289.00	0.00	289.00	Non vatable
	Hackney Carriage vehicle – renewal	194.00	213.00	0.00	213.00	Non vatable
	Private Hire vehicle – new application	263.00	289.00	0.00	289.00	Non vatable
	Private Hire vehicle – renewal	194.00	213.00	0.00	213.00	Non vatable
	Transfer of vehicle licence – to another person	26.00	29.00	0.00	29.00	Non vatable
	Transfer of vehicle licence – to another vehicle (1 year)	189.00	208.00	0.00	208.00	Non vatable
	Transfer of vehicle licence – to another vehicle (remainder of plate)	90.00	99.00	0.00	99.00	Non vatable
	Temporary vehicle (Insurance Company)	263.00	289.00	0.00	289.00	Non vatable
Change of registration number	90.00	99.00	0.00	99.00	Non vatable	
Private Hire Operators	Operator Licence – 5 year – new application	420.00	462.00	0.00	462.00	Non vatable
	Operator Licence – 1 year – new application / renewal	105.00	116.00	0.00	116.00	Non vatable
Other Fees	Knowledge Test	79.00	87.00	0.00	87.00	Non vatable
	Replacement driver's badge	29.00	32.00	0.00	32.00	Non vatable
	Replacement external plate	35.00	39.00	0.00	39.00	Non vatable
	Replacement internal plate	29.00	32.00	0.00	32.00	Non vatable
	Vehicle bracket	11.00	12.00	0.00	12.00	Non vatable
	Administration charge for any other requests	26.00	29.00	0.00	29.00	Non vatable

Environmental & Regulatory Services: Licencing Street Trading		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
Street Trading Licences	Witney & Chipping Norton – annual	2,893.00	3,182.00	0.00	3,182.00	Non vatable
	Witney & Chipping Norton – 3 months	862.00	948.00	0.00	948.00	Non vatable
	All other consents – annual	1,934.00	2,127.00	0.00	2,127.00	Non vatable
	All other consents – 3 months	621.00	683.00	0.00	683.00	Non vatable
	Individual Trader Day Rate (per stall)	67.00	74.00	0.00	74.00	Non vatable

Environmental & Regulatory Services: Markets						
Chipping Norton	per day per 10' frontage or pro-rata	22.00	22.00	0.00	22.00	Non vatable
	per day casual	31.00	31.00	0.00	31.00	Non vatable
	plus per canopy, per pitch, per day	3.00	3.00	0.00	3.00	Non vatable
Witney	per day per 10' frontage or pro-rata	23.00	23.00	0.00	23.00	Non vatable
	per day casual	32.00	32.00	0.00	32.00	Non vatable
	plus per canopy, per pitch, per day	3.00	3.00	0.00	3.00	Non vatable
	Farmers Market - per site	349.00	349.00	0.00	349.00	Non vatable

Environmental & Regulatory Services: Licencing Other		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
Scrap Metal	Dealer (Site) Licence – New Application / Renewal	646.00	711.00	0.00	711.00	Non vatable
	Collector's Licence – New Application / Renewal	646.00	711.00	0.00	711.00	Non vatable
Cosmetic Piercing (Accupuncture, Tattoo, Ear Piercing & Electrolysis)	Premises registration	227.00	250.00	0.00	250.00	Non vatable
	Personal registration	169.00	186.00	0.00	186.00	Non vatable
Sex Shop, Sex Cinema or Sexual Entertainment Venue	Please contact ers@publicagroup.uk to discuss your requirements					
Houses in Multiple Occupation	HMO Licence (3 years)	752.00	802.00	0.00	802.00	Non vatable
Advisory Services	The council offers regulatory service support and advice as part of the Better Business for all partnership (https://www.thegrowthhub.biz/support-hub/better-business-for-all); please contact ers@publicagroup.uk to discuss your requirements.					

Alcohol & Entertainment (Licensing Act 2003)	<i>Fees as laid down by the Secretary of State – please refer to www.gov.uk</i>				
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Environmental & Regulatory Services: Licencing Caravan & Campsites		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
New site application	- 5 or less units	382.00	408.00	0.00	408.00	Non vatable
	- 6 to 24 units	509.00	543.00	0.00	543.00	Non vatable
	- 25 to 99 units	612.00	653.00	0.00	653.00	Non vatable
	- 100 to 199 units	703.00	750.00	0.00	750.00	Non vatable
	- 200 units and over	806.00	860.00	0.00	860.00	Non vatable
Annual Fee for existing site licence	- 5 or less units	321.00	343.00	0.00	343.00	Non vatable
	- 6 to 24 units	424.00	452.00	0.00	452.00	Non vatable
	- 25 to 99 units	528.00	563.00	0.00	563.00	Non vatable
	- 100 to 199 units	612.00	653.00	0.00	653.00	Non vatable
	- 200 units and over	709.00	757.00	0.00	757.00	Non vatable
Other Fees	Transfer / amendment of existing site licence	121.00	129.00	0.00	129.00	Non vatable
	Change Site Conditions	121.00	129.00	0.00	129.00	Non vatable
	Site Rules Deposit	61.00	65.00	0.00	65.00	Non vatable
	Administrative and other expenses to serve notice under the Mobile Homes Act 2013	364.00	388.00	0.00	388.00	Non vatable

Environmental & Regulatory Services: Licencing Gambling Act		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
Betting Premises (excluding Tracks)	New Premises	471.68	519.00	0.00	519.00	Non vatable
	Vary Premises	471.68	519.00	0.00	519.00	Non vatable
	Transfer of Premises	105.53	116.00	0.00	116.00	Non vatable
	Reinstatement of Premises	211.01	232.00	0.00	232.00	Non vatable
	Provisional Statement	471.68	519.00	0.00	519.00	Non vatable
	New Premises with Provisional	86.88	96.00	0.00	96.00	Non vatable
	Annual Fee	186.20	205.00	0.00	205.00	Non vatable
	Copy of Licence (Set cap of £25.00)	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	Non vatable
Notification of change		31.00	34.00	0.00	34.00	Non vatable
For all other premises licence fees, please contact ers@publicagroup.uk .						
The fees for gaming machine permits are set nationally – please refer to: https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/licencees-and-businesses/licences-and-fees						
Lotteries and Amusements (<i>Fees set nationally</i>)	Small Lottery – new application	40.00	40.00	0.00	40.00	Non vatable
	Small Lottery – renewal	20.00	20.00	0.00	20.00	Non vatable

Environmental & Regulatory Services: Premises Li		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
Number of people						
*Events that exceed 5,000 people will be liable for an additional fee to be charged on an application for a premises licence authorising the event.	5,000-9,999	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	Non vatable
	10,000-14,999	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	2,000.00	Non vatable
	15,000-19,999	4,000.00	4,000.00	0.00	4,000.00	Non vatable
	20,000-29,999	8,000.00	8,000.00	0.00	8,000.00	Non vatable
	30,000-39,999	16,000.00	16,000.00	0.00	16,000.00	Non vatable
	40,000-49,999	24,000.00	24,000.00	0.00	24,000.00	Non vatable
	50,000-59,999	32,000.00	32,000.00	0.00	32,000.00	Non vatable
	60,000-69,999	40,000.00	40,000.00	0.00	40,000.00	Non vatable
	70,000-79,999	48,000.00	48,000.00	0.00	48,000.00	Non vatable
	80,000-89,999	56,000.00	56,000.00	0.00	56,000.00	Non vatable
	90,000 and over	64,000.00	64,000.00	0.00	64,000.00	Non vatable
Note: Fees are determined by Government						

