

Tuesday, 26 November 2024

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

You are summoned to a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee which will be held in the Council Chamber, Woodgreen, Witney OX28 1NB on **Wednesday, 4 December 2024 at 5.30 pm.**



Giles Hughes
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillors: Andrew Beaney (Chair), Joy Aitman (Vice-Chair), Thomas Ashby, Adam Clements, Julian Cooper, Steve Cosier, Genny Early, Natalie King, Liz Leffman, Nick Leverton, Dan Levy, Andrew Lyon, Paul Marsh, Stuart McCarroll, Michele Mead, Elizabeth Poskitt, Carl Rylett, Sandra Simpson, Ruth Smith, Alistair Wray, Liam Walker, Mark Walker and Alex Wilson

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 and Temporary Appointments**
To receive any apologies for absence and temporary appointments.
2. **Declarations of Interest**
To receive any declarations from Members of the Committee on any items to be considered at the meeting.
3. **Minutes of Previous Meeting (Pages 5 - 10)**
To approve the minutes of the meeting held 6 November 2024.
4. **Chair's announcements**
To receive any announcements from the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
5. **Participation of the Public**
To receive any submissions from members of the public, in accordance with the Council's Rules of Procedure, anyone who lives in the district or who pays council tax or business rates to the Council is eligible to read a statement or express an opinion at this meeting. You can register to speak by sending your written submission of no more than 750 words to democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk by no later than 10.00am on the working day before the meeting.
6. **Ubico Business Plan 2025-26 (presentation)**
Purpose:
To provide a Presentation on Business Plan engagement.

Recommendations:
That the Committee resolves to:
 1. Agree any recommendations it wishes to submit to the Executive on 11 December 2024.
Invited:
Councillor Lidia Arciszewska – Executive Member for Environment
Bill Oddy – Assistant Director, Commercial Development
Beth Boughton – Managing Director, Ubico
7. **Waste Fleet Purchase Delegation (Pages 11 - 24)**
Purpose:
To consider the proposal outlined in the report to procure new waste fleet vehicles and the associated infrastructure for any electric vehicles.

Recommendations:
That the Committee resolves to:
 1. Notes the decision by the Executive on 9 October 2024 to: Delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Commercial Development, in consultation with the Executive Members for Environment and Finance, and the Director of Finance, to purchase or lease up to 2 x full size HGV's and up to 4 food waste vehicles and

necessary charging infrastructure up to an estimated cost of £2.8M, (including a procurement contingency and estimated cost of borrowing).

2. Agree any recommendations it wishes to submit to the Executive on 11 December 2024.

Invited:

Councillor Lidia Arciszewska – Executive Member for Environment
Bill Oddy – Assistant Director, Commercial Development
Simon Anthony – Business Manager, Environmental Services

8. **Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report (Pages 25 - 94)**

Purpose:

To consider the Council's Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report for the period 2024-2024.

Recommendations:

That the Committee resolves to:

- I. Agree any recommendations it wishes to submit to the Executive on 11 December 2024.

Invited:

Councillor Hugo Ashton – Executive Member for Planning
Andrew Thomson – Lead Planning Policy and Implementation Officer

9. **Service Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Two (Pages 95 - 156)**

Purpose:

To provide details of the Council's operational performance at the end of 2024-25 Quarter Two (Q2).

Recommendations:

That the Committee resolves to:

- I. Agree any recommendations it wishes to submit to the Executive on 11 December 2024.

Invited

Councillor Andy Graham – Leader of the Council
Alison Borrett – Senior Performance Analyst

10. **Report back on recommendations (Pages 157 - 158)**

For the Committee to note the Executive's response to any recommendations arising from the previous Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.

11. **Committee Work Programme (Pages 159 - 162)**

Purpose:

To provide the Committee with an updated Work Programme for 2024/25.

Recommendation:

That the Committee resolves to:

- I. Note the work programme and agree any amendments.

12. **Executive Work Programme (Pages 163 - 174)**

Purpose:

To give the Committee the opportunity to comment on the Executive Work Programme.

Recommendation:

That the Committee resolves to:

- I. Agree which items on the Executive Work Programme should be subject to pre-decision scrutiny and the priority order of those items.

(END)

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB
at 5.30 pm on **Wednesday, 6 November 2024**

PRESENT

Councillors: Andrew Beaney (Chair), Thomas Ashby, Adam Clements, Julian Cooper, Genny Early, Liz Leffman, Nick Leverton, Dan Levy, Andrew Lyon, Paul Marsh, Stuart McCarroll, Michele Mead, Elizabeth Poskitt, Sandra Simpson, Ruth Smith, Alistair Wray, Liam Walker, Alex Wilson and David Jackson

Officers: Madhu Richards (Director of Finance), Andrew Brown (Head of Democratic and Electoral Services), Georgina Dyer (Chief Accountant), Phil Martin (Director of Place), Heather McCulloch (Community Wellbeing Manager), Janine Sparrowhawk (Community Funding Officer) and Kim Langford-Tejrar (Infrastructure Delivery Lead)

Cabinet Members in attendance: Councillors Duncan Enright, Hugo Ashton, Rachel Crouch and Alaric Smith

55 Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Joy Aitman, Carl Rylett, Steve Cosier and Mark Walker. Councillor David Jackson substituted for Councillor Carl Rylett.

Apologies for lateness were received from Councillor Natalie King.

Councillor Liam Walker left at 18:40.

Councillor Elizabeth Poskitt left at 18:57.

Councillor Liz Leffman left at 19:02.

Councillor Michele Mead left at 19:47.

56 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received from Members of the Committee.

57 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Councillor Elizabeth Poskitt proposed that the minutes of the previous meeting, held on Wednesday 2 October 2024, be approved by the Committee as a true and accurate record.

This was seconded by Councillor Alex Wilson, was put to a vote and it was unanimously agreed by the Committee.

RESOLVED: The Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 2 October 2024.

58 Chair's announcements

The Chair welcomed Members to the meeting and explained what to do in case of a fire and any further procedure rules.

59 Participation of the Public

There was no participation of the public.

60 Infrastructure Funding Statement 2023/24

The Executive Member for Planning, Councillor Hugo Ashton, introduced the Head of Planning and the Infrastructure Delivery Lead. The report provided greater clarity on the receipt and use of developer contributions including Section 106 planning obligations to fund new and enhanced infrastructure in support of planned growth. As such, the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) helped to support several aims and objectives of the Council Plan.

It was to be noted that the Section 106 annual report was not included as details could not be shared due to not being contractually determined.

S106 was to mitigate the impacts of development on a locality that were specifically earmarked in a legal agreement to meet a specific identified need. S106 applied once the impact of development could be seen. There was a very specific process for allocating S106 monies for projects which required a request to be made. There was evidence that sports play and leisure were very good at proving need and requesting money.

A scheme dating from 2006 had become unviable and needed further funding. There were no spend deadlines, however; S106 was used on long-term projects. Monies were being received from 2014-2021 and all instalments were needed before it could be spent. The Council was actively working on projects for 2025 to 2026 and nothing would be lost.

The following points and suggestions were noted by the Committee:

- CIL money was not always index linked and the Council did not sit on the money for long.
- S106 money was project specific and if it could not go to a specific project then it would go to a department and work would be done with the local community on how to allocate it and legal agreements would be looked at as part of that process.
- A Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Scheme would be introduced and submitted to an examiner before Christmas. CIL could be more flexible and capture smaller developments. The Council could define how it was spent and as part of the IFS which would be used to set out priorities and a list of schemes would be drawn out of it.
- Any contribution to a community needed to be evidence based and would need to be requested at the application stage. Once the money was received the relevant Town or Parish Council would be informed and the Council would work with them on delivering a specific project or type of infrastructure which could be flexible based on needs.
- There would be a review of whether CIL could be used for sustainable transport where a proper evidence base that was defensible at appeal could be set up. There would be an aim to ensure that no money was lost by working with internal teams, tracking and chasing and ensuring good accountancy procedures to actively manage it. However, it could not be guaranteed that schemes would not fail due to unviability.
- CIL and S106 were intended to coexist. However, this became unclear when there were larger schemes involved. For example, with Salt Cross there was £90m of S106 towards top end and then little room to charge CIL beyond that.
- A more proactive approach was required working with Town and Parish Councils in regard to S106/CIL. Information would be contained on the website and a spending plan would be shared to Members.

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- Officers would look back to how much CIL was given back in the last five years.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the report and it was agreed that there were no recommendations to the Executive on 20 November 2024.

61 West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041 Update

The Executive Member for Planning, Councillor Hugo Ashton introduced the Head of Planning. The report provided an update on the emerging draft West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041, with particular regard to proposed national planning policy changes, and a revised timetable for taking the plan through to adoption.

The District Council was in the process of producing a new Local Plan covering the period up to 2041. Good progress was being made with preferred policy options currently being drafted and supporting technical evidence being prepared. However, significant national planning policy changes had been announced in July and these would have a direct bearing on the new local plan and therefore a revised timetable for taking the new local plan forward needed to be agreed.

Work on the new West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041 was now well underway. To date, there had been two main periods of public consultation which had been interspersed with focused engagement with key stakeholders. The anticipated structure of the plan was now agreed and was expected to comprise a series of cross-cutting district-wide strategic policies, a number of geographically specific 'place based' policies and a suite of development management policies. Preferred policy options were currently being drafted, the intention being to set out the Council's preferred approach and in doing so, to explain why other approaches have been ruled out. The purpose of the preferred options consultation was to firm up on the overall content of the plan ahead of it being formally published.

The Executive Member for Planning suggested that the final National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF) later this year was expected to include a new standard for the housing requirement meaning the district's requirement would be 65% higher than currently planned for. This would equate to 7,500 extra homes compared to the current plan. The delayed production of the NPPF meant that it would be brought to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Executive in March 2025 with a possible Member workshop beforehand and then a consultation after the Oxford County Council election in May/June. The Regulation 19 draft would give more protection and March 2026 was a realistic timeframe for the completed Local Plan.

There would also be a housing and employment land availability assessment with a long list of potentially suitable sites. Salt Cross was currently being assessed by the Inspector and their assessment would be completed by the end of this month.

The following points and suggestions were noted by the Committee:

- The Head of Planning confirmed that discussions were ongoing with neighbouring authorities in various forums and the Council was awaiting information from Oxford City Council as to how they would proceed after their local plan had failed at examination.
- It was explained that the Infrastructure Delivery Plan was not listed as not all the plans were listed in the update; only those that formed part of the evidence base.

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- The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was out of date; an updated SCI would be considered in the Regulations 18 consultation with further policy and Development Management (DM) input provided.
- There was also a requirement to build on youth engagement and engagement with other hard to reach groups.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the report and it was agreed that there were no recommendations to the Executive on 20 November 2024.

62

Westhive Criteria

The Community Funding Officer introduced the report that asked the Committee to consider the strengthening and clarification of established criteria for Westhive civic crowdfunding platform.

Westhive was a 'movement' on Spacehive, set up to support community projects in West Oxfordshire. Westhive was launched in October 2023. The Civic Crowdfunding platform provided a new and accessible way that West Oxfordshire residents could be at the heart of civic change and provided a springboard for locally led ideas to attract funding more easily. The report served to confirm the established criteria and strengthen elements which had been noted as requiring clarification.

The following points and suggestions were noted by the Committee:

- There were six funding rounds over three years.
- There was no change to the criteria it was just being organised into one place. There would be a review and analysis after round four toward the spring/summer 2025. The technical process and supporting residents remained. Officers were working through residents' experiences and would bring back the lessons learned at a later date.
- There was 1 application that had not been successful because it had not met the crowdfunding target out of 6 applications to date in phases 1 and 2. 9 applications in round 3 would be assessed.
- There were 2 pots of funding, of £125k and £175k. The UKSPF funding pot had a time limit but it could only be spent on capital projects so that funding was allocated where possible and there was less demand on Council's own allocation.
- A previous underspend had not been rolled over or lost. For 2025/26 the funding would be added in to the revenue account and whatever was left would be unspent capital.
- Members requested that there be more understanding provided in the next report as there were misgivings. It was proposed that a review is undertaken which compares the impacts of the Westhive approach with the previous grants system it replaced.
- It was explained that the Council used to give grants to the same groups every year. There was still £458k per year in total including the commissioned grants.
- The Cabinet Member for Finance explained that he was interested to hear feedback and this was about making Council's funding go further. If this was approach was not working then other ways could be found to make it work. There was a review of scheme being conducted against its objectives. It was currently a three-year scheme but it could be changed in future.
- There were comments around the need to ensure that funding was fully utilised for the benefit of communities across the district.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the report and it was agreed that there would be the following recommendation to the Executive on 20 November 2024:

1. That the Council reviews how funding for Westhive is utilised with a view to ensuring that the budget allocated by the Council can be distributed effectively and fully for the benefit of communities.

63 Financial Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Two

The Executive Member for Finance, Councillor Alaric Smith, introduced the report that detailed the Council's financial performance for Quarter Two 2024-2025.

The report considered the significant variances in revenue income and expenditure against the approved revenue budget set by Full Council on 28th February 2024. The report also included progress in delivering the approved Capital Programme. A year end revenue forecast was also included based on the data available in Q2. The forecast did not include any potential variances in funding i.e. interest on external borrowing, Minimum Revenue Provision, Retained Business Rates income and General Government Grants. These items made a significant impact on the 2023/24 outturn position, but at this stage in the year it was not possible to accurately predict their final position for the year.

At quarter 2 (Q2) there was an overall overspend of £96,821 against the profiled budget for the period. At quarter 1 there was an overall overspend of £257,013 against the profiled budget. The key factors driving the revenue position were income shortfalls in garden waste and development management, the delayed Elmfield office letting, the empty Carterton Industrial Estate units and increased expenditure on waste and recycling container replacement. Development management income had struggled in the first half of the year but may yet recover should a major application be received. The recycling contract with Suez expired at the end of September and the cost centre was showing a temporary underspend of £126,000 against the contract as officers and Suez were negotiating the final two months invoicing cost. The new contract, approved at the Executive meeting on 11 September 2024, was expected to deliver a budget saving of £300,000 from 2025/26 (£62,000 in 2024/25). The Elmfield offices had been empty since August 2023 and required capital investment before the new tenant occupies the building in January 2025. The tenant would undertake the work and had scheduled it to take 12 weeks. Rent would be paid from mid-January, irrespective of whether the construction works had been completed.

The following points and suggestions were noted by the Committee:

- There were many moving parts and it was unknown if there would be an underspend.
- In terms of planning projects, there were fortnight meetings to ensure all work streams were working efficiently.
- The Council was exploring opportunities for partnership working across Oxfordshire.

RESOLVED that the Committee noted the report and it was agreed that there were no recommendations to the Executive on 20 November 2024.

64 Report back on recommendations

There were no recommendations to the Executive arising from the previous Committee meeting.

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65 Executive Work Programme

The Executive Work Programme was noted.

66 Committee Work Programme

It was noted that an item on the Waste Fleet Purchase Delegation would be added to the Committee Work Programme. This item had been referred to the Committee by the Executive on 9 October 2024.

The Meeting closed at 7.52 pm

CHAIRMAN

 <p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>	<p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>
<p>Name and Date of Committee</p>	<p>OVERVIEW AND SCUTINY COMMITTEE – 4 DECEMBER 2024</p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p>WASTE FLEET PURCHASE</p>
<p>Wards Affected</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Accountable Member</p>	<p>Councillor Lidia Arciszewska – Executive Member for Environment Email: lidia.arciszewska@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Accountable Officer</p>	<p>Bill Oddy – Assistant Director, Commercial Development Email: bill.oddy@publicagroup.uk</p>
<p>Report Author</p>	<p>Simon Anthony – Business Manager, Environmental Services Email: simon.anthony@publicagroup.uk</p>
<p>Purpose</p>	<p>To consider the proposal outlined in the report to procure new waste fleet vehicles and the associated infrastructure for any electric vehicles.</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p>Annex A – eHGV Trial Results.</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>That the Committee note the decision by the Executive on 9 October 2024 to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Commercial Development, in consultation with the Executive Members for Environment and Finance, and the Director of Finance, to purchase or lease up to 2 x full size HGV's and up to 4 food waste vehicles and necessary charging infrastructure up to an estimated cost of £2.8M, (including a procurement contingency and estimated cost of borrowing).
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting Residents First • A Better Environment for People and Wildlife • Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>YES – Budget expenditure of more than £150,000.</p>
<p>Exempt</p>	<p>NO</p>

Consultees/ Consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cabinet Members for Climate, Environment, and Finance• Ubico Head of Fleet Operations• Waste Contract Manager• Climate Change and Nature Recovery Manager• Section 151 Officer• Chief Accountant• Finance Business Partner responsible for waste• Ubico Head of Operations
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I. BACKGROUND

- I.1** On the 9th October 2024 The Executive considered a report to purchase ten new waste vehicles -
<https://meetings.westoxon.gov.uk/documents/s/11715/WODC%20Executive%20Report%20Waste%20Fleet%20Purchase%20Sept%202024%20v7.pdf>
- I.2** The Executive resolved to purchasing 3 fully electric supervisor vehicles and 1 standard fuel ultra-narrow access vehicle.
- I.3** The Executive also resolved to “Delegate authority to the Assistant Director for Commercial Development, in consultation with the Executive Members for Environment and Finance, and the Director of Finance, to purchase or lease up to 2 x full size HGV’s and up to 4 food waste vehicles and necessary charging infrastructure up to an estimated cost of £2.8M, (including a procurement contingency and estimated cost of borrowing), on the understanding that proposals under this delegation will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.”
- I.4** The report related to the procurement of waste vehicles for use by Ubico to deliver the council’s statutory waste collection services. 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 their lifetime. To continue provision of an efficient and effective high performing waste service a number of vehicles currently in use require replacement.
- I.5** In February 2024 the Executive agreed to procure four standard fuel HGV’s and hire a further two to ensure a degree of flexibility and allow for potential alternative fuel vehicles in the future. This report requests approval to purchase a further four vehicles as part of the vehicle replacement programme and delegated authority for the future procurement of up to a further six.
- I.6** For the initial 3-5 years of a waste vehicles life, the cost of repairs and maintenance is comparatively low. As vehicles age, they require additional repairs and planned preventative maintenance, this increases the costs associated with operation of each vehicle. Older vehicles breakdown more frequently because of mechanical failure, this not only impacts on revenue budgets but also frontline service delivery performance with containers being missed and rounds not completed.
- I.7** 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 minimised to achieve carbon neutrality as a council by 2030. Vehicles should also be affordable, not only to purchase but also to operate.
- I.8** The UK waste fleet industry is very much in a ‘transition phase’ moving away from fossil fuel to renewable energy. It is expected that green fuelled, affordable and reliable Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) will become available on the market in the future. To this point Ubico trialled a fully electric 27tonne collection vehicle in May 2024, the results of which are discussed as part of the report and a summary document is attached as Annex A.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1** The waste service has thirty-five frontline collection vehicles with most of these approaching the end of their life. This paper asks the Executive to consider the purchase of four vehicle and to delegate the purchase or lease of a further six vehicles. This will make the procurement of the vehicles smoother and will allow for better management of the Council's Capital Programme.
- 2.2** Without reliable 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.
- 2.3** A Member/Officer Steering Group met on 17 July and determined that the following vehicles are due for renewal:
- 4 x Food Waste Vehicles 7.5te and retain one of the existing fleet as a spare;
 - 1 x 7.5te vehicle with bin lift for ultra narrow access collections;
 - 2 x 26te vehicles used across both refuse and garden waste collections;
 - 3 x supervisor vans.

3. DELEGATED AUTHORITY OF 2 x 26 TONNE HGV's AND 4 x FOOD WASTE VEHICLES

- 3.1** A recent trial of a full size, 26-tonne, eHGV in May 2024 revealed that the technology has achieved a level where it can adequately perform standard frontline collections comparable with standard fuel vehicles. Performance of the eHGV included being deployed on WODC's most challenging collection day and completing the rounds with a 30% charge remaining. Collections were completed by the trial vehicle across the trial week and performed well on each collection day. A full review of trial can be found in Annex A.
- 3.2** However, eHGV waste collection vehicles are still in the first-generation stage and improvements around efficiency and reliability are expected to be met by future generations of eHGVs. It is expected that in early 2025 second generation eHGV's will become available. Given that The Council can be comfortable with the environmental and operational performance of these vehicles this paper recommends delegating authority to the Assistant Director Commercial Development, in consultation with the Executive Member for the Environment, the Executive Member for Finance, and the Director of Finance to purchase up to 2x HGV's to use on either garden or general waste collection rounds.
- 3.3** A full cost assessment will be completed at procurement as this is point at which actual capital costs will be known. The comprehensive cost assessment will include, but not limited to:
- The cost of borrowing to the council;
 - vehicle capital costs;
 - cost of infrastructure works for electric vehicle charging;

- potential energy costs throughout the life of the vehicle;
- repairs and maintenance costs throughout the life of the vehicle;
- any reasonable assumptions around vehicle life and the value of the vehicle at end of its life.

- 3.4** The comprehensive assessment will compare standard fuel vehicles with the eHGV prices and forecast full life costs to determine the most suitable option. Finance officers will be included in the financial assessment, which will then be taken to senior officers and members with delegated authority from this report.
- 3.5** The waste service currently has four food waste vehicles approaching the end of their life which need replacing. These are operationally reliable given the length of rounds and the weight collected. These vehicles have zero tailpipe emissions and are planned to be charged using at The Council’s depot in Witney. Ubico have confirmed that four fully electric food waste vehicles could be deployed onto the service from an operational perspective provided there is reliable and suitable infrastructure to charge the vehicles.
- 3.6** Should the Council decide to procure electric food waste vehicles, the vehicles would be the larger 12te version, rather than the standard 7.5te principally as a 7.5te version is not available as an electric. The larger electric food waste vehicles have additional capacity and can accommodate larger rounds without needing to tip off as frequently, this adds additional resilience to the waste service to accommodate housing growth and potentially increased rates of food waste recycling. As per 3.4 a full comprehensive financial assessment will be completed which will include all points set out in 3.4. The finance assessment will determine how many, electric vehicles should be procured, however as 4 replacement vehicles are needed this could mean a mix of electric and standard fuel vehicles.

4. PROCUREMENT OF SUPPORT VEHICLES AND ULTRA NARROW ACCESS VEHICLE

- 4.1** The waste service deploys several support vehicles to provide ancillary duties which allow for the smooth running of a frontline waste service, these duties typically include crew monitoring, property visits, and other discrete duties which are performed by supervisors in small vans. Three supervisor vehicles have already been carried over from 22/23 when they were due for replacement and their usable life has already been extended. Supervisor vehicles are used every day and shared among supervisors and management staff where appropriate. Supervisor vehicles completed between 200 and 300 miles per week and remain essential for the smooth running of the service.
- 4.2** Supervisor vans have many equivalents and are reasonably generic in their design, as such there are suitable equivalent electric alternatives which could be considered as part of vehicle replacement options.

Table 1. Supervisor Vans Estimated Costs

Vehicle Type	Purchase Cost	Cost of Borrowing	Fuel Full Life Costs	Whole Life Costs
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Supervisor Van (Standard Fuel)	£35,000	£6,300	£26,000	£67,300
Supervisor Van (Electric)	£35,000	£6,300	£20,000	£61,300

- 4.3** The costs quoted above are also only forecasts and the actual capital cost of each vehicle will only be known at the time of procurement. Similarly, fuel costs are estimates and subject to variation linked to oil and electricity prices. Repairs and maintenance of each option have been discounted as part of the financial assessment as the difference is estimated as marginal due to the current arrangements of externally supplied contracted maintenance.
- 4.4** Electric supervisor vans can complete the mileage a supervisor covers during standard daily activities, therefore there would be no compromise in the productivity of supervisors who use an electric vehicle. Similarly electric vans have zero tailpipe emissions and are currently more affordable than standard fuel version over their life and making a small annual revenue saving.
- 4.5** The service also deploys an ultra-narrow access vehicle for collections in hard-to-reach locations, this vehicle is a 7.5tonne specialist vehicle. Having reliable ultra narrow waste collection vehicles is important for any waste collection service as these vehicles tend to be a single point of failure without ready access to spare replacement vehicles as is the case with other vehicles. Having reviewed alternative fuel options, and the distance this vehicle travels each day, Officers do not recommend an electric, or any other alternative fuel version of this vehicle at this point. The table below provides a breakdown of the costs of such a vehicle:

4.6 Table 2. Ultra-Narrow Vehicle Estimated Costs

Vehicle Type	Purchase Cost	Cost of Borrowing	Fuel Full Life Costs	Whole Life Costs
Ultra Narrow Access (standard fuel)	£113,000	£20,300	£42,000	£175,000

- 4.7** As reported above in 4.3 the costs quoted above are also forecasts and the actual capital cost of the vehicle will only be known at the time of procurement. Similarly, fuel costs are estimates and subject to variation linked to oil prices and other factors.

5. INFRASTRUCTURE REQUIREMENTS

- 5.1** Downs Road Depot, where most of The Council's waste services are operated from, currently has electric vehicle charge points for smaller electric vehicles already deployed to deliver the service. The depot requires additional vehicle recharging infrastructure to be added to accommodate the additional electric vehicles outlined in this report.

- 5.2 Exploratory work has already been completed and determined that there is enough capacity in the existing supply to increase the amount of electricity entering the depot. There will be a capital cost to install the additional infrastructure, so the vehicles have suitable and sufficient charge points to access. Installing charge points themselves has become standardised with a range of suppliers fully able to install charge points and complete and enabling ducting works for example.
- 5.3 It should be noted that supervisor vehicles can be charged at most public charge points, or charge points at the supervisors place of residents if they have them, should supervisors need to charge while away from the depot charge point.
- 5.4 The cost of installing additional charge points would be fully investigated as part of the comprehensive financial assessment completed as part of the proposed vehicle procurement work outlined in the report.

6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 6.1 The Council has considered alternative fuel options, particularly electric versions of all vehicles due for replacement as part of this report, and where possible this report recommends electric versions which supports the Authority's commitment to net-zero by 2030. Given the sensitive and important nature of narrow access vehicles and the non-availability of spare vehicles it is of primary importance that these vehicles are reliable and in addition have adequate range, this discounts the potential for electric equivalents at this point in time.
- 6.2 The Council could retain existing vehicles and not replace for a further 12 months in anticipation that affordable and reliable electric alternatives arrive on the market. This option would risk frontline services as key vehicles would, and in some cases are becoming unreliable.
- 6.3 The Council, and its partner, Ubico, continue to review the market for opportunities to retrofit diesel engine vehicles with batteries which may become an option as local authorities progress towards 2030 and net-zero targets.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 Following a rigorous assessment of the options for the replacement of waste vehicles, Officers believe the recommendations are sound and will be affordable and will ensure the authority to continue providing robust service in the future.

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 These are covered in the main body of the report, or will be fully investigated as part of financial assessments.
- 8.2 The costs associated with the recommendations can be met by the existing budget for the waste fleet of £3.5M in the Councils 2024/25 Capital Programme.
- 8.3 There will be reduced repair and maintenance costs following the procurement of new vehicles and the replacement of the existing vehicles.

- 8.4 Some value is likely to be achieved following the sale of existing vehicles which will be returned to the council.
- 8.5 The table below provides a breakdown of recommended costs within the paper:

Table 3. Vehicle cost summary

Vehicle	Per vehicle Purchase and Borrowing Cost	Total Cost
7.5te Ultra Narrow Collection Standard Fuel Vehicle x 1	£133,300	£133,300
Supervisor Van Electric x 3	£41,300	£123,900
2 x full size HGV's and up to 4 food waste vehicles and necessary charging infrastructure		£2,832,000
	Total Cost	£3,089,200

- 8.6 The figures presented in Table 3 are forecast costs with the true capital cost only becoming known at the point of procurement.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

10. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 10.1 The risks identified with the recommended approach are outlined in the main body of the report. There is a good level of confidence in the performance and longevity of batteries used in the proposed electric vehicles, this is based on available evidence from local authorities that are already using these vehicles. However, as the vehicles are first generation and there is not 7 years of evidence of good battery life in equivalent vehicles it is important to record the risk that batteries may not last the full 7 years.

11. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 11.1 Not Applicable

12. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

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

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

(END)



Ubico Limited

West Oxfordshire District Council Trial of Battery Electric Refuse Collection Vehicle (e-RCVs)

Internal Briefing Paper

To: Rob Heath, Director of Operations; Marc Osment, WODC Operations Manager.

From: Ian Bourton, Ubico Head of Fleet Operations

Background

- At the West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC) electric vehicle meeting (11 March 2024) where Elected Members, Ubico and Publica were present, discussions were had in relation to the feasibility of operating one, maybe two, 27 tonne open chamber battery electric refuse collection vehicle(s) (e-RCV) to collect residual waste within the WODC collection area.
- Ubico provided some expert guidance to the meeting, including that this type of vehicle was available in the market and that Ubico had undertaken some tachograph analysis to support the operational activity of an e-RCV. This analysis confirmed, on paper, that in certain WODC areas an e-RCV could be practically utilised for residual waste collections.
- Ubico also provided some expert guidance to the meeting on the known problems, benefits and constraints of e-RCVs, the early adoption risk that WODC would face and the necessary recharging infrastructure that would be required.
- The known constraints of the current and available e-RCVs to operate within the WODC collection area include the rural locations and distances to be travelled, the topography of the area and the current recharging infrastructure capability at WODC operational depots. The known industry constraints include the introduction of new technology for e-RCVs (battery electric trucks ARE new technology and cannot be compared with battery electric cars/vans), power train reliability and capability, variable energy sources required for RCVs (hydraulics, pneumatics etc).
- An action was generated from the vehicle procurement strategy meeting for Ubico's Head of Fleet to organise a trial of e-RCV.
- The operational trial dates were organised for Tuesday 14th May 2024 to Thursday 23rd May 2024 inclusive (8 working days). The vehicle trial was arranged through Ubico and Dennis Eagle Limited (the leading UK manufacturer of RCVs) and the vehicle deployed was a 27 tonne (gross vehicle weight) 'e-Collect' e-RCV.

Note; due to vehicle/charging failures during the trial the vehicle did not operate at all on the 24th May 2024. However, an additional trial day (Monday 27th May 2024) was added, in agreement with the manufacturer maintaining 8 working days for the trial data.

- A post-trial briefing paper was requested from Ubico’s Head of Fleet Operations. This is that paper, generated from the vehicle CANbus data, industry expertise and knowledge and in liaison with the Ubico operational teams at WODC.

Trial Approach

- Ubico Fleet issued trial recording documents and completion instructions to drivers, loaders, and operational supervisors to record experiences of practical vehicle use and operation.
- Ubico Operations at WODC compiled daily route maps for areas that were known to be achievable, and those that would be challenging for the e-RCV. The Operations team dedicated a supervisor to monitor the practical performance and to liaise with the trail team.
- The fleet team were enabled to capture the CANbus data from the vehicle which contains vehicle performance and operational data in electronic form.
- The actual trial was executed seamlessly to the plan by the drivers, loaders, fleet, and operational management to provide some useful conclusions.

Relevant Vehicle Operational CANbus Data

- Operational activity data was collected from the vehicle on each day the vehicle was in use and relevant data is covered in this document.
- The e-RCV vehicle covered an average of 50.36 miles over the trial period, operating between 37.2 miles and 75.8 miles.

Date	Kms Covered	Miles Covered	No. Loads
14.5.24	60	37.2	1
15.5.24	73	45.3	2
16.5.24	65	40.3	2
17.5.24	96	59	2
21.5.24	80	49.7	1
22.5.24	90	55.9	2
23.5.24	64	39.7	2
27.5.24	122	75.8	1

- On 27th May 2024, the maximum mileage covered of 75.8 miles included the e-RCV returning with 23% of its battery energy remaining. This is impressive but it should be noted that the

weather conditions to operate an e-RCV on the day were ideal at 16 degrees centigrade, with no vehicle heating or air conditioning in use. Regenerative braking, feeding energy back into the battery, would also have been in use on this day due to the topography of the operational area.

- Regenerative braking is standard functionality for e-RCVs and with good driver application it can recover several kWh of energy.
- E-RCV batteries operating between 0 and 5 degrees centigrade typically lose 12% of their energy capability. The e-RCV heater or air conditioning operating for a full shift will typically lose 15% of the vehicle's energy capability.
It should be noted that the best daily mileage obtained during the trial would have extinguished all the vehicles battery energy before the completion of the collection round, if it had not been ideal conditions.
- The vehicle was capable of completing the two loads that are required during a WODC operational day.
- The vehicle completed 4,220 packing cycles during the trial, averaging 528 per day. The maximum cycles for one day being 638 (16th May 2024).
- The vehicles bin lift (an electric Terberg OmniDel Twin Auto Lift) lifted 6,683 wheelie bins, averaging 835 per day. The maximum number of bins lifted on any one day was 1052 (16th May 2024). On this day the bins were a combination of two sizes - 240 and 180 litre, mixed with some manual loading of residual waste bags.
- The vehicle collected a combined weight of 94,820kg (94.82 tonnes) of residual waste over the 8 working day, and average of 7,294kg (7.294 tonnes) per day.
The maximum load compacted during one collection round before needing to tip was 10,480kg (10.48 tonnes). This is comparable to a 26 tonne diesel RCV of similar design.
- The CANbus data shows that the vehicle stopped charging at 85% overnight on the 17th May 2024. This fault remains unexplained but was an unforeseen 15% reduction in energy for the crews to undertake their collection round.
- The CANbus data shows a complete failure to charge over the weekend of 19th May 2024. Investigations conclude a failing of the vehicles recharging technology. This would have led to an unforeseen service failure during the trial but was replaced by a diesel vehicle from the WODC vehicle fleet.
- The average energy that the vehicle used collecting residual waste over the 8 days was 56% per day. It should be noted that the vehicle was used in ideal temperatures with no heating or air conditioning in use by the driver.
- The air conditioning is used less in the e-RCV as there is no heat generated from the diesel engine. The engine usually sits directly below the driver's cab, providing some cab heat. The heating on the e-RCV would usually be used more in the winter, for the same reason that there is no naturally generated engine heat. Therefore, vehicle energy available to operate the vehicles drive train and packing modes are significantly reduced during the winter.

- The table below shows the kWh used per day, the kWh used per tonne, per bin lifted and per km travelled, of residual waste collected:

Date	kWh used	kWh per Tonne	kWh per Bin	kWh per km
14.5.24	105	14.71	0.19	1.75
15.5.24	150	10.71	0.15	2.05
16.5.24	156	10.89	0.15	2.40
17.5.24	171	12.56	0.19	1.78
21.5.24	177	20.25	0.27	2.21
22.5.24	204	16.04	0.21	2.27
23.5.24	153	10.52	0.16	2.39
27.5.24	231	23.72	0.36	1.89

- The e-RCV has a dashboard alert indicator to the driver when 15% energy remains to encourage the driver to return to base or to find a recharge station. At 10% the indicator turns red and goes into limp/low energy use mode.
- If batteries become fully depleted the recovery of the e-RCV is necessary. The recovery is significant, will require specialist HGV recovery and will require the prop and half shaft removal to allow a 'suspend and tow' recovery.

Driver/Loader Operational Feedback

- The driver and loader crews recorded daily feedback on how they felt about operating the e-RCV. The views were generally positive. Some of the crew comments are listed below.
- The position of the batteries is lower when compared to the position of the fuel tank. Although this didn't cause any problems within the WODC area, it should be noted.
- Frustration when the vehicle failed on charging, another vehicle had to be sought (diesel).
- Communication is better as the loaders could hear each other clearer because of reduced noise levels. Loaders could also hear ambient noise around them better and felt safer. Drivers commented that they could hear very well – traffic noise and loader noise/communications.
- Reduced noise levels from the vehicle could be a danger to pedestrians crossing the road who would normally hear a diesel vehicle.
- Would missed bins increase as some residents rush out with their wheelie bin when they hear the diesel vehicle approaching? With e-RCV there is minimal sound to advise residents the crews are working in their street.

- Drivers feel more relaxed and less stressed as the drive feels calmer. This positive effect on the driver can lead to reduced road traffic collisions.
- Throttle response is impressive especially after bin loading. Wheelie bin lifting is quiet and fast. Wheelie bin lifters can be used without engaging neutral.

Points of Note

- Currently the trial e-RCV has a single gear transmission. This translates into a factory set top speed of 38mph but allows a hill climb. This could cause some issues on dual carriageways within the WODC collection area (there are no motorways in WODC collection area).
- The increased torque from electric motors and faster wheelie bin lifting operation allows for a more efficient operation, with a greater number of bin collections a possibility. Industry e-RCV users have found that crews finish their collection rounds quicker than with a diesel RCV – some by up to 30 minutes.
- Driver performance and the application of acquired skills for driving e-RCVs have a variable impact on the energy used during the operational day. Conserving vehicle energy by eco-driving, use of regenerative braking, controlled torque on take-off are some of the driver skills that can have a significant effect on vehicle performance.
- The e-RCV on trial is a current but first-generation model and comes with reliability issues that should be expected with new vehicle technology. WODC would be early adopters of this technology and thus should assume unexpected failures that cannot be put right quickly, potentially leading to service failures. WODC would need to facilitate a contingency should Ubico operations experience similar e-RCV reliability issues that were experienced during the trial, and thus avoid a service failure.
- Failures of recharging infrastructure are not uncommon. A failure to recharge an-RCV due to an outage or similar supply interruption would lead to a service failure for that collection round unless a contingency is in place. Clearly with a diesel RCV refuelling could be undertaken at any refuelling forecourt, and option that is not available for e-RCVs.
- To recharge e-RCVs similar to the trial vehicle, each e-RCV would need an infrastructure with off-board vehicle charging supply of 600 volts minimum (up to 80A), direct current (DC). The charger plug would need to be 48 kW CCS2 connection type. WODC would need to secure funding (on top of the vehicle price) to install a recharging infrastructure that meets this specification into Downs Road. Note Downs Road is a leased depot and not owned by WODC.
- Standard diesel residual waste collection vehicles have a maximum gross weight of 26 tonnes. Standard e-RCVs are registered with an extra tonne by the manufacturers, providing a maximum 27 tonne gross vehicle weight. This extra tonne accounts for the additional weight of the batteries. This means in practice that there is no loss of the vehicle payload to the operator when using an e-RCV.

- The supply into Downs Road has been identified as having adequate capacity to recharge two 27 tonne 300 kWh e-RCVs. This would need to be confirmed prior to any installation project commencing.


Conclusion

- Ubico operation teams had no operational issues with completing the collection rounds that were within 60 miles routing from the Downs Road depot.
- The trial materialised generally as expected. Ubico currently operate six residual waste collection rounds for WODC and could accommodate the objective of operating two e-RCVs, replacing two diesel RCVs. However, the e-RCVs would need to be practically utilised across different collection crews to achieve a full week's work from the vehicle.
- A contingency of a spare vehicle(s) would be required to support the operation of an e-RCV. As is represented throughout similar organisations operating e-RCVs, WODC would be early adopters of this type of technology and should assume some unexpected failure from the vehicle and the recharging infrastructure.
- The vehicle on trial was a first-generation e-RCV with single gear electric motors and dual manufacturer technology integrated on board. A second-generation e-RCV by the same manufacturer is being produced that elevates these two significant issues. It would be prudent to wait until the second-generation e-RCV is available if WODC decide to purchase e-RCVs. Delivery dates for second generation e-RCVs of this type are expected around August 2025.

Ian Bourton

Head of Fleet Operations, Ubico Ltd

13.05.2024

 WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and Date of Committee	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 4 DECEMBER 2024 EXECUTIVE – 11 DECEMBER 2024
Subject	LOCAL PLAN ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT (AMR)
Wards Affected	ALL
Accountable Member	Councillor Hugo Ashton – Executive Member for Planning Email: hugo.ashton@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable Officer	Andrew Thomson – Lead Planning Policy and Implementation Officer Email: andrew.thomson@westoxon.gov.uk
Report Author	Andrew Thomson – Lead Planning Policy and Implementation Officer. Email: andrew.thomson@westoxon.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To consider the Council’s Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report for the period 2024-2024.
Annexes	Annex A – Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2023-2024
Recommendation	That the Executive Resolves to: I. Note the content of the report.
Corporate Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting Residents First • Enabling a Good Quality of Life for All • Creating a Better Environment for People and Wildlife • Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency • Working Together for West Oxfordshire
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	There is no requirement to consult on the AMR.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** Members will be aware that under current planning legislation, the Council is required to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).
- 1.2** The main purpose of the AMR is to monitor the implementation of adopted Local Plan policies but it must also include information on the following:
 - Progress of the Local Plan and any other related documents against agreed timetables;
 - Neighbourhood Planning;
 - The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) where this has been introduced; and
 - How the Council has fulfilled its obligations under the Duty to Co-Operate.
- 1.3** The AMR must be made available on the Council's website, at its main offices and at any other appropriate locations.
- 1.4** The Council's most recently published AMR covered the two-year period 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024.
- 1.5** The new draft AMR for 2023 – 2024 is attached at Annex A and the key points of interest are summarised in Section 2 below.

2. AMR 2023/2024 – OVERVIEW

Local Plan Progress

- 2.1** The AMR explains that the District Council has committed to the preparation of a new Local Plan covering the period to 2041 and that two rounds of informal (Regulation 18) consultation have taken place to inform the scope and direction of the emerging plan.
- 2.2** Whilst further informal consultation was initially planned to take place before the end of 2023, this is now expected to take place in May 2025 which is largely a result of forthcoming significant changes to national policy. The council has recently updated its Local Development Scheme setting out the expected timetable for Local Plan preparation up to submission for Examination by March 2026.

Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan (AAP)

- 2.3** The AMR provides an update on the progress of the Salt Cross AAP with the Inspector's final report having been received on 1st March 2023 but then subject to a subsequent legal challenge which led to those parts of the report relating to Policy 2 Net Zero Carbon being formally quashed. The examination was re-opened in April 2024 and at the time of writing, examination hearing sessions are due to be held in February 2025.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

- 2.4** The AMR explains that the District Council has four Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) in place with two of these (Developer Contributions and the Combe Village Design Statement) having been adopted during the monitoring period, in July 2023.

Neighbourhood Planning

- 2.5** The AMR provides an update on Neighbourhood Planning in West Oxfordshire, explaining that there are now 9 'made' (adopted) Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) in West

Oxfordshire with two of these (Cassington and Milton under Wychwood) adopted during the monitoring period, in June 2023.

- 2.6 The AMR explains that a further 6 NDPs are currently in preparation, with Brize Norton NDP nearing the point of submission for Examination.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 2.7 The AMR provides an update on the District Council's progress with introducing the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) into West Oxfordshire. In March 2023, the Council's executive agreed that new viability evidence should be commissioned to inform a new draft CIL charging schedule (and also to help inform the emerging Local Plan 2041).

- 2.8 Consultants have since been appointed and a new draft CIL charging schedule was published for consultation in August 2024. Submission, examination and adoption will follow in 2025.

Duty to Co-Operate

- 2.9 The Duty to Cooperate is a legal requirement on local planning authorities to engage with other relevant authorities and certain prescribed bodies in relation to cross-boundary strategic planning matters. The AMR therefore provides an update on how the District Council has fulfilled its obligations under the duty.

- 2.10 This includes the conclusion reached by the Salt Cross AAP Inspector that the District Council had met the requirements of the duty in preparing the AAP.

- 2.11 The AMR also outlines that ongoing Oxfordshire-wide discussions are currently taking place around plan-making and are expected to culminate in the publication of Statements of Common Ground which will form part of the District Council's evidence to demonstrate that it has complied with the duty to co-operate in preparing the new Local Plan 2041.

Implementation of Local Plan Policies

- 2.12 The AMR is structured around the five main sections of the current Local Plan 2031:

- Overall strategy
- Providing new homes
- Sustainable Economic Growth
- Transport and Movement
- Environmental and Heritage Assets

- 2.13 The key points to note under each heading are summarised below.

Overall Strategy

- 2.14** A total of 1,437 planning applications were determined during the monitoring period (1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024). The majority of these (1,162 applications) were approved or approved subject to a legal agreement.
- 2.15** 44% of the applications determined were for relatively minor 'householder' type proposals and 23% were for full or outline planning approval.
- 2.16** The majority of planning approvals were concentrated within the Main Service Centres, Rural Service Centres and larger villages of the District in accordance with Local Plan Policy OS2, which seeks to focus development primarily at larger settlements due to their relative sustainability in terms of available services and facilities.
- 2.17** 43 appeals were determined during the monitoring period. The majority of these were dismissed with 18 being allowed or allowed in part.
- 2.18** £892,062 was collected towards new infrastructure from new development in West Oxfordshire between 1 April 2023 and 31 March 2024. Over £1.5m was spent on new infrastructure during the same period.
- 2.19** A detailed breakdown of infrastructure funding (received and spent) is set out in the Council's separate Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) which is published annually each December.

Providing New Homes

- 2.20** Planning permission was granted for 918 new dwellings during the monitoring period, a net gain of 898 dwellings.
- 2.21** The largest concentrations of outstanding residential commitments are located within, or on the edge of Main Service Centres within neighbouring Parishes, e.g. Witney / Curbridge and Carterton /Brize Norton. There are also significant concentrations at Woodstock, Minster Lovell and Long Hanborough.
- 2.22** There were 683 net residential completions in 2023/2024. This is below the Local Plan housing requirement of 975 dwellings for the monitoring period, but above the standard calculation of housing need (549 dwellings per annum), which the council is currently utilising for housing land supply calculations.
- 2.23** It is also important to note that since the start of the current Local Plan period 1st April 2011 up to 31st March 2024, a total of 7,719 new homes have been completed which falls below the requirement of 8,075 set in the Local Plan for the period. This minor shortfall is partly a result of under-delivery on strategic housing sites in the district.
- 2.24** Major housing schemes were allowed at appeal during the monitoring period, for development at Woodstock, Minster Lovell and Aston.
- 2.25** Approximately 238 new affordable homes were completed during the monitoring period, comprising a mixture of affordable rented, social rented and shared ownership properties. These were located predominantly on larger sites in accordance with the requirements of Local Plan Policy H3.

- 2.26** Approximately 35% of total housing completions during the monitoring period were classed as affordable, which is broadly consistent with the requirements of Local Plan Policy H3 which adopts a tiered approach ranging from 35% - 50% depending on location.
- 2.27** In September 2023, the Council undertook a formal review of the Local Plan 2031 in accordance with Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 2.28** Importantly, the review concluded that the Local Plan housing requirement set out in Policy H2 (which has previously been used to calculate the Council's 5-year housing land supply) needs updating because it is based on 2014 evidence which pre-dates the introduction of the standard method for assessing local housing need.
- 2.29** The significance of this is that because the current Local Plan is now more than 5-years old, the District Council is able to calculate its 5-year housing land supply position using the Government's standard method for assessing local housing need. Notwithstanding this, at the present time, the Council is not able to demonstrate a 5-year supply of deliverable housing land.

Sustainable Economic Growth

- 2.30** A total of 27,709m² of new business floorspace was approved during the monitoring period, the majority of which was for mixed business uses, including general industrial, offices and storage and distribution.
- 2.31** The majority of new business floorspace is located at areas allocated for business purposes in the Local Plan 2031. The most significant proportion of newly approved floorspace during the monitoring period was at Lakeside Industrial Estate at Standlake.
- 2.32** Any new business development approved in the rural parts of the District during the monitoring period was relatively minor in nature.
- 2.33** The majority of tourism-related development during the monitoring period was for new tourist accommodation.
- 2.34** The mix of town centre uses continues to evolve in the 5 existing town centres in West Oxfordshire, to include retail, hospitality professional services and residential. There have been a limited number of changes of use during the monitoring period but nothing major in nature. There remain a number of empty units within each of the town centres in line with national trends.

Transport and Movement

- 2.35** The majority of new development continues to be focussed within the Main Service Centres and Rural Service Centres, which are the most accessible locations to access services and facilities by a range of transport options, including public transport, walking and cycling.
- 2.36** Funding has been secured from a number of developments during the monitoring period to contribute towards public transport provision, most significantly, for the A40 transport improvements between Eynsham Park and Ride and Wolvercote.
- 2.37** Access to some key services remains poor in West Oxfordshire compared to the rest of Oxfordshire and car ownership remains higher than the rest of the county.

2.38 The access to Witney (Shores Green) junction improvements will be funded by a combination of Housing and Growth Deal (HGD) funds and Section 106 developer contributions. Planning permission for the scheme was granted in July 2023 and initial enabling works are expected to begin later this year.

Environmental and Heritage Assets

2.39 No major development was approved within the Cotswolds National Landscape (formerly referred to as the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) during the monitoring period.

2.40 The majority of new development is steered away from environmentally sensitive locations in West Oxfordshire, particularly areas with ecological, landscape or heritage sensitivities or areas at risk of flooding.

2.41 There have been no significant changes to the area of protected habitats or number of protected species in West Oxfordshire during the monitoring period.

2.42 The number of heritage assets recorded on the Heritage at Risk register has fallen from 8 in 2023 to 5 in 2024.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

3.1 None.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The report raises no direct financial implications.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

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

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 The AMR raises no significant risks.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

8.1 The report raises no specific equality implications for any specific group/protected characteristic. The adopted Local Plan was supported by a separate Equalities Impact Assessment.

9. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The AMR reports on a number of climate and ecological related issues.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None.

(END)



West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 Annual Monitoring Report (2023 – 2024)

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Section I - Introduction

Purpose of the Annual Monitoring report

- 1.1 The primary purpose of the AMR is to monitor the implementation and effectiveness of the policies set out in the adopted West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.
- 1.2 The AMR is also required to report on the following matters:
 - The progress of the Local Plan and any other related documents against agreed timetables;
 - Neighbourhood Planning;
 - The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) where this has been introduced; and
 - How the Council has fulfilled its obligations under the Duty to Co-Operate
- 1.3 This AMR focuses primarily on the 1-year period 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024 but includes some information from outside this period where appropriate.

Structure of the report

- 1.4 The following section of the report (Section 2) covers the four bullet points listed above whilst Section 3 summarises the implementation and effectiveness of adopted Local Plan policies against relevant indicators.

Section 2 - West Oxfordshire Local Plan and associated documents

Local Plan Progress

- 2.1 The existing West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 was formally adopted in September 2018.
- 2.2 In September 2023, reflecting the fact that the Local Plan became 5-years old, the Council undertook a review in accordance with Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 2.3 The review is available [online](#) and concludes that whilst many of the policies remain consistent with national policy, they would benefit from being reviewed and re-considered in light of updated evidence and to reflect any changing circumstances.
- 2.4 Recognising the importance of having robust and up-to-date policies in place to guide development, the Council has committed to the preparation of a new Local Plan covering the period to 2041.
- 2.5 The timetable for preparing a Local Plan must be set out in a Local Development Scheme (LDS).
- 2.6 The current LDS for West Oxfordshire was published in November 2024 and progress against the key milestones is summarised in the table below.

Table 1 - West Oxfordshire Local Development Scheme Key Milestones (November 2024)

Stage/Milestone	Progress
Regulation 18 initial scoping consultation August/October 2022	COMPLETE
Regulation 18 focused consultation on draft plan objectives, spatial strategy options and call for sites. June/July 2023	COMPLETE (although consultation took place slightly later than anticipated from August – October 2023)
Regulation 18 consultation on preferred policy options/approaches May 2025	Delayed as a consequence of significant, anticipated changes to national planning policy. It is prudent to take account of these changes in the next iteration of the Local Plan making process.
Regulation 19 publication of pre-submission draft Local Plan October 2025	Not yet undertaken.

Regulation 22 submission of draft Local Plan March 2026	Not yet undertaken.
Examination and adoption 2026/27	Not yet undertaken.

Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan (AAP)

- 2.7 The Local Plan 2031 identifies land to the north of the A40 near Eynsham as a strategic location for growth (SLG) which is intended to accommodate a free-standing exemplar Garden Village of around 2,200 new homes plus 40 hectares of business land and various supporting services and facilities.
- 2.8 The Local Plan requires comprehensive development of the Garden Village (now referred to as Salt Cross) led by an Area Action Plan (AAP).
- 2.9 Following extensive stakeholder engagement, the final draft version of the AAP was submitted for independent examination in February 2021 with hearing sessions held in June/July 2021.
- 2.10 Following a pause in the examination to enable additional work on infrastructure phasing to be undertaken, the appointed Inspectors wrote to the District Council in May 2022 to confirm that the AAP is capable of being found 'sound' subject to a number of Main Modifications (MMs).
- 2.11 Consultation on those Main Modifications took place from September to October 2022 and on 1 March 2023, the Inspectors' issued their final report which concluded that the AAP can be formally adopted subject to a number of modifications.
- 2.12 However, a legal challenge was subsequently lodged by Rights Community Action (RCA) focusing on the conclusions reached by the Inspectors in relation to the soundness of AAP Policy 2 – Net Zero Carbon Development.
- 2.13 The legal challenge was successful and in March 2024, it was confirmed that the Inspector's report and proposed Main Modifications are quashed insofar as they relate to Policy 2.
- 2.14 As a result, the examination was re-opened in April 2024 with a new Inspector appointed. At the time of writing, examination hearing sessions are expected to be held in February 2025.¹

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 2.15 West Oxfordshire does not yet have CIL in place but in March 2023, the Council's Executive agreed that new viability evidence should be commissioned to inform a new draft CIL charging schedule (and also to help inform the emerging Local Plan 2041).

¹ <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning-and-building/planning-policy/salt-cross-garden-village/salt-cross-area-action-plan-examination/salt-cross-area-action-plan-re-opened-examination-2024/>

- 2.16 Consultants were appointed to prepare new evidence with input from key stakeholders.
- 2.17 Consultation on a new CIL charging schedule took place between August and September 2024 with submission, examination and adoption to follow in 2025.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

- 2.18 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are intended to build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on policies in an adopted Local Plan. The District Council now has a number of SPDs in place. Details are provided in the summary table below with copies of the SPDS available on the Council's website [here](#).

Table 2 - West Oxfordshire Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

Title	Purpose	Date of adoption
Affordable Housing	Supplements Local Plan Policy H3 – Affordable Housing and provides detailed guidance on the delivery of new affordable housing in West Oxfordshire.	27 October 2021
Developer Contributions	Supplements Local Plan Policy OS5 – Supporting Infrastructure and provides detailed guidance to developers, infrastructure providers and local communities on likely infrastructure requirements for developments in West Oxfordshire.	31 July 2023
Combe Village Design Statement	Supplements Local Plan Policy OS4 – High Quality Design and provides design guidelines that can help to shape any future development so that it blends in with Combe's distinctive rural landscape and heritage.	28 July 2023
West Oxfordshire Design Guide	Supplements Local Plan Policy OS4 – High Quality Design and contains a detailed analysis of both natural and man-made aspects of the District and detailed design advice.	2016

Neighbourhood Planning

- 2.19 Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) provide an extra tier of planning, to address locally specific issues within localities, mainly parishes in the case of West Oxfordshire. NDPs form part of the statutory Development Plan and are therefore a key consideration in decision making in West Oxfordshire.
- 2.20 Nine NDPs have been formally adopted or 'made' in West Oxfordshire. Details of these plans are provided in sequential date order in the table below.

Table 3 - Made Neighbourhood Development Plans

NDP	Date of adoption	Weblink
Cassington	26 June 2023	https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/wkojqf3/made-cassington-neighbourhood-plan-for-web.pdf
Milton under Wychwood	26 June 2023	https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/g4okpitt/milton-under-wychwood-neighbourhood-plan-made-26062023.pdf
Woodstock	23 January 2023	https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/saynun5i/woodstock-neighbourhood-development-plan.pdf
Charlbury	14 June 2021	https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/wbens1r3/regulation-19-charlbury-decision-statement-14-june-2021-astrid-harvey-1.pdf
Eynsham	6 February 2020	https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/ngkcklyhi/eynsham-neighbourhood-plan.pdf
Hailey	2 September 2019	https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/flmhngyh/hailey-neighbourhood-plan.pdf
Shilton	2 September 2019	https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/5fvkylce/shilton-neighbourhood-plan.pdf
South Leigh	8 January 2019	https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/mp5klvz1/south-leigh-neighbourhood-plan-v2.pdf
Chipping Norton	15 March 2016	https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/tlchsxc5/chipping-norton-neighbourhood-plan.pdf

2.21 In addition, there are a further six NDPs currently being prepared as outlined below.

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

Duty to Cooperate

2.22 The Duty to Cooperate is a legal requirement on local planning authorities to engage with other relevant authorities and certain prescribed bodies in relation to cross-boundary strategic planning matters. It applies during the period of plan-preparation i.e. up to the point at which the plan is submitted for examination.

2.23 The Duty to Cooperate is important not least because it is the first issue to be considered by a Planning Inspector when a Local Plan reaches the examination stage and if the Inspector finds that the duty has not been complied with, they will recommend that the local plan is not adopted and the examination will not proceed any further.

- 2.24 West Oxfordshire District Council has a strong track record of working actively and continuously with other local authorities and statutory bodies such as the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England.
- 2.25 In his report into the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031, the Inspector concluded that, where necessary, the Council had engaged constructively, actively and on an on-going basis in the preparation of the plan and that the Duty to Co-operate had therefore been met.
- 2.26 More recently, in relation to the Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan (AAP) the Inspectors in their report of 1 March 2023 also concluded that the Council had engaged constructively, actively and on an on-going basis in the preparation of the AAP and that the duty to co-operate had therefore been met.
- 2.27 The District Council will continue to work closely with other local authorities and statutory bodies in the preparation of the new Local Plan 2041. Early engagement has already been undertaken through two rounds of informal Regulation 18 consultation and this will continue up until the point of submission and beyond as appropriate.
- 2.28 Discussions are currently taking place between the Oxfordshire local planning authorities regarding the preparation of a countywide Statement of Common Ground – the purpose of which will be to document the progress which has been made during the process of planning for strategic cross-boundary matters.
- 2.29 This will form part of the District Council's evidence to demonstrate that it has complied with the duty to co-operate in preparing the new Local Plan. Where appropriate, the District Council may also seek to agree separate statements of common ground with individual authorities.

Section 3 - Monitoring Results

4.1 The primary purpose of the AMR is to monitor the implementation of adopted Local Plan policies and in this section, we consider the extent to which policies are being delivered under the five main sections of the Local Plan:

- Overall strategy
- Providing new homes
- Sustainable economic growth
- Transport and movement
- Environmental and heritage assets

4.2 For each section, we consider the effectiveness and implementation of the various Local Plan policies with reference to relevant indicators and contextual information.

OVERALL STRATEGY

SUMMARY

- The majority of planning applications submitted during the monitoring period were approved, in accordance with the policies of the Local Plan 2031.
- The majority of planning applications that were appealed during the monitoring period were dismissed.
- The Local Plan continues to facilitate the delivery of new development in line with the vision and overarching strategic objectives. This ensures beneficial outcomes against the objectives of the West Oxfordshire Council Plan which seeks to enable a good quality of life for all and create a better environment for people and wildlife.
- The majority of planning approvals granted were located within the main service centres, rural service centres and villages in accordance with the settlement hierarchy set out in Policy OS2.
- The majority of developments are suitably located to protect and enhance the individual form, character and identity of towns and villages and contribute to the quality of life in West Oxfordshire.
- Ensuring that new development is located in the right places enables a good quality of life for all, by ensuring that housing, jobs and infrastructure can be delivered where it is needed, while protecting the characteristics of the district that make West Oxfordshire special.
- Maintaining an up-to-date Local Plan ensures a plan-led approach to managing development in West Oxfordshire can continue and that planning applications can be determined in accordance with the Plan and overarching vision and objectives.
- The majority of residential development has been delivered on undeveloped greenfield sites throughout the monitoring period, due to relatively limited available opportunities for brownfield redevelopment.

- The council has continued to secure funding through development for new infrastructure, but there remains a significant funding gap to deliver necessary infrastructure improvements in the district.
- The delivery of infrastructure is important if the Local Plan is to deliver against a range of Core Objectives and to meet the priorities of the West Oxfordshire Council Plan 2023 – 2027. Failure to deliver adequate supporting infrastructure is likely to have a detrimental impact on the quality of life for all.

4.3 The overall strategy for the Local Plan comprises five strands; a presumption in favour of sustainable development, ensuring development is located in the right places (i.e. focused primarily on larger, more sustainable settlements) prudent use of natural resources, high quality design and ensuring that new development is supported by appropriate investment in infrastructure.

4.4 Set out below is some commentary and statistical/monitoring information around these five main strands with links to each policy (and also the Council Plan) provided as appropriate.

Planning Applications Determined in Monitoring Period (links to Policy OSI)

4.5 A total of 1,437 planning applications were determined within the monitoring period (1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024).

4.6 This includes applications that were subsequently withdrawn, but the figures serve to illustrate the level of interest in developing in West Oxfordshire and the important role the planning department plays in determining applications and implementing the policies of the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031.

4.7 A breakdown is provided below. As can be seen, the vast majority of applications were approved in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development that is embedded in Local Plan Policy OSI.

Table 4 - Types of planning application decision 2023-2024

Type of decision	Number of applications 23/24
Approved / Subject to S106	1,162
Prior approval granted / not required	28
Split decision	1
Refused	162
Withdrawn	74
Prior approval refused	10

Type of decision	Number of applications 23/24
Total	1,437

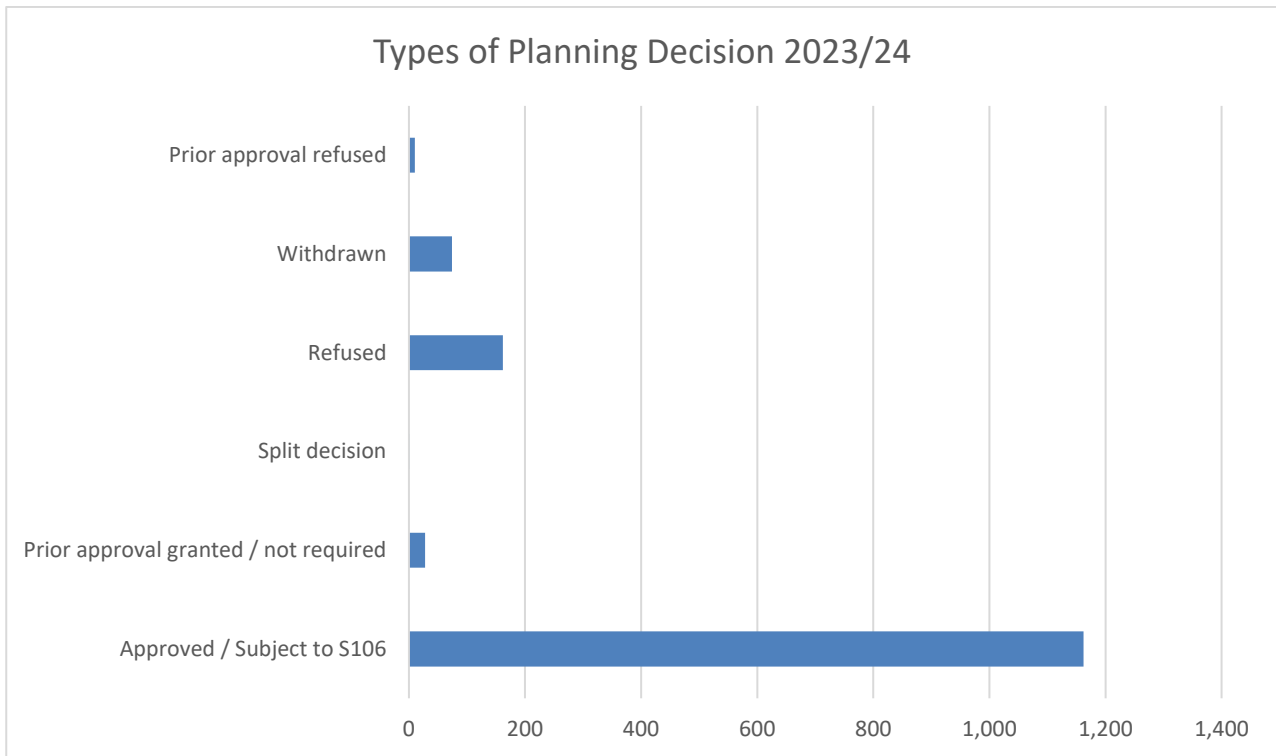


Figure I - Types of planning decision 2023 - 2024

Table 5 - Types of planning application 2023 - 2024

Type of application	Number of Applications 23/24
Advertisement	21
Certificates of Lawfulness	41
Discharge / Removal / variation of conditions	107
Full Planning Application	308
Householder	636
Listed Building Consent	214
Non Material Amendments	46
Outline Planning	19
Prior Approval	39
Reserved Matters	6
Total	1,437

4.8 Of the 1,437 applications that were determined, the largest proportion were householder applications.

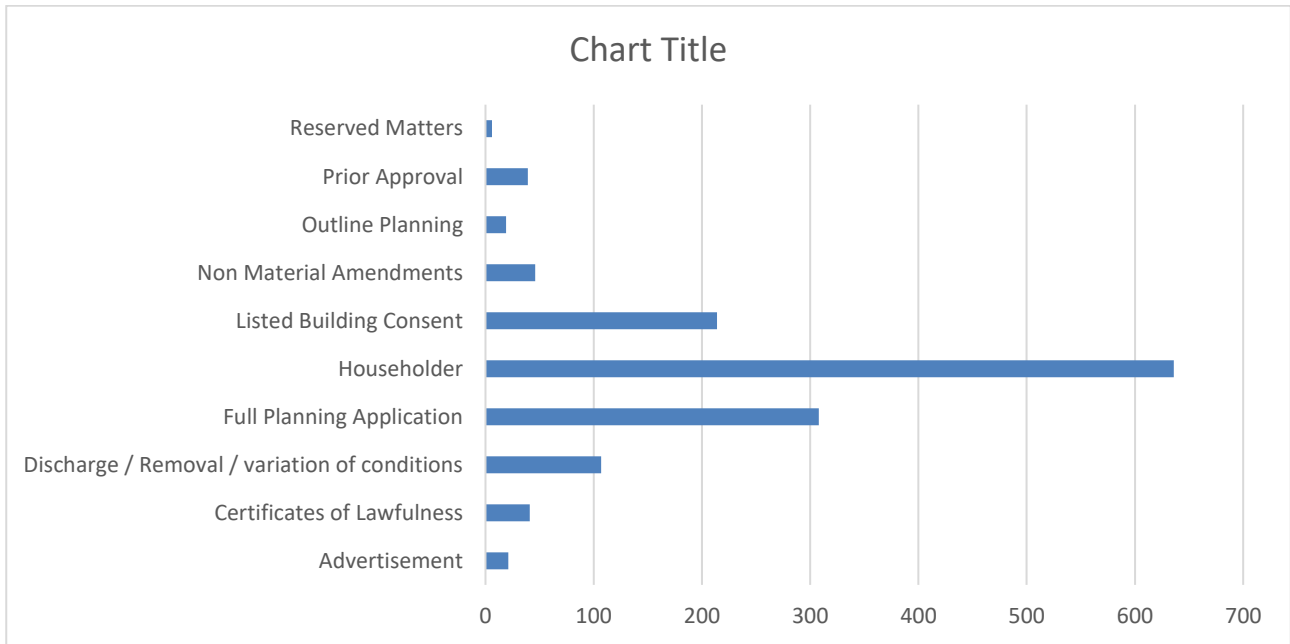


Figure 2 - Types of planning application 2023 - 2024

Planning Appeals (links to Policy OSI)

4.9 A total of 43 planning appeals were determined within the monitoring period. The majority of these (23) were dismissed, with 18 allowed or allowed in part and 2 withdrawn on application.

4.10 The allowed appeals included a number of residential schemes as illustrated in table 6 below including major developments at Minster Lovell, Aston, Woodstock and Witney.

Table 6 - Appeals allowed for residential development 2023 - 2024

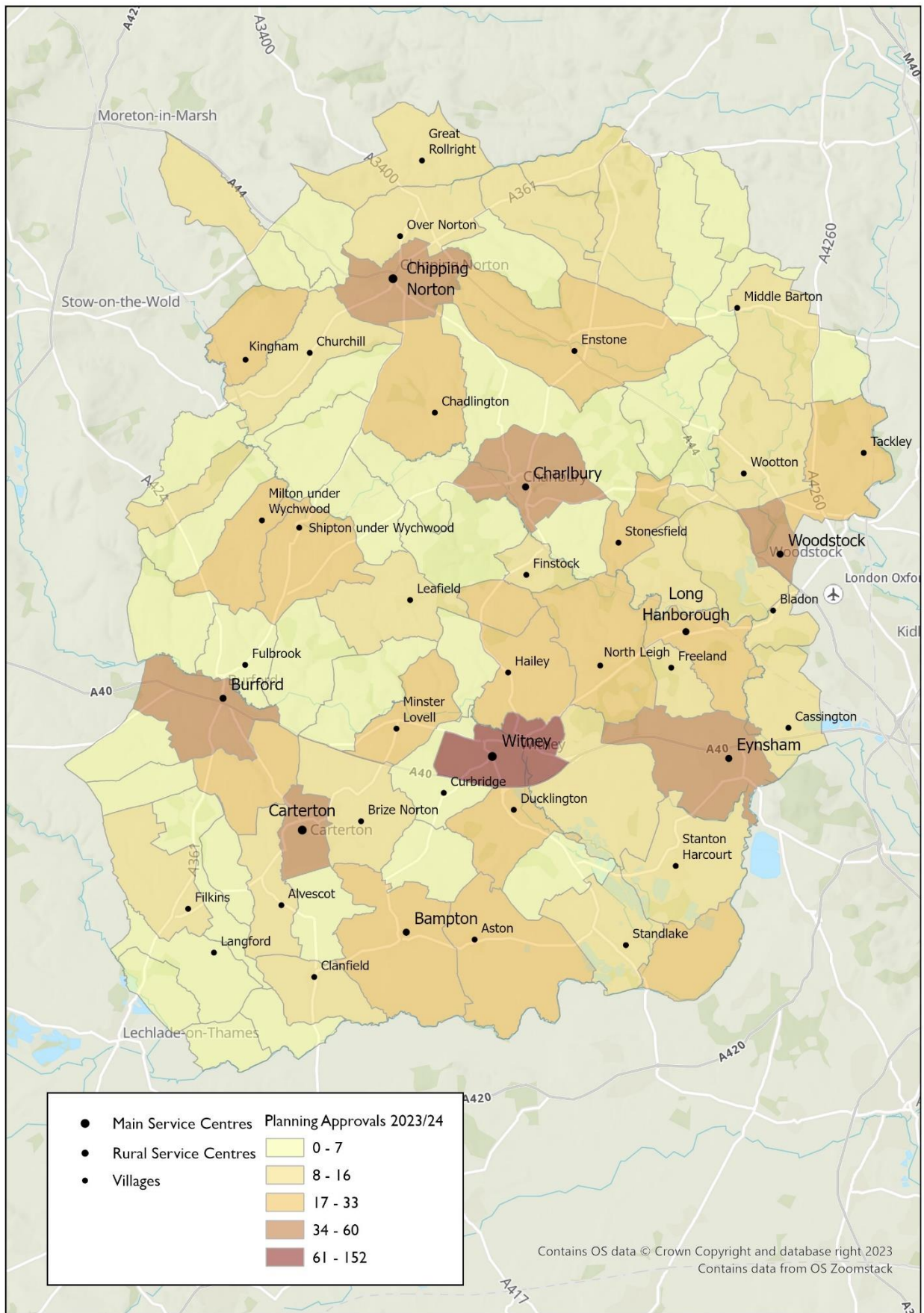
Reference	Location	Description
22/00821/FUL	Filkins	Conversion of existing forge and adjoining barn/outbuilding to create an independent dwelling together with associated works.
22/02425/FUL	Ducklington	Erection of a dwelling with detached double garage and associated works.
21/03503/FUL	North Leigh	Demolition of existing bungalow and erection of a dwelling with detached garage
22/03240/OUT	Minster Lovell	Outline planning permission for the development of up to 134 dwellings (Class C3) including means of access into the site and associated highway works, with all other matters reserved.

Reference	Location	Description
22/00986/FUL	Aston	Erection of 40 new dwellings with the provision of a new access and associated works and landscaping.
21/00189/FUL	Woodstock	Hybrid planning application consisting of full planning permission for 48 dwellings, 57 sqm of community space (Class E), a parking barn, means of access from the A44, associated infrastructure, open space, engineering and ancillary works, outline planning permission for up to 132 dwellings.
21/03342/OUT	Land Southwest of Downs Road, Curbridge Business Park	Outline planning application for a residential development comprising up to 75 dwellings (with up to 40% affordable housing provision) and public open space. All matters reserved.

Location of Development (links to Policy OS2)

- 4.11 Local Plan Policy OS2 seeks to steer development to larger, more sustainable settlements where there are good opportunities for active travel and public transport and a good range of services and facilities available.
- 4.12 In this context, figure 3 below shows the concentrations of planning approvals in each town and parish between 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024.
- 4.13 As can be seen, the majority of planning approvals were concentrated within the main service centres and rural service centres in line with the general approach of Policy OS2.
- 4.14 There were also higher concentrations of new permissions in a number of larger villages including North Leigh and Enstone. These locations have seen increased development activity in recent years, particularly for residential development and have growing populations.

Figure 3 - All planning applications approved 2023 - 2024



Car use and accessibility (links to Policies OSI, OS2 and OS3)

4.15 11.5% of households in West Oxfordshire have no access to a car compared to 16% across Oxfordshire as a whole. Higher levels of car ownership may be a reflection of the rural nature of the district and relatively poor access to public transport in some rural areas, which may increase car dependency for many communities.

Figure 4 - West Oxfordshire car ownership statistics, Census 2021

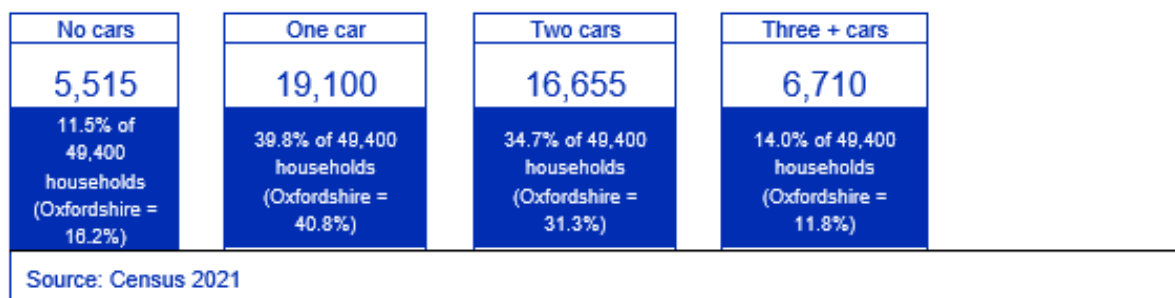
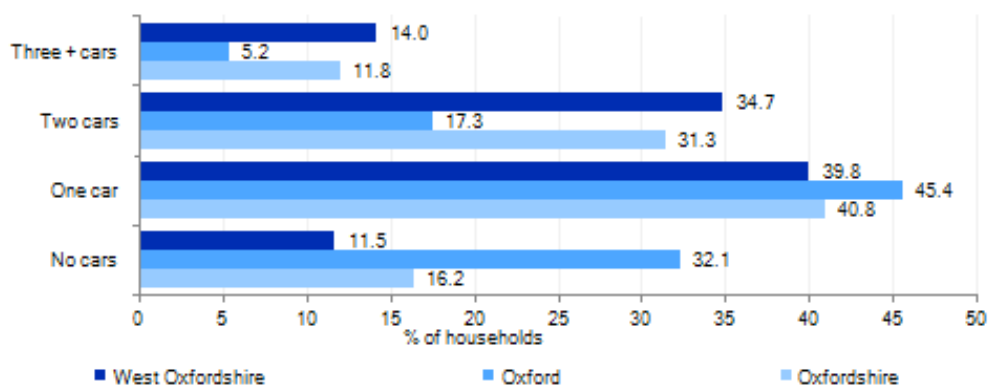


Figure: Car ownership
Source: Census 2021



Proximity of development to public transport (links to Policies OSI, OS2 and OS3)

4.16 The majority of development is focused within the main and rural service centres which are the most accessible locations for public transport services linking to other centres, particularly bus services.

4.17 Financial contributions towards improved bus services have been secured through new development that has been delivered in the district during the monitoring period.

4.18 There were 8 new residential development schemes approved during the monitoring period, located within 1.6km of a railway station. The total number of dwellings approved was 9, although 3 of these were replacement dwellings, so a net gain of 6.

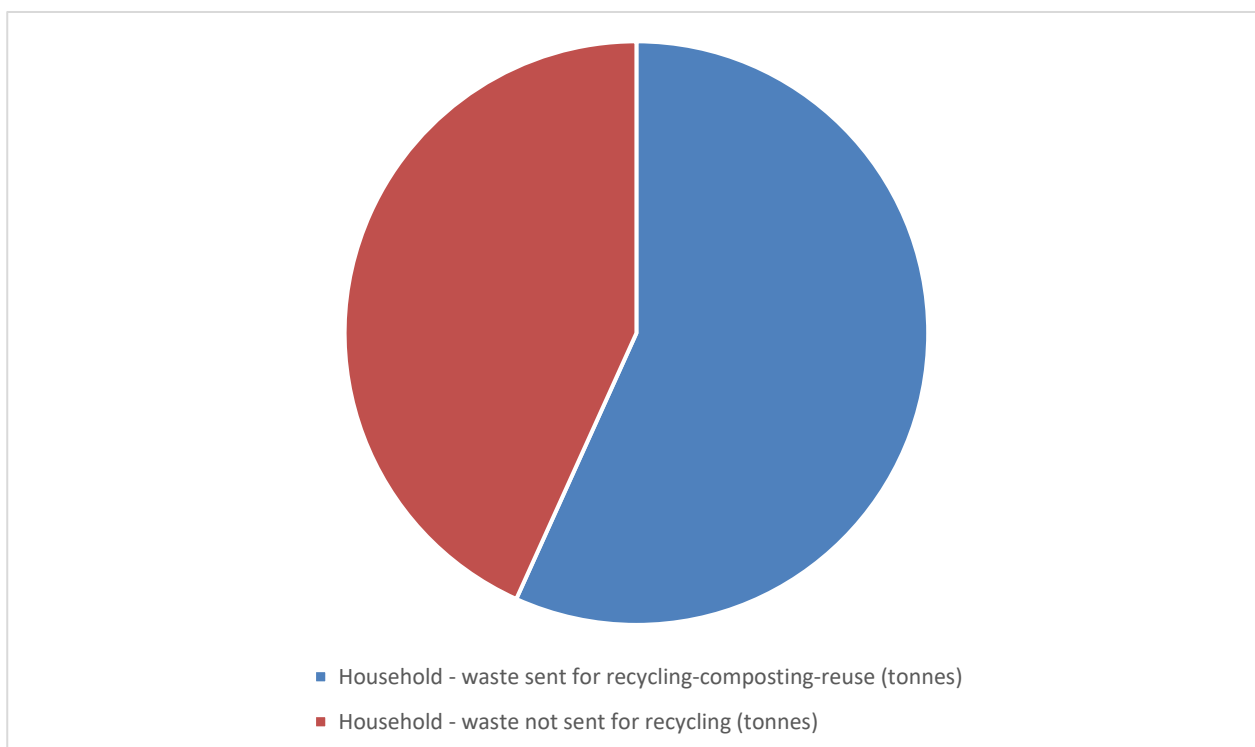
4.19 A total of 21 approvals were granted for residential development that were neither proximate to bus or rail services, totalling 27 dwellings. The majority of these applications were for replacement dwellings or redevelopment of brownfield land.

Waste and recycling (links to Policy OS3)

4.20 A total of 41,804 tonnes of household waste was collected by the local authority between 2022 and 2023. The majority of this waste was sent for recycling, composting or reuse².

4.21 The Local Plan includes a target to recycle or compost 70% of household waste by 2025. The figures for the monitoring period indicate a shortfall against this target with 57% of waste recycled, composted or re-used within the period.

Figure 5 - Proportion of waste sent for recycling, composting or reuse in West Oxfordshire 2023 - 2024



² <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/local-authority-collected-waste-management-annual-results>

Brownfield land redevelopment (links to Policies OS1, OS2 and OS3)

- 4.22 The Local Plan seeks ensure that development makes the most efficient use of land. There is relatively limited brownfield land available in the District since the majority of former industrial sites have already been developed, yet a significant amount of residential development has been delivered on previously developed land, though conversion or redevelopment.
- 4.23 Approximately 55 dwellings out of 896 (a total of 6%) were approved on previously developed land during the monitoring period.

Development at risk of flooding (links to Policies OS1, OS2 and OS3)

- 4.24 There were 5 approvals for residential development within Flood Zone 2 (medium risk) totalling 6 dwellings during the monitoring period³. The majority of these approvals were for conversion or redevelopment of existing buildings.
- 4.25 There were few reported incidents of property flooding recorded during the monitoring period, despite periods of heavy rainfall and named storms during the monitoring period.
- 4.26 There were incidents of highway flooding recorded during the monitoring period however.
- 4.27 Incidents of highway and property flooding in West Oxfordshire are often a result of sewer inundation and overflowing their capacity. This is an issue that will need to be addressed to ensure that there is capacity for future development in the district.

Water Quality (links to Policies OS1, OS2, OS3 and OS4)

- 4.28 Water quality is measured on a river catchment scale and West Oxfordshire falls within two catchment areas: the Evenlode and the Windrush which are both major tributaries of the River Thames.
- 4.29 The annual water quality report for the Evenlode (2023)⁴, recorded high nitrate levels throughout the catchment and more variable phosphate levels, with high phosphate levels at disparate and specific locations across the catchment.

³ Calculated using GIS analysis – Any planning application boundary that intersects flood zone 2.