Environmental & Regulatory Services: Community Safety & Licensing (Licensing Act 2003) Premises Licences		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
Fees relating to applications for premises licences, club premises certificates, variations, (but not changes of name and address etc or changes of designated premises supervisor) the conversion of existing licences, and conversion/variations should be graduated using five bands as shown:	BAND A	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	Non vatable
	BAND B	190.00	190.00	0.00	190.00	Non vatable
	BAND C	315.00	315.00	0.00	315.00	Non vatable
	BAND D	450.00	450.00	0.00	450.00	Non vatable
	BAND E	635.00	635.00	0.00	635.00	Non vatable
The annual charges payable by those holding licences and club premises certificates:	BAND A	70.00	70.00	0.00	70.00	Non vatable
	BAND B	180.00	180.00	0.00	180.00	Non vatable
	BAND C	295.00	295.00	0.00	295.00	Non vatable
	BAND D	320.00	320.00	0.00	320.00	Non vatable
	BAND E	350.00	350.00	0.00	350.00	Non vatable
Particular types of premises which do not have non-domestic rateable values would be allocated to Band A The various non-domestic rateable values should be allocated to bands in the following way: Note:*Non-Domestic rateable value	BAND A	*£0-£4,300				Non vatable
	BAND B	*£4,301-£33,000				Non vatable
	BAND C	*£33,001-£87,000				Non vatable
	BAND D	*£87,001-£125,000				Non vatable
	BAND E	*£125,001 and over				Non vatable
*No fee or annual charge would be payable by church halls, chapel halls or other premises of a similar nature and village halls, parish and community halls or other premises of a similar nature for a premises licence authorising only the provision of regulated entertainment. No fee or annual charge would be payable by a school providing education for pupils up to year 13 or a sixth form college for a premises licence authorising only the provision of regulated entertainment carried on by the school or sixth from college.						
Temporary Events Notice		21.00	21.00	0.00	21.00	Non vatable
Personal Licence		37.00	37.00	0.00	37.00	Non vatable
Minor Variations procedure		89.00	89.00	0.00	89.00	Non vatable
Note: Fees determined by Government						

Environmental & Regulatory Services: Community Safety & Licensing (Licensing Act 2003)		2023/2024	2024/2025	VAT	2024/2025	VAT Status
Miscellaneous Fees		Basic Charge	Basic Charge		Total Charge	
		£ p	£ p	£ p	£ p	
	Application for a grant or renewal of personal licence	37.00	37.00	0.00	37.00	Non vatable
	Temporary event notices	21.00	21.00	0.00	21.00	Non vatable
	Theft, loss etc of premises licence or summary	10.50	10.50	0.00	10.50	Non vatable
	Application for a provisional statement where premises being built, etc	195.00	195.00	0.00	195.00	Non vatable
	Notification of change of name or address	10.50	10.50	0.00	10.50	Non vatable
	Application to vary to specify individual as premises supervisor	23.00	23.00	0.00	23.00	Non vatable
	Application for transfer of premises licence	23.00	23.00	0.00	23.00	Non vatable
Miscellaneous Fees	Interim authority notice following death etc. of licence holder	23.00	23.00	0.00	23.00	Non vatable
	Theft, loss etc of certificate or summary	10.50	10.50	0.00	10.50	Non vatable
	Notification of change of name or alteration of club rules	10.50	10.50	0.00	10.50	Non vatable
	Change of relevant registered address of club	10.50	10.50	0.00	10.50	Non vatable
	Theft, loss etc of temporary event notice	10.50	10.50	0.00	10.50	Non vatable
	Theft, loss etc of personal licence	10.50	10.50	0.00	10.50	Non vatable
	Duty to notify change of name or address	10.50	10.50	0.00	10.50	Non vatable
	Right of freeholder etc to be notified of licensing matters	21.00	21.00	0.00	21.00	Non vatable
Note: Fees determined by Government						

Environmental & Regulatory Services: Environmental Services Penalty Notices		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
Fine for Dog Fouling		50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	Non vatable
Off Street Parking enforcement	Higher Level Contravention paid after service of charge certificate*	105.00	105.00	0.00	105.00	Non vatable
	Higher Level Contravention paid after 14 days but before service of charge certificate*	70.00	70.00	0.00	70.00	Non vatable
	Higher level contravention paid within 14 days*	35.00	35.00	0.00	35.00	Non vatable
	Lower Level Contravention paid after service of charge certificate*	75.00	75.00	0.00	75.00	Non vatable
	Lower level contravention paid within 14 days*	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	Non vatable
	Lower level contravention paid within 14 days*	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	Non vatable
Operational Guidance to Local Authorities: Parking Policy and enforcement. Department for Transport. Traffic Management Act 2004						
Nuisance parking	Fixed penalty notices (FPN's)*	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	Non vatable
	If paid within 14 days	75.00	75.00	0.00	75.00	Non vatable
Abandoned vehicles	Fixed penalty notices (FPN's)*	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	Non vatable
	If paid within 14 days	150.00	150.00	0.00	150.00	Non vatable
*statutory fee						

Environmental & Regulatory Services: Penalty Notices		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
Depositing litter	Fixed penalty notices (FPN's)*	80.00	80.00	0.00	80.00	Non vatable
	If paid within 14 days	60.00	60.00	0.00	60.00	Non vatable
Graffiti & Fly-posting	Fixed penalty notices (FPN's)*	80.00	80.00	0.00	80.00	Non vatable
	If paid within 14 days	60.00	60.00	0.00	60.00	Non vatable
Unauthorised distribution of free printed matter	Fixed penalty notices (FPN's)*	80.00	80.00	0.00	80.00	Non vatable
	If paid within 14 days	60.00	60.00	0.00	60.00	Non vatable
Failure to comply with a waste receptacles notice	Fixed penalty notices (FPN's)*	80.00	80.00	0.00	80.00	Non vatable
	If paid within 14 days	60.00	60.00	0.00	60.00	Non vatable
Failure to comply with a street litter control notice	Fixed penalty notices (FPN's)*	110.00	110.00	0.00	110.00	Non vatable
	If paid within 14 days	83.00	83.00	0.00	83.00	Non vatable
Failure to comply with a litter clearing notice	Fixed penalty notices (FPN's)*	110.00	110.00	0.00	110.00	Non vatable
	If paid within 14 days	83.00	83.00	0.00	83.00	Non vatable
Failure to produce waste documents	Fixed penalty notices (FPN's)*	300.00	300.00	0.00	300.00	Non vatable
	If paid within 14 days	180.00	180.00	0.00	180.00	Non vatable
Failure to produce authority to transport waste	Fixed penalty notices (FPN's)*	300.00	300.00	0.00	300.00	Non vatable
	If paid within 14 days	180.00	180.00	0.00	180.00	Non vatable
Smoking in smoke free premises or work vehicles	Fixed penalty notices (FPN's)*	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	Non vatable
	If paid within 14 days	30.00	30.00	0.00	30.00	Non vatable
Failure to display no smoking signs	Fixed penalty notices (FPN's)*	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	Non vatable
	If paid within 14 days	150.00	150.00	0.00	150.00	Non vatable
Unlawful deposit of waste	Fixed penalty notices (FPN's)*	400.00	400.00	0.00	400.00	Non vatable
	If paid within 10 days	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	Non vatable
Householder Duty of Care	Fixed penalty notices (FPN's)*	400.00	400.00	0.00	400.00	Non vatable
	If paid within 10 days	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	Non vatable
Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Regulations	Fixed penalty notices (FPN's)*	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00	Non vatable
Housing Act 2004 Charging for Notices	Charge for Notice served	355.00	355.00	0.00	355.00	Non vatable
Minimum Energy Performance Certificate	The Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015.	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00	Non vatable
*statutory fee						

BUILDING CONTROL – GENERAL NOTES

THE BUILDING ACT 1984 : THE BUILDING REGULATIONS 2010 (As amended)

The building owner or agent must make a building regulations application and pay a fee for the construction of new works. All work must comply with the 2010 Building Regulations (as amended).

The person carrying out the building works is to liaise with and meet the requirements of the Local Authority Building Control and give the required notice for certain key stages of works as detailed in the guidance below.

The charges set out on the following pages have been set in accordance with the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010. The tables give the charges for various categories of work.

Full Plans Applications Charges

The 'charges' shown in the following tables relate to Full Plans Applications. For the definition and details of Full Plans Applications please visit the respective Council's website.

Building Notice Applications Charges

Where building work is of a relatively minor nature, the Building Notice charge is the same for the Full Plans Application charge except for Cotswold District Council where the Building Notice charge is as shown on the relevant Tables.

For the definition and details of Building Notice Applications please visit the respective Council's website.

A Building Notice Application will not, in the majority of situations, be accepted for new dwellings. It is also likely that new dwellings may potentially attract additional charges depending on what level of design input has been achieved by the applicant.

Regularisation Applications (Retrospective Works) Charges

The charge required when depositing an application for regularisation (or reversion) is 100% of the appropriate charge as listed in the following tables **excluding VAT**, with an additional 50% premium added to it. This type of application is exempt from VAT.