⁴⁴ https://earthwatch.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Evenlode_WaterBlitz_Autumn_2023_Report.pdf

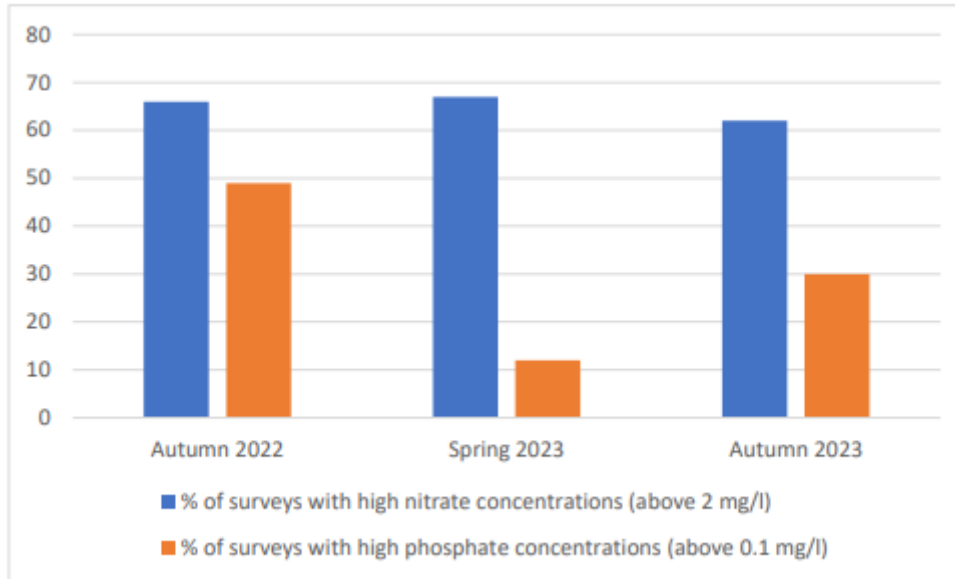


Figure 6 - Concentrations of pollutants in River Evenlode 2022-2023

- 4.30 Levels of Nitrate concentration in the Evenlode have remained consistent between seasons, suggesting a widespread legacy of nitrate pollution and likely a reflection of agricultural land practices in the catchment.
- 4.31 Phosphate levels have varied more significantly between seasons and could be due to variations in rainfall. There were extreme low flows in the Evenlode in 2022 and this could have led to higher concentrations of pollutants being recorded at that time. Higher rainfall during spring 2023 and higher river flows are likely to have diluted concentrations of pollutants.
- 4.32 The latest Environment Agency data for the Evenlode Catchment⁵ indicates that all 18 water bodies in this catchment failed their chemical status. In terms of ecological quality 6 were rated poor and 12 were rated moderate.
- 4.33 Within the Windrush Catchment⁶, all 19 water bodies in this catchment failed their chemical status. In terms of ecological quality 2 were good, 9 were moderate, 6 were poor and 2 were bad.
- 4.34 Discharges from storm overflows into water courses remain an ongoing problem.

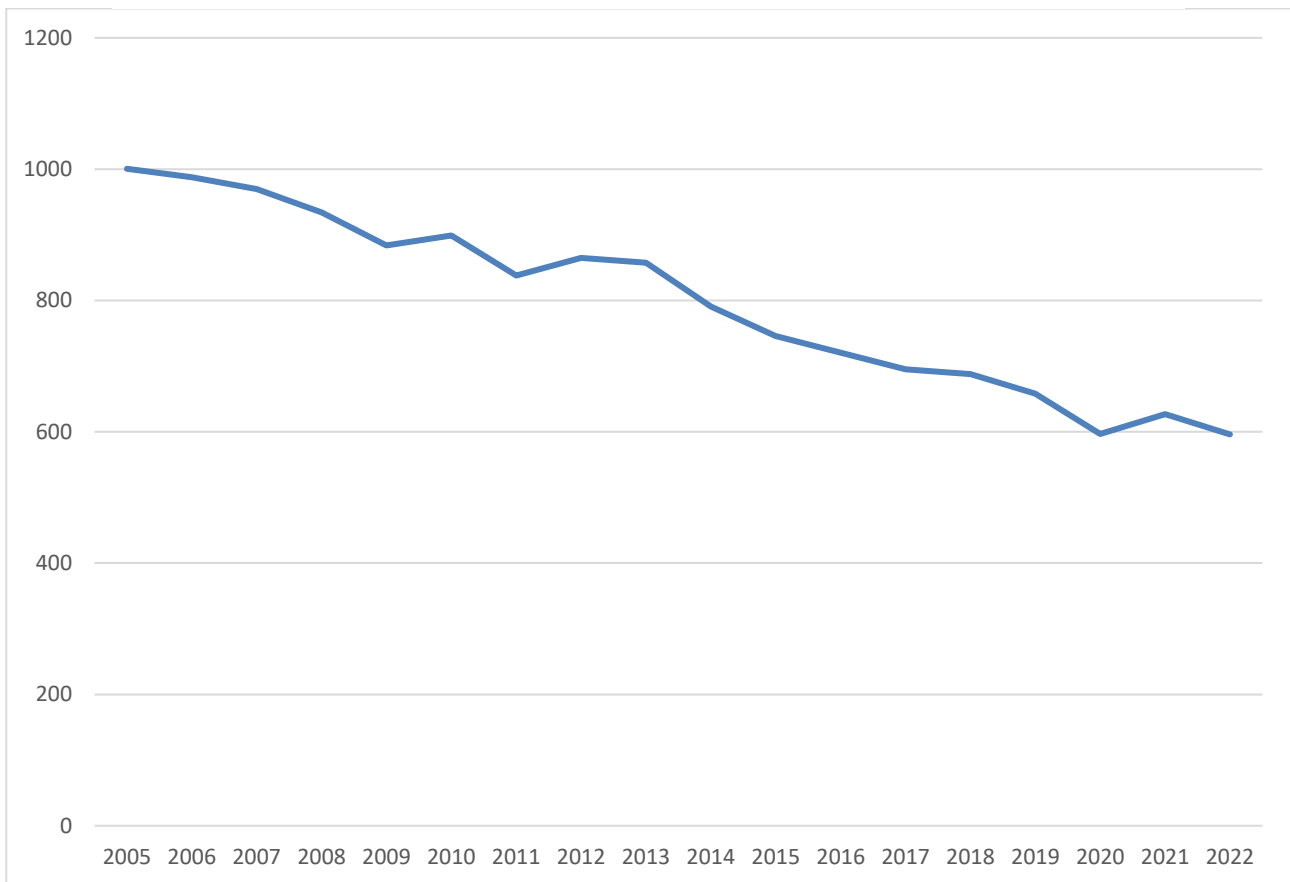
⁵ [Evenlode Operational Catchment | Catchment Data Explorer](#)

⁶ [Windrush Operational Catchment | Catchment Data Explorer](#)

Climate and Carbon (links to Policies OS1, OS2, OS3 and OS4)

- 4.35 The government publish statistics⁷, to produce a nationally consistent set of greenhouse gas emission estimates for local authority areas in England. The latest statistics published in June 2024 show the change in greenhouse gas emissions for different sectors over the lifetime of the Local Plan.
- 4.36 Figure 6 below, shows the trend in greenhouse gas emissions in West Oxfordshire since 2005. Notably, there has been as steady decrease since 2011 with a slight uptick in 2021.

Figure 6 - Total Greenhouse gas emissions for West Oxfordshire 2011 - 2022

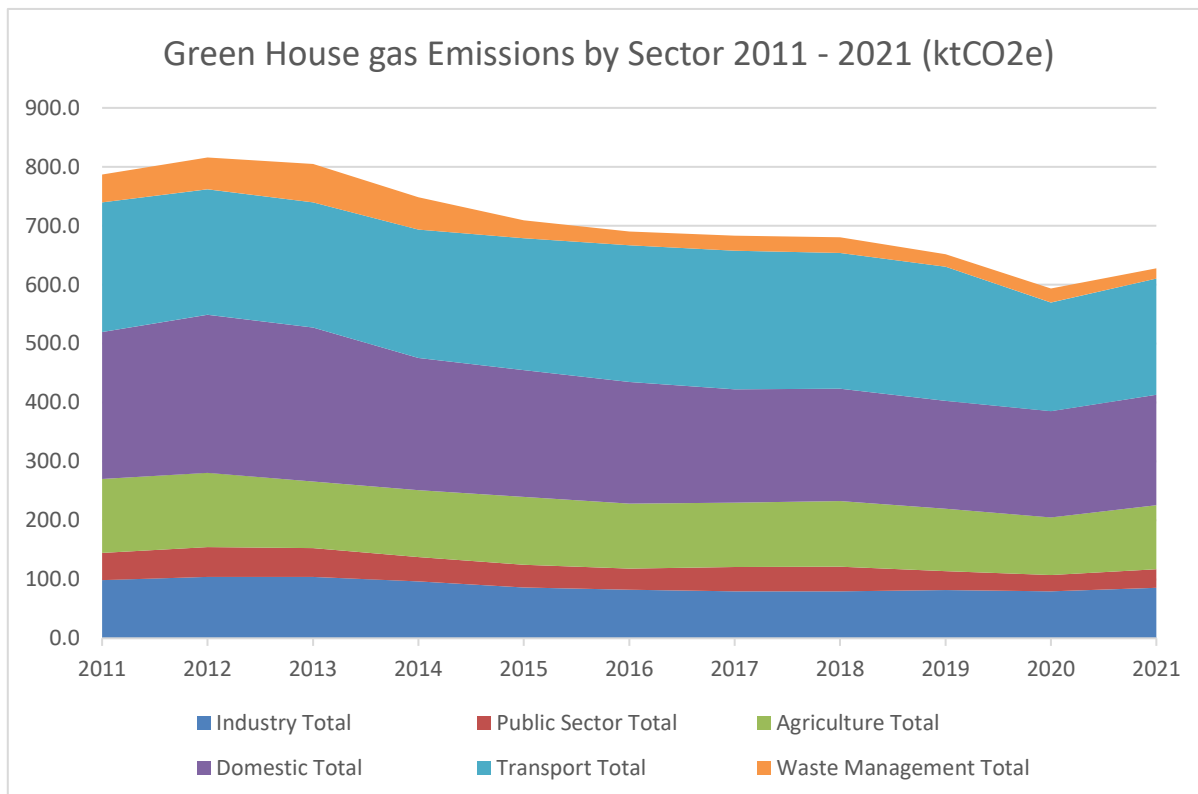


⁷ [UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions statistics, 2005 to 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

4.37 The majority of greenhouse gas emissions in West Oxfordshire arise from domestic and transport emissions, which account for over 58% of the total.

4.38 Further action to reduce emissions from residential development and transport will be necessary to meet targets for net zero emissions by 2050 or earlier.

Figure 7 - West Oxfordshire Greenhouse gas emissions by sector 2011 - 2021



4.39 WODC have undertaken analysis to assess carbon emissions from the Council’s own operations during the monitoring period. These emissions are categorised as Scope 1 and Scope 2, which are directly from WODC own operations and buildings and Scope 3, which is related to emissions where the council does not have direct control e.g. staff business mileage.

4.40 Total carbon emissions from the council’s own operations for 2022/23 are illustrated on the chart below. The majority of the Council’s own emissions are categorised as Scope 1 and relate to the operation of the council’s own buildings, such as office space and the council’s vehicle fleet.

4.41 The Council published a Carbon Action Plan in 2020. Since then, it has become good practice to consider additional sources of emissions beyond those previously accounted for, including emissions where the lack of data means that these cannot be reported formally through the Council’s carbon reporting process. The Carbon Action Plan 2024⁸ provides an updated version of the Climate Action

⁸ <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/tslaufqh/wodc-carbon-action-plan-20242030-oct-24.pdf>

Plan, covering actions to be undertaken between 2024 and 2030 to reach the carbon neutral target. Additional actions for procurement and waste have been included in line with best practice, while actions from the previous plan which are complete have been removed.

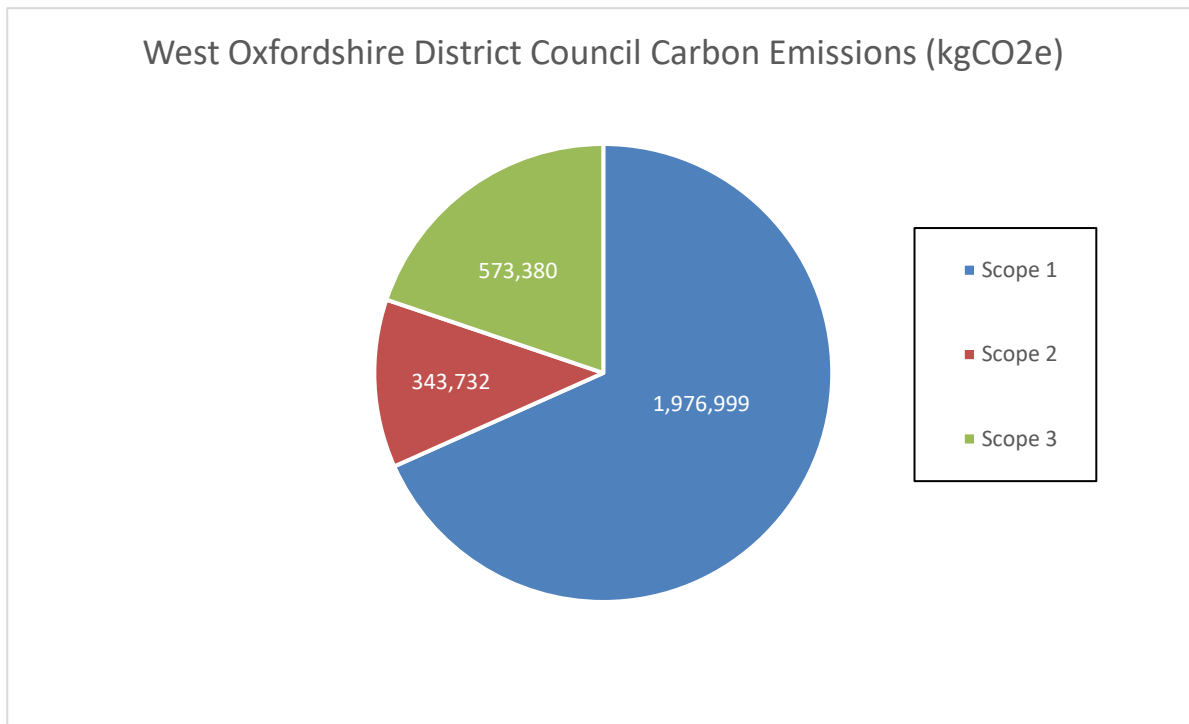


Figure 8 - West Oxfordshire District Council carbon emissions 2023/24

Provision of Supporting Infrastructure (links to Policy OS5)

- 4.42 New development is required to deliver or contribute towards the timely provision of essential supporting infrastructure either directly as part of the development or through an appropriate financial contribution.
- 4.43 The Local Plan 2031 is supported by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which sets out a range of highways, utilities, community and green infrastructure that is necessary to support the delivery of the Local Plan.
- 4.44 Evidence⁹ suggests that there is a significant funding gap relating to the cost of infrastructure in the district and this will have to be made up through a range of mechanisms including Section 106 agreements, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and central Government funding.

⁹ <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/oxnfffxd/infrastructure-funding-gap-analysis-june-2020.pdf>

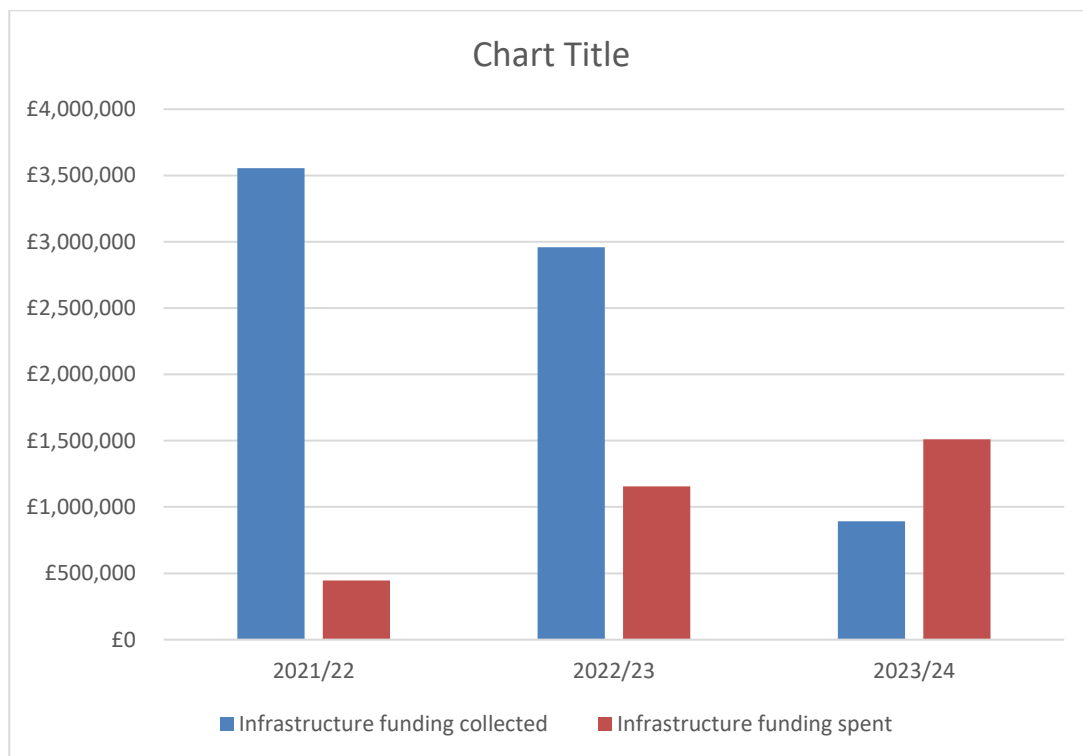
4.45 West Oxfordshire District Council do not currently operate CIL, so the majority of financial contributions for infrastructure funding are secured via S106 at present.

4.46 The Council collected a total of £892,062 of infrastructure funding through the monitoring period. A summary of financial contributions is shown in the table below. Further, detailed information is set out in the Council's Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) published [online](#) annually.

Table 7 - Section 106 infrastructure funding agreed, collected and spent 2023 - 2024

Year	Infrastructure Funding Agreed	Infrastructure funding collected	Infrastructure funding spent
2023 - 2024	£3,183,352	£892,062	£1,510,850
Total	£3,183,352	£892,062	£1,510,850

Figure 9 - Section 106 infrastructure funding collected and spent 2021 - 2024



PROVIDING NEW HOMES

SUMMARY

- The highest concentrations of new residential development have taken place within Main Service Centres, Rural Service Centres and larger villages in line with the locational policies of the Local Plan.
- In 2023/24, a total of new homes 683 were completed, below the 975 Local Plan requirement for the monitoring period.
- Overall, there has been an upward trend in housing delivery since the start of the Local Plan period (1st April 2011) although completions rates have decreased since 2021. Up until 31st March 2024, a total of 7,719 new homes have been completed, set against a requirement for 8,075 over the same period (i.e. a modest shortfall of 356 dwellings over a 13 year period).
- The District Council was unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing land when calculated using the Government's standard method for assessing local housing need at 31 March 2024.
- Affordable housing continues to come forward as a significant proportion of total housing permitted and completed in the District.
- 238 new affordable homes were completed during the monitoring period, 35% of the total housing completions.
- Notwithstanding increased delivery of new affordable homes, the affordability ratio¹⁰ in West Oxfordshire has worsened, increasing from 8.03 in 2011 to 10.46 in 2023. This is consistent with trends seen elsewhere including across Oxfordshire as a whole.
- The mix of dwelling types approved is broadly consistent with the indicative guidelines set out in the Local Plan. There have been some additional dwellings to meet the needs older people both permitted and completed during the monitoring period.
- A small number of self-build plots were secured during the monitoring period. The provision of self-build plots will continue to increase as larger housing allocations are built out over the lifetime of the Plan.

¹⁰ Ratio of median house price to median gross annual (where available) residence-based earnings by local authority district, England and Wales, 2002 to 2023

4.47 The housing policies of the Local Plan deal with a range of issues including the overall number of homes to be provided, the distribution and location of those homes, affordable housing, housing mix, changes to existing dwellings and provision for specialist housing needs.

4.48 Housing related core objectives are as follows:

- CO4 - Locate new residential development where it will best help to meet housing needs and reduce the need to travel.
- CO5 - Plan for the timely delivery of new housing to meet forecast needs and support sustainable economic growth.
- CO6 - Plan for an appropriate mix of new residential accommodation which provides a variety of sizes, types and affordability with special emphasis on the provision of homes for local people in housing need who cannot afford to buy or rent at market prices including those wishing to self-build, as well as homes to meet the needs of older people, younger people, black and minority ethnic communities, people with disabilities, families and travelling communities.

New residential permissions (links to Policies H1 and H2)

4.49 Planning permission was granted for 918 new dwellings during the monitoring period, representing a net gain of 890.

Table 8 - New permissions for residential development 2023 - 2024 (net residential dwellings)

Year	New permissions for residential development (net dwellings)
I April 2023 – 31 March 2024	890

4.50 The majority of permissions across the monitoring period were major in nature involving developments of greater than 10 units.

4.51 A number of developments approved during the monitoring period were allowed at appeal and include further significant development to the west of Minster Lovell, to the West of Witney and to the north of Woodstock (the Woodstock site being allocated in the adopted Local Plan).

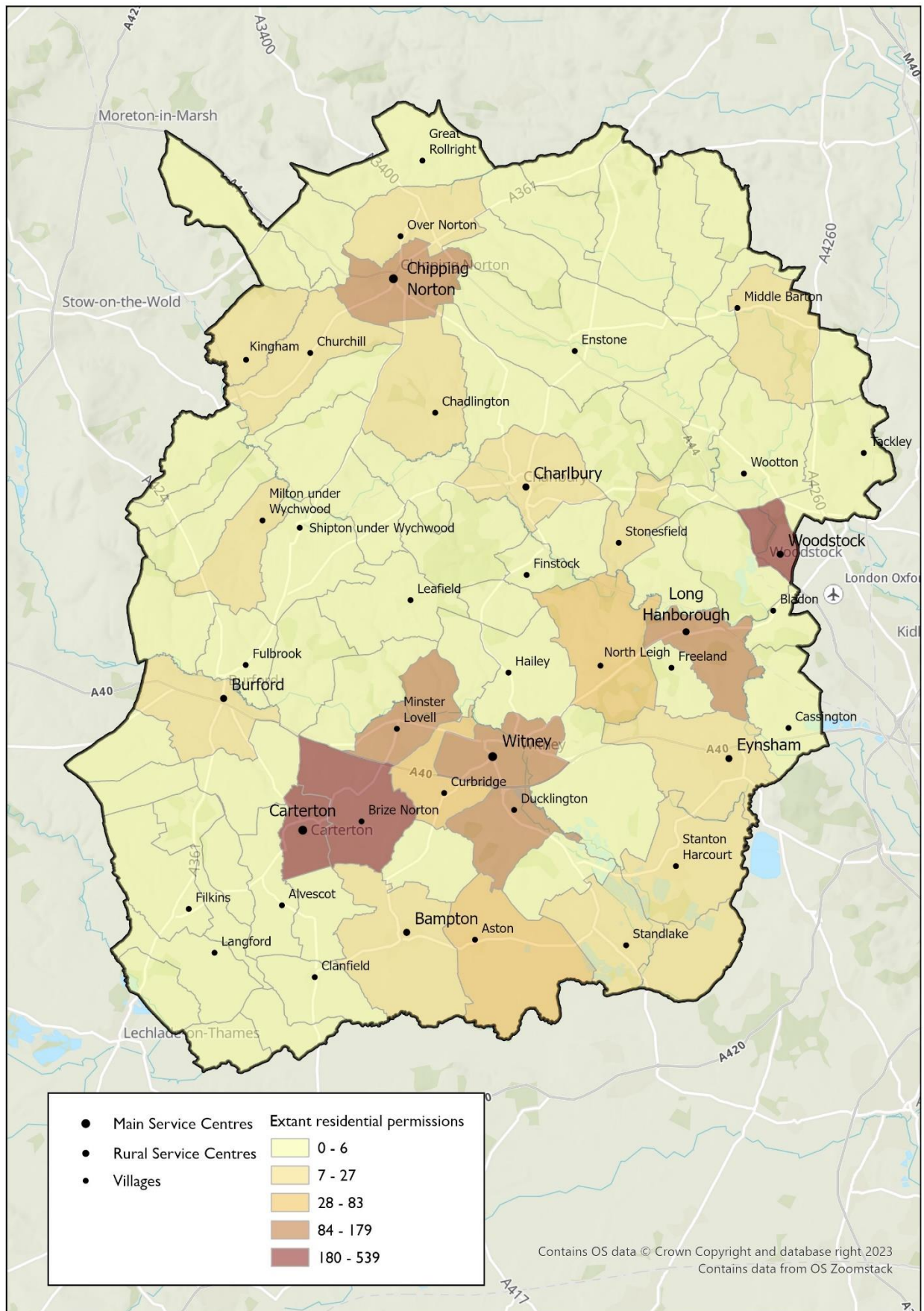
4.52 Total commitments for new residential development are illustrated in Table 9 below. It shows that the largest numbers of outstanding commitments (dwellings with planning permission that are yet to be built) are within and on the edge of Carterton, Brize Norton and Woodstock.

4.53 This pattern of development is consistent with Policy H1, but as the main service centres expand, neighbouring parishes accommodate a growing share of new housing development. This is the case at Witney where housing growth has extended into the parish of Curbridge and at Carterton where housing development has expanded into Brize Norton.

Table 9 – Residential Commitments on major development sites April 2024

Site Name	Number of units yet to be built as of 1 st April 2024	Parish
North Curbridge (West Witney)	39	Witney
North Curbridge (West Witney)	74	Witney
Land west of Downs Road, Curbridge	75	Curbridge
Land east of Carterton (Brize Meadow)	258	Brize Norton
Land east of Carterton	99	Brize Norton
Land west of Shilton Road, Burford	22	Burford
Land North of Witney Road, Long Hanborough	150	Hanborough
Land West of Minster Lovell	134	Minster Lovell
Witney Road, Ducklington, Witney	120	Ducklington
Land south of Hit or Miss Farm, Banbury Road, Chipping Norton	90	Chipping Norton
Land north of Witney Road, North Leigh	55	North Leigh
Land north of Foxwood Close, Aston	40	Aston
Chipping Norton War Memorial Hospital, Horsefair, Chipping Norton	14	Chipping Norton
Station Garage, Station Road, Kingham,	10	Kingham
Land to the rear of 65 High Street, Standlake	9	Standlake
Site Of Former 19, Burford Road, Carterton	10	Carterton
West End Scrap Yard, Witney	10	Witney
1 St Marys Court Witney	4	Witney
TOTAL	1,213	

Figure 10 - Residential Commitments by Parish 2024



Total Net Housing Completions (links to Policies H1 and H2)

4.54 The Local Plan is based on an overall housing requirement of 15,950 homes (798 per year from 2011 – 2031). This includes 13,200 homes for West Oxfordshire’s own housing needs (660 per year) plus a further 2,750 (136 per year rounded) for Oxford City’s unmet housing need.

4.55 Policy H2 of the Local is based on a ‘stepped’ housing requirement which increases from 2021 onwards to take account of Oxford’s unmet housing need as follows:

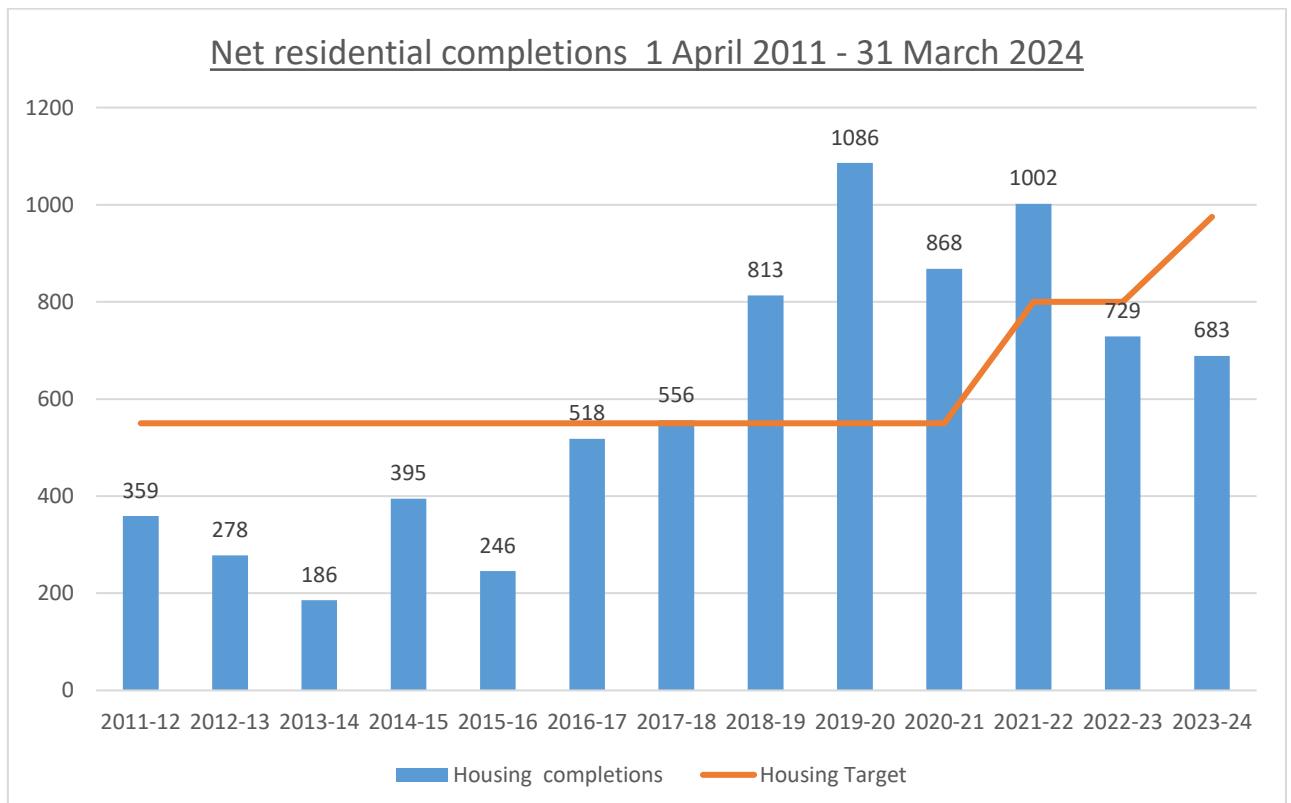
- 550 dwellings per year (2011-2021)
- 800 dwellings per year (2021 – 2023)
- 975 dwellings per year (2023 – 2024)
- 867 dwellings per year (2024 – 2031)

4.56 Notably, in the period 1st April 2011 – 31st March 2024, a total of 7,719 new homes have been completed in West Oxfordshire, set against a requirement of 8,075 new homes over the same period. Delivery was effectively on track until 2023, but has dropped off during the monitoring period, with a modest shortfall now of approximately 356 over the whole Plan period to date.

4.57 Some of this shortfall can be accounted for by under-delivery of new housing on allocated sites, compared to the anticipated housing trajectory set out in the Local Plan.

4.58 A number of strategic and non-strategic site allocations are associated with necessary infrastructure and it has proven difficult to bring these sites through the planning process in a timely and sustainable manner.

Figure 11 - Net residential completions in West Oxfordshire 2011 - 2024



- 4.59 As the Local Plan is over 5 years old and the Council has identified that the policies for the supply of housing require updating, West Oxfordshire District Council have reverted to the Standard Methodology for housing need for the purpose of calculating housing land supply.
- 4.60 The standard calculation of housing need for West Oxfordshire is 549 dwellings per annum. The Council was unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply based on this measure at 31 March 2024.

Net Housing Completions 2023 – 2024 (links to Policies H1 and H2)

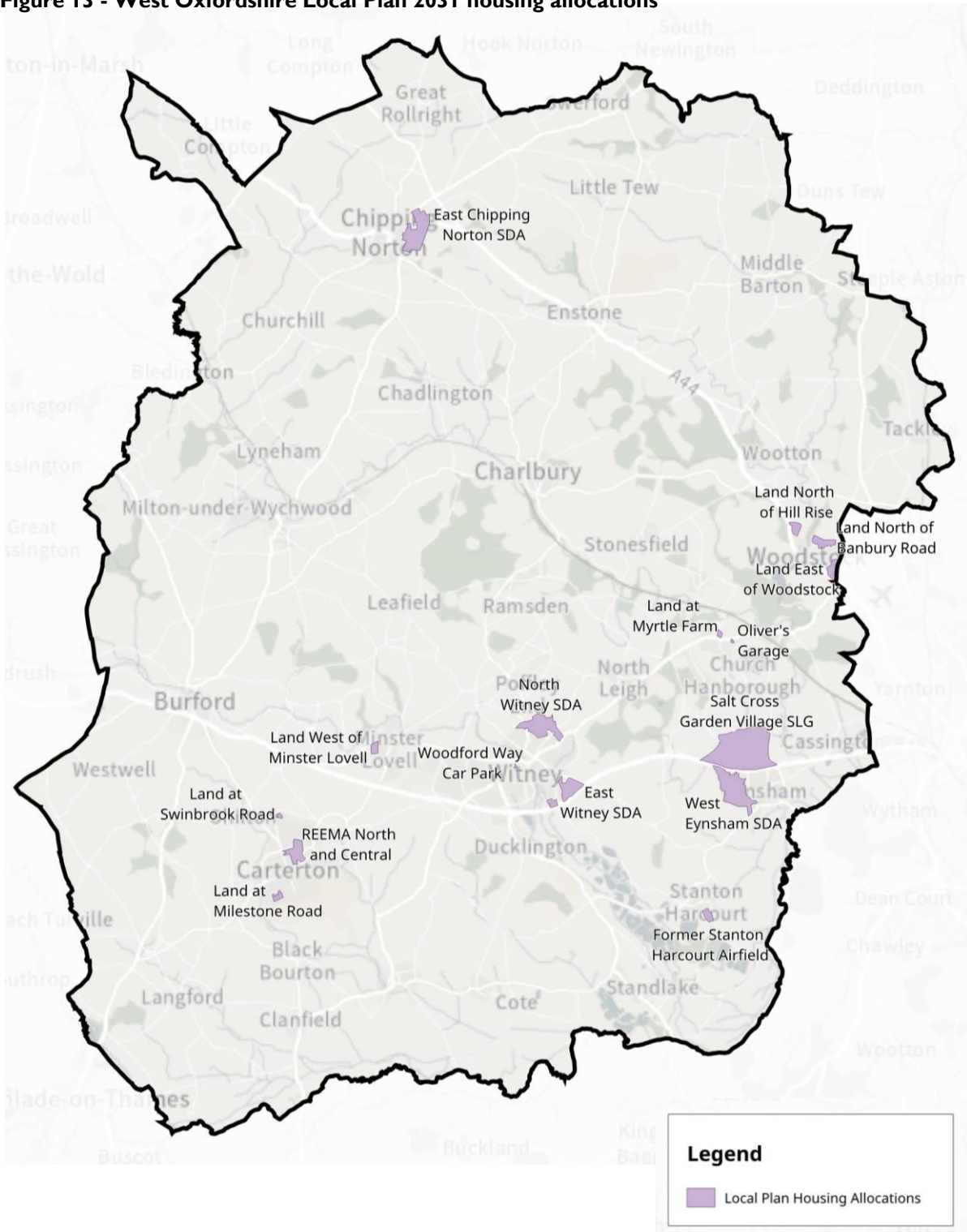
- 4.61 A total of 683 new homes were completed in 2023/24, falling short of the Local Plan requirement of 975 for the year.
- 4.62 Figure 12 below shows the location of these completions on a spatial basis.

Housing allocations (links to Policies HI, H2 and various site allocations)

4.63 The Local Plan allocates a number of strategic and non-strategic housing sites, some of which (primarily the smaller, non-strategic sites) have now been completed or are under construction and some of which are yet to come forward to construction, particularly the larger strategic sites.

4.64 The location of these allocated sites is shown on figure 13 below.

Figure 13 - West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 housing allocations



4.65 Table 10 below lists the various local plan housing allocations and the total number of completions recorded up to 1st April 2024.

Table 10 - Expected and actual completions on allocated sites

Site Name	Allocated total dwellings	Expected completions 2018-2024 (Local Plan Housing trajectory)	Total Completions to 31 March 2024
East Witney SDA	450	125	0
North Witney SDA	1,400	175	0
Woodford Way Car Park	50	25	0
Land west of Minster Lovell	125	125	94
REEMA North and Central	300	81	81
Land at Milestone Road, Carterton	200	180	0
Land at Swinbrook Road, Carterton	70	70	30
East Chipping Norton SDA	1,200	173	252
Salt Cross Garden Village	2,200	220	0
West Eynsham SDA	1,000	312	237
Land east of Woodstock	300	275	180
Land north of Hill Rise, Woodstock	120	70	0
Land north of Banbury Road, Woodstock	160	0	0
Myrtle Farm, Long Hanborough	50	50	0
Oliver's Garage, Long Hanborough	25	25	25
Former Stanton Harcourt Airfield	50	50	66

Affordable Housing Completions (links to Policy H3)

4.66 A total of 238 affordable homes were completed during the monitoring period. This included:

- 140 Affordable Rented properties
- 98 Shared Ownership properties

4.67 The provision of new social rented properties is particularly welcome as this is generally acknowledged to be the most affordable form of affordable housing. The Office for National Statistics September 2024 data reveals that the average house price is £388,000 up 4.2% from August 2023 and the average monthly rent is £1,256 up 6% in the same period.

4.68 Notwithstanding increased delivery of new affordable homes, the affordability ratio in West Oxfordshire has worsened over the lifetime of the plan, increasing from 8.03 in 2011 to 10.46 in 2023. The affordability ratio is the ratio of median house price to median gross annual-based earnings of local residents.

Table 11 - Affordable housing completions in West Oxfordshire 2023 - 2024

Year	Affordable rented	Social rented	Shared ownership	First homes	Total
2023 / 2024	140	0	98	0	238
Total	140	0	98	0	238

4.69 All affordable housing completions during the monitoring period were focused on larger development sites, reflecting Local Plan Policy H3 which only requires on-site delivery of affordable housing for developments of 11 units or more.

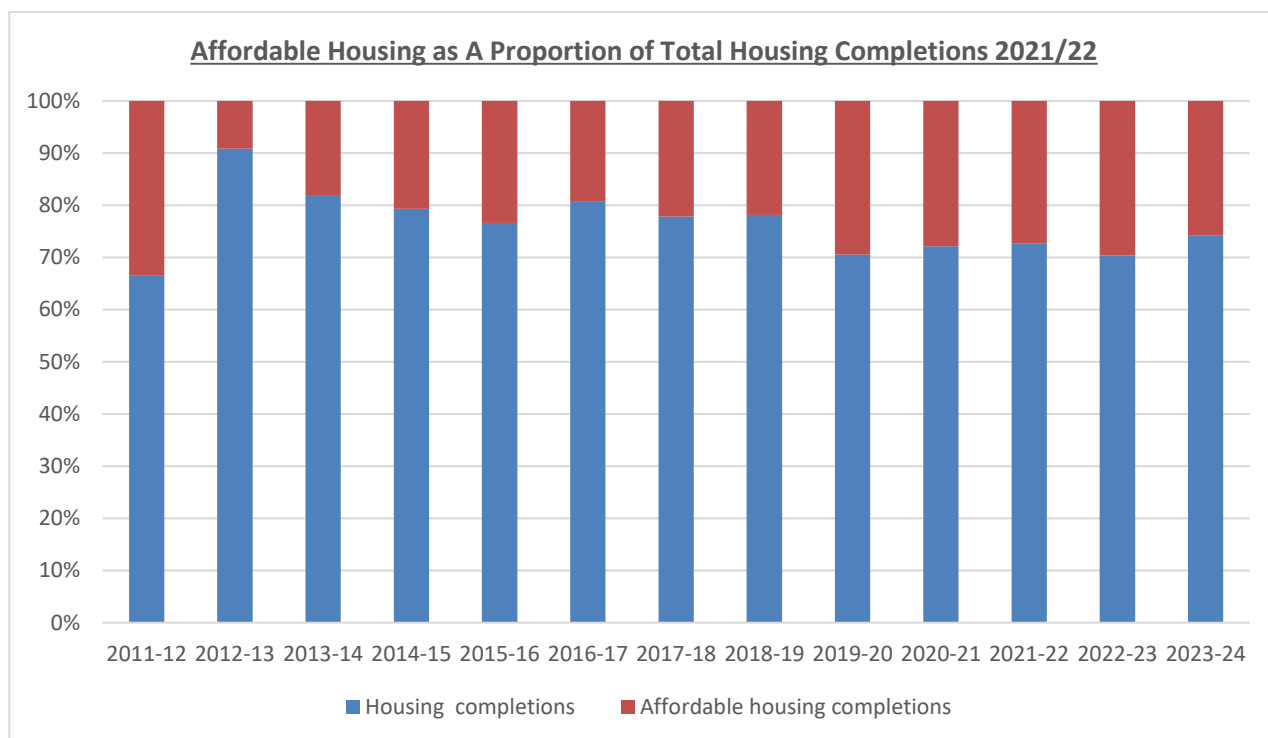
4.70 Overall, 35% of total housing completions during the monitoring period were classed as affordable which is broadly in line with Local Plan targets. Future developments in High and Medium Value zones, as indicated in the Local Plan are expected to increase the overall proportion of affordable housing delivered on-site.

4.71 In some instances, a financial contribution (commuted sum) may be sought in lieu of on-site affordable housing provision. Such contributions are then used to fund the delivery of affordable housing within the District.

4.72 A total of **£593,049** was collected towards the provision of affordable housing during the monitoring period.

4.73 Much of this is awaiting allocation, but the Council remains in discussion with affordable housing providers about allocating this funding effectively.

Figure 14 - Proportion of affordable housing completions 2011 - 2024



Affordable Housing Permissions (links to Policy H3)

4.74 A total of 287 on-site affordable housing units were secured through legal agreement in 2023/24 and will be delivered through future monitoring periods. It should be noted that this exceeds the indicative level of affordable housing need identified in the Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) - 274 per annum.

4.75 These affordable units will be focused within the main service centres of Witney and Chipping Norton, Woodstock and the larger villages of Minster Lovell, Brize Norton and Aston.

Table 12 - Affordable Housing required from S106 planning obligations signed 2023-2024

1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024		
21/00189/FUL	Land East of Hill Rise, Woodstock	90
21/03342/OUT	Land Southwest of Downs Road, Curbridge Business Park, Witney	30
22/00986/FUL	Land North of Cote Road, Aston	40
22/02498/OUT	Witney Road, North Leigh	22
22/02980/FUL	Bliss, Brassey and Wilkins House, Hailey Avenue, Chipping Norton	12

22/03240/OUT	Land South of Burford Road, Minster Lovell	57
22/00536/OUT	Land South of Hit or Miss Farm, Banbury Road, Chipping Norton	36
22/01768/FUL	Land at Campbell's Close	37
Total		287

Type and mix of new homes provided (links to Policy H4)

4.76 The population of West Oxfordshire has continued to grow over the lifetime of the Local Plan from around 104,800 in 2011 to 114,200 in 2021. This 9% increase is higher than the overall increase for England of 6.6% over the same period. The proportion of the population aged 65 and over remains higher in West Oxfordshire than the Oxfordshire average.

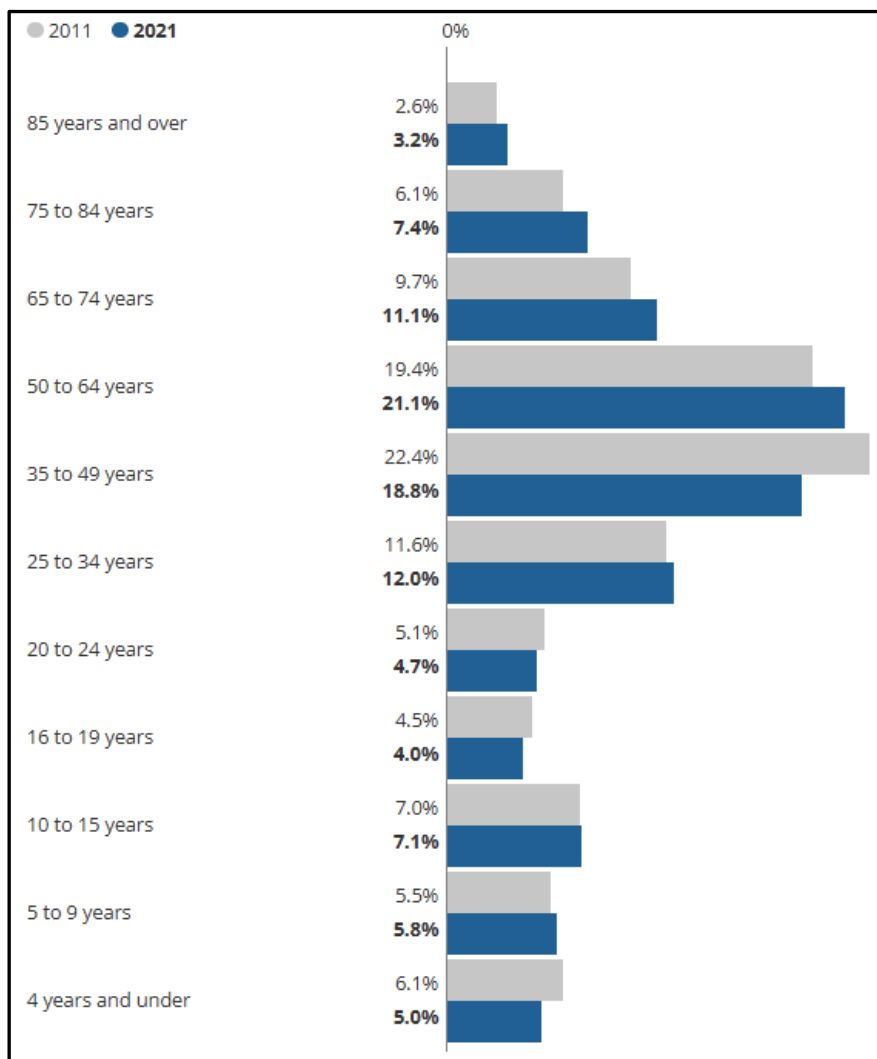


Figure 15 - Percentage of usual residents in West Oxfordshire by age group

4.77 West Oxfordshire has a higher dependency ratio than the Oxfordshire average. This is the ratio of non-working age people (those aged 0-15 and over 65) to working age population. It is therefore

essential that an appropriate mix of housing types is delivered in district to meet the varied needs of the population.

4.78 The Local Plan provides a general guide to the size of open market properties required to meet the mixed needs of the population as follows;

- 4.8% 1 bed properties
- 27.9% 2 bed properties
- 43.4% 3 bed properties
- 23.9% 4+ bed properties

4.79 Details of the new permissions granted over the monitoring period for different types and sizes of residential property are set out in the table 13. A number of approvals during the monitoring period were for outline planning permission and as such, details of dwelling size, type and tenure are unknown.

Table 13 - Proportion of residential types and sizes granted permission between 2023 and 2024

Size	Percentage
1 bed	15
2 bed	43
3 bed	23
4+ bed	18

4.80 It can be seen that during the monitoring period, that the majority of approved dwellings were 1 and 2 bed units, likely a result of a higher proportion of flatted developments being approved in 2023/24

Meeting the needs of elderly (links to Policy H4)

4.81 The Local Plan indicates that particular support will be given to the provision of specialist housing for the elderly. There have been limited new permissions and completions for such accommodation during the monitoring period, but there has been some new provision of age restricted accommodation as indicated in table 14 below.

Table 14 - Specialist elderly accommodation permissions and completions 2023 - 2024

Reference	Description	Location	Status
18/03035/RES	Residential development comprising 91 dwellings (50% affordable), 59 assisted living units (C2 use class) and a 64 bed care home (C2 use class)	Shilton Road, Burford	14 assisted living units completed during monitoring period and 20 units still to be built. Construction of the care home has commenced and expected completion during 2024/25 period.
22/03370/FUL	Erection of six single storey age restricted dwellings	Land West Of Colt House, Aston Road, Bampton	Permission granted
22/01768/FUL	Demolition of existing retirement dwellings. Construction of 37 no. replacement age restricted apartment units	Campbells Close, Woodstock	Permission granted

Provision for custom and self-build housing (links to Policy H5)

4.82 In order to address the need for custom and self-build housing, the Council requires that all housing developments of 100 or more dwellings should include 5% of the residential plots to be serviced and made available for self-build purposes.

4.83 Two sites exceeded the threshold for the delivery of on-site self-build residential plots during the monitoring period at Hill Rise in Woodstock and to the west of Minster Lovell.

4.84 Providing access to self-build housing opportunities can provide a more affordable path to home ownership to some people. Although the provision of such plots has been relatively low during the monitoring period, more opportunities will rise as the larger housing allocations of the Local Plan start to come forward.

Provision for travelling communities (links to Policy H7)

- 4.85 There were no new planning applications for new gypsy and traveller accommodation during the monitoring period.
- 4.86 In 2023, there were a total 13 Gypsy and Traveller sites in West Oxfordshire with a total of 110 pitches accommodating 74 households. In addition, there were 4 Travelling Showperson yards, with 24 plots accommodating 26 households.
- 4.87 WODC has jointly commissioned a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) with the other Oxfordshire local planning authorities. The findings of the study will be taken into account in the determination of any future planning applications and in developing the new Local Plan 2041.

Land at Cuckoowood Farm, Freeland (links to Policy H8)

- 4.88 One planning application was granted permission at Cuckoowood Farm during the monitoring period

Table 15 – Planning approvals at Cuckoowood Farm 2023 - 2024

Permission Reference	Description	Address
23/02909/FUL	Erection of a building for the garaging of fairground vehicles.	Cuckoo Wood, Caravan Park, Freeland

SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH

SUMMARY

- The new permission rates for employment development have remained stable over the past 3 years. The uptake of land for business uses, particularly in locations identified in the Local Plan serves to support economic growth and help to provide a balance between homes and jobs.
- The Local Plan identifies a need for at least 27 hectares of additional employment land to be delivered in the District by 2031. Much of the land required was identified within existing employment sites and urban extensions, which have been a focus for employment land provision during the monitoring period.
- The Local Plan continues to direct the majority of business development, particularly larger scale development to the main and rural service centres.
- There has been a range of new business development permitted in rural parts of the district during the monitoring period, although this has been relatively minor in nature. The West Oxfordshire local economy remains diverse, with professional, scientific and technical services the largest business sector in the district.
- Tourism development in West Oxfordshire has been primarily focused on the provision of visitor accommodation during the monitoring period.
- There have been a number of proposals during the monitoring period to increase the provision of community services and facilities in West Oxfordshire, although some existing community facilities have been lost to other uses.
- Barriers to housing and services remains the most significant deprivation domain in West Oxfordshire with almost half the population falling within the most 40% most deprived areas nationally. The availability of services and facilities in West Oxfordshire's settlements has remained fairly stable since the adoption of the Local Plan.
- There have been no changes to the extent of town centres during the monitoring period and only minor changes in terms of land use within town centres over the same period. Although there are some vacancies in town centre premises, the vacancy rates do not present too much cause for concern.
- The overall health of town centres is considered to be good as they continue to meet a range of Local Plan and council Plan objectives.

4.89 The economic growth-related policies of the Local Plan cover a number of issues including the provision and protection of employment land, the rural economy, tourism, town centres and the provision and protection of community facilities.

4.90 Core objectives are as follows:

Core Objectives

CO3 - Promote safe, vibrant and prosperous town and village centres and resist proposals that would damage their vitality and viability or adversely affect measures to improve those centres.

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

CO8 - To enable a prosperous and sustainable tourism economy.

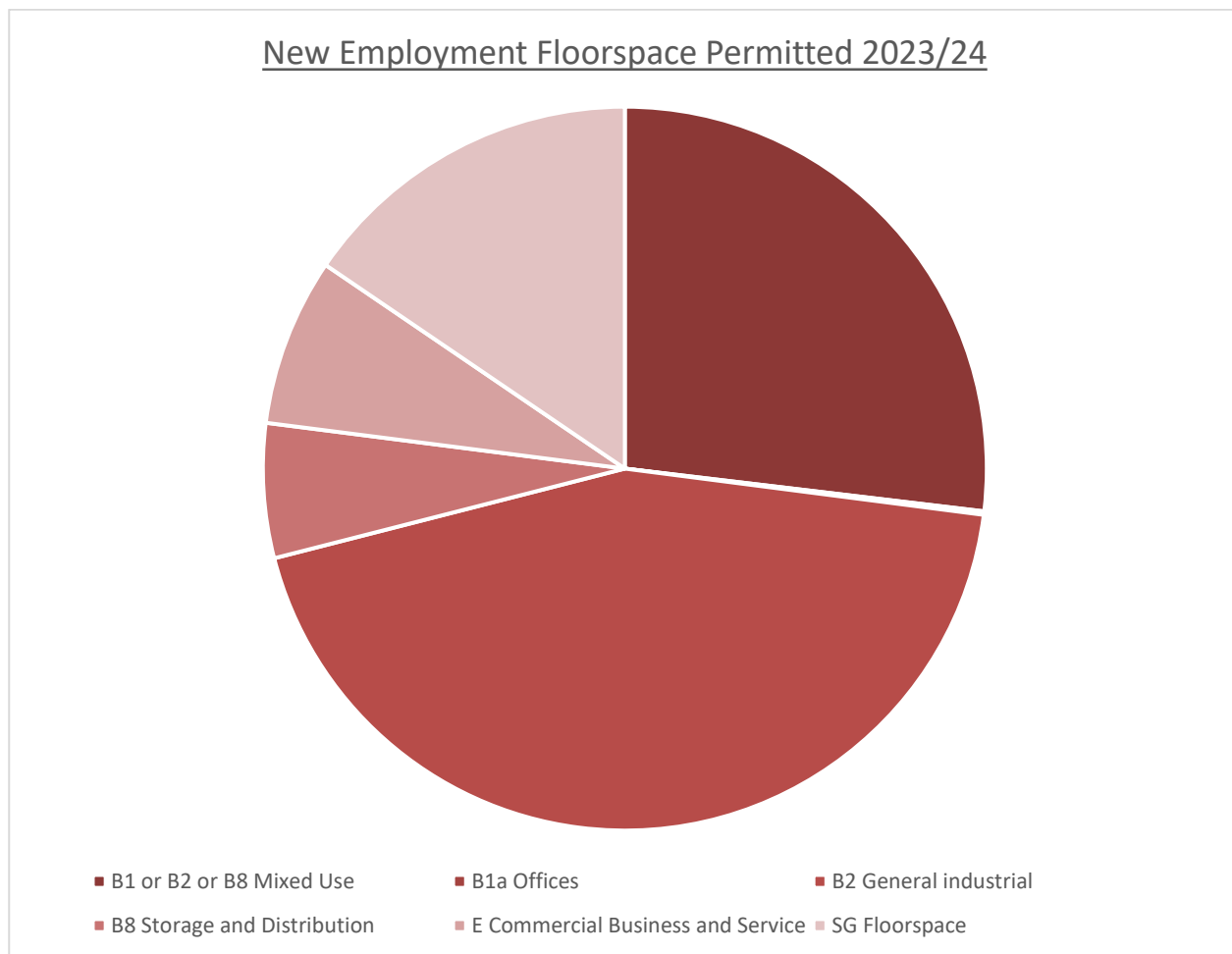
CO12 - Look to maintain or improve where possible the health and wellbeing of the District's residents through increased choice and quality of shopping, leisure, recreation, arts, cultural and community facilities.

CO13 - Plan for enhanced access to services and facilities without unacceptably impacting upon the character and resources of West Oxfordshire.

New Employment Permissions (links to Policy EI)

- 4.91 A total of 27,709m² of new employment floorspace was granted permission between 1st April 2023 and 31st March 2024.
- 4.92 The largest proportion of new employment floorspace permitted was for General Industrial development.
- 4.93 The largest individual proposal was for the erection of five industrial units at Lakeside Industrial Estate at Standlake.

Figure 17 - proportions of new employment floorspace permitted 2023 - 2024



4.94 The area of land illustrated on figure 16 below was identified to meet the employment needs of the Local Plan within the Witney sub-area.

4.95 There were two new approvals for employment and commercial development within the West Witney Industrial Area during the monitoring period.

Figure 16 - Location of new employment floorspace permitted, West Witney 2023 - 2024



Table 16 - Approvals for new employment floorspace at West Witney

Permission Reference	Address	Description
23/00873/FUL	Range Road Windrush Industrial Park	Construction of two new storage buildings within service yard of existing property
23/03129/FUL	Book End Witney	Erection of eight drive-up storage units, alterations to the existing parking and turning area, and associated works

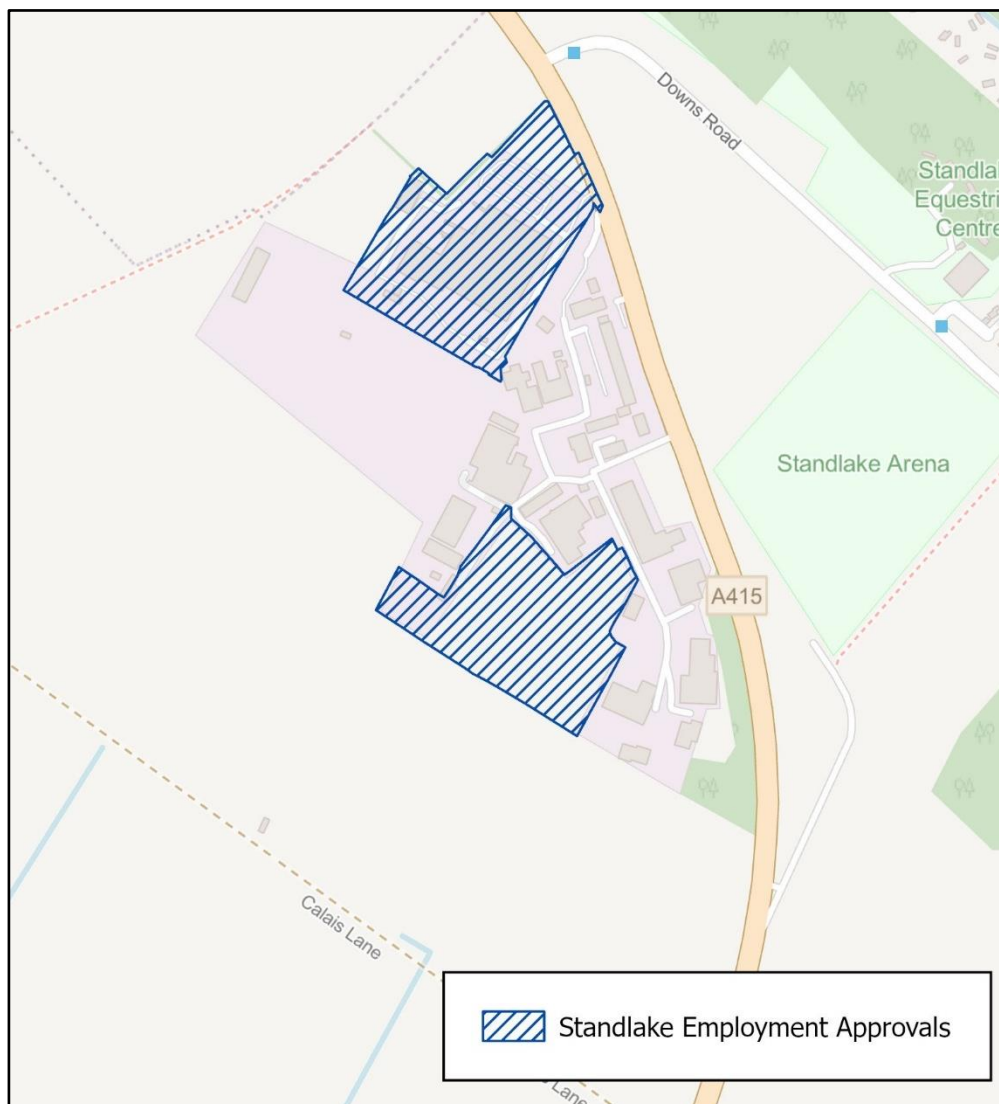
4.96 New business development at other towns and villages was planned to be focused primarily at the Lakeside Industrial Estate at Standlake..

4.97 There were two schemes approved in this area during the monitoring period as illustrated by table 17 and figure 17 below.

Table 17 - New approvals for employment floorspace at Standlake

Permission Reference	Address	Description
23/00301/FUL	Lakeside Industrial Park	Erection of five industrial units
23/00907/FUL	Cotswold Farm, Standlake	Change of use from egg packing plant to flexible Class B2 use (general industry), Class B8 use (storage and distribution) or Class E g ii use (industrial processes).

Figure 17 - New employment floorspace permitted at Standlake 2023 - 2024



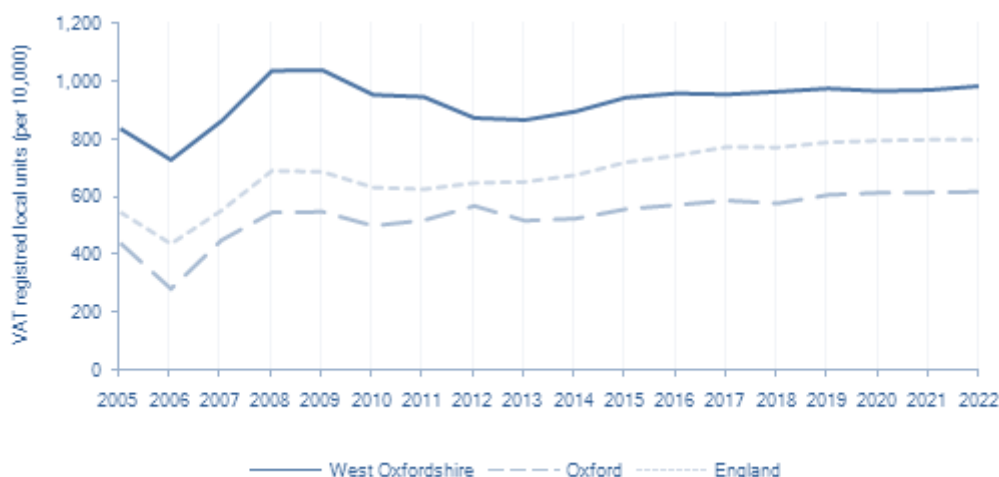
Rural economy (links to Policies E2, E3 and E4)

4.98 Figure 18 below shows that the largest industry groups for businesses based in West Oxfordshire are professional, scientific and technical services followed by the construction sector and the retail industry.

Figure 18 - West Oxfordshire largest business sectors, ONS 2022



Figure: Businesses (VAT based local units) per 10,000 working age population
Source: Office for National Statistics



4.99 The majority of businesses employ less than five people. Businesses employing less than 10 people represent approximately 86% of all local businesses.

4.100 Local Plan policy directs larger businesses and employers to the main service centres but seeks to support the rural economy by taking a positive approach to small rural business premises and diversifying the land-based sector.

4.101 The development of new small employment sites within and adjacent to rural service centres and villages are supported where commensurate with the scale and character of the area.

4.102 Outside of the main towns there were limited new permissions granted for new commercial floor space at service centres and villages. New permissions were relatively minor in nature and consistent with the requirements of Policy E2

4.103 As part of the supporting evidence for the new Local Plan, the Council has commissioned an economic needs assessment which will provide up to date evidence on the amount and type of new employment floorspace needed in the period up to 2041.

Table 18 - New permissions for commercial and business development in service centres and larger villages

Parish Name	Permission Reference	Description
Freeland	23/02909/FUL	Erection of a building for the garaging of fairground vehicles.
Hanborough	23/00851/FUL	Erection of a replacement storage building with glazed canopy link to main building
Leafield	23/01429/FUL	Replace existing storage shed with new log cabin for use as pre-school office/meeting room and erection of new storage shed in revised position.

4.104 As a rural district, much of the economic activity in West Oxfordshire relates to agriculture.

4.105 A total of approximately 1,553m² of new agricultural floorspace was permitted during the monitoring period, primarily relating to the formation of new storage for equipment and farm produce.

4.106 A limited number of change of use applications for business developments have been permitted during the monitoring period although nothing significant in nature.

4.107 Policy E3 supports the re-use of traditional and non-traditional buildings for employment, tourism and community uses to support the rural economy, but there have been few applications for such development during the monitoring period.

Table 19 - New permissions for change of use and re-use of non-residential buildings in West Oxfordshire 2023 – 2024

Permission Reference	Description	Parish Name
23/02948/FUL	Change of use from former Telephone Repeater Station (Sui Generis use) to furniture workshop (Use Class B2) and erection of a single storey side extension	Tackley
23/00864/FUL	Change of use from Class E (c)(ii) (formally A2 financial and professional services) to Class E (b) (formally A3) food and drink	Witney
23/01705/FUL	Change of use of agricultural storage area to a drinks bar and a glass wash area to serve the existing wedding venue	Filkins & Broughton Poggs
23/01326/FUL	Temporary change of use and operational development in association with business and storage operations (Retrospective)	Asthall

Permission Reference	Description	Parish Name
23/02948/FUL	Change of use from former Telephone Repeater Station (Sui Generis use) to furniture workshop (Use Class B2) and erection of a single storey side extension	Tackley
23/02000/FUL	Change of use of a warehouse unit from Industrial use to a Gymnasium and associated works	Witney

4.108 There have been a number of holiday lets and other tourism related developments permitted during the monitoring period, supporting an increase in tourism accommodation and activity in the district.

4.109 The most significant tourism related development approved during the monitoring period was for a holiday park at the former Leaffield Technical Centre.

4.110 As the provision of short-term holiday accommodation increases, particularly through changes to existing dwellings, regard should be had to the impact on existing communities, the increase in temporary residence within settlements and the impact this can have on house prices and service provision.

Table 20 - New permissions for tourism development in West Oxfordshire 2023 - 2024

Permission Reference	Description	Parish Name
23/02297/FUL	Proposed new dwelling to replace redundant stables and store, to create holiday let	Bampton
22/03408/FUL	Partial demolition of existing buildings and development of a holiday park comprising short stay holiday accommodation units and associated leisure facilities	Leaffield
23/02676/FUL	Erection of a gardeners bothy, entrance kiosk, installation of artwork and a boathouse kiosk with fenced enclosure	Great Tew

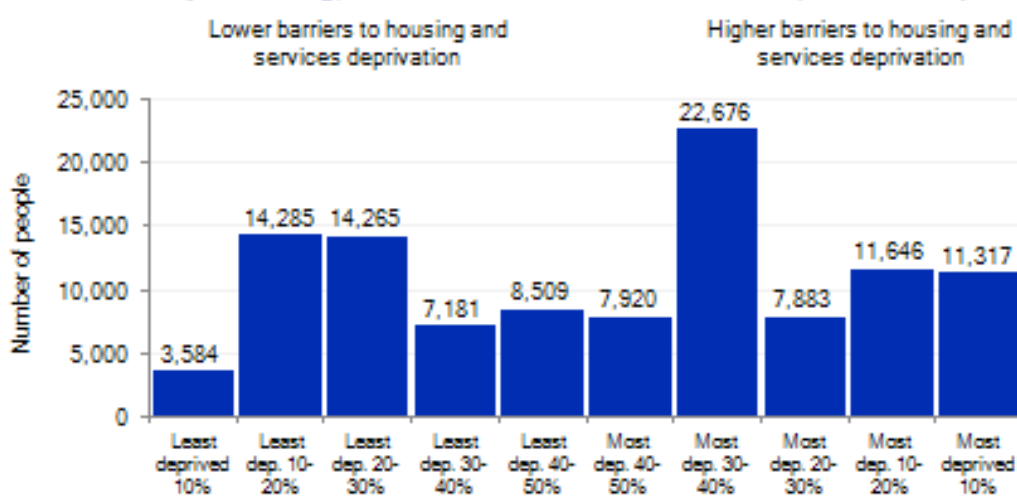
Local services and community facilities (links to Policy E5)

4.111 The 'Barriers to Housing and Services' deprivation domain measures the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services. The indicators fall into two sub-domains: geographical barriers, which relate to the physical proximity of local services, and wider barriers which includes issues relating to access to housing such as affordability.

4.112 Figure 19 below shows that a significant proportion of West Oxfordshire's population falls into the most deprived areas nationally for this measure of deprivation when combined for physical accessibility and affordability.

Figure 19 - Number of West Oxfordshire residents in areas with higher barriers to housing and services deprivation

Figure: Number of people in each deprivation decile, ID 2019 Barriers to Housing and Services domain
Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (Indices of Deprivation 2019)



4.113 The District Council supports the development and retention of local services and community facilities to meet local needs and to promote social wellbeing, interests, interaction and healthy inclusive communities. This is reflected in Local Plan Policy E5.

4.114 Records indicate that there have been a number of proposals relating to the expansion and improvement of community services and facilities during the monitoring period.

4.115 These will help to ensure the continued integrity of community uses and support activity of communities in West Oxfordshire.

Table 21 - Planning permission for new community services and facilities 2023 - 2024

Permission	Description	Granted
24/00095/FUL	Installation of new pre-fabricated classroom to the rear of the property.	Ascott-under-Wychwood
23/00593/FUL	Erection of a Special Educational Needs (SEN) Building,	Carterton
.23/00288/FUL	The erection of a community workshop building on land alongside Charlbury Community Centre.	Charlbury
23/00749/FUL	Erection of extension to South elevation to provide a purpose built community gym.	Charlbury
23/01148/FUL	Erection of a sports amenities building for Charlbury Primary School with associated works	Charlbury
23/02096/FUL	Change of use from dwelling to dental practice rooms	Chipping Norton
23/00361/FUL	Erection of a temporary pavilion together with associated works to include provision of temporary mobile staff WC's,	Glympton
23/02187/FUL	Change of use of agricultural and grassland to a playing field with boundary fencing to create a playing field for Hanborough Manor School with erection of an ancillary facilities block	Hanborough
24/00101/FUL	Construction of pre-fabricated school outbuilding for learning purposes.	Kingham
23/00513/FUL	Demolition of existing pavilion. Erection of a new single storey cricket pavilion with provision of external spectator seating and associated works	Langford
23/00480/FUL	Erection of a wooden tennis club house surrounded by a fence to match the existing tennis court fencing	Ramsden
23/02000/FUL	Change of use of a warehouse unit from Industrial use to a Gymnasium and associated works	Witney

4.116 There have been relatively few losses of community uses to other forms of development during the monitoring period suggesting that Policy E5 is acting effectively.

4.117 Permission has been granted for the conversion of two long standing vacant public houses during the monitoring period.

4.118 Chipping Norton lost it's last remaining high street bank as the Barclays closed it's branch and it's use as a café was allowed. Barclays retain a local service within the town hall.

Table 22 - Loss of community services and facilities 2023 - 2024

Parish Name	Reference	Address	Description
Eynsham	23/01971/FUL	Boot Inn Barnard Gate	Demolition of single and two storey side and single storey rear extensions. Conversion of former Public House to a pair of semi detached dwellings with two storey side and rear extensions and associated car parking spaces.
Hailey	23/00729/FUL	The Saddlers Arms, New Yatt Lane	Change of use of former public house and ancillary living accommodation to a dwellinghouse.
Chipping Norton	23/01183/CLP	Barclays Bank, High Street	Certificate of Lawfulness (to allow change of use from bank to restaurant / coffee shop)

Town Centre Vitality and Viability (links to Policy E6)

4.119 There are currently 5 designated town centres in West Oxfordshire in the main and rural service centres as follows:

- Witney
- Carterton
- Chipping Norton
- Burford
- Woodstock

4.120 There were 112 new permissions granted within or on the edge of these town centres within the monitoring period.

Table 23 - Planning approvals within town centres 2023 - 2024

Town Centre	Number of new approvals	Proposals of note
Witney	14	<p>A mixture of householder listed building consents and advertisement consent approved in Witney town centre during the monitoring period.</p> <p>There was no significant development or changes of use approved during the monitoring period.</p>
Carterton	9	<p>There was a significant number of new residential dwellings approved in Carterton Town Centre with a total of 19 flats and apartments approved.</p> <p>New commercial premises were also approved at 19 Burford Road at the northern edge of the town centre to create mixed use development.</p>
Chipping Norton	19	<p>Majority of approvals minor in nature comprising alterations to listed buildings and advertisement consents.</p> <p>The most significant approvals in the town centre include the erection of 6 dwellings to the rear of the High Street, the conversion of a retail unit to a cinema and 8 apartments and the closure of the Barclays bank and change of use to a café.</p>
Burford	13	<p>The majority of new permissions granted within Burford town centre were Listed Building consents for alterations and extensions to listed buildings.</p>
Woodstock	6	<p>All applications relatively minor in nature and relate to alterations and improvements to existing buildings.</p>

4.121 There has been no change to the total area designated as town centre space during the monitoring period and only limited changes to land use and premises within these town centres.

4.122 Town centre surveys were undertaken in November 2023 to quantify the number of vacant units. Chipping Norton had a total of 14 empty units. Carterton had a total of 1 empty unit and Witney a total of 34 across a number of locations including Corn Street, Market Square, High Street and Marriot's Walk (no change for Witney from the previous monitoring period).

4.123 The health of the District's Town Centres is key to meeting a number of Local Plan and Council Plan objectives as these are often to focal point of communities and the most accessible locations for residents to access services and facilities. Although there are some vacancies within town centres, they remain healthy, vibrant and active. As part of the supporting evidence for the new Local Plan, a

retail and other commercial leisure needs assessment has been commissioned to provide evidence of the type and amount of floorspace needed in the period up to 2041.

4.124 There have been some changes to accessibility in Town Centres, including restricted access to motor vehicles in Witney and the introduction of parking permits in Woodstock. Such changes have been introduced to improve the town centre environment while keeping them accessible for residents, vulnerable road users and people with disabilities.

TRANSPORT AND MOVEMENT

SUMMARY

- The majority of new residential and commercial development is located in the most accessible locations at town centres and rural service centres.
- Limited public transport improvements and enhanced opportunities for walking and cycling have been delivered in rural areas during the monitoring period.
- Car ownership and distances travelled to access key services and facilities remain higher than the Oxfordshire average.
- Funding has been secured towards highways improvements and monitoring of travel plans during the monitoring period.
- There has been good progress on a number of strategic highway schemes including the Access to Witney project (Shores Green Slip Roads) and the A40 smart corridor project.

4.125 The transport and movement policies of the Local Plan cover a number of issues including the location of development, improvements to the highway network, public transport, walking and cycling and parking provision.

4.126 Core objectives are as follows:

Core Objectives

CO1 - Enable new development, services and facilities of an appropriate scale and type in locations which will help improve the quality of life of local communities and where the need to travel, particularly by car, can be minimised.

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

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

CO13 - Plan for enhanced access to services and facilities without unacceptably impacting upon the character and resources of West Oxfordshire.

CO15 - Contribute to reducing the causes and adverse impacts of climate change, especially flood risk.

CO16 - Enable improvements in water and air quality.

CO17 - Minimise the use of non-renewable natural resources and promote more widespread use of renewable energy solutions.

Location of Development (links to Policies T1 and T3)

4.127 The Local Plan gives priority to locating new development in areas with convenient access to a good range of services and facilities and where the need to travel by private car can be minimised.

4.128 The Local Plan identifies 3 Main Service Centres and 7 Rural Service Centres which offer the widest range of services and facilities, are accessible by a choice of transport modes and offer a range of job opportunities.

Main Service Centres

- Witney
- Carterton
- Chipping Norton

Rural Service Centres

- Bampton
- Burford
- Charlbury
- Eynsham
- Long Hanborough
- Woodstock
- Salt Cross Garden Village (proposed)

4.129 Planning permission was granted for 26 residential schemes at the service centres during the monitoring period totalling 212 dwellings, so although a large proportion of residential development is being directed to the most sustainable locations in accessibility terms¹¹, a proportion of development is being directed towards larger villages, some of which are less accessible.

4.130 The District Council has secured funding towards public transport improvements from developments commercial developments and developments that have been approved outside of the service centres.

4.131 The council currently holds £13,047 that is yet to be allocated towards highways and sustainable transport projects.

Table 24 - Section 106 contributions towards public transport in West Oxfordshire 2023 - 2024

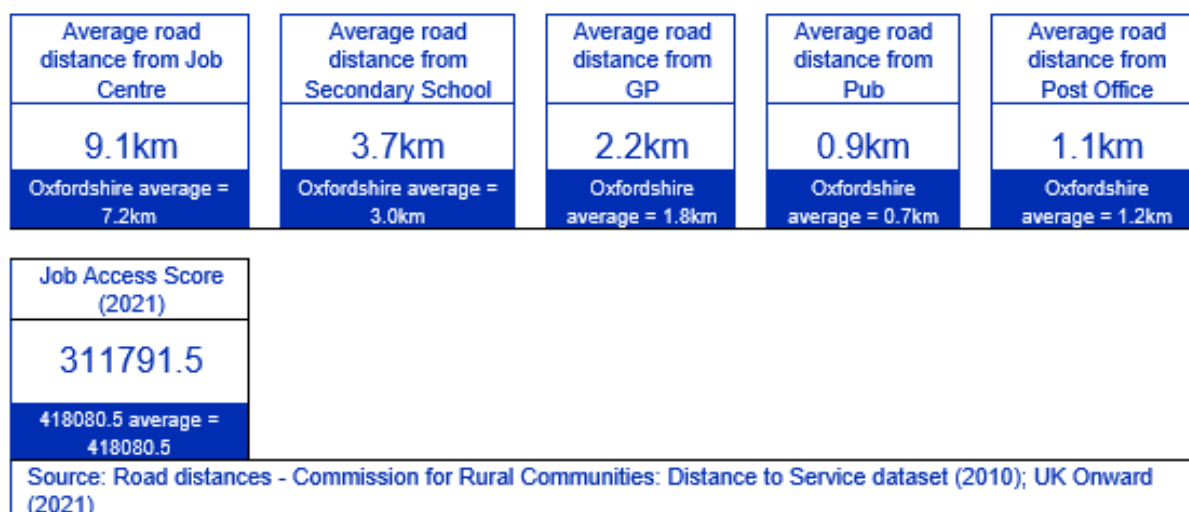
Year	Public Transport contributions secured / collected / spent
2023/2024	£50,000 (The Driving Centre, Enstone Airfield) Contribution to Middle Barton Community Bus £200,000 was also secured for car parking for the same application

4.132 Notwithstanding the fact that a good proportion of development is directed towards service centres, the rural nature of the district and fact that many settlements in the district have limited or no

¹¹ See Policies OS2 and H2 for further information

services at all, accessibility to key services and facilities in West Oxfordshire is relatively poor, resulting in relatively high car dependency.

Figure 20 - West Oxfordshire accessibility to key services and facilities 2021



Source – Oxfordshire Insight – Local Insight profile for West Oxfordshire. OCSI 2022

Highway Improvements (links to Policy T2)

4.133 All development in West Oxfordshire is required to demonstrate safe access and an acceptable degree of impact on the local highway network.

4.134 Development proposals that are likely to generate significant amounts of traffic should be supported by a transport assessment and travel plan.

4.135 The tables below indicate the level of financial contributions towards highway improvements and monitoring fees secured during the monitoring period.

Table 25 - Travel Plans submitted and monitored during monitoring period

Year	Proposal	Contribution / Spend
2023/24	Erection of a new office building, warehouse and starter units development in a mix of BI (E(g)) and B8 use class	£1,633.99 Travel Plan monitoring

4.136 The Local Plan also identifies a number of strategic highway infrastructure schemes, the latest position in relation to which is summarised below.

Table 26 - Local Plan 2031 identified highway infrastructure schemes.

Scheme Name	Status
Downs Road Junction, Witney	Complete - New roundabout providing access to the A40 from Downs Road was delivered via development contributions at North Curbridge

Scheme Name	Status
Shores Green Slip Roads	<p>Detailed scheme design is nearing completion, and the discharge of planning conditions are well underway. Internal approvals have been secured to release the project funding and to enter into a construction contract to begin mobilisation and enabling works. Subject to securing land access and discharge of planning conditions, mobilisation and enabling works are scheduled to commence later this year.</p> <p>(Source - Witney TAC Report by Oxfordshire County Council September 2024 Place Planning Team Update)</p>
West End Link Road	Not Started – This scheme is associated with the allocated strategic development area at North Witney which is yet to come forward.
Northern Distributor Road	Not Started – This scheme is associated with the allocated strategic development area at North Witney which is yet to come forward.
Eastern Link Road	Not Started – This scheme is associated with the allocated strategic development area at East Chipping Norton which is yet to come forward.
Western Spine Road	Not Started – This scheme is associated with the allocated strategic development area at West Eynsham which is yet to come forward.
A40 improvements	<p>Oxfordshire County Council has successfully negotiated with funding partners Homes England and the Department for Transport (DFT) to confirm £126m in funding to deliver the A40 Eynsham Park and Ride to Wolvercote scheme.</p> <p>The new scheme focuses on improving bus travel and enhancing walking and cycling infrastructure along the A40, providing a connection to the Eynsham Park and Ride,</p> <p>Subject to planning permission, construction could start in early 2026 and last for two years.</p>

ENVIRONMENTAL AND HERITAGE ASSETS

SUMMARY

- No major residential development was approved in the Cotswolds National Landscape during the monitoring period. Larger residential schemes were approved in a limited number of service centres and villages.
- A number of single dwellings and minor schemes were approved elsewhere in the protected landscape including small villages and open countryside.
- There are 101 Local Wildlife Sites in West Oxfordshire, totalling 1737.11 hectares. The area of Local Wildlife Sites has increased by 147.03 hectares since last year (2023). There are 16 Local Geological sites in West Oxfordshire. The area of Local Geological sites has not changed since last year.
- There are 5122.55 hectares of NERC S41 habitats in West Oxfordshire. This has increased by 155.37ha since 2023.
- There have been records of 145 priority species in West Oxfordshire within the last 10 years. We have not received records from three priority species in the last 10 years.
- The farmland bird index for West Oxfordshire is 1.02, which shows the index fell 0.14 from 2022.
- The number of heritage assets on the Historic England assets at risk register decreased from 8 to 5 to the end of the monitoring period.
- There were approximately 45 applications for new residential development approved within or on the edge of conservation areas in West Oxfordshire, totalling approximately 253 dwellings during the monitoring period.
- Of the 274 planning applications that were refused in 2021/23, 114 of these were located within Conservation Areas
- There were 448 applications for Listed Building consent determined during the monitoring period. Of these, 398 were approved.

4.137 The environmental and heritage section of the Local Plan covers a broad range of issues relating to the natural and built environment including the Cotswolds National Landscape (formerly AONB)

landscape character, biodiversity, green infrastructure, sport and recreation, renewable energy, flood risk, pollution and heritage.

4.138 Core objectives are as follows:

Core Objectives

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

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

CO15 - Contribute to reducing the causes and adverse impacts of climate change, especially flood risk.

CO16 - Enable improvements in water and air quality.

CO17 - Minimise the use of non-renewable natural resources and promote more widespread use of renewable energy solutions.