For the definition and details of Regularisation Applications please visit the respective Council's website.

Works to provide access and facilities for disabled persons

Charges are not payable when the proposed work is to provide access and facilities in an existing dwelling or an extension to store equipment or provide medical treatment for a disabled person. In order to claim exemption, the appropriate evidence as to the relevance of the adaptation for the person's disability must accompany the application.

Building Control		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
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TABLE A – NEW DWELLINGS e.g. flats, houses with total floor area of less than 300m ²)						
Dwellings 1	Full Plans Charge	606.00	647.00	129.40	776.40	Vatable
	Building Notice Charge	660.00	704.00	140.80	844.80	Vatable
Dwellings 2+		Price on application				
<p>a) Where more than 1 dwelling is proposed, charges will be calculated on an individual application basis; please contact Building Control for a competitive quotation.</p> <p>b) New dwellings over 300m² in floor area – charges to be</p> <p>c) No additional fees are payable for different associated garages, built at the same time as the dwelling(s) concerned.</p> <p>d) Local Authority Building Control (LABC) can provide competitively priced 10 year Structural Warranties for new housing (including conversions, social housing, self-build and competed housing) and commercial buildings. For more details and prices contact 0845 0540505 or www.labcwarranty.co.uk.</p>						

TABLE B – DOMESTIC AND COMMERCIAL EXTENSIONS TO A SINGLE BUILDING						
Erection / Extension of a garage (30m ² to 60m ²)	Full Plans Charge	296.00	316.00	63.20	379.20	Vatable
	Building Notice Charge	325.00	347.00	69.40	416.40	Vatable
Garage conversion to habitable accommodation	Full Plans Charge	222.00	237.00	47.40	284.40	Vatable
	Building Notice Charge	244.00	260.00	52.00	312.00	Vatable
Loft conversion up to 100m ²	Full Plans Charge	591.00	631.00	126.20	757.20	Vatable
	Building Notice Charge	650.00	694.00	138.80	832.80	Vatable
Loft conversion over 100m ²		Price on application				
Extension up to 20m ²	Full Plans Charge	458.00	489.00	97.80	586.80	Vatable
	Building Notice Charge	503.00	537.00	107.40	644.40	Vatable
Extension 20m ² up to 60m ²	Full Plans Charge	606.00	647.00	129.40	776.40	Vatable
	Building Notice Charge	660.00	704.00	140.80	844.80	Vatable
Extension 60m ² up to 100m ²	Full Plans Charge	762.00	813.00	162.60	975.60	Vatable
	Building Notice Charge	838.00	894.00	178.80	1,072.80	Vatable
Extension over 100m ²		Price on application				
Notes:						
a) References to floor area relate to the total internal area of all storeys.						
b) Where more than one extension is proposed, the floor areas must be added together to determine the total charge.						
c) Some alterations to buildings to improve facilities for disabled persons are exempt from charges. For details and advice please contact us.						

TABLE C – ALL OTHER WORK						
Under £1,000	Full Plans Charge	111.00	117.00	23.40	140.40	Vatable
	Building Notice Charge	122.00	128.00	25.60	153.60	Vatable
£1,001 to £5,000	Full Plans Charge	222.00	233.00	46.60	279.60	Vatable
	Building Notice Charge	244.00	256.00	51.20	307.20	Vatable
£5,001 to £10,000	Full Plans Charge	296.00	311.00	62.20	373.20	Vatable
	Building Notice Charge	326.00	342.00	68.40	410.40	Vatable
£10,001 to £20,000	Full Plans Charge	407.00	427.00	85.40	512.40	Vatable
	Building Notice Charge	448.00	470.00	94.00	564.00	Vatable
£20,001 to £30,000	Full Plans Charge	577.00	606.00	121.20	727.20	Vatable
	Building Notice Charge	635.00	667.00	133.40	800.40	Vatable
£30,001 to £40,000	Full Plans Charge	704.00	739.00	147.80	886.80	Vatable
	Building Notice Charge	774.00	813.00	162.60	975.60	Vatable
£40,001 to £50,000	Full Plans Charge	813.00	854.00	170.80	1,024.80	Vatable
	Building Notice Charge	894.00	939.00	187.80	1,126.80	Vatable
£50,001 to £60,000	Full Plans Charge	998.00	1,048.00	209.60	1,257.60	Vatable
	Building Notice Charge	1,098.00	1,153.00	230.60	1,383.60	Vatable
£60,001 to £70,000	Full Plans Charge	1,073.00	1,127.00	225.40	1,352.40	Vatable
	Building Notice Charge	1,180.00	1,239.00	247.80	1,486.80	Vatable
£70,001 to £80,000	Full Plans Charge	1,183.00	1,242.00	248.40	1,490.40	Vatable
	Building Notice Charge	1,300.00	1,365.00	273.00	1,638.00	Vatable
Over £80,000		Price on application				
For competitive quotations for projects over £80,000 please contact the 01993 861651 or by emailing building.control@westoxon.gov.uk						

Building Control	2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
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TABLE C – ALL OTHER WORK *continued*

Electrical installations if not using a competent electrical engineer	Full Plans Charge	460.00	491.00	98.20	589.20	Vatable
	Building Notice Charge	506.00	540.00	108.00	648.00	Vatable
New windows install by non FENSA opp – up to 8 windows	Full Plans Charge	120.00	128.00	25.60	153.60	Vatable
	Building Notice Charge	132.00	141.00	28.20	169.20	Vatable
New windows install by non FENSA opp – over to 8 windows	Price on application					

Notes on additional services:

- a) Local Authority Building Control (LABC) can provide competitively priced 10 year Structural Warranties for new commercial buildings.
For more details and prices contact 0845 0540505 or www.labcwarranty.co.uk.
- b) SAP/EPC and SBEM calculations can be provided – price on application.
- c) Air pressure testing can be provided – price on application.

For more information please contact:

The building control team on 01993 861651 or Email: building.control@westoxon.gov.uk

TABLE D – ADDITIONAL SERVICES

Additional Services	Charge to administer an application which has not been visited for 10 years.	146.00	156.00	31.20	187.20	Vatable
	Services will be charged on an hourly rate of £ 73.00 per hour (including VAT).	73.00	78.00	15.60	93.60	Vatable
<p>Other relevant services not covered by the previous tables may be undertaken on a 'cost recovery' basis.</p> <p>Provision of Completion Certificates e.g. where requested more than six months after completion of the building work</p> <p>Advisory work in connection with i) demolition of buildings and ii) dangerous structures</p>						

Environmental Services		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
Dog Control (Release of an impounded Stray Dog)	Statutory Fee	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	Non vatable
	Kennelling per day	24.00	At cost	At cost	At cost	Non vatable
	Administration Fee	40.00	87.00	0.00	87.00	Non vatable
	Delivery Charge (Optional return of dog to owner by the kennels)	59.00	70.80	14.16	84.96	Vatable
Note: The cost of veterinary treatment will be passed on in full to the dog owner. Owners in receipt of an income-related benefit shall only be charged for kennelling and the delivery charge (if requested), plus any veterinary costs incurred. This only applies in respect of the first recorded stray. Thereafter, full charges apply.						
Other Services	Public Sewer Searches*	30.00	30.00	0.00	30.00	Non vatable
	Chipping Norton Mop Fair	5,250.00	5,880.00	0.00	5,880.00	Non vatable
	Woodstock Fair	2,625.00	3,255.00	0.00	3,255.00	Non vatable
Home Improvement Agency:	Agency Fees for Grant-aided Works up to £5,000	17% of cost	15% of cost			As Applicable
	Agency Fees for balance of Grant-aided Works Above £5,000	14% of cost	15% of cost			As Applicable
	Small Repairs Fee - Estimates quoted at £20 per hour plus VAT (if applicable) plus cost of materials used					As Applicable
	Agency Fees for balance of Grant-aided Works Above £5,000	14% of cost	15% of cost			As Applicable
	Small Repairs Fee - Estimates quoted at £20 per hour plus VAT (if applicable) plus cost of materials used					As Applicable
*statutory fee						