Development within the Cotswolds National Landscape (links to Policy EHI)

4.139 In line with national policy, the Local Plan has a generally restrictive policy against major development within the Cotswolds National Landscape (formerly known as the Cotswolds AONB), with great weight applied to conserving and enhancing the area's natural beauty, landscape and countryside including wildlife and heritage.

4.140 The Local Plan allocates no land for residential development within the Cotswolds National Landscape, but planning permission was granted for approximately 33 new dwellings during the monitoring period.

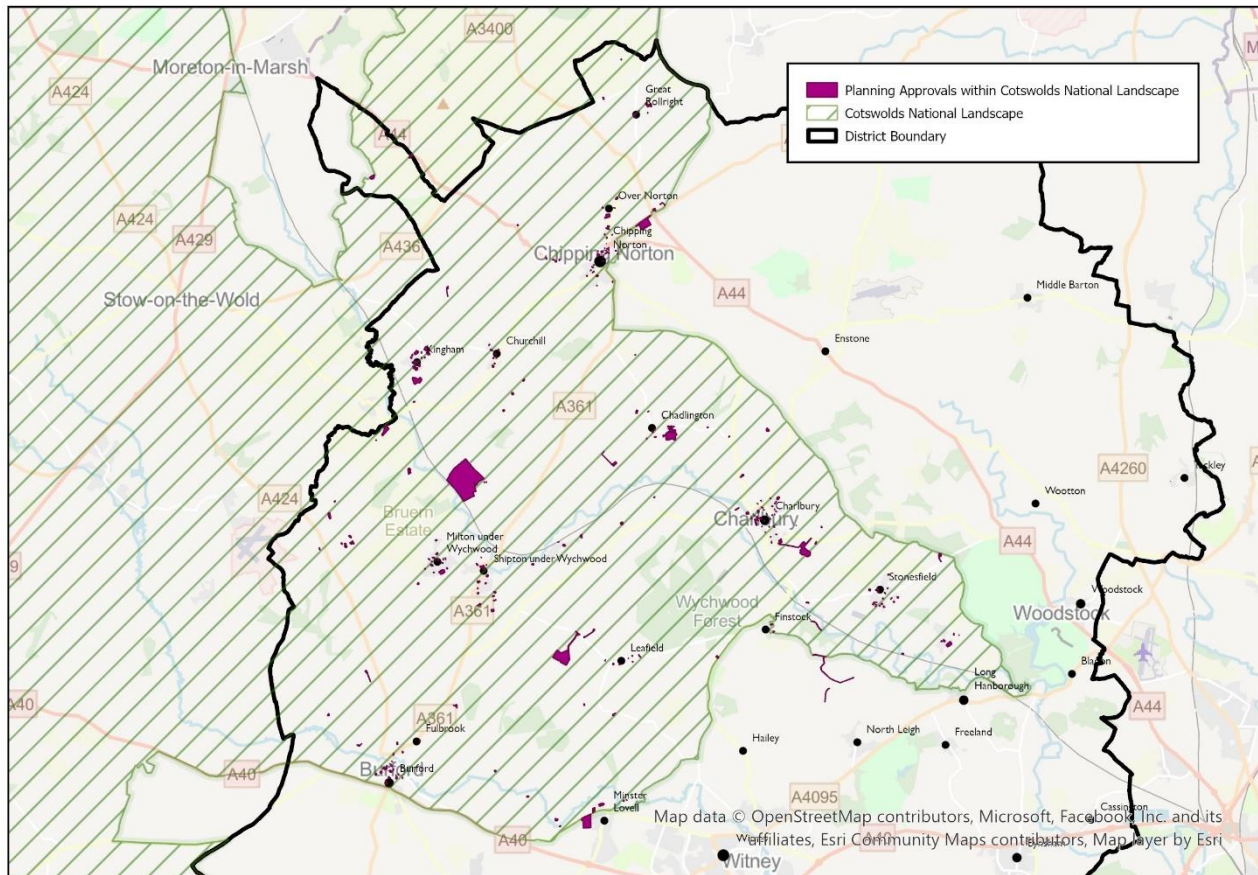
4.141 None of these proposals are major in nature and relate predominantly to the development of single dwellings.

4.142 One scheme of 7 dwellings was approved within the built-up area of Chipping Norton.

4.143 There were however 388 new permissions granted for a mix of development types and land uses within the Cotswolds National Landscape during the monitoring period, including:

- 188 householder applications approved
- 70 Full Planning approvals granted
- 76 applications for listed building consent granted

Figure 21 - Location of planning applications approved within Cotswolds National Landscape 2023 - 2024

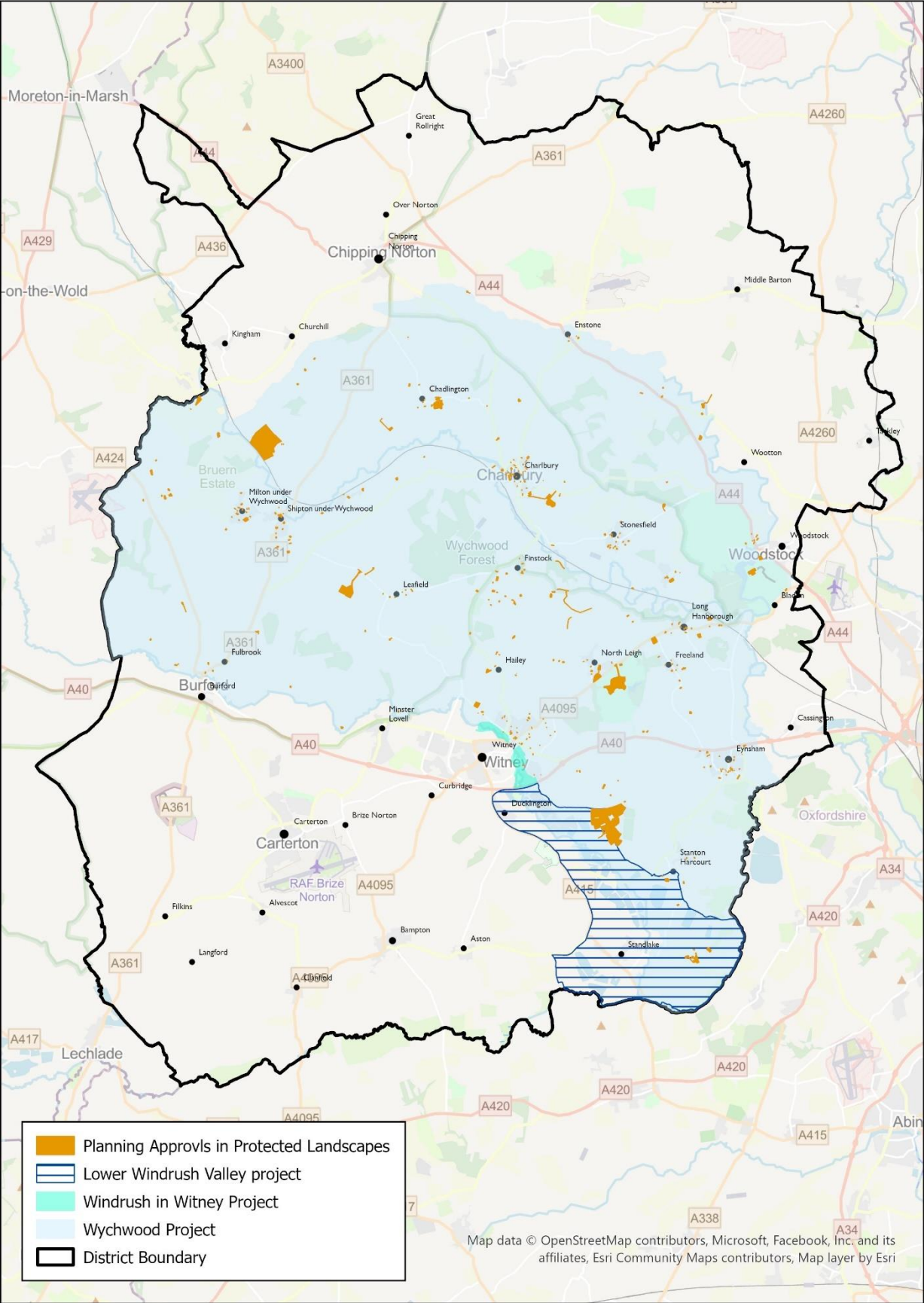


4.144 In addition to the Cotswolds National Landscape, the Local Plan identifies a further three special policy areas, that have been identified for special landscape protection, conservation and enhancement:

- Lower Windrush Valley Project Area – An area of major landscape change associated with mineral extraction and after uses, especially for recreation, tourism and nature conservation.
- Windrush in Witney Project Area – A fundamental component of the town’s attractive character.
- Wychwood Project Area – A project that aims to restore the landscape character and mix of habitats associated with the Royal Hunting Forest of Wychwood.

4.145 A total of 512 planning approvals were granted within these various landscape project areas during the monitoring period.

Figure 22 - Location of planning approvals in landscape project areas 2023 - 2024



Biodiversity (links to Policy EH3)

4.146 Local Plan Policy EH3 aims to protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity in West Oxfordshire, with a focus on protected sites and species and ensuring that development contributes towards the aims and objectives of Conservation Target Areas (CTAs) within the District.

4.147 Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) produce a Biodiversity Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) which provides useful information on areas of biodiversity importance, priority habitats, priority species and the distribution and status of farmland birds.

4.148 The information from the TVERC AMR is reproduced below for information.

Table 28 - Areas of sites designated for Intrinsic Environmental Value in West Oxfordshire

Designation	2023	2024
Local Geological Site	333.33	333.33
Local Wildlife Site	1590.08	1737.11

4.149 Records indicate that there has been a slight increase in the area of land designated as a Local Wildlife site in West Oxfordshire between this and the last monitoring periods.

4.150 There are 101 Local Wildlife Sites in West Oxfordshire. The area of Local Wildlife Sites has increased by 147.03 hectares since last year. The area of Local Geological sites has not changed since last year.

4.151 Figures for changes in area are derived from an analysis of site boundary data following a site selection panel meeting during the analysis year. Counts in this report are based on the number of sites, rather than polygons, thus counts may differ from previous reports aside from any changes arising from panel decisions.

Changes in area of UK priority habitat

4.152 This indicator identifies the UK NERC Act section 41 habitats of principal importance (priority habitats) within West Oxfordshire.

4.153 Table 29 below provides details of the UK priority habitats which have been identified within West Oxfordshire. The changes in the UK priority habitats are mostly attributable to new information such as confirmation of boundaries of habitat types.

4.154 The changes largely represent an improved understanding of the habitat resource in West Oxfordshire, rather than the creation or loss of habitat.

Table 29 - Changes in area of UK priority habitat

S4I Habitat	2023 (area in ha)	2024 (area in ha)
Coastal And Floodplain Grazing Marsh	1491.22	1517.67
Eutrophic Standing Waters	304.12	339.45
Hedgerow (Priority Habitat)	7.85	7.85
Lowland Beech And Yew Woodland	16.97	17.15
Lowland Calcareous Grassland	182.80	189.34
Lowland Dry Acid Grassland	6.33	12.55
Lowland Fens	52.69	53.73
Lowland Meadows	225.57	237.28
Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland	1528.92	1578.25
Lowland Wood Pasture And Parkland	764.36	783.31
Mesotrophic Lakes	256.62	221.11
Open Mosaic Habitats On Previously Developed Land	28.80	33.09
Purple Moor Grass And Rush Pasture	1.24	1.24
Reedbeds	2.13	2.13
Rivers	8.54	29.24
Traditional Orchards	57.85	57.85
Wet Woodland	31.17	31.21
Wood Pasture And Parkland	0.00	10.10
Total	4967.18	5122.55

Changes in number of UK priority species

4.155 The number of priority species in West Oxfordshire is 145.

4.156 Three species have been removed from the list, as no new records have been made within the last ten years. This does not mean that they are not present, only that no records have been added to the TVERC database since 2011.

4.157 West Oxfordshire District Council have a duty to consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in the district. The biodiversity duty was introduced in January 2024. Consideration will be given as to what actions can be taken to enhance biodiversity in West Oxfordshire. The District Council published its own Nature Recovery Strategy (2024 – 2030) earlier this year¹² and will continue to work in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council to identify further priorities through the emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) for Oxfordshire.

4.158 During the monitoring period, money was secured, collected and spent on Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) schemes in the district as set out in Table 30 below.

Table 30 - Funds secured, collected and spent for BNG projects 2023/24

Planning Reference	Value	Purpose
21/03711/FUL	£45,000	Funding secured through S106 agreement for biodiversity and landscape enhancements at Tar Farm, Stanton Harcourt
20/02422/FUL	£106,260	Funds collected for BNG relating to Swinbrook Road development at Carterton.
21/00228/FUL	£214,535.93	Funds spent on Biodiversity Net Gain at Radford Farm, Chipping Norton

Sport and recreation (links to Policy EH5)

4.159 Funding has been secured and spent on a number of improvements and proposed enhancements to sports, recreation and children's play during the monitoring period which should support the integrity and ongoing use of community services and facilities in West Oxfordshire.

4.160 There were few planning applications for sport and recreation developments in West Oxfordshire during the monitoring period.

¹² <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/nvtbk0ob/nature-recovery-plan-2024-to-2030.pdf>

Table 31 - Planning approvals for sport and recreation developments, 2023 - 2024

Proposal	Location
Change of use of a warehouse unit from Industrial use to a Gymnasium and associated works	Unit 13 Eagle Industrial Estate Witney
Reserved matters application for a sports pavilion and associated infrastructure including 65sq.m solar panel array (Amended).	Land West Of Witney North Of A40 And East Of Downs Road

Renewable Energy Provision (links to Policy EH6)

4.161 There were four applications for larger, utility scale solar scheme in West Oxfordshire during the monitoring period. Two of which were refused and two of which were approved.

Table 32 - Planning approvals for utility scale solar development 2023 - 2024

Planning Reference	Location	Description	Decision	Reason
23/02917/FUL	Ramsden	Installation of a ground mounted solar PV, energy storage system together with associated infrastructure	Refused	Landscape and heritage impact including setting of National Landscape.
23/01524/FUL	Hailey	Installation and operation of a renewable energy generating station comprising ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays and battery-based electricity storage	Refused	Landscape, heritage and ecology impacts, including setting of conservation areas and listed buildings.
21/03711/FUL	Stanton Harcourt	Installation of renewable energy scheme comprising ground mounted photovoltaic arrays	Approved	
22/02472/FUL	Burford	Solar park and energy storage facility	Approved	

Flood Risk (links to Policy EH7)

4.162 There were few approvals for residential development approved in areas at risk of flooding during the monitoring period.

4.163 Where planning application boundaries overlap with flood risk areas, these are often access points or form part of the residential curtilage or garden, rather than buildings being proposed in flood risk areas.

4.164 Two dwellings were approved within Flood Zone 2 during the monitoring period, one at Ascott under Wychwood and one at Bampton.

Heritage (links to Policy EH9)

4.165 There were approximately 27 applications for new residential development approved within or on the edge of conservation areas in West Oxfordshire, totalling approximately 36 dwellings during the monitoring period.

4.166 There were 214 applications for Listed Building consent during the monitoring period. Of these, 188 were approved.

4.167 Historic England maintain a list of heritage assets¹³ that are at risk to help understand the overall state of England's historic sites. The programme identifies those sites that are most at risk of being lost as a result of neglect, decay or inappropriate development. There are 5 heritage assets on the heritage risk register in 2024. There is one listed building and 4 scheduled monuments. The number of assets at risk has declined since 2023 when there were 8 assets at risk in West Oxfordshire. The 3 assets were removed from the register, possibly as a result of changing agricultural practices and securing grant aid funding for nature conservation.

Table 33 - West Oxfordshire Heritage at Risk

Designated Name	Heritage Category	Condition	Principal Vulnerability	Trend
Church of St Nicholas	Listed Building grade II*	Poor	The floors are in poor condition and there are problems with damp.	
Rectangular enclosures 1100yds (1010m) NW of Mount Owen Farm	Scheduled Monument	Extensive significant problems	Arable ploughing	Declining
Waterman's Lodge bowl barrow, one of a pair of Bronze Age barrows on the western edge of Wychwood Forest	Scheduled Monument	Extensive significant problems	Animal burrowing - Badger - extensive	Declining
Medieval settlement and church of Asterleigh	Scheduled Monument	Generally unsatisfactory with	Deterioration - in need of management	Declining

¹³ <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/results/?advsearch=1&county=Oxfordshire&searchtype=harsearch>

		major localised problems		
Pair of bowl barrows immediately south of Blindwell Wood	Scheduled Monument	Extensive significant problems	Animal burrowing - Badger - extensive	Declining

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 WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL	WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and Date of Committee	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 4 DECEMBER 2024
Subject	SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2024-25 QUARTER TWO
Wards Affected	ALL
Accountable Member	Councillor Andy Graham – Leader of the Council. Email: andy.graham@westoxon.gov.uk
Accountable Officer	Giles Hughes – Chief Executive Officer. Email: giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
Report author	Alison Borrett – Senior Performance Analyst. Email: democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk
Purpose	To provide details of the Council’s operational performance at the end of 2024-25 Quarter Two (Q2).
Annex	Annex A - Council Priorities report Annex B - Corporate Plan Action Tracker Annex C - Performance indicator report
Recommendation.	That the Committee Resolves to: I. Note the 2024/25 Q2 service performance report.
Corporate Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Putting Residents First • Enabling a Good Quality of Life for All • Creating a Better Environment for People and Wildlife • Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency • Working Together for West Oxfordshire
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Publica Directors, Assistant Directors, Business Managers, Service Managers and Service Leads.

I. BACKGROUND

- I.1** The new Council Plan was adopted in January 2023 and the Action Plan, setting out how the priorities within the Council Plan will be delivered, then followed. Additionally, following on from the external audit report in August 2023 which included a recommendation to review performance management to match the Council Plan and measure performance, a new performance framework has been developed to include a Corporate Action Plan Tracker and a Priority Report alongside the service output metrics.
- I.2** A high-level Commissioning Framework was approved by the Executive in October 2020, which sets out the relationship between Publica and the Council and their respective responsibilities. Publica provides the necessary information, including a range of performance indicators, to the Council so it can assess whether the commissioned services are being delivered in accordance with the agreed quality and standard.
- I.3** The Council's Chief Executive is responsible for reviewing and approving the information provided in this report prior to its publication.

2. COUNCIL PRIORITY REPORT

- 2.1** Progress on actions in the Corporate Plan for Q2 include:
- Public consultation on the draft CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) charging schedule took place during August and September for 8 weeks. Officers are currently summarising and analysing the responses received during this consultation period, with the aim of submitting the findings for examination in late October or early November.
 - A review of the enforcement process is currently underway, stemming from the efforts outlined in the Development Management Improvement Plan. As part of this review, we have introduced 10 key feedback points aimed at ensuring all stakeholders—including Councilors, complainants, contraveners, and town and parish councils—are kept well-informed about the progress of investigations.
 - Stage 3 of the Leisure Strategic Outcomes Planning Model (SOPM) has been received and reviewed from the consultancy, Max Associates, with the final report due to go to Executive in November.
 - The Local Authority Housing Fund Round 3 has concluded successfully, with the Council securing four additional housing units, bringing the total number of units to 27. This initiative supports local authorities in England in their efforts to obtain housing for individuals who are unable to find settled accommodation through resettlement schemes.
 - The review of Charter Markets in Witney and Chipping Norton has just been completed, with officers currently analysing the responses received. This review aimed to assess the current state of the markets, gather valuable feedback from both vendors and customers, and identify opportunities for improvement and growth.
 - Round 3 of Westhive is underway with nine projects actively fundraising. A creator workshop was undertaken in July with a further creative workshop, aimed at equipping residents with the tools and knowledge to develop their project ideas, to be held in October.
- 2.2** The Council Priority highlight report is attached at Annex A with an overview of progress against all actions in the Corporate Plan is attached at Annex B.

3. SERVICE PERFORMANCE

3.1 Overall, the Council's performance for the quarter has been largely positive, with notable progress in Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days and the percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed. Planning Determination Times, Gym Memberships, and Land Charges Response Times remain high. Additionally, Customer Satisfaction continues to be strong, with the Council topping the Gov Metric league table in July and August. However, the Number of Affordable Homes delivered and Income Achieved in Planning are showing negative trends.

3.2 Service performance above target:

- Percentage of Council Tax Collected (59.05% against a target of 58%)
- Percentage of Non-Domestic Rates Collected (60.92% against a target of 58%)
- Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims (18.41 days against a target of 20 days)
- Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events (3.08 days against a target of 5 days)
- Percentage of Housing Benefit overpayment due to LA error/admin delay (0.34% against a target of 0.35%)
- Customer Satisfaction (97.52% against a target of 90%)
- Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days (92.76% against a target of 90%)
- Building Control Satisfaction (100% against a target of 90%)
- Percentage of major planning applications determined within agreed timescales (80% against a target of 70%)
- Percentage of minor planning applications determined within agreed timescales (93.83% against a target of 65%)
- Percentage of other planning applications determined within agreed timescales (96.81% against a target of 80%)
- Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed (cumulative) (28.38% against a target of 30%)
- Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days (90.24% against a target of 90%)
- Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales (100% against a target of 90%)
- Missed bins per 100,000 (77.42 against a target of 120)
- (Snapshot) Number of gym memberships (5,204 memberships against a target of 4,875 memberships)

3.3 Service Performance below target:

Processing times for Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances (5.06 days against a target of 4 days)

The Council has shown steady improvement in processing times for Housing Benefit (HB) changes, with an overall reduction of around 2 days compared to the same period last year. While current processing times are still above the target, this decrease reflects a positive trend and the Council's commitment to enhancing service efficiency.

In September, system errors in the automation process created a backlog, leading to longer processing times. This temporary setback has been addressed by the Council, which is actively collaborating with its partners to resolve the technical issues and prevent further delays.

Number of Affordable Homes Delivered (96 against a target of 138)

During Q2, a total of forty-eight properties were delivered across West Oxfordshire, bringing the year-to-date total to 96. This includes 35 Social Rent and 8 Affordable Rent homes, with 30 Social Rent homes delivered as part of the St Mary's redevelopment in Witney. The redevelopment incorporates sustainable features like solar panels, air source heat pumps, and electric vehicle charging points, alongside a 30-year biodiversity management plan to promote long-term environmental sustainability.

It's worth noting that completion rates vary throughout the year due to the nature of housing developments, which often span multiple months or even years. Some projects may be phased over several years, contributing to fluctuations in completion numbers. Delays in handovers, attributed to works required from statutory service providers, have impacted expected completions, pushing back these properties.

According to the 2014 Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), West Oxfordshire needs 660 homes annually through to 2031, including 274 affordable units. Since 2013–14, the Council has delivered 2,491 homes, falling short of the SHMA target of 3,083 by 592 units. Nevertheless, since adopting the Local Plan in September 2018, the delivery of affordable housing has accelerated, with yearly completions often surpassing targets. This progress is gradually closing the shortfall observed in previous years, and forecasts suggest the Council is on track to meet its year-end targets, provided no additional delays occur.

Percentage of high risk notifications risk assessed within 1 working day (75% against a target of 90%)

The Council received four notifications during Q2, three of which were reviewed within one working day.

The missed notification was due to timing and resource availability, the initial allocation did not necessitate immediate action, as the referral was linked to ongoing cases from Housing. This allowed officers to prioritise other pressing tasks, resulting in a delay in the timely follow-up, despite the notification being promptly acknowledged and allocated.

Number of visits to the leisure centres (189,466 visits against a target of 196,000)

Visits to leisure facilities experienced a slight decline compared to the previous quarter, although there was an increase of 10,000 visits compared to the same period last year. Despite this growth, the Council fell just short of its quarterly target, largely due to disruptions caused by three significant roofing and refurbishment projects carried out during the summer months. These included roofing works at Windrush Leisure Centre, refurbishment of the Artificial Pitch in Witney (which led to a six-week closure), and refurbishment at Chipping Norton Leisure Centre. Despite these challenges, the Council was only approximately 3% below its target for the quarter.

In contrast, Woodstock Open Air Pool had a successful season, benefiting from new initiatives such as the introduction of cold-water swimming at the start of the season and extended operating hours throughout the summer. Furthermore, the partnership with Yellow Submarine Charity proved to be a success, with the charity providing a full café service and offering approximately 120 hours of one-on-one training for individuals with learning disabilities and autism.

3.4 A full report is attached at Annex C and should be looked at in conjunction with this report.

3.5 As previously agreed, where possible, broader benchmarking has been included in the full performance report to gain a more robust and insightful evaluation of performance. Where

benchmarking data is not currently available or outdated, this is noted, and further investigations will be undertaken to look at options.

4. EXECUTIVE

- 4.1 This report will be reviewed by the Executive at its meeting on 11 December 2024. The draft minutes of that meeting will be circulated to all Members and any recommendations from the Committee will be reported to the Executive meeting.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None specifically because of this report. However, a failure to meet statutory deadlines or standards in some services may expose the Council to legal challenge and/or financial liability.

7. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 Contained in this report.

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.1 None

9. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Contained in this report.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 None

(END)

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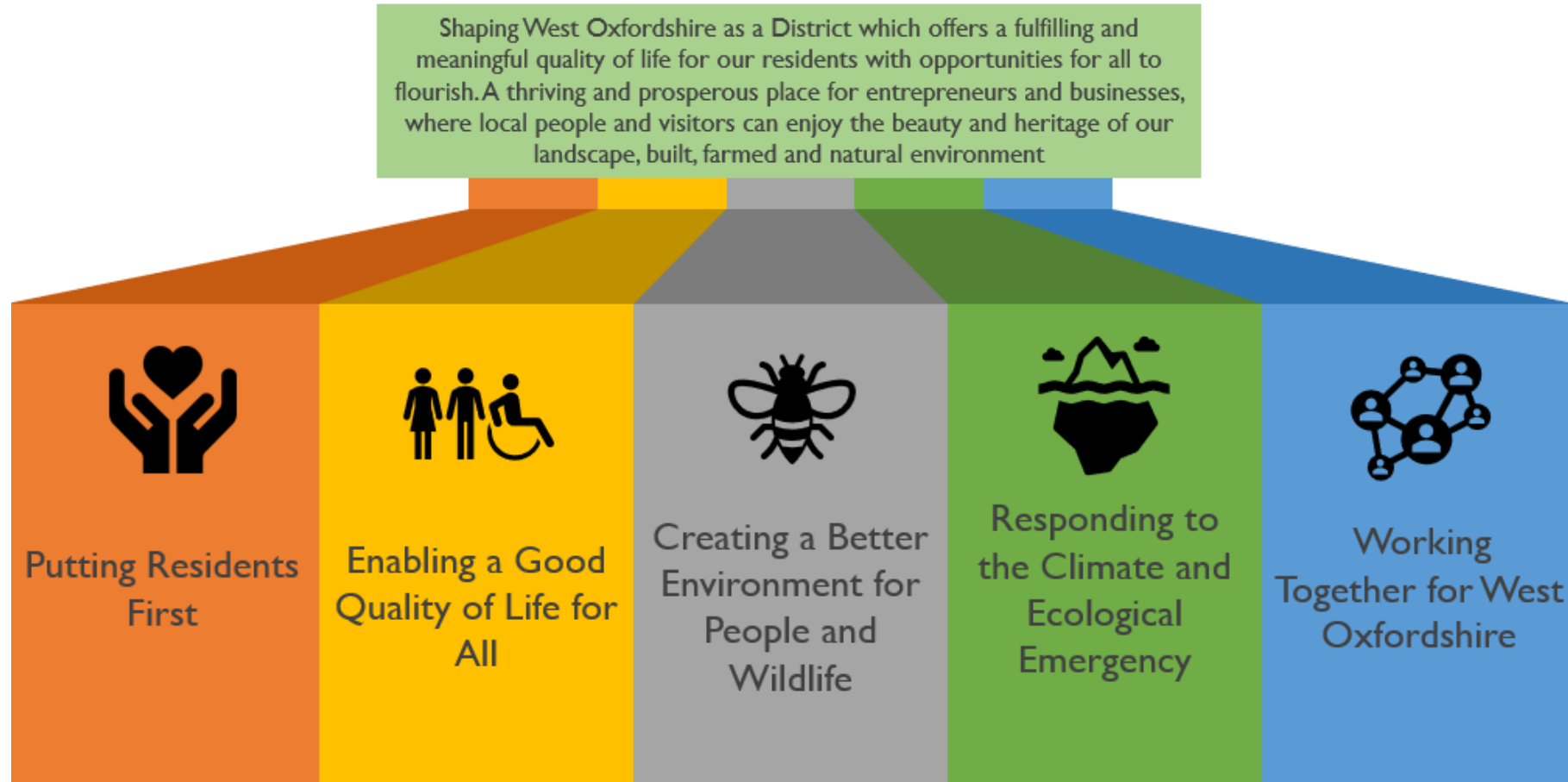


WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL PRIORITIES REPORT
July 2024 – September 2024

Background

The Executive Action Plan was created to outline the steps needed to carry out the vision of the Executive after the new Council Plan was adopted in February 2023. In the Council Plan, the Executive looks to the district's future and establishes a vision for West Oxfordshire. In addition to updating the public on the status of each priority at regular meetings across the plan's four-year duration, a new performance framework has been created to offer timely updates for actions taken in relation to the priorities.



Putting Residents First



Actions we are taking

The Council partnered with Oxfordshire County Council, the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils, and other local bodies to create the Oxfordshire Councils Charter, a pioneering framework aimed at enhancing local democracy and improving collaboration across all councils in the county. This charter is the first of its kind in the UK, bringing together all three tiers of local government—parish, town, district, city, and county councils. Co-produced through a three-stage engagement process involving 32 local councils in West Oxfordshire, the Charter incorporated key themes from their feedback and outlined principles for stronger partnership working while acknowledging the essential role of local councils in supporting residents and delivering services. Designed to be flexible, the Charter empowers councils without imposing additional operational burdens. Endorsed by the Executive in June, the Charter was officially launched at the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils AGM in July 2024, marking a significant milestone in fostering more effective collaboration and communication between Oxfordshire's councils.

The 'Our House' Project is an innovative initiative launched in 2018 by West Oxfordshire District Council in collaboration with Cottsway Housing and Aspire Oxfordshire. This community housing project aims to address the needs of local young people who are either experiencing homelessness, at risk of becoming homeless, or unable to remain with family or friends. The project provides shared accommodation for single individuals under 35 who are on out-of-work benefits in West Oxfordshire. Currently, it offers housing and support for up to 12 young people, referred to as 'trainees,' across three shared houses located within the district. In July 2024, the Executive granted a funding extension for the project, extending its support for an additional two years, until October 2026.

Residents and visitors who frequent the Guildenford car park in Burford and Hensington Road car park in Woodstock were encouraged to share their feedback as part of the Council's Car Parking Strategy Consultation, which took place from January 15 to February 12. This consultation aimed to gather insights from regular users, prioritizing an understanding of their experiences and ensuring that the facilities meet both present and future needs. Comprehensive studies, including the use of counters at Guildenford car park, are planned to gather detailed usage data. The Council's overarching strategy for car parking in Woodstock and Burford aims to align provisions with the evolving needs of users, ultimately outlining improvements to enhance the usability of these facilities for all stakeholders. A review of the consultation responses is currently underway, with a Mid-Point Review of the Car Parking Strategy anticipated to go to the Executive in December.

Finally, the Council is dedicated to maintaining outstanding levels of transparency and accountability, emphasising high standards of governance and trustworthiness. As part of these efforts, the Council is preparing to launch a review of the enforcement process under the Development Management Improvement Plan. This review will introduce ten feedback points designed to keep Members, complainants, contraveners, and town and parish councils informed about the progress of investigations and future timeframes. These initiatives reflect the Council's ongoing dedication to strengthening governance and building trust within the community, ensuring that all stakeholders remain informed and engaged in the decision-making process.

Enabling a Good Quality of Life for All



Actions we are taking

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), introduced by the Government in 2008, aimed to ensure fair and transparent contributions from developments towards essential infrastructure, such as schools and roads. In March 2023, the Council's Executive commissioned new viability evidence for a revised CIL charging schedule. Progress was made as the Council moved towards adopting and implementing the CIL. Additional information was provided to the Dixon Searle Partnership, the appointed consultants, and discussions were held regarding the development typologies to assess and the best approach for consulting with key stakeholders, including landowners and developers. Following the completion of the viability study, the draft CIL charging schedule was prepared and approved by the Executive in July. A public consultation on the draft charging schedule took place between August 2 and September 27, 2024. The responses from this consultation are currently being summarised and analysed, with plans for submission for independent examination in late October or early November.

The Weavers Fold development in Chipping Norton features eight 2- and 3-bedroom zero-carbon homes available through a discounted market sale, offering buyers the unique opportunity to custom-build their homes and influence design and specifications. Despite some delays in the project, the Executive approved a new delivery model proposal in November, jointly developed by Green Axis and Homes England. Legal agreements, reviewed and agreed upon by Legal Services, the housing team, and the developers, were exchanged in August. Developers are now working to secure funding to complete the project, anticipated by next quarter, and a delivery plan is being drawn up as contractors prepare to mobilise.

The Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) is an innovative capital fund that supports local authorities in England to obtain housing for those who are unable to find settled accommodation on resettlement schemes. The Council were successful in their bid for funding to relieve pressures on short-term accommodation, with a longer-term objective of seeing the housing used for more general affordable purposes. Collaborating with Cottsway and Miller Homes, the Council facilitated the construction of 23 additional affordable units within the district. With a successful bid in LAHF Round 3, the Council will now acquire an additional 4 properties in partnership with Soha HA, bringing the total to 27 affordable units.

Salt Cross Garden Village is a proposed new standalone settlement, self-contained with its own village facilities, such as schools, community resources and employment opportunities. The initial garden village proposals set out in the Local Plan include 2,200 new homes and a new science business park which will give local people an alternative to driving to work in Oxford. Nearby Hanborough railway station together with a new Park and Ride facility to the north of Eynsham will give people an alternative to using their cars. The Area Action Plan (AAP) has undergone a thorough revision, encompassing modifications identified during the examination process in preparation for its adoption. After the Inspector's report was received, a legal challenge was submitted focusing on the conclusions reached by the Inspector in relation to the soundness of AAP Policy 2 – Net Zero Carbon Development. The High Court ruled in favor of the community group in a hearing held on 14-15 November 2023. Subsequently, additional clarity on Net Zero was provided through a Ministerial Statement on 23 December 2023. Following the High Court ruling, the Planning Inspectorate has set a timeline for hearings based on the Council's submission of the revised Policy 2 (Net Zero) and related evidence. The Council has appointed consultants to assist with a revised viability assessment and sustainability appraisal, expected to be delivered by mid-September 2024. As a result, the Council plans to submit the documents to the Planning Inspectorate in October 2024, with hearings scheduled for February 2025.

A Market Towns Study was commissioned as part of the government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund Levelling Up scheme to help identify issues to be addressed through the fund. The study recommended establishing town partnerships in order to identify detailed projects in each of the towns, for which £158,000 has been allocated to Witney Town Partnership has been established as the first of the Town Partnerships with the priorities for the Witney Town Partnership agreed as:

- Develop a long term strategic plan for the Town
- Promote the town to increase footfall
- Improve wayfinding and signage

A recent review of Charter Markets in Witney and Chipping Norton received positive feedback. Plans are underway to align this work with Marriotts Walk events and support smaller retailers and start-ups. Wayfinding improvements are also progressing, with new information boards planned for Chipping Norton Town Centre.

Creating a Better Environment for People and Wildlife



Actions we are taking

The Council has committed to preparing a new Local Plan covering the period up to 2041. The emerging plan is currently at the 'Regulation 18' stage of preparation, where views are sought on the content of the plan, and different options and alternatives are considered and tested. An initial public consultation, 'Your Voice Counts,' took place from August to October 2022, seeking general views on what issues the new plan should focus on. More recently, a further public consultation occurred from 30 August to 25 October 2023, which sought specific feedback on potential draft objectives for the new plan, various scenarios for future growth, and ideas for land use across the District. Additionally, a call for sites was included, which Officers are currently assessing for suitability. The consultation was primarily held online via the Council's digital engagement platform, CitizenLab, but also included several in-person events. A total of 225 individuals and stakeholder organisations responded through CitizenLab, along with another 180 representations received via email or letter. The Local Plan process has been paused to allow for reflection on the changes likely to arise from the Government's proposed amendments to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and housing requirements for the District. These changes to the NPPF are now anticipated to be delayed from late this year to early next year due to the volume of responses received by the Government. Further public consultation will take place in the new year as the Local Plan progresses through additional Regulation 18 consultation. This is expected to include a series of preferred policy approaches, building on the feedback received so far and emerging technical evidence related to housing needs. The Environment Agency's 'Spheres of Influence' project, which the Council has completed as one of three national pilot areas, will influence local plan policies related to the water environment. The Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and Phase 1 Water Cycle Study have now been commissioned as part of the Local Plan evidence base. The Council is also working closely with the Environment Agency to develop a more integrated approach to water management, which will be reflected in the emerging draft Local Plan, including a strategic policy option on integrated water management.

The Council is collaborating with the Wychwood Forest Trust on a funding bid for the Windrush in Witney project. This initiative aims to implement landscape-scale enhancements across the Witney Floodplains area. Partnering with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), Witney Town Council (WTC), and the Wychwood Forest Trust, the project will focus on introducing grazing, enhancing floral diversity, pollarding willow trees, establishing a new volunteer group, and organizing a series of community engagement and rural skills training events.

The Coronation Community Orchard Scheme aims to plant trees in non-woodland areas near residential communities as a lasting tribute to King Charles III's coronation. The Council has secured £50,000 from the DEFRA Coronation Living Heritage Fund to support this initiative. Following the closure of the first round of applications in January 2024, six community groups received grants to start planting fruit trees, with grant claim submissions currently underway. Although applications for the second round of funding were originally set to close at the end of July, they remain open due to the availability of remaining funds. The Council is actively engaging with stakeholders to encourage submissions.

The Deer Park South Access Project is progressing with infrastructure enhancements aimed at improving public access to the adjacent woodland. Key developments include the installation of two new bridges over Colwell Brook and completed footpath upgrades, including a new bench offering a scenic view of the site's balancing ponds. Local artist-collaborated nature trail brass rubbing posts, crafted with Windrush CofE Primary School students, have been installed by Ubico, adding to the trail's immersive experience. Interpretation panels, now installed, are designed to enhance visitors' understanding of the area's natural features and heritage. Additionally, surfacing improvements have been made to the bridleway along the southern boundary of Deer Park South. A land management review and access to Deer Park Wood are currently underway, involving nature recovery officers and Witney Woodland volunteers.



Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency

Actions we are taking

In June 2019, the Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency and pledged to become a carbon-neutral council by 2030. In January 2020, the Council published a report on Climate Action for West Oxfordshire, which set out a proposed framework for developing a Carbon Action Plan to deliver the Council's carbon-neutral commitment and develop a Climate Change Strategy for West Oxfordshire.

The decarbonisation of Council-owned buildings is progressing with various initiatives. Funding from the Local Carbon Skills Fund has been secured for heat decarbonisation plans at Elmfield Council Offices and Welch Way. The Windrush Leisure Centre has received £1.6 million from the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Phase 3c (PSDS 3c), with Council approval granted on March 11, 2024, and work commencing on April 1, 2024. Additionally, a successful bid to the Swimming Pool Support Fund will finance the installation of solar PV panels and shower flow restrictors at Windrush Leisure Centre. Solar PV panels and heat recovery systems will also be added to the air handling units at Chipping Norton Lido to boost energy efficiency. Heat decarbonisation plans for Elmfield, Welch Way, and Old Court House were finalised in March 2024, advancing the Council's sustainability efforts.

The project to install Solar PV panels at Elmfield is progressing well, with the first installation taking place during the quarter. This decarbonisation project means tenants will be using green energy and the Council's capital investment is repaid through recharges or power purchasing agreements with tenants.

The bid submitted under the Public Sector Low Carbon Skills Fund Phase 5 (LCSF 5) for initial design work for the decarbonisation of Chipping Norton Leisure Centre and additional Council-owned buildings in Chipping Norton, Witney, and Oxford was ultimately unsuccessful. Although the bid met all the necessary criteria for the fund, the selection process for Phase 5 LCSF introduced a new randomised assessment approach. Under this new system, all eligible applications that met the fund's criteria were sorted into a random order prior to assessment. This change was implemented to address feedback from previous phases where the first-come-first-served approach led to rushed applications and potential mistakes.

Electric vehicle drivers can now access charging facilities at the Woolgate car park, owned by West Oxfordshire District Council. This installation is part of a broader initiative to expand electric vehicle charging points (EVCP) across the district. The new chargers are designed to encourage the adoption of cleaner driving practices by providing more convenient charging options, particularly for residents without off-street parking. The Woolgate car park features 12 charging bays, which include a combination of 7.4kW Type 2 chargers and 75.0kW rapid chargers. With this addition, the District Council's car parks now host a total of 42 charging units across 74 parking bays. This development supports the Council's Climate Change Strategy, which aims to decarbonise transport in the region.

The Executive approved the updated Carbon Action Plan for 2030 in March 2024. A tender process has been initiated for establishing the carbon baseline, which will serve as the foundation for the new Climate Change Strategy. The scope of work for the carbon baseline has been revised, and consultants have been asked to submit revised costs. Meanwhile, work on the delivery of the Carbon Action Plan continues, establishing the carbon baseline and continuing to draft the new Climate Change Strategy.

The Home Upgrade Grant (HUG) is a countywide initiative focused on improving energy efficiency and promoting low-carbon heating solutions, especially for low-income households in the least energy-efficient, off-gas grid homes. In partnership with Oxfordshire County Council, the District Council is raising awareness of Phase 2 of the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG2) through communications with residents under the Welcome the Warmth Oxfordshire Scheme. By the end of Year 1, 15 homes in the district had received grant funding for energy-saving upgrades. Applications for Year 2 of the HUG2 scheme are now open until October.

Ubico, the District Council's waste partner, recently tested a zero-emission Dennis Eagle eCollect vehicle in West Oxfordshire, collecting over 94 tonnes of rubbish in a two-week period to assess its effectiveness in a large rural district. With transport emissions from the Council's waste services contributing approximately 40% of its greenhouse gases, reducing this figure is essential to achieving the Council's goal of carbon neutrality by 2030. The eCollect test vehicle, on loan from Dennis Eagle, is equipped with five lithium-ion battery packs to optimise payload efficiency. The District Council's fleet already includes three electric supervisor vans, three electric sweepers, and an electric car. The Council's updated Carbon Action Plan, aligned with the Climate Change Strategy 2021-25, prioritises energy efficiency across buildings, vehicles, and waste services to achieve net-zero by 2030. A member-led steering group is also meeting regularly to support this mission. A proposal is currently being drafted for the Executive's review, seeking approval to acquire three fully electric supervisor vehicles. The proposal further requests delegated authority to facilitate future procurement of electric heavy goods vehicles (eHGVs) and electric food waste vehicles, reinforcing the Council's commitment to its net-zero goals.



Working Together for West Oxfordshire

Actions we are taking

The Community Infrastructure Fund, hosted on the Westhive platform (<https://www.spacehive.com/movement/westhive/>), aims to revitalise and grow local infrastructure as part of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Levelling Up scheme. It offers capital grants of up to £20,000 or 50% of the project's crowdfunding target. With a generous budget of £40,000 for this financial year and a total of £226,000 over two years, the fund supports projects fostering community restoration, local pride, belonging, and positive contributions to health and wellbeing. The Council encourages submissions emphasising environmental sustainability, aiding vulnerable communities, and addressing exclusion due to mental health, physical or mental disability, or financial hardship. There's a particular focus on projects for or by young people, aligning with the Council's commitment to empower young voices.

The Spacehive team hosted a well-attended project creators workshop to guide potential applicants in developing and securing funds for project delivery. The Council pledges up to £10,000 for eligible projects, in addition to public contributions via the platform. The initiative has had eight projects crowdfunding, with four fully funded: Food Surplus Redistribution in Witney, Cotswolds Arts Through Schools, Get Set Gagingwell - The MAP Garden, and Cycles of Good. Round 3 of Westhive is underway, with a further creator workshop to be held on July 22.

Funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Wild Oxfordshire, a charity dedicated to fostering a more natural, resilient, and biodiverse Oxfordshire, is collaborating with Officers to update a Biodiversity Toolkit. This toolkit aims to guide Town and Parish Councils in managing their land in nature-friendly ways. Three pilot projects in Asthall, Eynsham, and Filkins & Broughton Poggs will serve as demonstrations of the toolkit's efficacy, producing case studies to assist other parishes in their nature recovery endeavours. The recently updated Community Town and Parish Guide to Nature Recovery provides valuable insights and resources for local communities to enhance biodiversity and promote nature conservation. An in-person launch event held at Woodgreen Offices on March 21, 2024, featured demonstrators showcasing practical examples to representatives from various town and parish councils, fostering knowledge sharing and collaboration. The guidance was also launched online on April 16, 2024, providing a broader audience with access to the resources virtually. The grand opening of Water Close in Asthall Leigh on May 23, 2024, marked another milestone in the initiative. Additionally, £2,000 was transferred to parish councils for long-term maintenance, using the underspend to further support sustained nature recovery efforts across the region.

In an effort to support community initiatives and address pressing environmental and social issues, West Oxfordshire District Council has established three-year grant agreements (SLAs) for 2024-27. These grants aim to enhance the region's natural environment, combat climate change, and strengthen community resilience. The grants were awarded under three lots:

Lot 1: Improving the natural environment and access to it to enhance physical and mental well-being and foster connected communities.

Lot 2: Addressing climate and ecological emergencies to reduce carbon footprints and promote nature recovery.

Lot 3: Increasing community resilience and amplifying the voices of the seldom heard, focusing on critical issues such as food access, youth support, and cultural provision.

Under the terms of the SLA, organisations are required to submit biannual progress reports in Q2 and Q4. For the 2024-25 period, a total of £188,500 in funding has been allocated to various organisations.

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Corporate Strategy Action Tracker

Green	On target
Amber	Off target but action being taken to ensure delivery (where this results in a reviewed target date, this is made clear in the table)
Red	Off target and no action has yet been agreed to resolve the situation
Complete	Action completed
Not Scheduled to Start	The action/project has either a future start date or is still in its early stages, with no start date established yet.

Our Focus	Actions	Quarter 2 Update	Start Date	Date Due	Status	Executive Member	Link Officer	Updates Provided by
Putting Residents First	<p>The Council will listen and act in the best interests of residents by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Being an outward facing, accessible, inclusive and open Council, improving our use of technology to increase understanding and access to what we do, how we work and the decisions we take -Providing easy to use platforms for public consultations that are effective, accessible and timely so that the voice of residents can be heard in planning and other Council decisions -Positively engaging with and listening to locally elected representatives on Town and Parish Councils -Actively seeking the voice of the seldom heard, including those of young people, to understand their particular needs and ensure that the Council is taking decisions that meet these needs. 	<p>Explore how the Council leads Youth Engagement, ensuring youth are engaged across the wide range of activity it undertakes.</p>			On Target	Rachel Crouch	Emmy-Lou Bossard / Heather McCulloch	Heather McCulloch
	<p>Customer Experience Improvement Programme</p>	<p>The arrangement for telephones to remain open 9 - 2 was agreed by Executive in June. Online services available for customers continues to increase with the uptake for our customers exceeding expectation. Open portal applications continue to rise so that our customers can self serve.</p>	01/07/2020	01/01/2024	On Target	All	Giles Hughes	Michelle Clifford

1.2		<p>The Council will act with outstanding levels of transparency and accountability, with high standards of governance and trustworthiness.</p>	<p>Proposal to implement a robust system and process for: > the allocation of matters to the councils' forward plans > report preparation, consultation and approval > transparency and publication of decision making; and > decision tracking.</p>	<p>The review of the Enforcement process that is due to launch shortly and arises from work undertaken through the Development Management Improvement Plan has introduced 10 feedback points to ensure Members, Complainant, contravener and town and parish councils are kept up to date with the progress of an investigation and timeframes moving forwards</p>	01/05/2021	31/12/2023	On Target	Andy Graham	Giles Hughes	Andrew Brown
1.3	<p>Putting Residents, Young and Old, at the Heart of What We Do</p>	<p>The Council will actively manage Council budgets, delivering good levels of service through the wise and efficient use of funds available as well as enabling those budgets to grow so that the Council can take action towards the priorities of this Council Plan.</p>	<p>Procurement: Publica-wide project to embed climate, ecological and social value considerations in procurement processes to maximise the use of sustainable suppliers and support local businesses.</p>				Ongoing	Alaric Smith	Ciaran O'Kane / Phil Martin	Ciaran O'Kane
		<p>The Council will seek to attract inward investment in our towns, villages and rural areas so that they can flourish and be sustained with new jobs and housing and infrastructure that are designed to meet the needs and aspirations of our current and future residents.</p>								
			<p>Adopt and implement CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy).</p>	<p>Public consultation on draft charging schedule took place from Friday 2 August - Friday 27 September (8 weeks). The consultation responses are currently being summarised and analysed with a view to submission for examination in late October/early November.</p>	01/11/2019	31/08/2024	On Target	Hugo Ashton	Giles Hughes / Charlie Jackson / Chris Hargraves	Chris Hargraves
			<p>Commission (Sport England) Strategic Outcomes Planning Model (SOPM) through Max Associates to inform a West Oxfordshire Leisure, Health and Wellbeing Strategy which will define a more holistic leisure provision offer (inc. arts, culture, entertainment and sport). The SOPM will also inform the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (and Local Plan Review) and Town Centre regeneration plans.</p>	<p>Final report on forward plan for November Executive</p>	01/09/2023	20/11/2024	On Target	Tim Sumner	Rachel Biles	Rachel Biles

2.1
Enabling a Good Quality of Life for All

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.

Explore opportunities for green investment for strategic development areas eg through the Carterton Masterplan and also through the Pan-Regional Partnership.	Further exploration necessary, have discussed with Pan-Regional Partnership and opportunities to connect Oxfordshire better through the Ox/Cam Arc already developing through East/West rail links. Will pick up opportunities to develop green investment in terms of infrastructure with Carterton Town Partnership .	01/01/2023	31/08/2025	On Target	Tim Sumner, Andrew Prosser	Sam Stronach	Sam Stronach
Explore how the Local Plan can address the issue of securing long term maintenance of green infrastructure on large SDAs.	Local Plan process paused to enable reflection upon the changes likely to arise as a result of the Governments putative changes to the NPPF and the Housing requirements for the District. NPPF changes are now likely delayed from late this year to early next year as a result of the volumes of responses received by Government	31/08/2022	31/08/2025	On Target	Andrew Prosser	Chris Hargraves	Chris Hargraves
Consideration of community stewardship and maintenance of Strategic Development Areas – how do we enable this?	See above ref short delay to the Local Plan process	31/08/2022	31/08/2025	On Target	Andrew Prosser	Chris Hargraves	Chris Hargraves
Work with Oxfordshire County Council and others to increase the opportunity for residents to travel around and beyond the District on foot or by bike, or on public transport, to reduce car dependence and benefit from the health and economic benefits of doing so.	Fed into the Oxfordshire Greenways project. Carterton Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LWCIP) due to commence.			On Target	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
Strategic Housing Project: Internal management and modelling – proposals to be presented to Executive in paper compiled by Publica Assistant Director Planning and Sustainability to November Executive.	Completed	01/04/2023	15/11/2023	Complete	Geoff Saul	Giles Hughes	
Strategic Housing Project: Assessing scope for investment and modelling.	Additionality secured by negotiations with RP partners is currently working well; 52 additional social rented units delivered to date. Further opportunities to grow partnerships and investment models are being progressed.	01/04/2023		On Target	Alaric Smith, Geoff Saul	Giles Hughes	Michael David
Strategic Housing Project: Overview of modelling options and delivery. Proposed approach to the November Executive.	Completed	01/04/2023	15/11/2023	Complete	Tim Sumner, Geoff Saul	Giles Hughes	

Explore the scope for alternative means of delivering the range of homes in the District that meet the diverse needs of our communities, such as investment in tenures and sizes of homes that the market does not currently deliver enough of.

Further exploration of the best route to be more interventionist in housing delivery via direct provision – clarity needed over the desired objectives of establishing the council owned housing company or pursue an alternative route eg via a Joint Venture (OxPlace/Oxfordshire wide).	Following early exploration, the Initial View is that Partnership working for specific projects is a preferred route . (An example may include a Joint project or JV with Ox Place). This is preferred to creating an over-arching, dedicated company or legal structure. This will be kept under review and discussed across the organisation in accordance with the desired corporate & political objectives.	01/04/2023		On Target	Geoff Saul	Giles Hughes	Michael David
Development of business cases for existing Council owned sites – initial focus should be on Woodford Way – a housing scheme which integrates carparking (what is needed/tie in with EVPC). Key landowners/development partners.	Early Scoping of Car capacity has begun and the potential to re-locate car users to Marriotts Walk Car park and other locations within Witney. Further development of the business case and delivery model will follow.	01/04/2023		On Target	Geoff Saul	Andrew Turner	Michael David
Further exploration of modular building – how, where and with whom including visits manufacturers. To understand options for delivery.	Modular housing companies have been identified and explored, however suitable sites and delivery models have not yet been identified within the district.	01/04/2023		On Target	Geoff Saul	Giles Hughes	Michael David
Emergency accommodation – Acquisition of - consider the balance – single/couple and family accommodation).	Discussions with Oxford City are progressing well. During the last meeting WODC officers suggested that Oxford City should lead on either Acquiring or leasing Knights Court from us. Next steps to be determined via internal liaison and partnership working with Oxford City & Ox Place.			On Target	Geoff Saul	Jon Dearing	Michael David
Completion of housing development at Walterbush Road, Chipping Norton.	Exchange took place on 23rd August 2024. Developers working to secure funding in order to complete, expected by next qtr. Delivery plan also being drawn up as contractors are prepare to mobilise.	01/10/2021	31/07/2023	Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Geoff Saul	Andrew Turner	Andrew Turner
Deliver the Local Authority Housing Fund as a means to relieve pressures on short term accommodation and bridging hotels with a longer term of objective to see the housing being used for more general affordable purposes.	New government has confirmed the continuation of this scheme and approved the four additional units as part of phase 3 bringing the total to 27 units	01/04/2023	31/09/2024	On Target	Geoff Saul	Jon Dearing	Jon Dearing
Work with Carterton Town Council and other relevant stakeholders to identify economic regeneration priorities for the town and immediate area following completion of the UKSPF funded Carterton Strategic/Master Plan.	Further consideration being given as to how this is most appropriately taken forward by the Director of Place in discussion with Members.			Not Scheduled to Start	Duncan Enright	Chris Hargraves	

Work with partners to support a vibrant local economy which gives residents the opportunity to prosper and fulfil their ambitions through secure jobs and exciting careers, entrepreneurship and developing new skills to participate in and contribute to the local economy.

Support the retention of existing and development of new services and facilities that contribute to the local economy, community wellbeing and cohesion.

<p>Strategy and plan for reinvigorating the District's Charter Markets</p>	<p>Draft strategy currently developed and the draft brief for the Expression of interest being designed for the management and operation of the Charter Markets in Chipping Norton and Witney and potentially another for additional markets at Marriotts.</p>			<p>On Target</p>	<p>Duncan Enright</p>	<p>Emma Phillips</p>	
<p>Take an active role as member of Cotswolds Plus Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) and engagement with neighbouring LVEP's.</p>	<p>Climate team are advising on the green leaf scheme and webpages.</p>			<p>On Target</p>	<p>Duncan Enright</p>	<p>Chris Jackson</p>	<p>Chris Jackson</p>
<p>Set future project priorities for Council and Stakeholders to secure the long term viability of our Market Towns via enhancements inc wayfinding & signage, public realm and support for independent retailers and appropriate market promotions/attractions.</p>	<p>Review of Charter Markets in Witney and Chipping Norton has just been completed with a great response to consultation. Looking to tie this work in with Marriotts Walk market events also. This work will also look to support smaller retailers and start-ups also. Looking to improve wayfinding and signage in towns also on track with new information boards going into Chipping Norton Town Centre.</p>	<p>01/12/2022</p>	<p>31/05/2025</p>	<p>On Target</p>	<p>Duncan Enright</p>	<p>Sam Stronach</p>	<p>Sam Stronach</p>
<p>Oxfordshire County Council improvements to Witney Town Centre linked to Marriotts Walk redevelopment where appropriate.</p>	<p>Currently in consultation phase for Witney High Street Enhancements work. Officers from RD Team, Planning and Climate Action all coordinating comments with our respective Executive Members.</p>			<p>On Target</p>	<p>Duncan Enright</p>	<p>Sam Stronach</p>	<p>Sam Stronach</p>
<p>The commissioning of the Strategic Outcomes Planning Model (through Max Associates) to inform the development of a West Oxfordshire Leisure, Health and Wellbeing Strategy.</p>				<p>Not Scheduled to Start</p>			
<p>Guide the future delivery of Salt Cross new garden village and associated infrastructure to enable delivery of Salt Cross Science Park.</p>	<p>The AAP Inquiry was scheduled to be re convened to re look at the Net Zero policy in December. There may be a short delay whilst some legal issues are resolved but officers are seeking to keep matters moving forward due to the importance of the delivery at Salt Cross to the overall housing land supply position. The A40 improvement funding position is similarly not yet resolved and Officers are working with colleagues at OCC to seek to clarify the position</p>	<p>01/01/2018</p>	<p>31/12/2034</p>	<p>Off Target but Mitigation in Place</p>	<p>Duncan Enright</p>	<p>Andrea Clenton</p>	<p>Andrea Clenton</p>
<p>Marriotts Walk – implementation of CBRE recommendations inc. securing new tenants, public realm improvements & making enhanced use of the square.</p>	<p>Work ongoing with CBRE to manage void units in a challenging market. Unit 6 remodelling progressing well, in preparation for new tenants.</p>			<p>On Target</p>	<p>Duncan Enright</p>	<p>Jasmine McWilliams</p>	<p>Andrew Turner</p>

Creating a Better Environment for People and Wildlife

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.

<p>Development of the Carterton Strategic/Master Plan to regeneration the town and in doing so redressing balance between housing development with investment in the town centre, leisure and culture facilities, community space and business opportunities. Will seek to determine the best way to maximise the economic benefit of the RAF's largest airbase for the town and immediate area.</p>	<p>Carterton Town Council are now reviewing the document and we are looking to workshop next steps in interpreting how we can tease out a plan for the town that engages with residents and speaks to the business community in order to pull together what is needed to develop a more robust, workable action plan. Engaging with RAF in order to ascertain opportunities for growth and engagement.</p>	01/02/2022	31/05/2025	On Target	Alaric Smith, Hugo Ashton, Geoff Saul, Tim Sumner	Sam Stronach	Sam Stronach
<p>Ubico Grounds Maintenance Contract – review contract with aim of securing both biodiversity enhancements and budgetary savings.</p>		01/03/2025	01/03/2026	Not Scheduled to Start	Lidia Arciszewska	Bill Oddy	
<p>Biodiversity Land Management Plans - Working with Ubico to change land management processes across key WODC sites, for example reduced mowing frequency, creation of urban meadows, changes to floodplain meadow management, invasive species action, subsidence works, to improve them for both wildlife and people.</p>	<p>Land management plans still under review with surveying scheduled for next year. Grounds maintenance review still underway. Exploring opportunities for shared grounds maintainence.</p>	01/02/2022	01/03/2026	On Target	Lidia Arciszewska	Bill Oddy	Hannah Kenyon
<p>Support DEFRA funded Landscape Recovery Project (continguous with the Evenlode and Windrush Catchments) in partnership with the North East Cotswolds Farmer Cluster and the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership.</p>	<p>Further consideration being given to these matters as part of the scoping of the next stages of the Local Plan.</p>			Not Scheduled to Start	Lidia Arciszewska	Chris Hargraves	
<p>Windrush in Witney funding bid, in partnership with Wychwood Forest Trust - Landscape-scale enhancements across the Witney Floodplains, working with OCC, WTC and Wychwood Forest Trust to introduce grazing, improve floral diversity, pollard willow trees, establishment of a new volunteer group and delivery of a series of community engagement/rural skills training events. Linked to 3.5.</p>	<p>Wychwood Forest Trust SLA update due, including timescales for bid submisison.</p>	01/05/2022	01/03/2025	Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
<p>Coronation Community Orchard Scheme</p>	<p>Applications remain open as still grant funding remaining. Engaging with stakeholders to encourage applications.</p>	01/11/2023	21/03/2025	On Target	Andrew Prosser/Lidia Arciszewska	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon

3.2	<p>The Council will be a progressive custodian of our environmental resources, supporting a healthy natural landscape and functioning ecosystem which is rich in wildlife and habitats that are enjoyed by and benefit all.</p>	<p>Recognise and support the vital role of farming in natural ecosystem conservation, local food production and economic resilience, and the role that environmentally sustainable farming can play in achieving this.</p>	<p>Engaging with farmers as part of a wider consideration of the District's rural economy. How can WODC work to support (within its powers) a strong local rural economy, including diversification and the visitor economy.</p>	<p>Met with the representatives of the North East Cotswold Farmer Cluster to discuss nature-based carbon sequestration and opportunities for collaboration. Exploring potential investment in farmer-led woodland planting schemes for carbon sequestration.</p>			<p>Not Scheduled to Start</p>	<p>Lidia Arciszewska, Andrew Prosser</p>	<p>Chris Jackson / Hannah Kenyon</p>	<p>Hannah Kenyon</p>
3.3		<p>Help people to connect with nature by improving understanding of and public access to green spaces and the countryside.</p>	<p>Deer Park South Access Project – Infrastructure improvements to enhance public access to woodland adjacent to strategic development area.</p>	<p>Land management review and access to Deer Park Wood underway.</p>	<p>01/12/2022</p>	<p>31/05/2025</p>	<p>On Target</p>	<p>Duncan Enright</p>	<p>Hannah Kenyon</p>	<p>Hannah Kenyon</p>
		<p>Be an active participant in the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership and contribute to the production of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy to establish priorities and map proposals for action to drive nature's recovery, achieve Biodiversity Net Gain and provide wider environmental benefits specific to West Oxfordshire.</p>	<p>Officer group to convene with Local Nature Partnership - maintain relationship with LNP and work with partners to develop workstreams.</p>	<p>Contributed to the draft LNRS documents for public consultation, which is scheduled for November. Briefed Members on the LNRS.</p>	<p>01/07/2022</p>	<p>01/07/2025</p>	<p>On Target</p>	<p>Lidia Arciszewska, Duncan Enright</p>	<p>Hannah Kenyon</p>	<p>Hannah Kenyon</p>
			<p>Explore the potential for the Council to acquire land for Biodiversity Net Gain and nature-based carbon sequestration.</p>	<p>Some existing sites have been considered for BNG potential.</p>	<p>8/12/2024</p>	<p>31/03/2026</p>	<p>On Target</p>	<p>Andrew Prosser</p>	<p>Frank Wilson / Hannah Kenyon</p>	<p>Hannah Kenyon</p>
3.5		<p>Work with others to facilitate environmentally sensitive flood management of our river catchments.</p>	<p>Support of the Catchment Partnerships including the promotion (where appropriate) of other water quality campaigning groups. Sewerage and Water Agency Group continue to facilitate (Links with the Pan Regional Partnership – Scoping and Modelling Work).</p>	<p>Windrush Catchment Partnership funded through Wild Oxfordshire SLA. Partnership is in the process of establishing good governance.</p>			<p>On Target</p>	<p>Lidia Arciszewska, Andy Graham</p>	<p>Hannah Kenyon</p>	<p>Hannah Kenyon</p>
		<p>Delivery of the Local Plan – overview including how can the site allocations process through the Local Plan review play a positive role in water management? Coordination of policy. Linked to 4.2.</p>	<p>EA spheres of influence project now completed. Level 1 SFRA and Phase 1 Water Cycle Study now commissioned. Local Plan preferred options being drafted including a strategic policy option on integrated water management.</p>	<p>01/06/2022</p>	<p>31/12/2024</p>	<p>On Target</p>	<p>Hugo Ashton</p>	<p>Chris Hargraves / Hannah Kenyon</p>	<p>Chris Hargraves</p>	

Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency

<p>Drive down carbon emissions from Council operations including leisure, waste and street cleansing and running of the Council's estate, and in so doing lead by example to inspire others to take action to collectively reduce the overall carbon emissions of the District.</p>	<p>Decarbonisation of council owned buildings, including leisure centres and sports pavilions – secure external PSDS funding and extend the MEES project to include the full decarbonisation of tenanted buildings.</p>	<p>Assessing the viability of the PSDS 3c Windrush Leisure Centre scheme so as to enter into contract with the consultant and progress the heat decarb design. PSDS 4 application being considered for Chipping Norton Leisure Centre. LCSF 5 bid was unsuccessful as selection was through a lottery.</p>			Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Andrew Prosser, Dan Levy, Alaric Smith	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
	<p>PSDS 3b funded Carterton Leisure Centre decarbonisation - Carbon reduction through the replacement of the heating and hot water system of the building with a low-carbon alternative and increasing the amount of solar PV on site.</p>	<p>Project under review for next PSDS application.</p>	31/10/22	31/03/25	Off Target	Andrew Prosser, Tim Sumner	Claire Locke	Claire Locke / Andrew Turner
	<p>Waste Vehicle Strategy - Supporting the Waste team on the development of the strategy to reduce emissions from the Council's waste vehicle fleet.</p>	<p>Member led steering group meetings continue and paper drafted for Council decision on 3 fully electric supervisor vehicles and delegated authority for future procurement of food waste and eHGV vehicles</p>			On Target	Lidia Arciszewska	Simon Anthony / Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
	<p>Carbon Action Plan to 2030 and Climate Change Strategy to 2050 - Update of the Carbon Action Plan and Climate Change strategy to include scope 3 emissions, district carbon budgets, route maps to net zero, and actions.</p>	<p>Establishing the carbon baseline and continuing to draft the new Climate Change Strategy.</p>	01/07/23	30/6/2024	On Target	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
	<p>Climate Impact Assessment Tool (CIAT) – Develop the tool as a mandatory requirement on projects so as to embed climate and nature considerations in council decision making.</p>	<p>Members have been briefed on the SIAT and top up training has been delivered to the Project Management team.</p>	01/02/2023	01/04/2024	On Target	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
	<p>Solar PV project for tenanted buildings - A Publica-wide long-term project to install rooftop solar panels on council owned buildings, increasing the amount of renewable energy generated in the District.</p>	<p>PV installation to Elmfield progressing well and nearly complete. PV investment to wider estate still being reviewed to ensure investment is viable.</p>	01/08/2022	01/12/2023	On Target	Andrew Prosser	Andrew Turner/Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon / Andrew Turner

4.2	<p>The Council will be a community leader in responding to the challenges of climate change, including rapidly reducing greenhouse gas emissions and preparing the District and its communities for the impacts of climate change to ensure a fair transition for all to a future that will be defined by climate change.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Biodiversity Action Plan – Develop and deliver workstreams to restore nature and enhanced biodiversity in the District.</p>	<p>Nature recovery officers are prioritising the delivery of particular workstreams.</p>	01/03/2023	01/03/2024	On Target	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
4.3			<p>Consider how proactive should WODC be in facilitating retrofit for the 'able to pay' market.</p>	<p>Scoping a countrywide retrofit strategy and will use learnings from LARA. CAPZero SLA has funded some whole building plans and the project team continues to engage with residents to accelerate retrofit. The DM team has recently secured 100k of Government funding which in part will be used to create a guide to the retrofit of existing/historic buildings.</p>			Ongoing	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
		<p>Work with partner organisations and residents to facilitate the retrofit of carbon reduction measures in homes and businesses and pursue a drive to net zero carbon buildings in new developments through planning policy</p>	<p>Greenlight – nature and online hub to facilitate community action for a greener future.</p>	<p>Greenlight has been updated and a review is underway of improving outreach.</p>			Ongoing	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
			<p>Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) project for tenanted buildings - A Publica-wide review of tenanted buildings to determine what measures are needed to bring the EPC rating up to a B or above by 2030.</p>	<p>MEES requirements not yet confirmed by Government.</p>	01/07/2023		On Target	Andrew Prosser	Jasmine McWilliams	Jasmine McWilliams / Andrew Turner
			<p>Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 (HUG2) - A countywide scheme to upgrade energy efficiency and low carbon heating for low-income householders in the worst performing off-gas grid homes.</p>	<p>A total of 15 homes in West Oxfordshire have received HUG 2 funding during Year 1 of the scheme. Year 2 has begun with an application deadline of the end of October.</p>	01/06/2023	01/03/2025	On Target	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
4.4		<p>Encourage renewable energy generation at appropriate sites in the District, improving local energy and economic resilience and supporting the community benefits that this resilience will bring.</p>	<p>Explore opportunities with partners to encourage renewable energy within the District.</p>	<p>LAEP tender deadline closed and currently evaluating bid submissions. Discussions with Low Carbon Hub on increasing rooftop solar.</p>			Ongoing	Andrew Prosser	Giles Hughes / Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
4.5		<p>Work with Oxfordshire County Council to deliver on our joint commitment to active travel and public transport, including through improved walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure and better public transport services.</p>	<p>Install EV charging points across the District.</p>	<p>Tender pack with a shortlist of sites will be issued shortly for review.</p>	26/05/2023	01/01/2025	Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon

Working Together for West Oxfordshire

The Council recognises that to deliver on our aspirations and the priorities in this Council Plan for West Oxfordshire, working collaboratively with others will be essential

5.1	Target available Council grant budgets to proposals by other organisations that will deliver on Council priorities.	Enable delivery of agreed project interventions on Government approved Investment Plan under UKSPF and REPF.	Projects are comintuning to be delivered including employment support for those furtherest from the market with OxLep, Aspire, Sofea and Farmability. New Climate Action Fund being launched to support SME's on Carbon Action journey.			On Target	Duncan Enright	Sam Stronach	Sam Stronach
		Successful implementation of new Grant Scheme: a) Crowdfunding, b) Community and Voluntary Sector Service Level Agreements and c) Youth initiatives.	a) Round 3 of Westhive underway with Creator workshop on 22nd July. Round 2 projects successfully pledging to WODC and UKSPF have been confirmed. b) Legal agreements for all SLA grant recipients are signed. Work has begun. Kick off meeting with all organisations was held on 11th July. c) Work with youth people is included in some SLA proposals. No specific projects led by Young people have come forward through Westhive. We anticipate that projects led by young people will require some support to come forward and this will be part of the Youth Dev officer's remit.	01/12/2022	31/05/2025	On Target	Alaric Smith with Rachel Crouch, Andrew Prosser and Lidia Arciszewsk	Heather McCulloch	Heather McCulloch
5.2	Work with existing businesses and new start-ups to access support available to enable their success.								
	Support Town and Parish Councils to represent their communities energetically and take action on issues important to their locality.	Towns and Parish Biodiversity project– UKSPF funded project to provide case studies for communities on how to enhance biodiversity in different habitats.	Continuing to work with Wild Oxfordshire to promoting case studies that highlight best practice for nature recovery.	01/12/2022	31/05/2025	Complete	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon	Hannah Kenyon
5.4	Support the Voluntary and Community Sector to continue to undertake activity which serves the needs of residents including established organisations and more informal groups working to address particular needs such as access to food, youth support and cultural provision.	Community Grants	No expenditure on VCS as part of Food Action Plan to date. OCC Public health Community Insight funding (ward profile) will provide £25k of funding for VCS groups in the Witney area. Of the £120 of COMF funding towards MH support, £60k has been allocated to the SLA grant recipients and £60 has been awarded to 2 VCS organisations to work in West Oxfordshire over the next 2 years. A bid to OCC Public Health for £90k over 3 years has been approved and will provide funds to 2-4 community based Health and Nature Recovery recovery projects in communities. £10k of COMF funding has been allocated to 2 West Ox groups to deliver mental health support to parents based on findings of the Youth Needs Assessment. Household Support funding of £33k has been distributed to voluntary sector partners.	01/12/2022	31/05/2025	On Target	Rachel Crouch	Heather McCulloch	Heather McCulloch
5.5	Make a dedicated effort to further understand and meet the needs of our young people and support their mental health, including children, teenagers and young adults leaving school, entering the world of work and/or seeking to	Focussed programme of engagement with young people, and other groups, on mental and physical health, local facilities and spaces for young people, to ensure future leisure, sport, culture and arts provision in the District best provides for these.	The Youth Development officer came into post on 23rd September 2024. As part of their role they will support and upskill colleagues internally in conducting more effective engagement with young people so that it is embedded. The YDO will also consider how the YNA might be updated in the future.			Ongoing	Rachel Crouch, Tim Sumner	Heather McCulloch	Heather McCulloch

<p>entering the world of work and/or seeking to set up home in the District.</p>	<p>Have Your Say Events – focussed topic event for young people.</p>	<p>Engagement with young people will be considered by the Youth development officer and its too early to confirm what shape this will take at this time.</p>			<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Rachel Crouch</p>	<p>Heather McCulloch</p>	<p>Heather McCulloch</p>
<p>Look to invest in the building of homes that meet the diverse housing needs of our residents at all stages of their lives, including for those seeking to downsize or affordable social housing.</p>								

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WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Delivering great services locally

PERFORMANCE REPORT:
July 2024 - September 2024

Summary Index

Area	KPI Name	RAG	Page
Revenues, Benefits and Housing	Percentage of Council Tax Collected	Green	6
	Percentage of Non Domestic Rates collected	Green	7
	Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims	Green	8
	Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events	Green	9
	Processing times for Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances	Orange	10
	Percentage of Housing Benefit overpayment due to LA error/admin delay	Green	11
	(Snapshot) Long Term Empty Properties	Grey	12
	(Snapshot) Number of households in B&B/hotel-type accommodation & Hostels (LA owned or managed); and Number of successful 'Move On' into suitable independent/long-term accommodation from B&Bs/hotels/hostels	Grey	13
Customer Experience	Customer Satisfaction - Telephone	Green	14
	Customer Satisfaction - Email	Grey	15
	Customer Satisfaction - Face to Face	Green	16

Summary Index

Area	KPI Name	RAG	Page
Customer Experience	Customer Call Handling - Average Waiting Time		17
	Complaints		18
	Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days		20
Development Management and Land Charges	Building Control Satisfaction		21
	Percentage of major planning applications determined within agreed timescales (including AEOT)		22
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	Percentage of other planning applications determined within agreed timescales (including AEOT)		24
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	Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed		26
	Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days		27
	Number of affordable homes delivered		28

Summary Index

Area	KPI Name	RAG	Page
Waste and Environment	Number of fly tips collected and percentage that result in an enforcement action		29
	Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales		30
	Percentage of high risk notifications risk assessed within 1 working day		31
	Percentage of household waste recycled		32
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Leisure	Number of visits to the leisure centres & (Snapshot) Number of gym memberships		35

A note on performance benchmarking

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

When we embark on performance benchmarking, it is important to understand that we are often looking at one aspect of performance i.e. the level of performance achieved. It does not take into account how services are resourced or compare in terms of quality or level of service delivered, for example, how satisfied are residents and customers? Furthermore, each council is unique with its own vision, aim and priorities, and services operate within this context.

Benchmarking has been included wherever possible ranking against Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Nearest Neighbours model which uses a range of demographic and socio-economic indicators to identify the local authorities most similar to your own. The Councils identified Nearest Neighbours are Bromsgrove, East Cambridgeshire, East Hampshire, Harborough, Hinckley and Bosworth, Horsham, Lichfield, Mid Sussex, Rushcliffe, South Oxfordshire, Stafford, Stratford-upon-Avon, Stroud, Test Valley, Tewkesbury. Additional investigations are underway to provide it for those metrics that are missing comparisons.

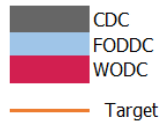
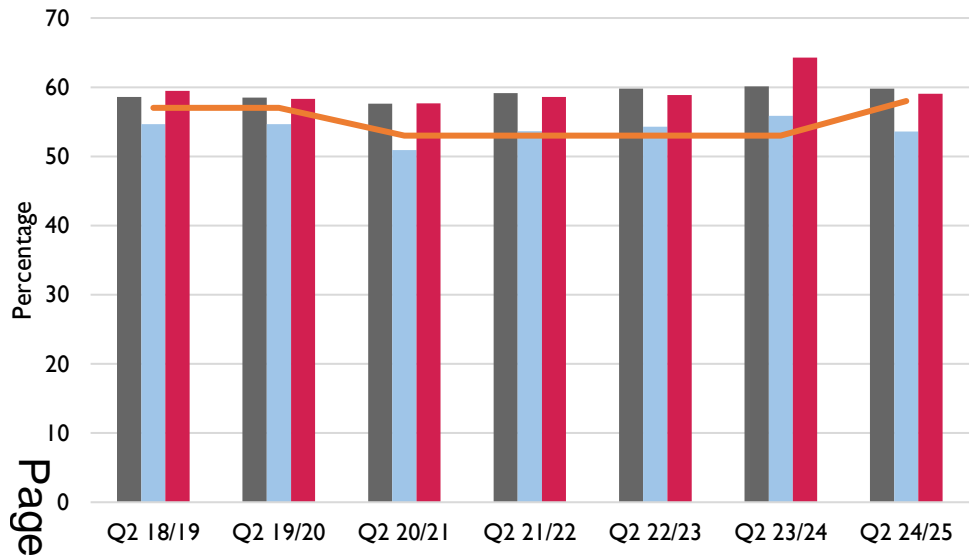
A RAG (red, amber, green) status has been applied to each KPI to provide a quick visual summary of the status of that KPI for the quarter. Additionally, RAG status has been added to the direction of travel for each metric to show how the performance against last quarter and the same quarter compared to last year is progressing.

Overall Performance


Overall, the Council's performance for the quarter has been largely positive, with notable progress in Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days and the percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed. Planning Determination Times, Gym Memberships, and Land Charges Response Times remain high. Additionally, Customer Satisfaction continues to be strong, with the Council topping the Gov Metric league table in July and August. However, the Number of Affordable Homes delivered and Income Achieved in Planning are showing negative trends.

The Council remains committed to further improving its performance and service delivery and actively investing in the development and implementation of automation and self-serve options for customers. By providing accessible and efficient self-help tools, customers can address their queries and concerns independently, leading to a decrease in the need for repeated interactions with services. It will continue to monitor and assess the impact of improvement programs in reducing customer contact and enhancing operational efficiency.

Percentage of Council Tax Collected



Direction of Travel

Against last Year
Year 
Declined since last year.

2024-25 Q2 – Higher is Good

Target	58%
Actual	59.05%

2023-24 Collection Rate

Target	99%
Actual	98.29%

How do we compare?

Benchmarking via Gov.uk Tables and Individual Council Websites using CIPFA Nearest Neighbours - Current Dataset is up to March '24 (Q4 23-24)

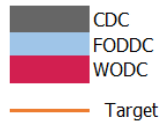
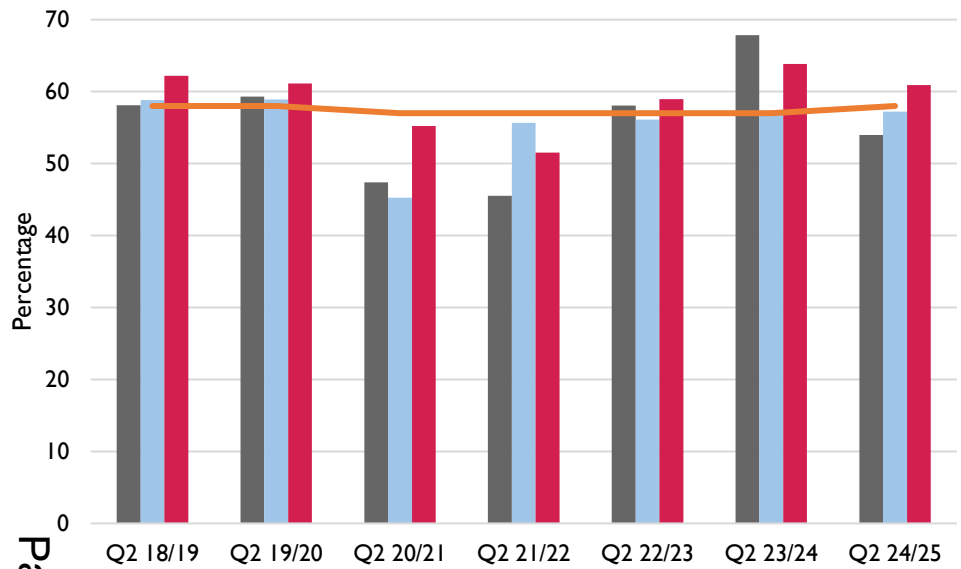
Q4 23-24 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	97.81	12/16	Third
Rushcliffe	99.02	1/16	Top
Horsham	98.36	3/16	Top
South Oxfordshire	97.94	6/16	Second
Stroud	97.66	14/16	Bottom
Hinckley and Bosworth	97.52	16/16	Bottom

An audit of Council Tax Services found a significant accumulation of arrears during the pandemic. Despite the temporary suspension of recovery efforts, they have resumed, bringing the cycle up to date and reporting progress on the previous year's debt collection. The table below shows the percentage of aged debt collected and the total outstanding:


2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	Total Outstanding
15.57%	18.79%	18.75%	29.10%	£5,279,794

By March 2024, authorities in England had collected £38.5 billion in council tax for 2023-24, along with an additional £907 million in aged debt, achieving an average in-year collection rate of 95.9%, marking a 0.1 percentage point decrease from 2022-23 (source: gov.uk). By the end of Q2, the Council observed a decrease in the amount collected compared to the same period last year. In previous years, the Q2 collection rates included Direct Debits due on 1st October, resulting in higher percentages. This year, those payments were not included, leading to a decrease in the collection percentage by approximately 5.2%. Despite this, the collection rates have surpassed pre-pandemic levels for the same period. The service recently conducted an intensive review, leading to the implementation of dashboards that have streamlined operations and improved efficiency. This project is ongoing, with the current focus on further enhancing the service through collaboration with Customer Service to identify additional areas for improvement.

Percentage of Non-domestic rates collected



Direction of Travel

Against last Year

 Declined since last year.

2024-25 Q2 – Higher is Good

Target	58%
Actual	60.92%

2023-24 Collection Rate

Target	99%
Actual	97.99%

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How do we compare?