Street Signage, Naming and Numbering		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
Address and Street Name Amendments	Change of address	72.00	75.00	0.00	75.00	Non vatable
	Allocating a name to a property or allocating a number to a named property	72.00	75.00	0.00	75.00	Non vatable
	Change of a commercial building address	72.00	75.00	0.00	75.00	Non vatable
	Change of street name at residents, developers or parish/town council request	431.00	448.00	0.00	448.00	Non vatable
	Plus additional charge per property/unit where consultation with existing residents is to be carried out by WODC	48.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	Non vatable
Naming and numbering of a block of flats	Block of flats: up to 20 flats	215.00	226.00	0.00	226.00	Non vatable
	Block of flats: 21-50 flats	300.00	300.00	0.00	300.00	Non vatable
	Block of flats: 51+ flats	400.00	400.00	0.00	400.00	Non vatable
Naming and numbering of new properties including commercial buildings	Per Unit up to 5 plots	72.00	75.00	0.00	75.00	Non vatable
	6 - 25 plots	609.00	639.00	0.00	639.00	Non vatable
	26 - 75 plots	948.00	995.00	0.00	995.00	Non vatable
	76 - 150 plots	1,354.00	1,422.00	0.00	1,422.00	Non vatable
	151 - 250 plots	1,693.00	1,778.00	0.00	1,778.00	Non vatable
	251 - 350 plots	2,031.00	2,133.00	0.00	2,133.00	Non vatable
	351 - 500 plots	2,370.00	2,489.00	0.00	2,489.00	Non vatable
501 or more plots	2,708.00	2,843.00	0.00	2,843.00	Non vatable	
Additional charges where new street names are required:	1 - 5 new street names	271.00	285.00	0.00	285.00	Non vatable
	6 - 10 new street names	542.00	569.00	0.00	569.00	Non vatable
	11 or more new street names	677.00	711.00	0.00	711.00	Non vatable
Additional charge where new Court names are required	Per Court name	160.00	168.00	0.00	168.00	Non vatable
Charge for a developer amending plans after naming and numbering has commenced.		144.00	151.00	0.00	151.00	Non vatable
Providing a Letter of Certification	Per letter of address certification	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	Non vatable
Charges for preparing site location plans and supervising the installation of street nameplates	1-4 Nameplates	209.90	209.90	41.98	251.88	Vatable
	5-8 Nameplates	269.80	269.80	53.96	323.76	Vatable
	9-12 Nameplates	329.80	329.80	65.96	395.76	Vatable
	13-16 Nameplates	389.80	389.80	77.96	467.76	Vatable
	17-20 Nameplates	449.80	449.80	89.96	539.76	Vatable
	21-24 Nameplates	509.70	509.70	101.94	611.64	Vatable
	25-28 Nameplates	569.60	569.60	113.92	683.52	Vatable
29+ Nameplates	599.50	599.50	119.90	719.40	Vatable	
The charges above include all necessary administration, site visits to carry out existing address checks, establishing any new street names required and the publishing of the new addresses to relevant organisations						

Environmental Services:		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
Prepaid items	*Pre paid plastic sacks - per sack (Refuse)	3.00	3.50	0.00	3.50	Non vatable
	*Pre paid stickers - per sticker (Refuse)	3.00	3.50	0.00	3.50	Non vatable
	*Pre paid plastic sacks - per sack (Recycling)	3.00	3.50	0.00	3.50	Non vatable
	*Pre paid stickers - per sticker (Recycling)	3.00	3.50	0.00	3.50	Non vatable
*Service to be available where wheeled bins are unsuitable						
For Domestic use only:- Bulky household waste charges	Contaminated bin	117.00	140.00	0.00	140.00	Non vatable
Waste collection from commercial establishments. (See page 12.27 for chargeable items)						
Green Waste Collection		45.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	Non vatable
Recovery of Abandoned Trolleys (per trolley)		61.00	98.00	19.60	117.60	Vatable
Container Delivery	Black Boxes & Food Caddies	5.00	6.00	0.00	6.00	Non vatable
	Household Waste Bin 240ltr	11.00	12.00	0.00	12.00	Non vatable
	Larger Waste Bins 1100 & 660ltrs	21.00	23.00	0.00	23.00	Non vatable
Emptying of litter/dog waste bins	Per empty	8.37	8.37	0.00	8.37	Non vatable
Trade Waste Fees	Charges disclosed on customer enquiry					

Bulky Household Waste Collection Service		2023/2024 Basic Charge £ p	2024/2025 Basic Charge £ p	VAT £ p	2024/2025 Total Charge £ p	VAT Status
Normal Household items*	Up to 4 items	33.00	34.00	0.00	34.00	Non vatable
	Each additional item with a limit of up to two additional items	11.00	12.00	0.00	12.00	Non vatable
Non - standard household items	Non - standard household items	33.00	34.00	0.00	34.00	Non vatable
Please refer to www.Westoxon.gov.uk for the up to date list of collectable items.						
Note: The Council will not collect the following items: Asbestos, Bricks, Builders Rubble, Car Shells, Chemicals, Gas Bottles, Oil Drums, Paint, Trailers, Vehicle Engines (or other parts) or Vehicle wheels/tyres						

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WODC Budget 2024/25

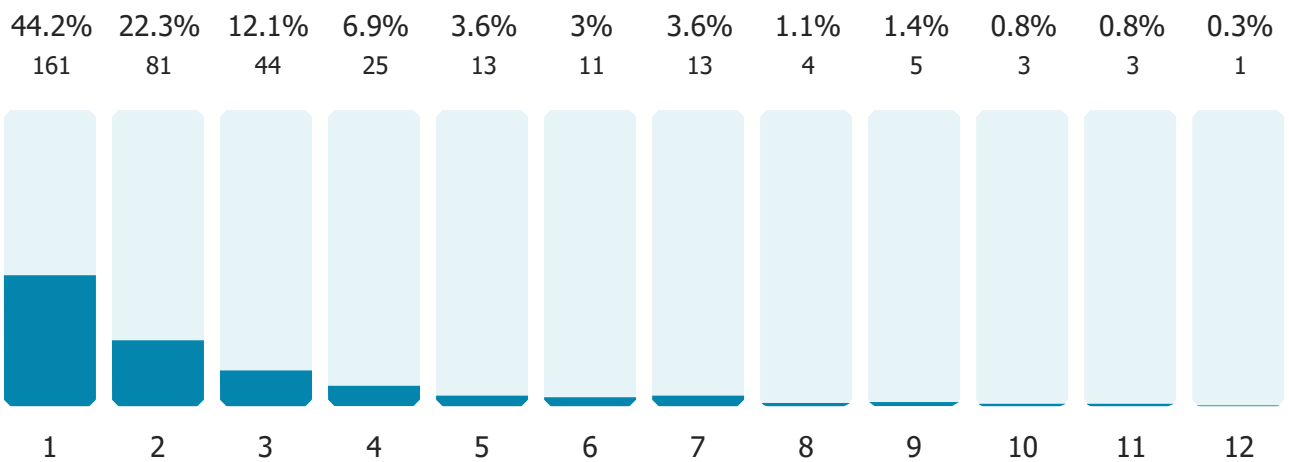
377 responses



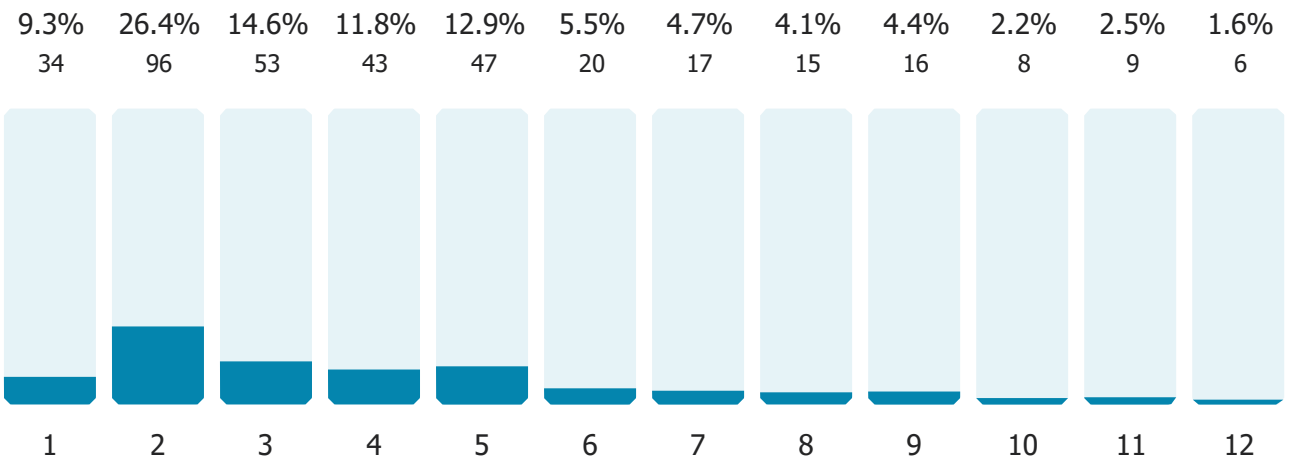
WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Please rank the services below with 1 being the service you consider most important and 10 being the service you consider least important.

Collecting waste and recycling

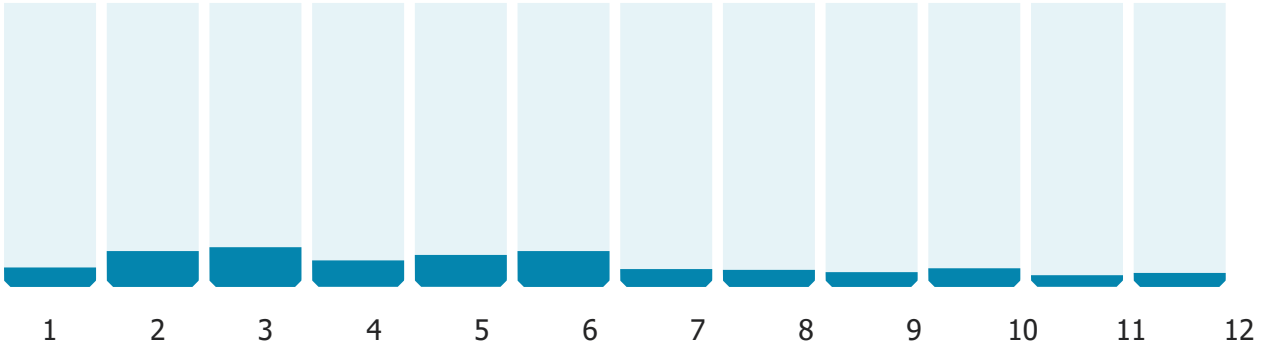


Keeping the district clean and tidy



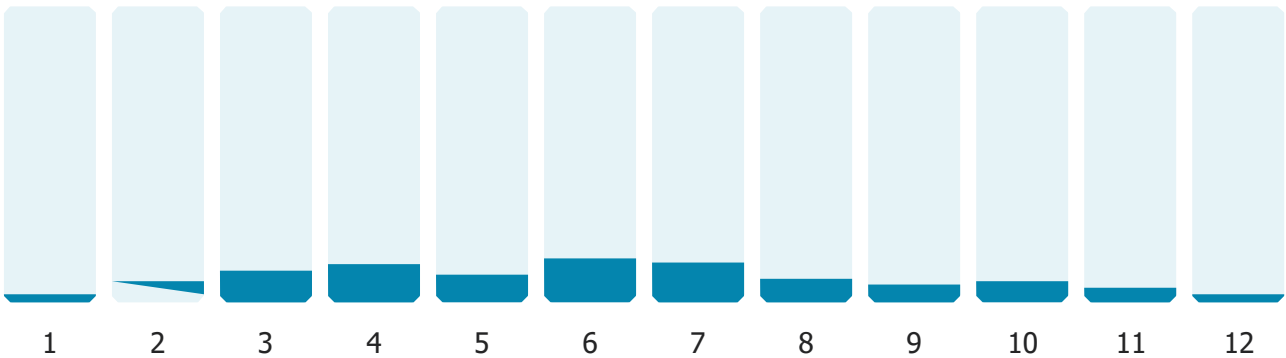
Providing benefits and financial support

6.9%	12.6%	14%	9.3%	11.3%	12.6%	6.3%	6%	5.2%	6.6%	4.1%	4.9%
25	46	51	34	41	46	23	22	19	24	15	18



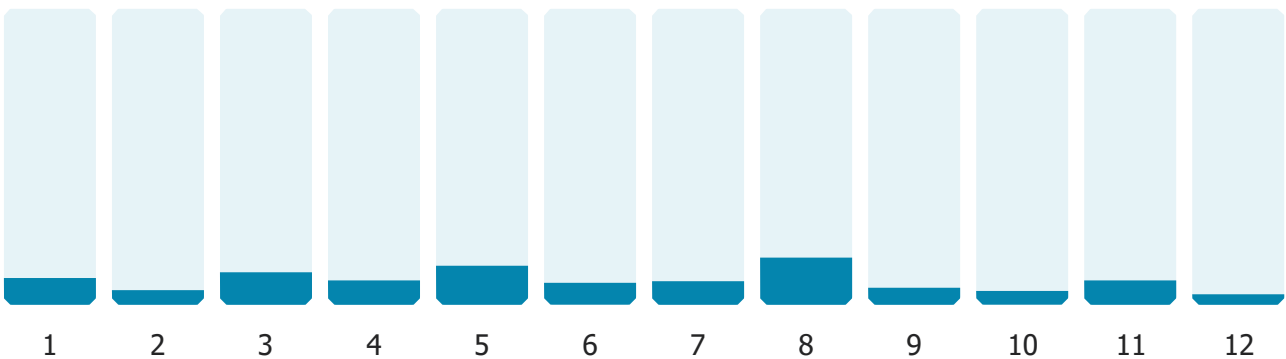
Planning services such as planning application decisions and appeals

2.7%	7.1%	10.7%	12.9%	9.3%	14.8%	13.5%	8%	6%	7.1%	4.9%	2.7%
10	26	39	47	34	54	49	29	22	26	18	10