Benchmarking via Gov.uk Tables and Individual Council Websites using CIPFA Nearest Neighbours - Current Dataset is up to March '24 (Q4 23-24)

Q4 23-24 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	97.89	6/16	Second
Lichfield	99.53	1/16	Top
Rushcliffe	98.74	3/16	Top
East Hampshire	97.32	9/16	Third
Stratford-on-Avon	96.44	14/16	Bottom
South Oxfordshire	93.92	16/16	Bottom

The current recovery cycle is up to date with the service reporting progress in collecting previous year's debt. The below table shows the percentage of aged debt that has been collected and the total outstanding:

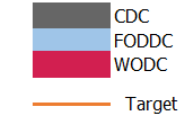
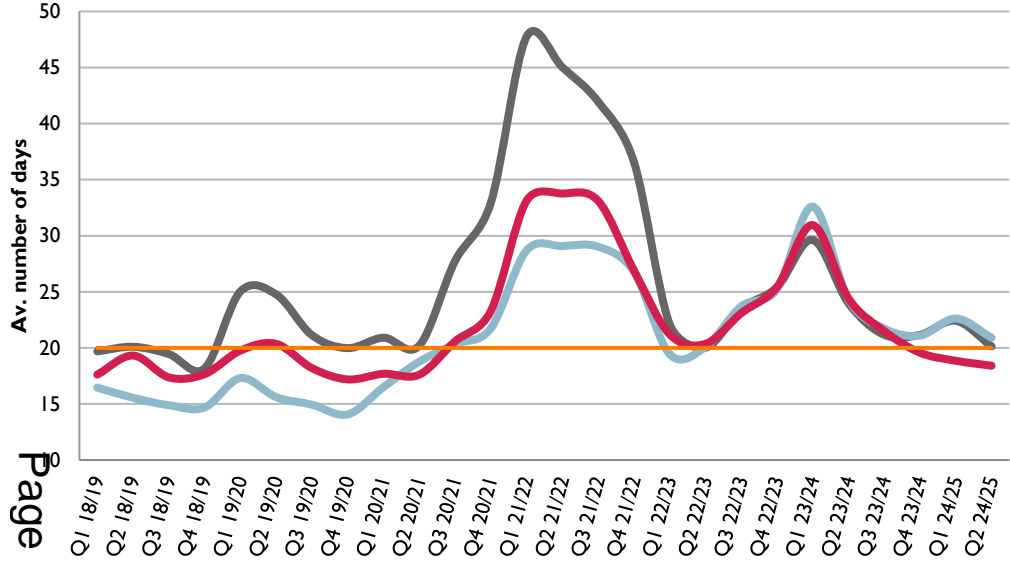
2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	Total Outstanding
14.10%	31.17%	18.41%	27.84%	£1,538,914

The arrears outstanding for previous year's debts for Business Rates include some data where the amount outstanding now is greater than that brought forward at the beginning of the financial year. There are some processes that can increase the amount that needs to be collected, such as Rateable Value changes and amendments to liability. As Business Rates deal with large amounts of money, the outcome can outweigh the amount that has been collected.


During Q2, the Council noted a decrease in collections compared to the same period last year. Like Council Tax, the exclusion of 1st October Direct Debits contributed to the decline in collection rates, which are about 1.3% below pre-pandemic levels. Despite this, all in-year recovery processes are currently up to date.


Note: The quarterly targets have been changed to more accurately reflect whether the Council is on track.

Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Improved since last quarter and last year

Q2 – Lower is Good

Target	20
Actual	18.41

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How do we compare?

Gov.uk produces tables to show a snapshot of the number of CTS claimants at the end of each financial year. The below table shows number of claimants at the end of March 2024 and the percentage change from March 2023 for each authority, plus the data for all authorities in England

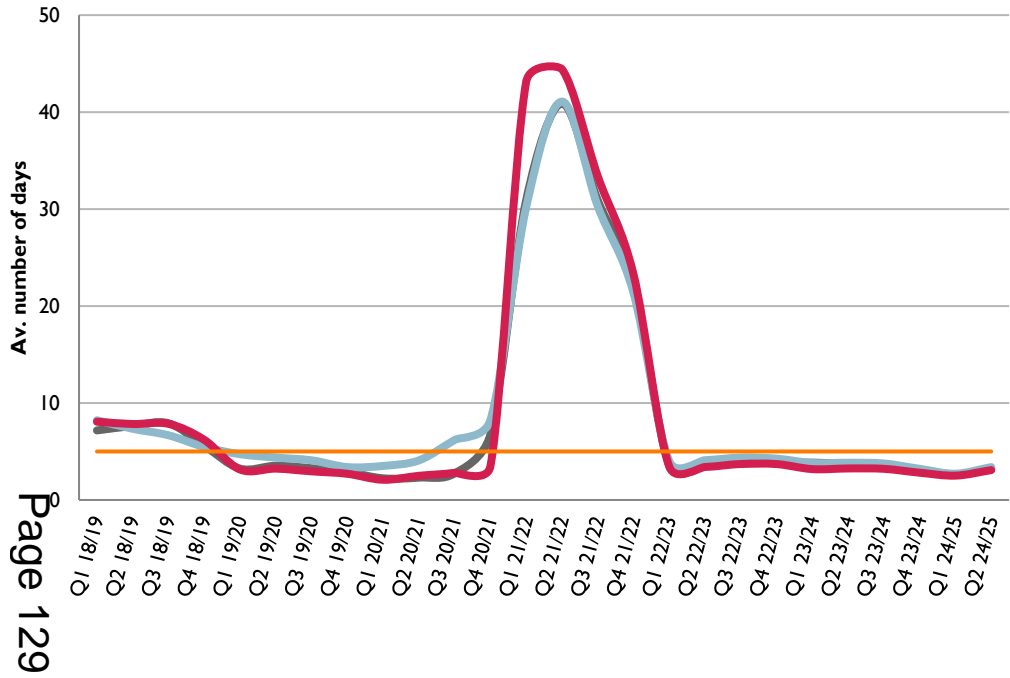
	Number of Claimants at end of March 2024	Percentage Change since March 2023	CIPFA Nearest Neighbours Rank (Higher = less claimants)
West Oxfordshire	4,363	0.88	4/16
Harborough	2,955	1.65	1/16
South Oxfordshire	4,966	0.32	10/16
Stafford	6,783	5.11	16/16

During Q2, the cumulative average processing time for new Council Tax Support (CTS) claims was 18.41 days, well within the 20-day target and a decrease of 6 days compared to the same period last year.

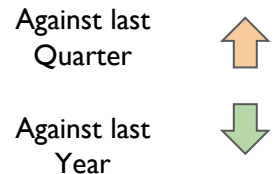
In September, system errors related to automation caused a backlog, resulting in longer processing times for new claims. The Council is actively working with partners to resolve these issues and ensure timely support for residents.

A consultation on proposed changes to the Council Tax Support (CTS) scheme is planned for the upcoming quarter.

Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events



Direction of Travel



Increased since last quarter but improved since last year

Q2 – Lower is Good

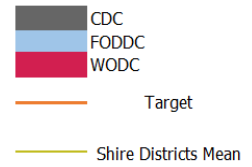
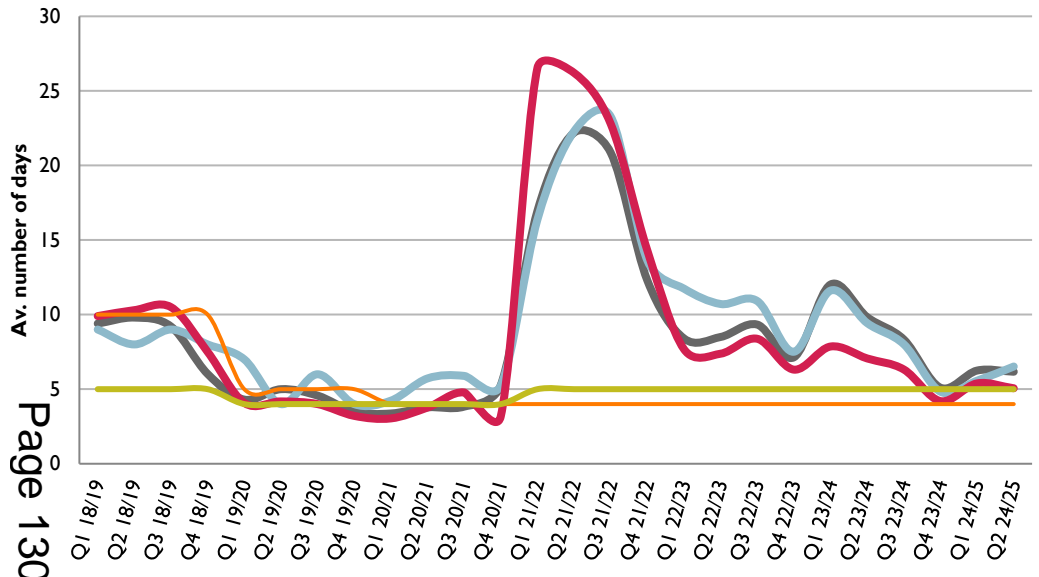
Target	5
Actual	3.08

How do we compare?


Benchmarking currently not available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options.


The processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events continue to comfortably meet the 5-day target. However, there has been a slight increase in processing times compared to last quarter, attributed to system errors in the automation process that occurred in September.

Processing times for Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Increased since last quarter but improved since last year

Q2 – Lower is Good

Target	4
Actual	5.06

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How do we compare?

Gov.uk produces tables showing statistics on the average number of days to process a change in circumstance of an existing Housing Benefit claim. Latest Release – April – June 2024 (Q1 24-25)

Q1 24-25 Benchmark	Days	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	5.31	6/16	Second
Rushcliffe	2.44	1/16	Top
East Hampshire	4.84	4/16	Top
South Oxfordshire	7.83	9/16	Third
Harborough	10.03	13/16	Bottom
Stafford	16.79	16/16	Bottom

Please see [Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims.](#)

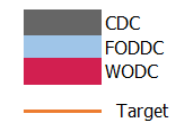
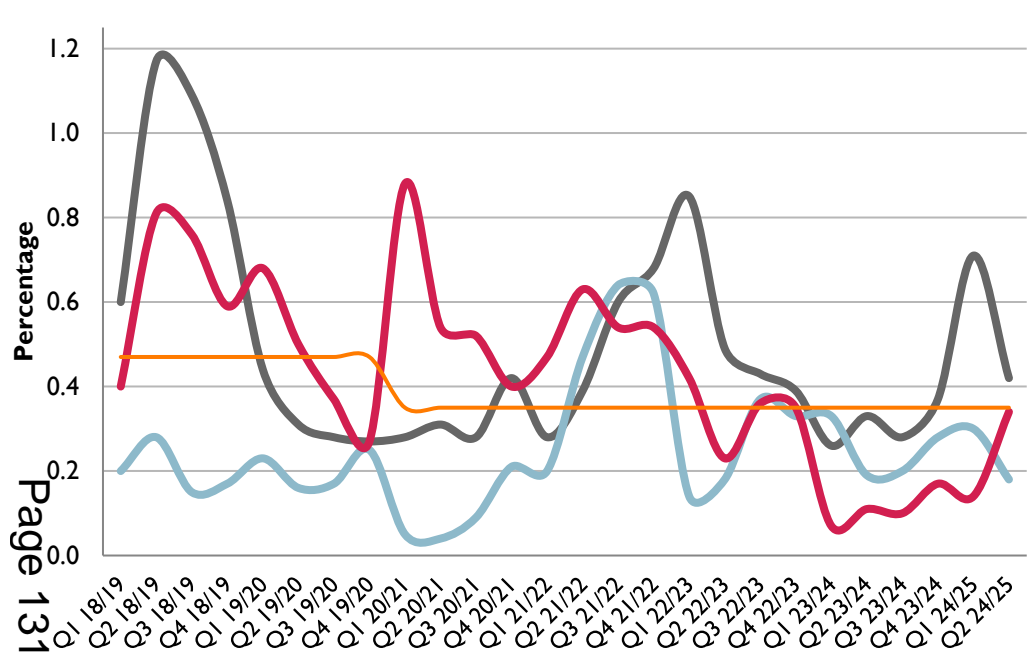
During Q2, processing times for Housing Benefit (HB) changes continued to decrease. Although the Council is currently above the target, there has been an improvement compared to the same period last year, with processing times reducing by approximately 2 days.

It should be noted that the number of expected changes affecting Housing Benefit (HB) is reducing significantly, as can be seen by comparing the number of HB changes assessed to the number of Council Tax Support (CTS) changes assessed. The decrease in HB changes received amplifies the impact of delays in assessing an application due to outstanding evidence required for average processing days.


HB Changes – 941
CTS Changes – 3,743


The managed migration of HB to Universal Credit commenced in April, with some minor glitches reported in the system. While the migration was planned in stages, some phases have been accelerated, which may further decrease the number of changes received but could potentially increase processing times.

Percentage of Housing Benefit overpayment due to LA error/admin delay



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Increased since last quarter and last year

Q2 – Lower is Good

Target	0.35%
Actual	0.34%

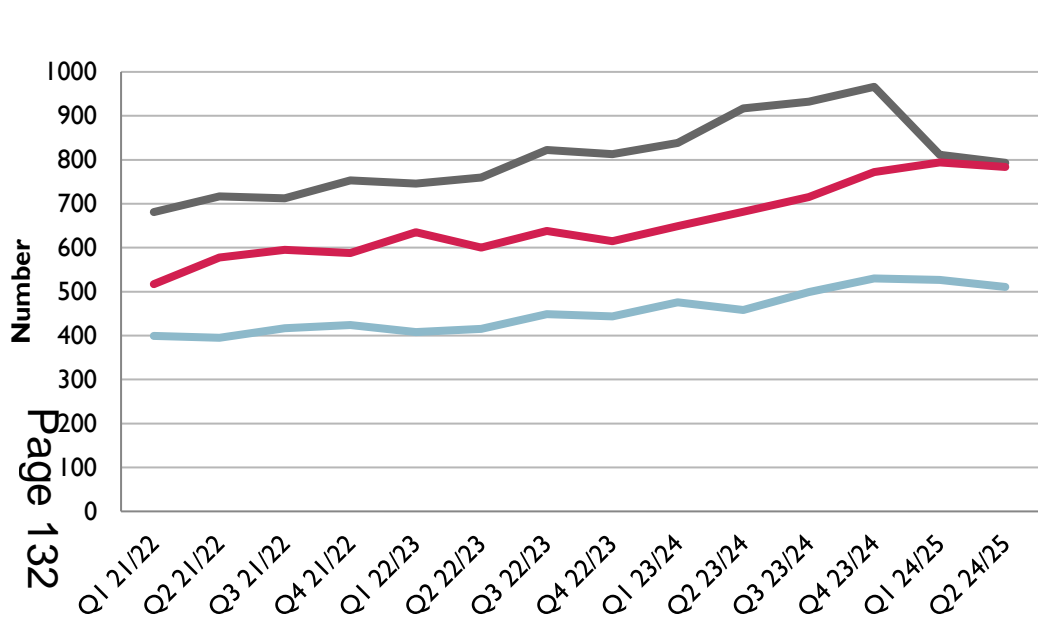
How do we compare?

Benchmarking currently not available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options.


There was an increase in the percentage of overpayments at the Council compared to last quarter, attributed to software issues that caused a backlog and resulted in administrative delays in payments.


Measures are in place to ensure that HB overpayments due to local authority errors are reduced as much as possible. Around 20% of the HB caseload is checked by Quality Assurance officers, who target areas with high error rates, such as calculation of earnings. In addition to this work, the service is signed up to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Housing Benefit Award Accuracy (HBAA) initiative to tackle fraud and error.

(Snapshot) Long Term Empty Properties



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Increased since last quarter and last year

Q2 – Lower is Good

No Target

784

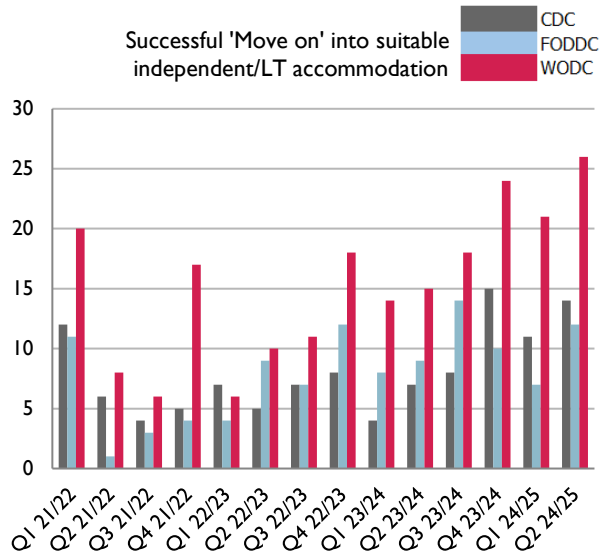
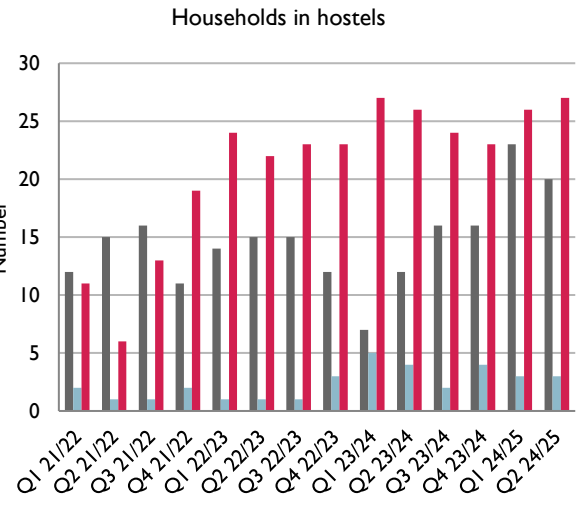
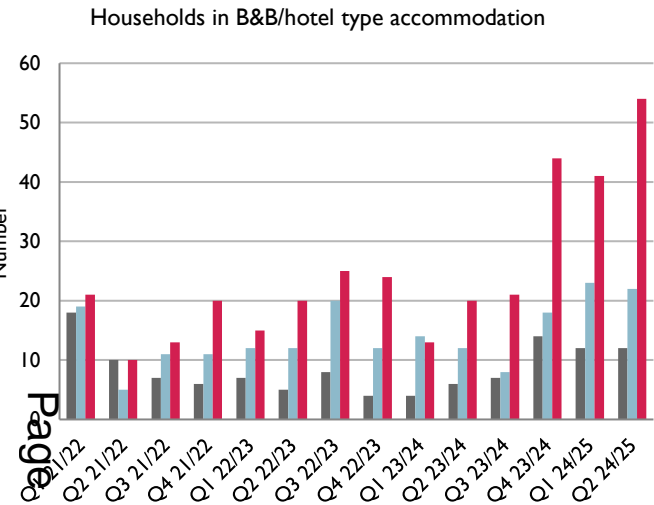
How do we compare?

Benchmarking currently not available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options.

Properties continue to be added and removed from the list, and while the graph indicates an upward trend in properties over the past few years, the Council has observed a decrease in long-term empty properties on their lists during the past quarter.

The service reports that properties remain on the long-term empty (LTE) list for extended periods. To address this, a range of initiatives is being implemented to understand the reasons properties are entering the list, which will facilitate better management and reduction of these cases. Additionally, efforts are being made to ensure that data is up to date, allowing for the correct levy to be applied and charged for these properties. Furthermore, the service has appointed a dedicated, experienced Long Term Empties Officer to proactively accelerate the reintegration of these properties into the housing stock.

(Snapshot) Number of households in B&B/hotel-type accommodation & Hostels (LA owned or managed); and Number of successful 'Move On' into suitable independent/long-term accommodation from B&Bs/hotels/hostels



Page 133

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter	B&B/Hotels	↑
Against last Year	B&B/Hotels	↑
Against last Quarter	Hostels	↓
Against last Year	Hostels	→
Against last Quarter	Move Ons	↑
Against last Year	Move Ons	↑

Homelessness remains a significant issue for the Council, with a noticeable increase in homelessness presentations, particularly from families needing emergency accommodation after being granted asylum and receiving notice to vacate the Home Office hotel in the district.

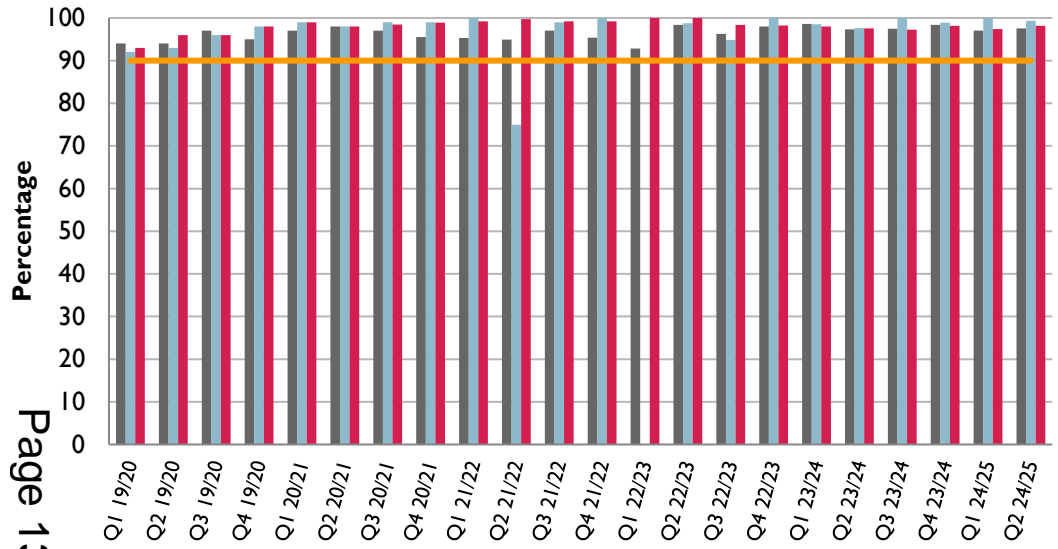
The situation is complicated by several factors: hostels are at full capacity, there is reduced availability in adult homelessness pathways, and there is a shortage of affordable housing options outside the social rented sector.

The team remains dedicated to preventing homelessness and has successfully averted homelessness for 93 households over Q1 and Q2. This includes 52 cases within the statutory 56-day period and 41 cases addressed before statutory duties were triggered. It's important to note that these figures are approximations and have not yet been officially confirmed through the government reporting system.


How do we compare?


No benchmarking currently available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options.

Customer Satisfaction - Telephone



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Improved since last quarter and last year

Q2 – Higher is Good

Target	90%
Actual	98.16%

Page 134

How do we compare?

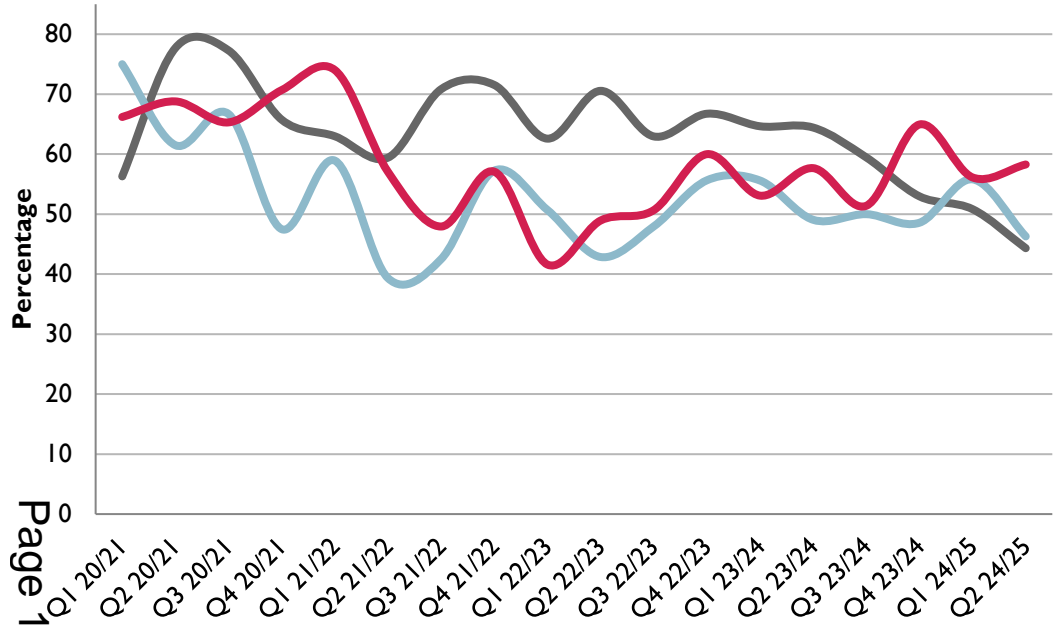
The Govmetric Channel Satisfaction Index is a monthly publication of the top performing councils across the core customer access channels. At least 100 customers need to be transferred to the survey to be included in the league table so even if satisfaction is high, it may not be included i.e. Forest in the below table. This is a national comparator.

Services provided via the telephone consistently yield high satisfaction with the Council topping the GovMetric Satisfaction Index for July and August.


	July Rank	July Net Sat.	Aug Rank	Aug Net Sat.	Sept Rank	Sept Net Sat.
Cotswold	4	94%	2	97%	TBC	TBC
Forest	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	TBC	TBC
West Oxfordshire	1	96%	1	99%	TBC	TBC


The Council continues to achieve top-tier performance levels when a sufficient number of surveys are included in the Satisfaction Index. Although this is a very small proportion of our calls, the numbers are comparable to those of other District Councils, hence the 'league tables' being a useful comparator.

Customer Satisfaction - Email



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Improved since last quarter and last year

Q2 - Higher is Good

No Target

58.28%

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How do we compare?

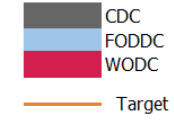
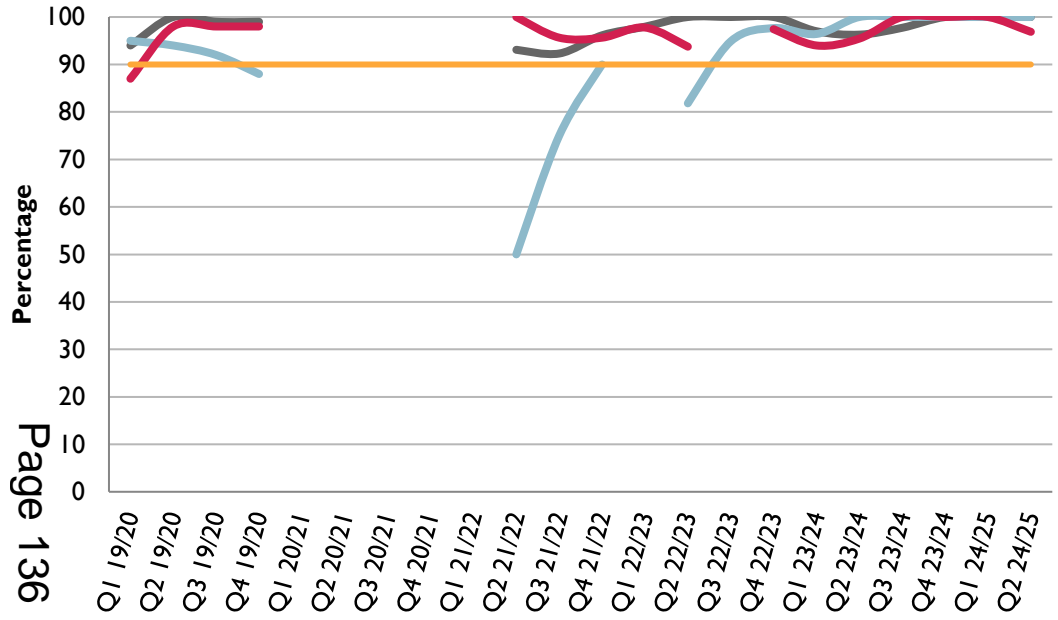
Benchmarking currently not available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options.

441 residents responded to the survey, of which 257 were satisfied. This equates to a rate of 58.28% satisfaction for the quarter, up from 56.12% during Q1.


All outbound emails sent by customer services from Salesforce contain a link to the survey.


A piece of work was undertaken to review the responses from the email surveys due to the more negative responses. Upon review, it appears to be dissatisfaction surrounding service failures such as missed bins, container deliveries, responses from Planning or Housing etc. System and process improvements by the individual services are being implemented, which may affect these figures in the future.

Customer Satisfaction - Face to Face



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Same as last quarter but improved since last year

Q2 – Higher is Good

Target	90%
Actual	96.88%

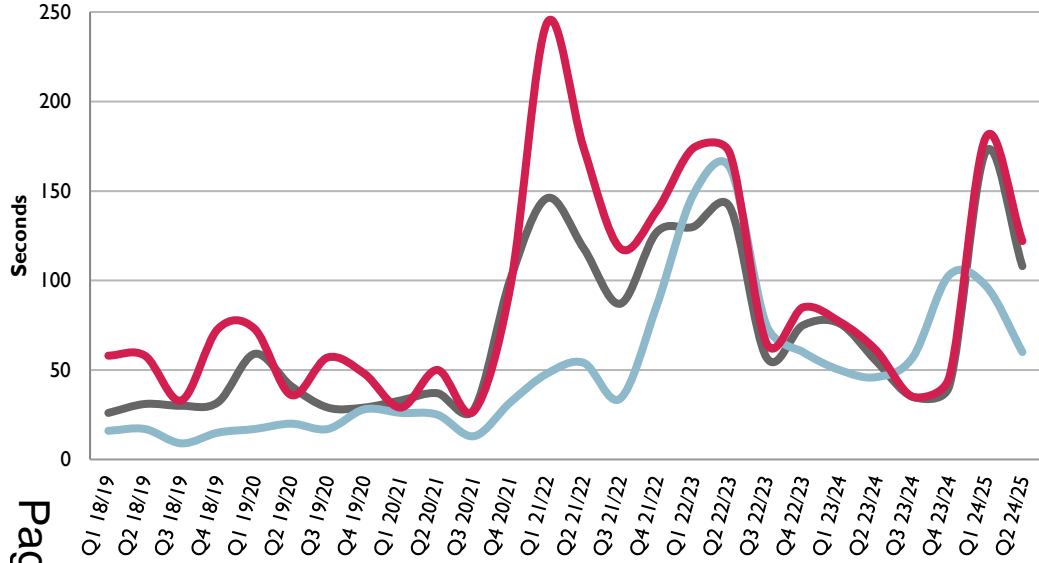
Page 136

How do we compare?



Benchmarking currently not available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options.

Customer Satisfaction from face to face interactions continues to be high, with a 100% satisfaction rate for the quarter, with 31 of 32 individuals surveyed satisfied with the service.

Customer Call Handling - Average Waiting Time



Direction of Travel

- Against last Quarter 
- Against last Year 
- Decreased since last quarter but increased since last year

Lower is Good

No Target
122 Seconds

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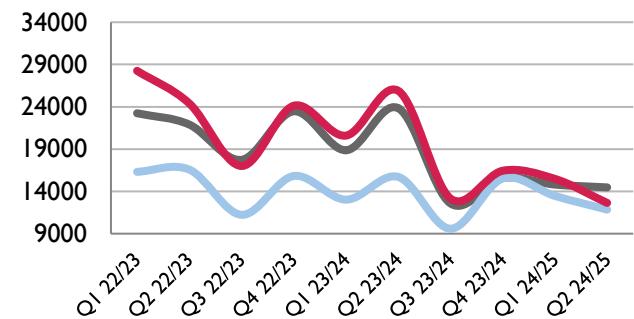
How do we compare?

SPARSE are investigating pulling together Customer Services benchmarking data and if there is sufficient demand and suitably similar metrics to provide comparison across similarly rural local authorities we will work with them to assess any crossover in metrics and potential presentation.

Average wait times at the Council reduced during Q2 by around a minute, though they remain about a minute higher than this time last year. The service faced several challenges during the quarter, including increased contact related to the general election and annual canvass. The team has also been impacted by the loss of experienced staff, vacancies, and staff sickness, though successful recruitment efforts have filled some positions. Despite these challenges, the team remains active in improvement projects to enhance efficiency and service delivery.

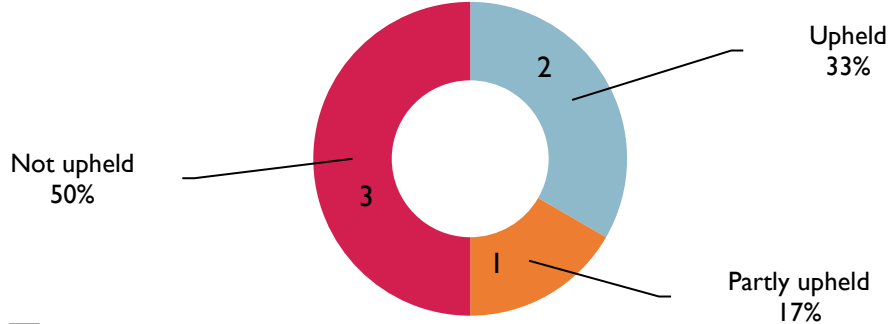
The Council saw a decrease of over 13,000 calls compared to the same period last year, as shown in the chart to the right. This decline aligns with a broader trend of reduced call volumes, a pattern likely to continue due to ongoing Channel Choice initiatives that promote customer self-service options.

Call Volume over Time




Number of complaints upheld

Complaints by Status




Direction of Travel

Complaints upheld or partly upheld at Stage 1

Against last Quarter 

No Target

Against last Year 

Declined since last quarter and last year

Page 1 of 8

How do we compare?

The table outlines the complaints received by the Ombudsman over the period, the decisions made on these cases, and the Council's compliance with any recommendations issued by the Ombudsman during this time. Complaints received by the Ombudsman reflect cases where customers, having completed the Council's complaint process (see to the right), feel that the Council has not satisfactorily resolved the matter.

During Q1, the Council experienced a decrease in complaints received from last quarter.

See the table on the following page for a breakdown of those upheld and partially upheld.

2022-23	Complaints Investigated	Percentage Upheld	Upheld decisions per 100,000 residents	Percentage Compliance with Recommendations	Percentage Satisfactory Remedy	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	1	50	0.9	N/A	100	12/16	Third
Harborough	11	0	0	N/A	N/A	1/16	Top
Mid Sussex	5	20	0.7	100	0	5/16	Second
Lichfield	2	100	1.9	100	0	16/16	Bottom

A new Customer Feedback Procedure went live on the 1st October 2021. The new process has the following stages:

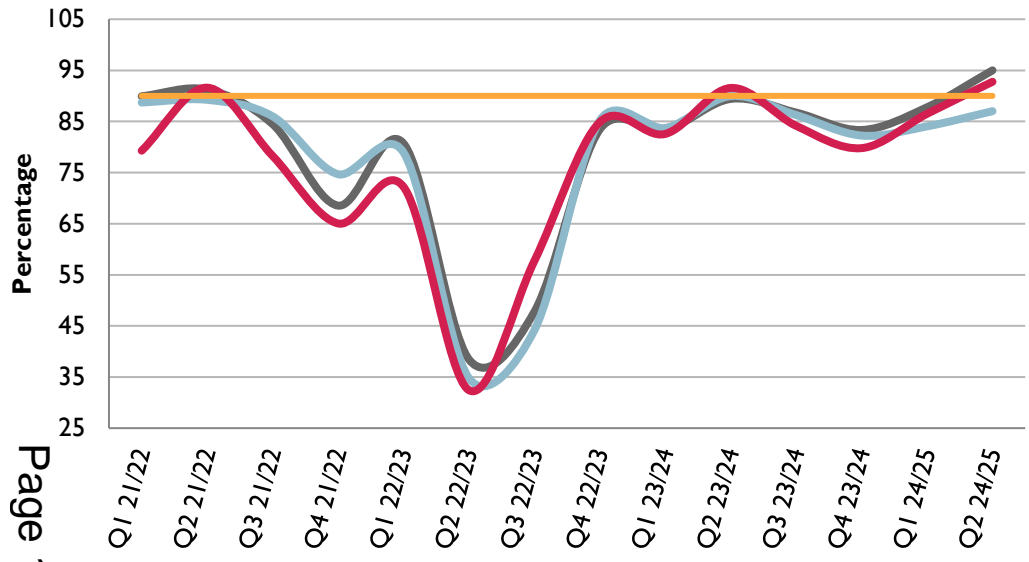
- Stage 1: Relevant service area responds to complaint within 10 working days
- Stage 2: Complaint is reviewed by Corporate Responsibility Team, response is signed off by relevant Business Manager, and sent to complainant within 10 working days
- Stage 3: Complaint is reviewed by relevant Business Manager, signed off by relevant Group Manager, and sent to complainant within 15 working days

Complaints Upheld or Partially Upheld Breakdown

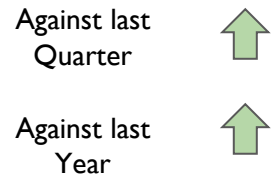
Service area	Description	Outcome/learning	Decision	Response time (days)
Revenues and Benefits	Single person discount withdrawn incorrectly due to communication issues.	Dealt with by Service	Upheld	1
Housing	Unprofessional interaction with officer.	Review of training provided to staff within the Housing Team undertaken to try and improve working practices.	Upheld	10
Housing	Lack of communication	Dealt with by Service.	Partly Upheld	6

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Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days

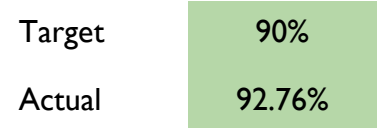


Direction of Travel



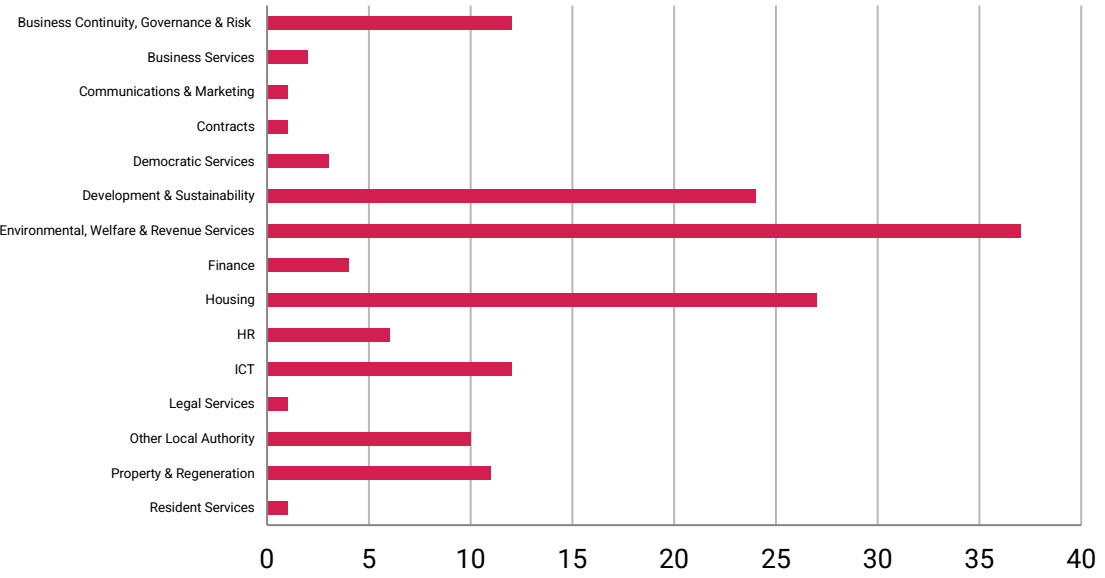
Improved since last quarter and last year

Q2 – Higher is Good

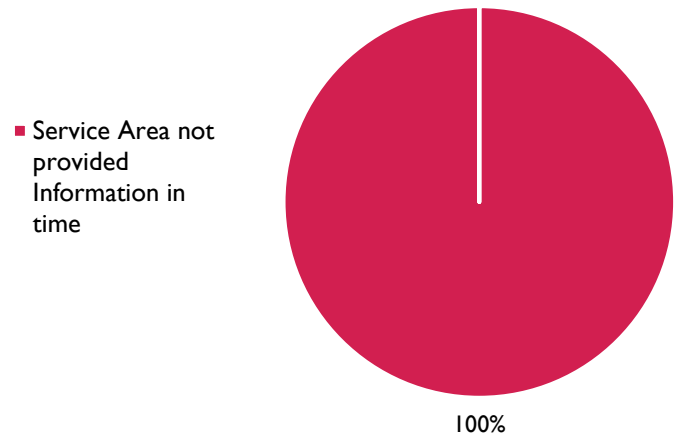


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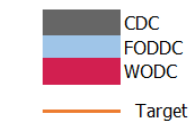
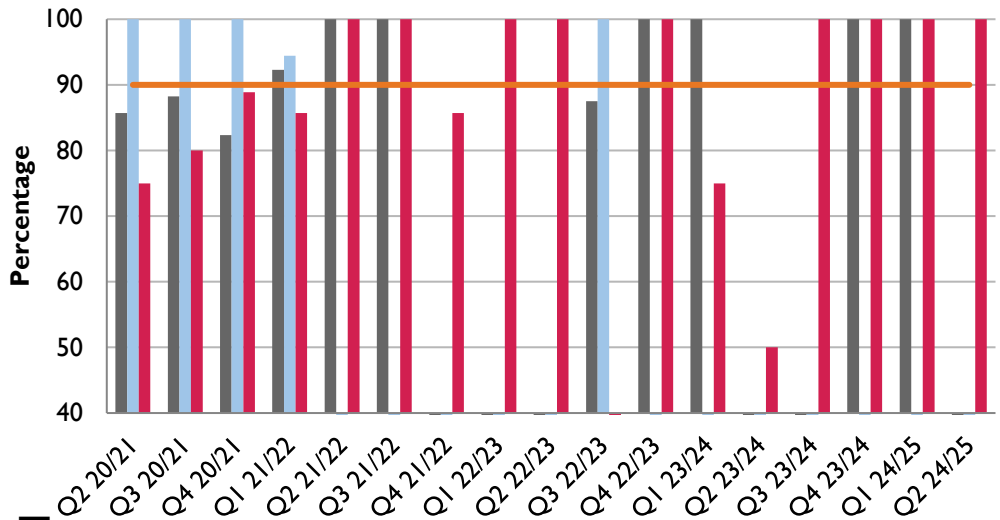
Requests by Service Area



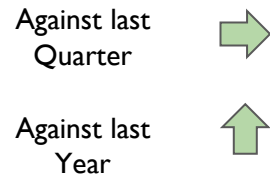
Reason FOI request was not Answered within 20 Days



Building Control Satisfaction



Direction of Travel



Same as last quarter but improved since last year

Q2 – Higher is Good

Target	90%
Actual	100%

Page 14

How do we compare?