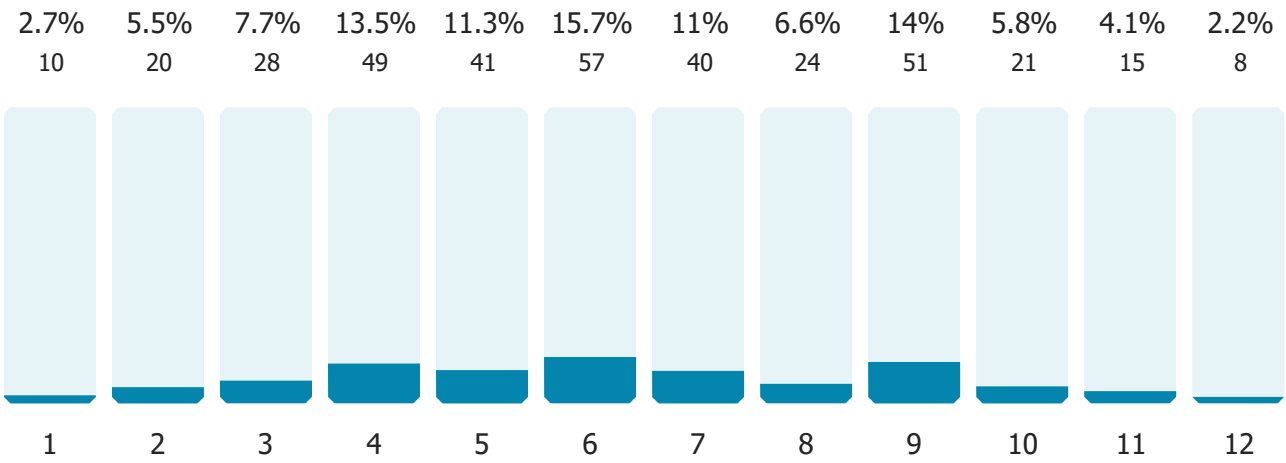


Support for homeless people

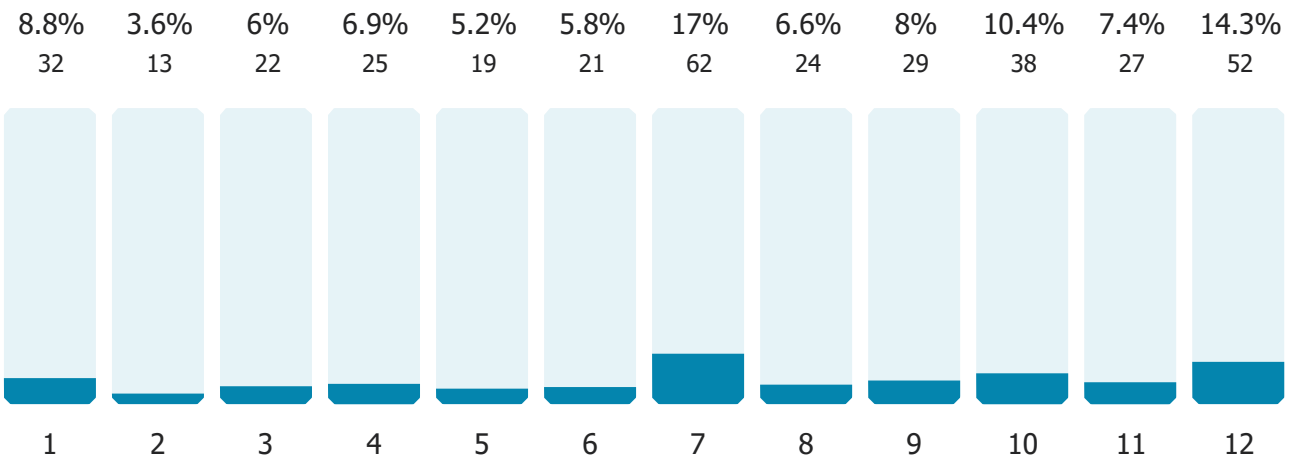
9.1%	4.9%	11%	8.2%	13.2%	7.4%	8%	15.9%	5.8%	4.7%	8.2%	3.6%
33	18	40	30	48	27	29	58	21	17	30	13



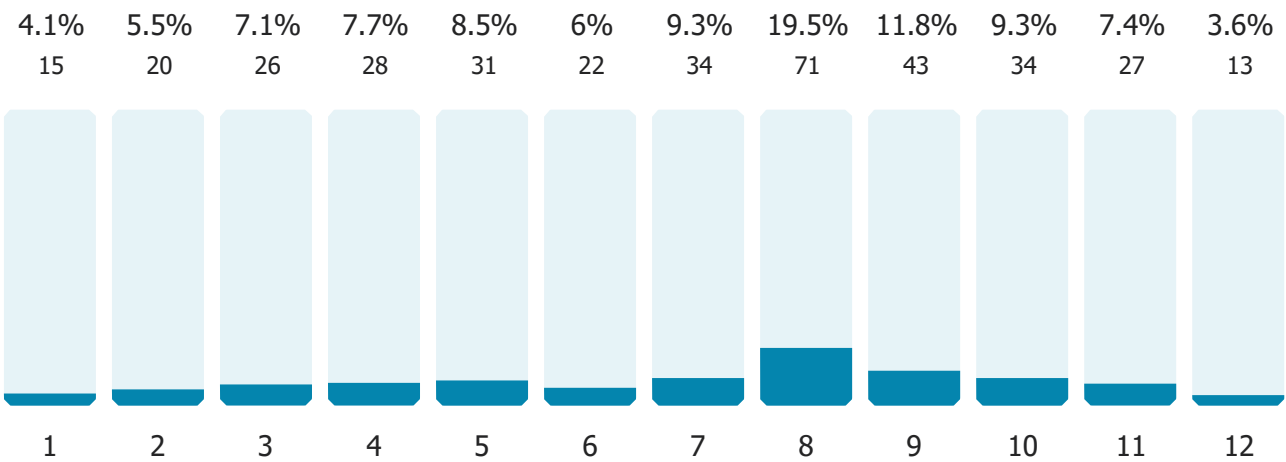
Leisure services such as leisure centres, playing areas and encouraging people to get active



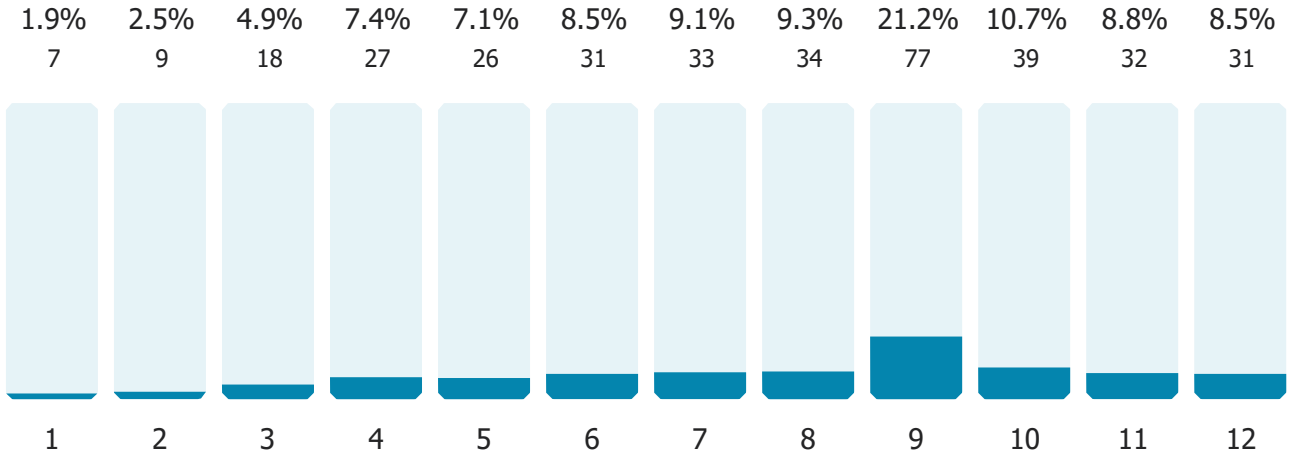
Environment initiatives to help tackle the climate emergency



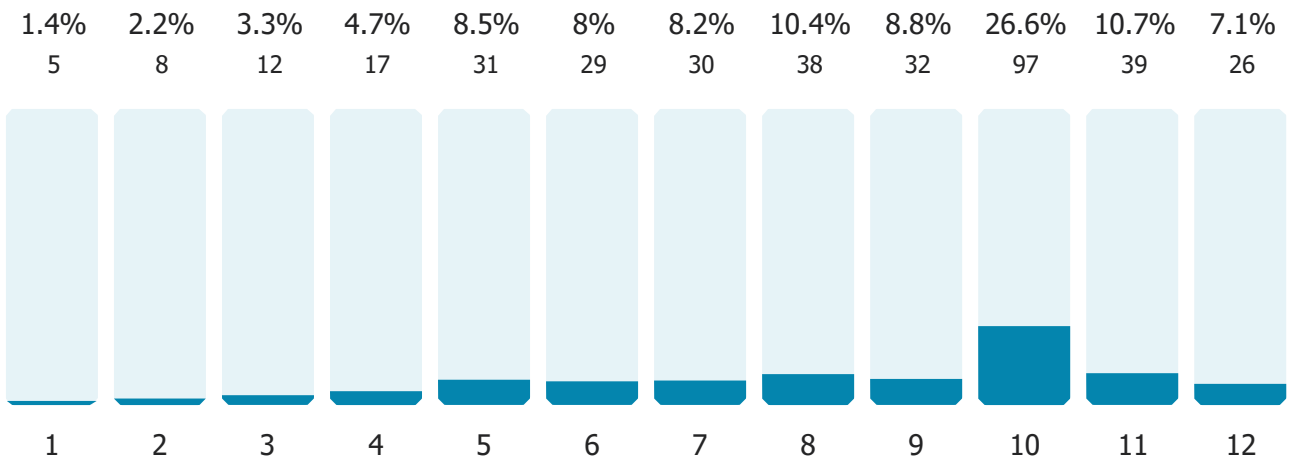
Supporting local business and the economy



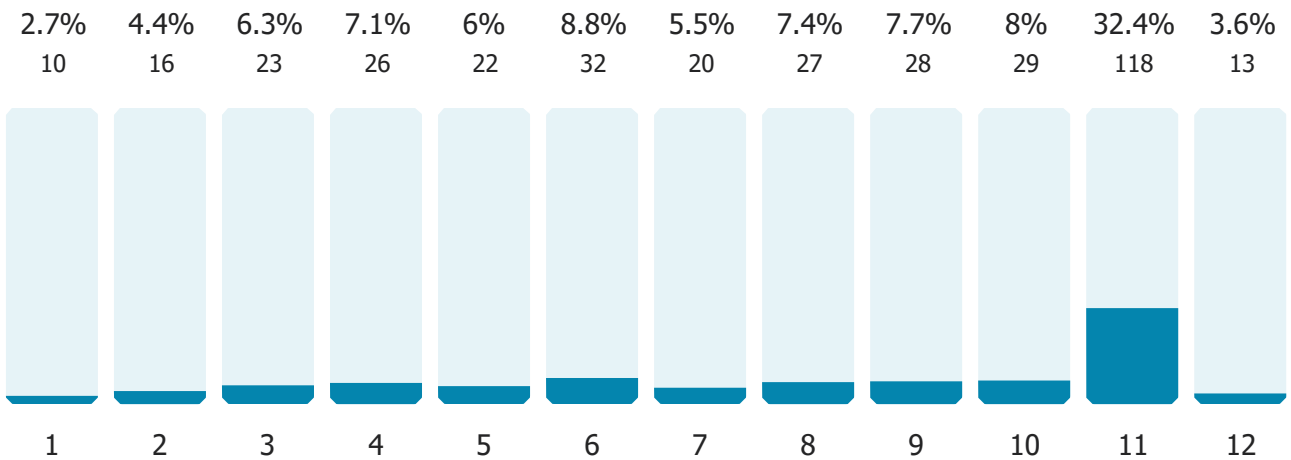
Car parks in the district



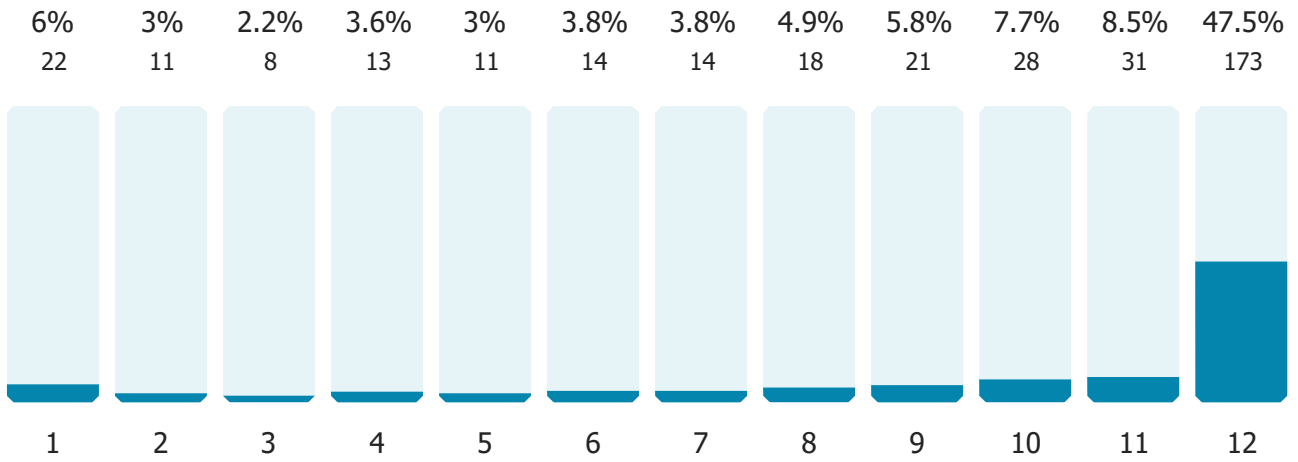
Supporting community activity such as grants and supporting community initiatives and support for the homeless



Making sure laws are followed such as food hygiene, checking water supplies, noise disturbances and business licences



Collecting council tax and business rates



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Pay Policy Statement – West Oxfordshire District Council 2024/25

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1. Background

1.1. The purpose of this Pay Policy Statement is to meet the following requirements:

- s38 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 which requires the Council to approve a Pay Policy Statement annually prior to the commencement of the financial year;
- the Council's obligations under the associated statutory guidance set out in the Openness and Accountability in Local Pay: Guidance under section 40 of the Localism Act (February 2012) together with the Local Government Transparency Code 2015.

2. Scope of the Statement

2.1. To avoid confusion and provide transparency this statement will only apply to officers that are employees of West Oxfordshire District Council.

2.2. Details of pay for staff employed by Publica are found within Publica's statement of accounts.

2.3. The current Statement sets out the following elements:

- pay for each of the in scope officers
- remuneration of lowest paid officer
- the pay relationship between the highest paid officers and other officers
- performance related pay and bonuses, termination payments, transparency
- other aspects of remuneration.

3. Officers covered by the policy statement

3.1. Below is a list of those officers covered by the Statement:

- Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service)
- Director of Finance (s151 officer)
- Director of Governance (Monitoring Officer)
- Other officers of the Council.

3.2. Those not covered by this statement include, officers who are wholly or primarily employed by Publica and who retain dual employment contracts to deliver statutory elements of their roles such as, Parking Appeal decisions or delegated planning decisions that require an employment relationship with the Council. In addition Officers mainly hosted by the Council e.g. South East England Councils (SEEC) are not included.

4. General Statements

- 4.1. The Council has a range of Human Resources policies that apply equally to all officers across the Council from the highest paid to the lowest paid. These policies cover a wide range of Human Resources issues including annual leave arrangements and sickness arrangements.
- 4.2. The Council determined that directly employed staff should adopt similar policies as the Publica employees in the interests of fairness and equity.
- 4.3. Subsequent to Publica merging its multiple pay and grading structures in 2020 and adopting a new comprehensive job evaluation scheme to ensure equal pay compliance, the Council has adopted a scheme built on similar principles in line with the previous Council resolutions.
- 4.4. The new Pay and Grading structure was designed in consultation with the Trade Unions and seeks to provide flexibility for the Council to adapt to changes in pay pressures and market conditions whilst retaining equal pay protection. The scheme also provides for local pay increases in addition to the national (cost of living) pay award in a similar way to incremental pay in the current scheme.
- 4.5. Following the conclusion of the staff consultation process, the new pay structure was implemented in June 2022 (backpay to 1st April 2021). This new pay structure does not cover statutory roles which remain subject to the previous benchmark approach as agreed by the Council.

5. Policy on Remuneration

- 5.1 The policy for the year 2024/25 in respect of statutory officers is to maintain the level of pay in the same bands as the current year subject to any cost of living award that may be agreed nationally in relation to year 2024/25.

Statutory Officers – Spot Salaries

Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) - £105,570

Director of Finance (s 151 officer) - £88,298

Director of Governance (Monitoring Officer) – £88,298

Non-Statutory Officers

- 5.2. In respect of other senior pay the revised scheme was implemented in June 2022 (pay back dated to 1st April 2021). This will also be subject to the national pay award in respect of 1 April 2024.
- 5.3. The pay and grading scheme is made up of four levels based upon the nature of the role (Core, Implement, Guide & Translate) with each level sub divided into generic job groups (Business Manager, Level 1 Manager, Level 4 Specialist, Level 3 Specialist, Level 2 Specialist, Level 1 Specialist, Level 2 Case/Field Work, Level 1 Case/Field Work, Customer Advisor, Process & Internal Support) and specific comparable pay peer groups.

The pay levels are as follows: -

Core	£23,151 - £37,459
Implement	£28,444 - £51,665
Guide	£42,957 - £64,436
Translate	£54,297 - £81,445

- 5.4. At the time of publication of this policy statement no annual pay award has been agreed for 2024/2025. These pay levels will be automatically upgraded by the agreed pay award.

5.5. Other factors relating to pay:

- Officers are generally placed upon the bottom pay point on appointment, but this can be varied by the approval of the appropriate appointments panel.
- A local pay award (pay levelling) can be made annually to allow progression within job groups typically to the mid-point.
- Pay levels above the Job Group mid-point need to be supported by special factors such as market conditions/market forces.
- No performance related pay exists for any Officer of the Council.
- No bonuses are available for any Officer of the Council.
- Termination benefits payable will be in line with that available to all other officers as set out in the Restructuring/Redundancy/Efficiency Policy guidelines in line with Employment Rights Act tables.
- Full Council will retain the decision to make any new appointment of an officer where the pay (incorporating all payments and benefits in kind) exceeds £100,000.
- Full Council will retain the decision to approve any severance payments where the compensation payments exceed £100,000.

5.5 The details of the payments in respect of all these officers are set out in the [Transparency page](#) of the Councils website.

5.6 None of the Statutory Officers are entitled to receive overtime payments for time worked beyond the contracted hours and out of ordinary working hours.

5.7 The Returning Officer for election purposes also receives a payment for the statutory duties undertaken by virtue of the specific, additional appointment to that role in addition to other responsibilities. For national elections and referenda the amount is set and is payable by the government. For District and Town/Parish Council elections, the fees are payable by the District Council in accordance with an approved scale.

6. Tax avoidance

6.1. The Council does not and will not employ senior managers in permanent positions via service companies that could be construed as avoiding tax and national insurance contributions. From time to time, the Council may employ individuals via service companies to cover interim or short-term project roles. However, the Council will comply with its responsibilities regarding the application of HMRC regulations on payments made to personal service companies (known as IR35) by applying income tax and national insurance deductions to the payment.

7. Market forces supplement

7.1. Evidence from market and recruitment data shows that for some professions a higher salary may be necessary to attract and retain staff. For non-statutory roles this is built into the pay & grading scheme utilising the in-built flexibility above mid-point.

8. Retention payment scheme

8.1. A retention payment scheme is available to all areas of the Council, and might be used in the following cases:

- Difficulty in recruiting the most suitable candidate for a post.

- Difficulty in retaining key people where their leaving would significantly affect internal and/or external service delivery.
- 8.2 All additional payments will be time limited and reviewed at predetermined intervals to reconsider their appropriateness against the prevailing job market.
- 8.3 The scheme may be applied flexibly and can mean:
- Paying someone at a higher salary level
 - Making a one off payment.
- 8.4 These can be used in combination with other benefits that the Council offers. A package to suit the particular circumstances should be used and no individual should receive benefits that equate to more than 15% above the maximum of their substantive grade.

9. Lowest paid employees

9.1. Lowest paid employees of the Council are defined as those employees (excluding Apprentices) who are in a full time or part time role, who are above the age of 21, and are paid within the Core category of the new Job Evaluation scheme (the lowest band). From 1st April 2023 the lowest Core Grade was £23,151. This amount is subject to pay award pending in respect of April 2024.

9.2 The pay differential between the highest paid officer and the median officer is set out below:

Highest	£105,570
Median Employee	£49,498
Multiple	2.13

10. Pay protection

10.1. The Council seeks to ensure that all employees receive equal pay for work of equal value. To be consistent with equal pay principles the Council's protection arrangements will not create the potential for pay inequalities (e.g. open-ended protection).

10.2. There may be times when the grade for an individual's role changes for reasons unrelated to their performance e.g. restructures. In such cases the protection arrangements outlined will apply for 3 years from the date of the change.

11. Severance payments

11.1. The Council has a consistent method of calculating severance payments which it applies to all employees without differentiation. The payment is intended to recompense employees for the loss of their livelihood and provide financial support whilst they seek alternative employment.

11.2. In line with the statutory redundancy payment scheme, the Council calculates redundancy severance payments using the following calculation. The calculation is based on an employee's age and length of continuous local government service (please note that employees must have

a minimum of 2 years' continuous service to qualify for a redundancy payment) the multiplier for the number of weeks is then applied to the employee's actual weekly earnings.

11.3. The amount of redundancy pay will be calculated as follows:

- 0.5 week's pay for each full year of service where age at time of redundancy is less than 22 years of age;
- 1 week's pay for each full year of service where age at time of redundancy is 22 years of age or above, but less than 41 years of age;
- 1.5 weeks' pay for each full year of service where age at time of redundancy is 41+ years of age.

11.4. The maximum number of service years taken into account is 20. The maximum number of weeks' pay is 30 for anyone aged 61 years of age or older with 20 years or more service

12. Honorarium payments

12.1. Payment of honoraria is a method by which the Council may reward an employee who has temporarily undertaken the duties and responsibilities of a higher graded post, or to recognise a specific contribution that an employee has made to the Council.

13. The Real Living Wage

13.1. The Council and Publica are committed to paying the Real Living Wage (RLW). The RLW rate from October 2023 is:

- £12.00 per hour across UK (except London - £13.15) for workers 18 years and older.

13.2. The RLW is voluntary and is independently calculated based on what people need to get by. The Government encourages all employers that can afford to do so to ensure their employees earn a wage that meets the costs of living, not just the government minimum.

13.3. For Council employees whose substantive post is less than the RLW they will automatically receive the rate set out in 14.1 above.

14. Other pay and conditions in operation

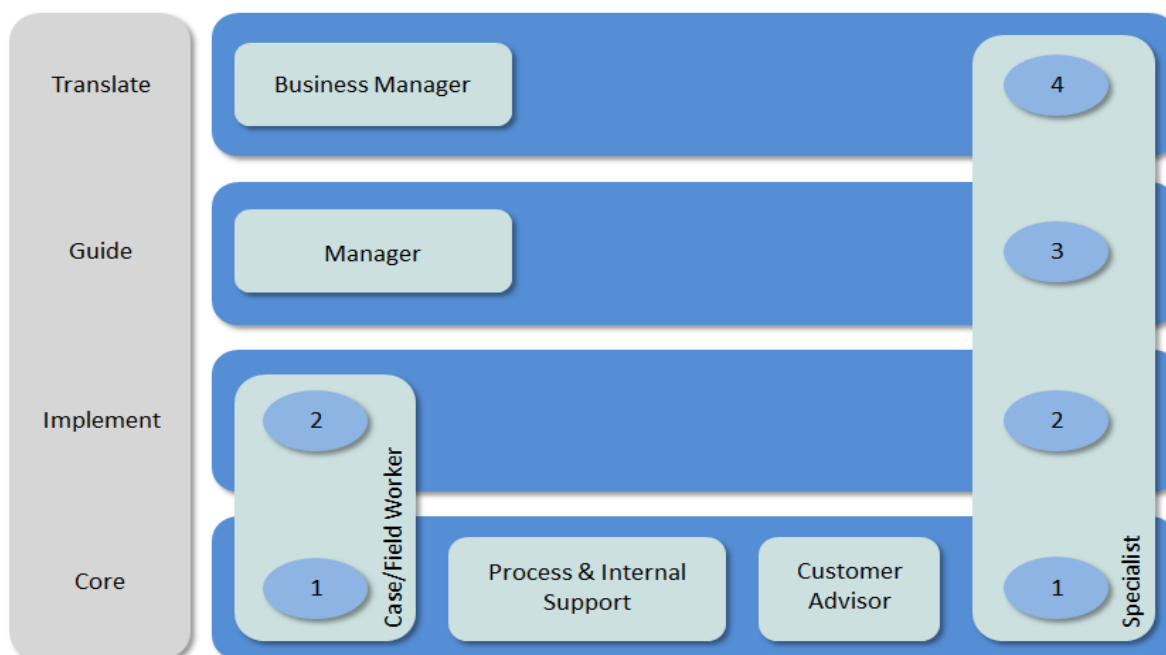
- Stand by and call out payments
- Long service award

15. The Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)

15.1. The LGPS provides for the exercise of discretion that allow retirement benefits to be enhanced. The Council will consider each case on its merits but has determined that it does not normally enhance pension benefits for any of its employees, nor does it operate any discretions under the Local Government (Discretionary Payments) (injury Allowances) Regulations 2011.

15.2. Further information regarding the Oxfordshire County Council administering body for the Council is available from the [Oxfordshire County Council](#) website.

Appendix I Evaluate Pay & Grading Framework – Non- Statutory Roles



Job Groups	From (£) *	Mid-Point (£) *	Top (£) *
Business Manager	54297	67871	81445
Level 4 Specialist	54297	67871	81445
Level 1 Manager	42957	53697	64436
Level 3 Specialist	42957	53697	64436
Level 2 Specialist	34443	43054	51665
Level 2 Case / Field Worker	28444	35555	42666
Level 1 Specialist	24973	31216	37459
Level 1 Case / Field Worker	23151	27766	33319
Customer Advisor	23151	27298	32758
Process / Internal support	23151	27298	32758

Please note: not all job groups will be utilised due to the structure of the Council

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