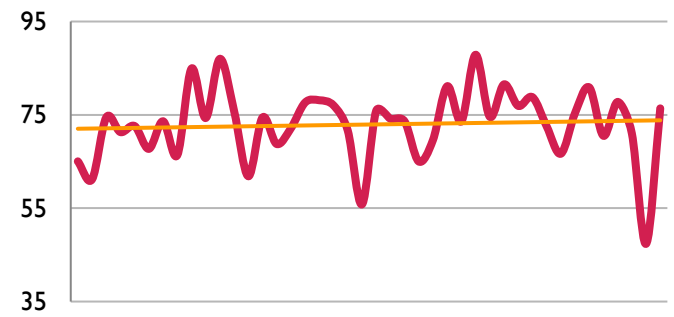
Percentage of share in the market

	July	Aug,	Sept.	Number of Apps for Quarter
Cotswold	64%	63%	56%	151
Forest	73%	49%	31%	81
West	71%	47%	76%	160

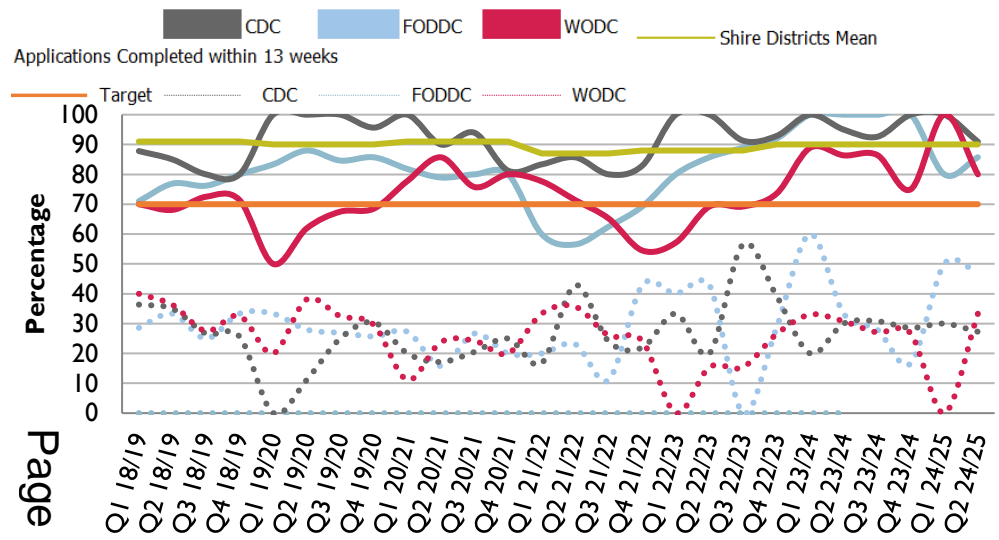
Each month, the service conducts telephone interviews with customers who have received a completion certificate during the month. The customer rates the service on helpfulness of staff, quality of technical advice and other information, responsiveness, value for money, and overall satisfaction.

The data on satisfaction surveys still faces challenges with a low number of returns, one survey were received during Q2.


The below chart shows market share over time from April 2021




Percentage of major planning applications determined within agreed timescales (including AEOT)



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Declined since last quarter and last year

Q2 – Higher is Good

Target	70%
Q2 Actual	80%
Year to Date (Cumulative)	89.89%

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How do we compare?

Major Developments - % within 13 weeks or agreed time – LG Inform

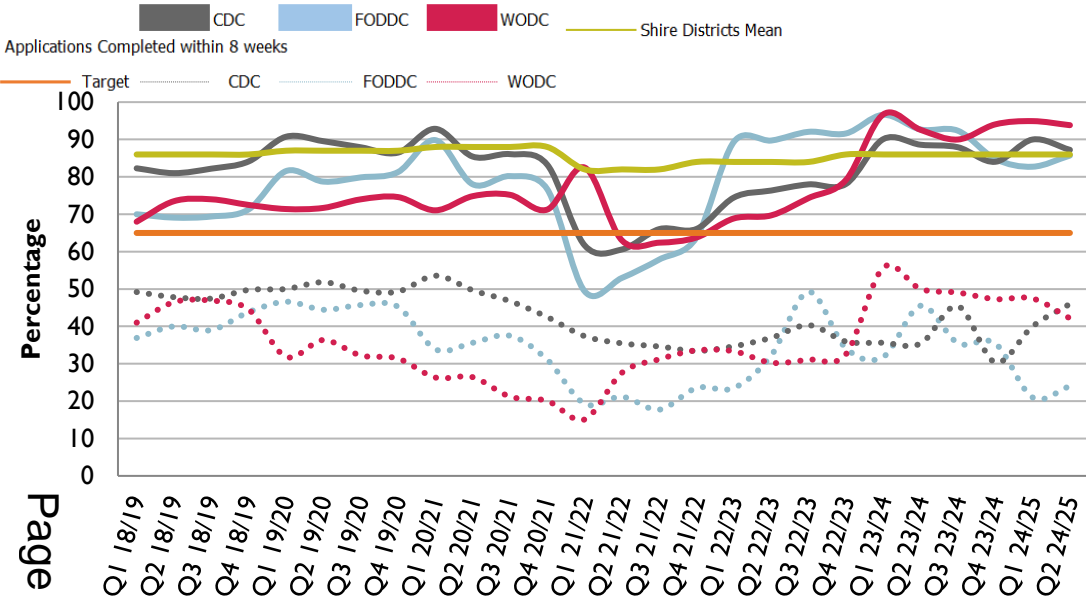
Q4 23-24 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	75	14/16	Bottom
East Cambridgeshire	100	1/16	Top
Rushcliffe	100	1/16	Top
Hinckley and Bosworth	90	10/16	Third
Test Valley	80	13/16	Bottom
Lichfield	67	16/16	Bottom

The service has maintained strong performance in processing Major applications within the agreed timeframes. However, there was a decrease of 20% compared to the previous quarter, with the in-time determinations dropping from 100% in Q1 to 80% in Q2.


During Q2, five major applications were determined.


[See slide for Minor Developments for further narrative](#)

Percentage of minor planning applications determined within agreed timescales (including AEOT)



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Slightly declined since last quarter but improved since last year

Q2 – Higher is Good

Target	65%
Q2 Actual	93.83%
Year to Date (Cumulative)	94.29%

Page 143

How do we compare?

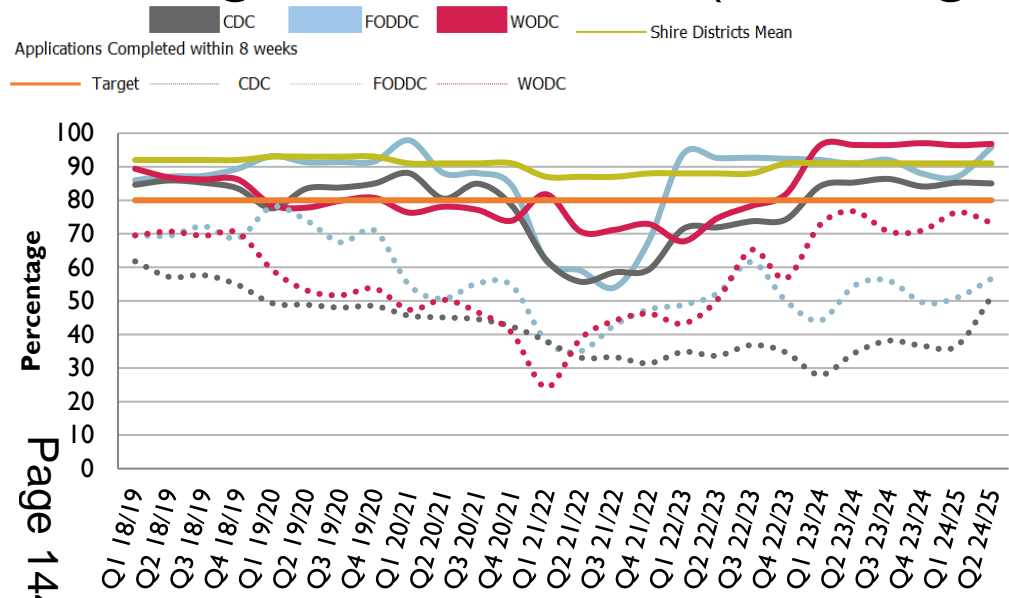
Minor Developments - % within 8 weeks or agreed time – LG Inform

Q4 23-24 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	94	2/16	Top
Mid Sussex	98	1/16	Top
Horsham	90	5/16	Second
Harborough	83	10/16	Third
Lichfield	77	13/16	Bottom
East Hampshire	62	16/16	Bottom


This quarter, the Council has continued to perform well in processing minor applications within required timeframes. However, vacancies within the Development Management team are currently impacting resources, and recruitment efforts are underway to address these gaps. 81 minor applications were determined in Q2.


The Development Management Improvement Plan, initiated following the PAS report, is progressing with a focus on streamlining enforcement. To reduce the case backlog, a "Harm Checklist" has been introduced to prioritise cases effectively. A new interactive digital form for submitting complaints is now available on the website, enabling users to upload photos, map locations, and access clearer guidance on enforcement processes and timeframes. These enhancements manage customer expectations and allow staff to concentrate on investigations. The next phase will refine case management for high-priority cases, with a tracking system being developed to improve transparency and responsiveness. The Council held a well-attended Agents' Forum this quarter, providing a valuable platform for open discussion between the Council and planning agents and promoting constructive feedback on planning processes.

Percentage of other planning applications determined within agreed timescales (including AEOT)



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Slightly improved since last quarter and last year

Q2 – Higher is Good

Target	80%
Q2 Actual	96.81%
Year to Date (Cumulative)	96.64%

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How do we compare?

Other Developments - % within 8 weeks or agreed time – LG Inform

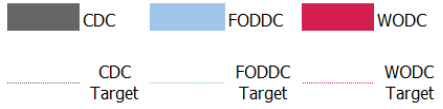
Q4 23-24 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	97	3/16	Top
Mid Sussex	99	1/16	Top
Horsham	96	5/16	Second
Stroud	90	12/16	Third
Rushcliffe	89	13/16	Bottom
Stafford	80	16/16	Bottom

Determination times for other applications have improved slightly by 0.4% since last quarter and by 0.32% compared to the same period last year.

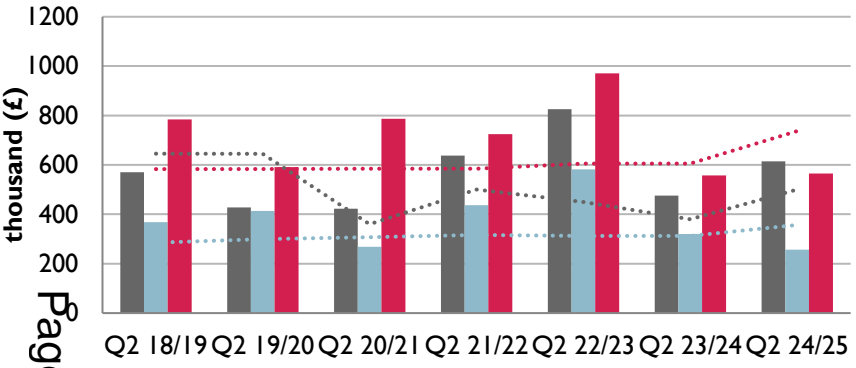
In Q2, 251 other applications were determined, with 243 applications determined within agreed timescales.

[See slide for Minor Developments for additional narrative](#)

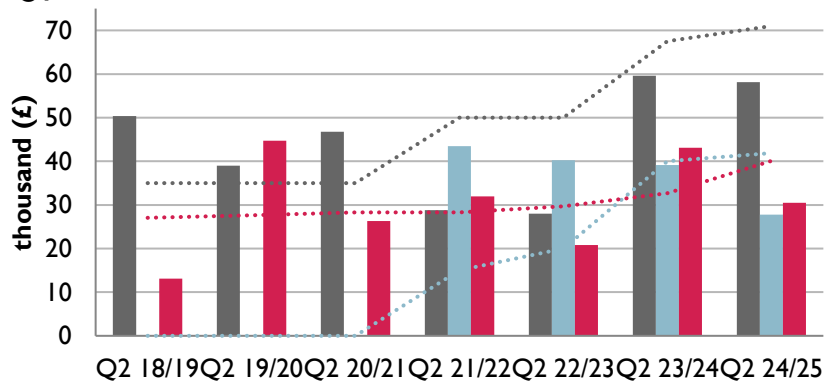
Total Income achieved in Planning & Income from Pre-application advice



Total planning income



Pre-application income



How do we compare?

Planning Advisory Service (PAS) planned to benchmark back in 2021. No data is available in the public domain.

Direction of Travel

Q2 – Higher is Good

Total Planning Income		Total Planning Income (£)
Against last Quarter	↓	Target 736,987
Against last Year	↑	Actual 565,794
Pre-Application Income		Pre-Application Income (£)
Against last Quarter	↓	Target 40,086
Against last Year	↓	Actual 30,479

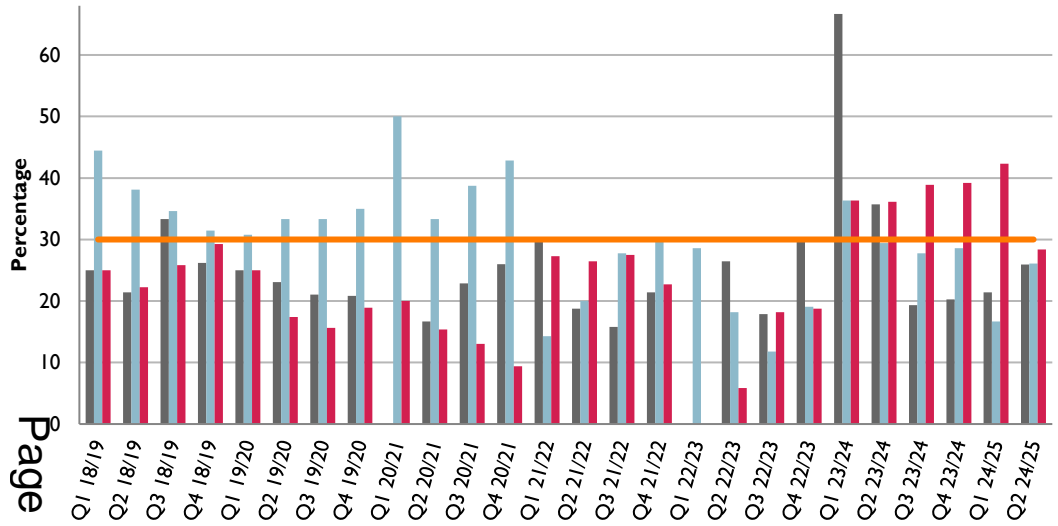
Total Income slightly decreased since last quarter but increased since last year
Pre-App Income declined since last quarter and last year

By the end of Q2, planning income for the Council fell short of its target. The shortfall is primarily due to a lower number of Major applications, which typically generate higher fees. This decline may be linked to the introduction of Biodiversity Net Gain requirements and uncertainty within the housing market. It is anticipated that the Government's autumn budget will help restore confidence in the housing sector.

Despite an increase in pre-application fees introduced in April, the Council fell short of its income target for pre-application advice.

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Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed (cumulative)



CDC
 FODDC
 WODC
 Target

Direction of Travel
 Against last Quarter ↓
 Against last Year ↓
 Improved since last year and last quarter

Q2 – Lower is Good

Target	30%
Actual	28.38%

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How do we compare?

Percentage of planning appeals allowed – LG Inform

Q4 23-24 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	33	7/16	Second
East Hampshire	0	1/16	Top
Test Valley	25	6/16	Second
Horsham	38	9/16	Third
South Oxfordshire	50	14/16	Bottom
Hinckley and Bosworth	83	16/16	Bottom

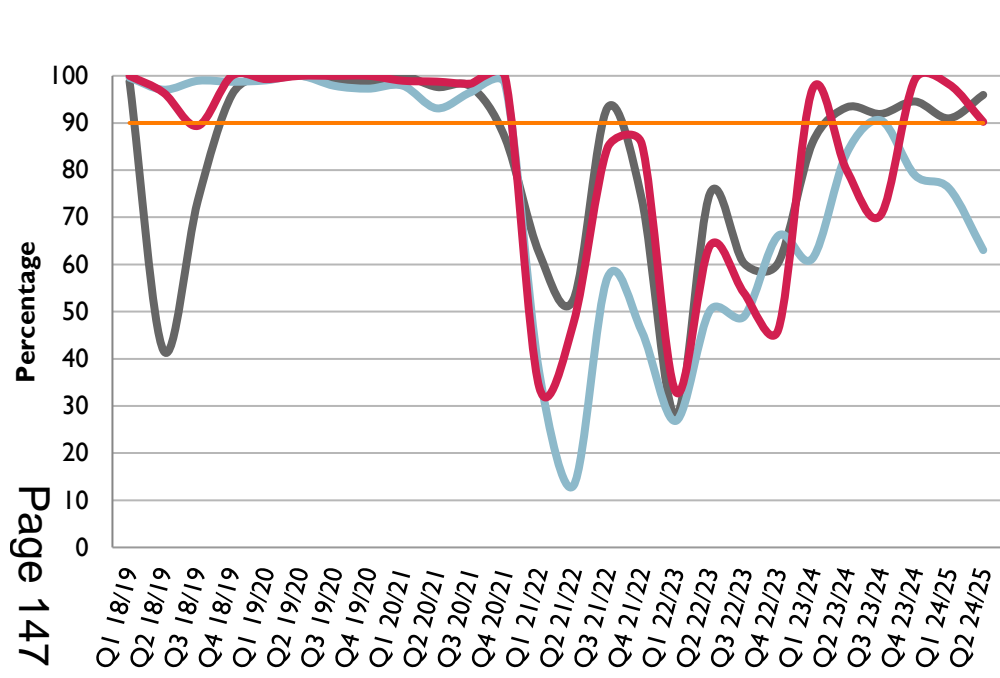
This indicator aims to ensure that no more than 30% of planning appeals are allowed in favor of the applicant, with a lower percentage being more favorable. According to the latest statistics from the Planning Inspectorate, the national average for Section 78 planning appeals granted is 28% (source: [gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)).

Between 1 July 2024 and 30 September 2024, twenty-four appeals were decided, with five allowed in favor of the applicant. Out of these, ten were Upland applications, two of which were allowed, resulting in a 20% allowance rate. The remaining fourteen were Lowlands applications, with three allowed, yielding a 21.4% allowance rate. Notably, the Council has met its target for the first time since Q4 2022-2023.


The below shows the appeal split between Uplands and Lowlands for the year;


	Decided	Allowed	% Allowed
Uplands	21	6.5	30.95%
Lowlands	16	4	25%

Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Increased since last year but decreased since last quarter

Q2 – Higher is Good

Target	90%
Actual	90.24%

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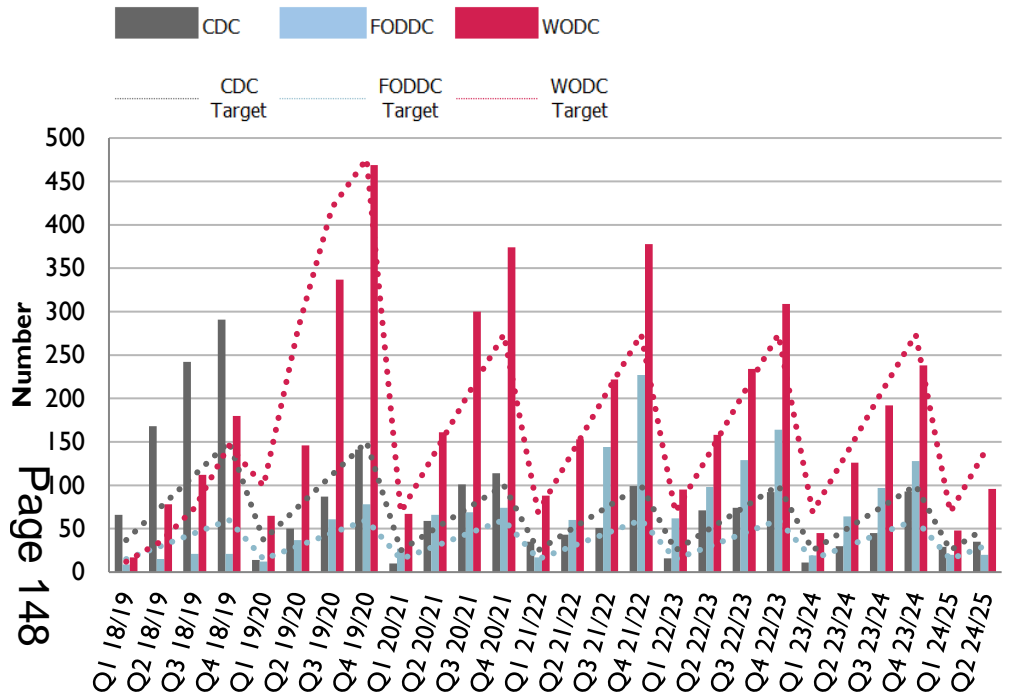
How do we compare?

Benchmarking currently not available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options.


During Q2, the Council continued to exceed its target for completing land charge searches within 10 days.


Efforts to strengthen relationships with the answering teams have improved communication and workload management, allowing team members to address tasks more efficiently and ultimately boosting overall productivity.

Number of affordable homes delivered (cumulative)



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Same as last quarter but declined since last year

Q2 – Higher is Good

Target	138
Actual	96

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How do we compare?

Benchmarking currently not available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options.

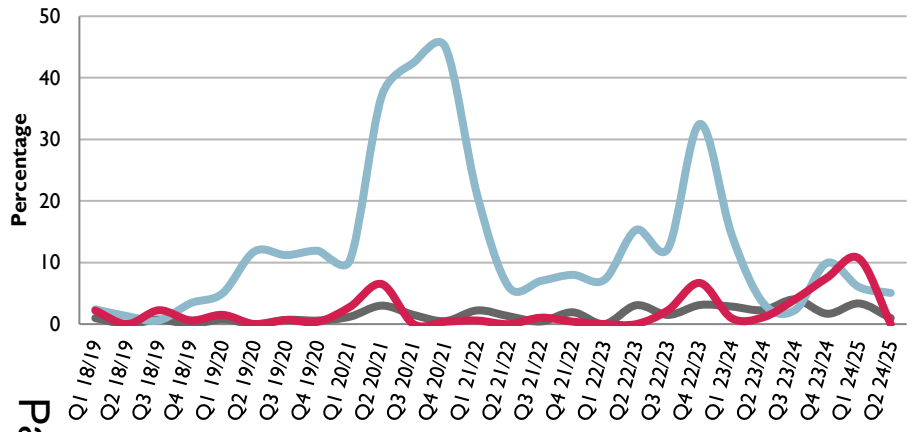
During Q2, a total of forty-eight properties were delivered in West across, bringing the year-to-date total to 96. This includes 35 Social Rent and 8 Affordable Rent homes, with 30 Social Rent homes delivered as part of the St Mary's redevelopment in Witney. The redevelopment incorporates sustainable features like solar panels, air source heat pumps, and electric vehicle charging points, alongside a 30-year biodiversity management plan to promote long-term environmental sustainability.

The service reports that completions fluctuate over the year. A housing development period is at least 12 months, with some schemes phased over several years.

Note: this data is collected cumulatively from the beginning of the financial year to account for peaks and troughs

Number of fly tips collected and percentage that result in an enforcement action

(defined as a warning letter, fixed penalty notice, simple caution or prosecution)



CDC
FODDC
WODC

Direction of Travel

Number of Fly Tips

- Against last Quarter: ↑ (No Target)
- Against last Year: ↑ (No Target)

Percentage Enforcement Action

- Against last Quarter: ↓ (177)
- Against last Year: ↓ (0%)

Fly Tips – Decreased since last quarter and but increased since last year
Enforcement Action – Increased since last quarter and last year

How do we compare?

Number of Fly Tips reported for year 2022-23 for Local Authorities in England – gov.uk. The latest dataset available is 2022-23.

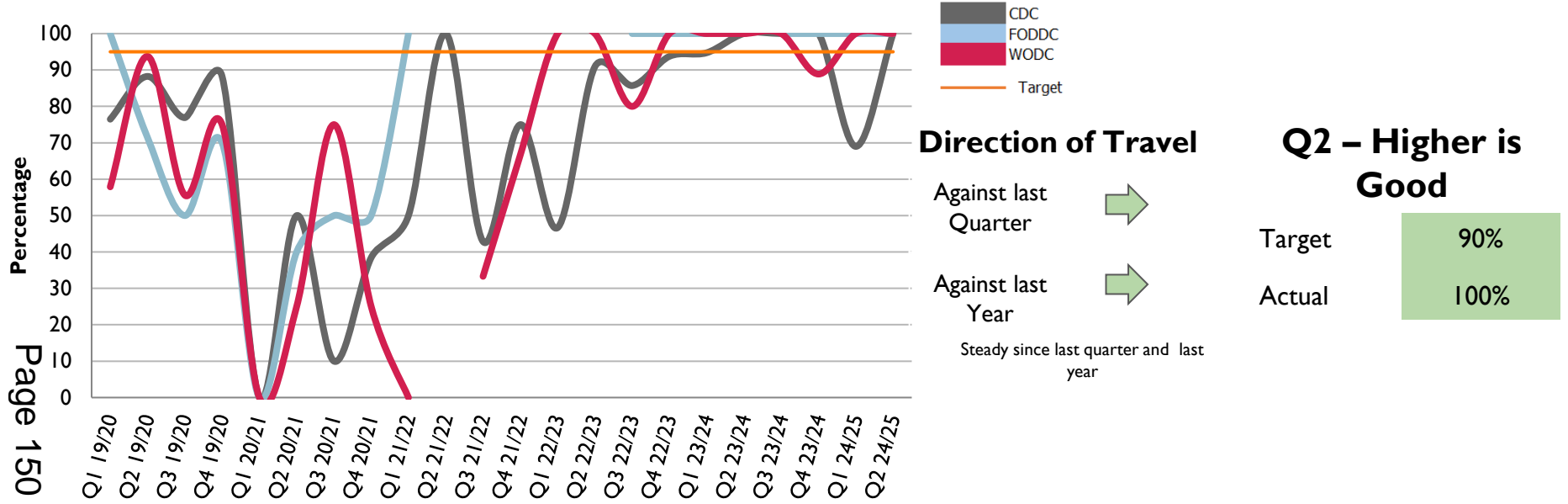
	Total Fly Tips	Total Enforcement Actions	Total FPNs	% FPNs per Fly Tip	CIPFA Nearest Neighbours Rank	Quartile
West	1150	53	14	1.22	6/16	Second
Horsham	1212	287	65	5.36	1/16	Top
Tewkesbury	655	29	1	0.15	10/16	Third
Stroud	859	11	0	0	16/16	Bottom

In Q2, the number of reported fly-tipping incidents increased, while the percentage of enforcement actions taken decreased.

To combat fly-tipping, the Council has installed 20 new covert cameras in rural hotspots as part of an initiative led by the Rural Crime Partnership, funded by the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Safer Streets initiative. Ongoing operations have already halted fly-tipping in some areas, with more cameras expected to reduce environmental crime across the district.

Additionally, the Council is collaborating with the Safer Streets Initiative to raise awareness about rural and environmental crimes, particularly in areas with higher crime rates. By attending Parish Council meetings, the Council aims to engage local communities, educate the public on fly-tipping and environmental responsibilities, and address specific local issues.

Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales



How do we compare?

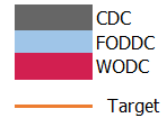
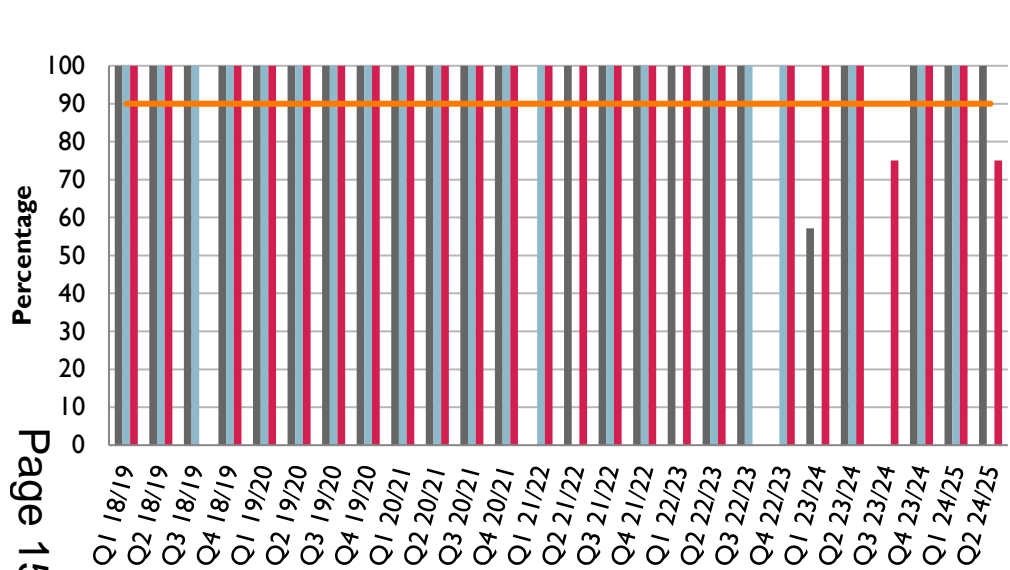
Benchmarking currently not available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options.

The Council conducted three inspections during Q2, all of which were completed within the timescale.

High-risk food inspections are prioritised due to their greater potential impact on public health and safety enabling issues to be addressed swiftly. However, this focus can occasionally delay scheduled inspections for lower-risk food businesses. To mitigate this, the service uses a dashboard to track both high- and lower-risk inspections, ensuring that, despite the emphasis on high-risk establishments, lower-risk inspections are still completed promptly to maintain overall compliance and safety standards.

Percentage of high risk notifications risk assessed within 1 working day

(including food poisoning outbreaks, anti-social behaviour, contaminated private water supplies, workplace fatalities or multiple serious injuries)



Direction of Travel



Q2 – Higher is Good

Target	90%
Actual	75%

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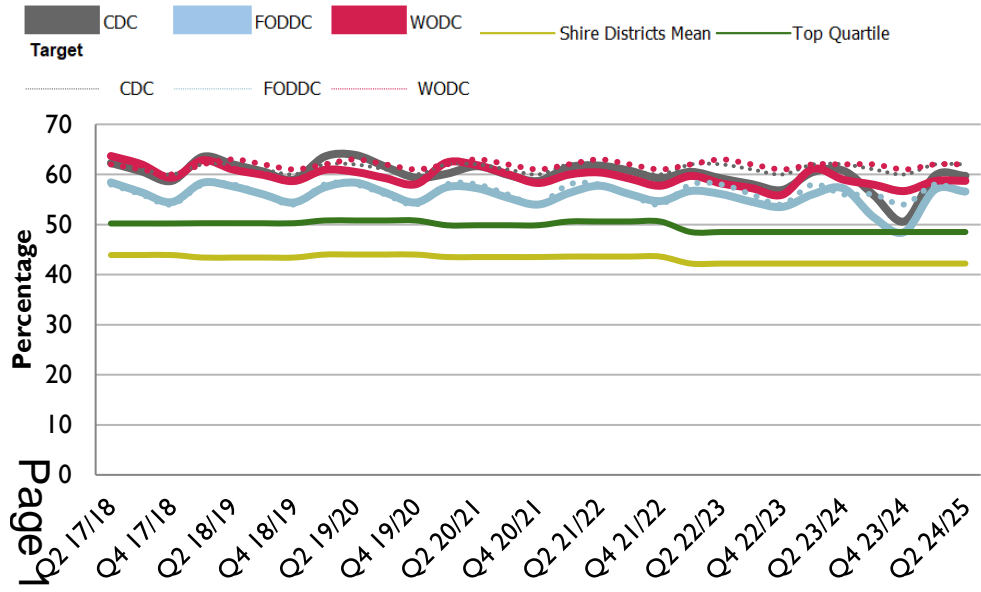
How do we compare?

Benchmarking currently not available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options.


The Council received four notifications during Q2, three of which were reviewed within one working day.


The missed notification was due to timing and resource availability, the initial allocation did not necessitate immediate action, as the referral was linked to ongoing cases from Housing. This allowed officers to prioritise other pressing tasks, resulting in a delay in the timely follow-up, despite the notification being promptly acknowledged and allocated.

Percentage of household waste recycled



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Q2 – Higher is Good

Target 62%

Actual 58.71%

How do we compare?

Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting

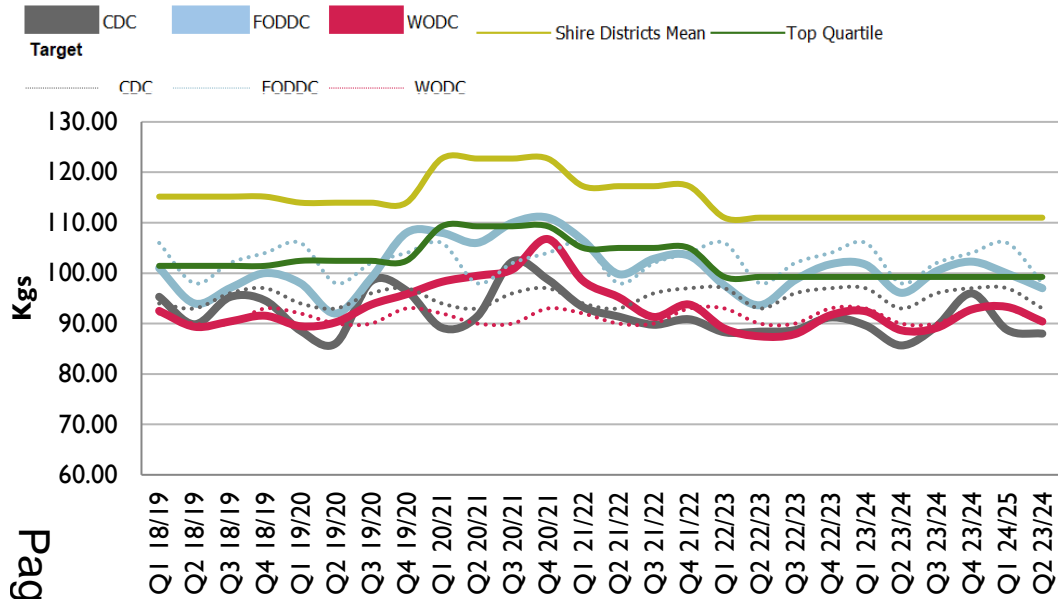
Q4 22-23 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	53.1	4/16	Top
South Oxfordshire	55.42	1/16	Top
Tewkesbury	47.58	6/16	Second
Harborough	38.5	10/16	Third
Hinckley and Bosworth	36.68	14/16	Bottom
Bromsgrove	31.98	16/16	Bottom

The team is currently awaiting the recycling rates for September from Oxfordshire County Council. The recycling rates for July and August stand at 58.71%, which is approximately 1% higher than the same period last year.


During Q2, the Council supported Second Hand September, a national campaign encouraging the public to shop for second-hand clothing and donate items they no longer wear. This initiative highlights the environmental impact of textile production and aims to reduce waste by promoting the recycling and reuse of textiles. Resources are available for residents on sustainable shopping and clothing repair.


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

Residual Household Waste per Household (kg)



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Q2 – Lower is Good

Target	90
Actual	90.41

Page 15 of 15

How do we compare?

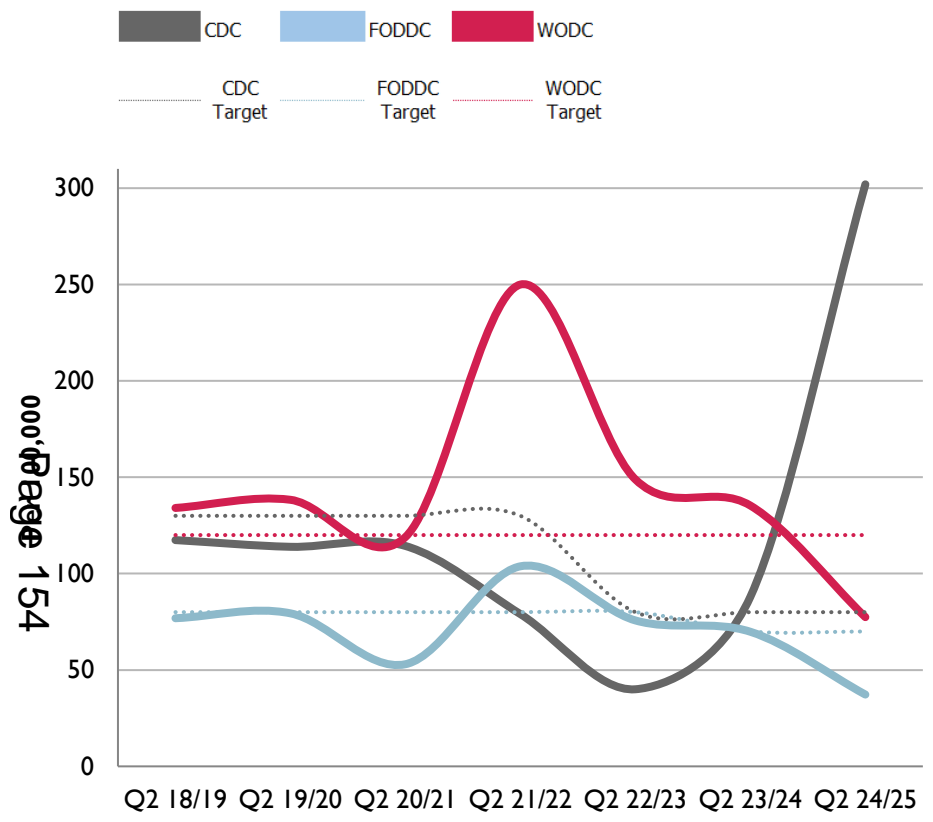
Residual household waste per household (kg/household)

Q4 22-23 Benchmark	Kg	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	85.56	4/16	Top
Stroud	76.83	1/16	Top
Tewkesbury	104.61	7/16	Second
Rushcliffe	114.93	11/16	Third
Lichfield	117.41	14/16	Bottom
Bromsgrove	126.69	16/16	Bottom


The pattern of residual waste throughout the year is cyclical and targets are profiled according. We typically see an increase in Q3 due to the Christmas period.


During Q2, the Council saw a decline in the tonnage of household waste in comparison to last quarter, decreasing by 2.9kg to 90.41kg. In comparison to Q2 2023-2024, the tonnage has increased by 1.71kg.

Missed bins per 100,000



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Decreased since last quarter and last year

Q2 – Lower is Good

Target	120
Actual	77.42

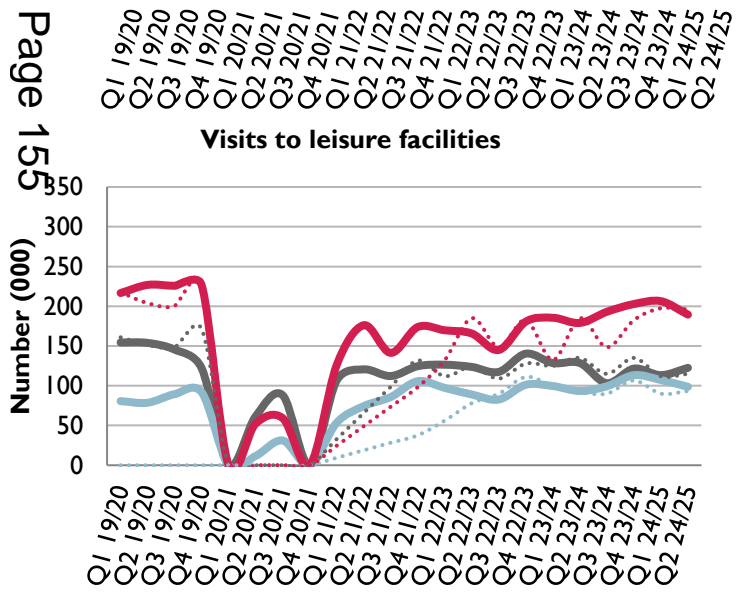
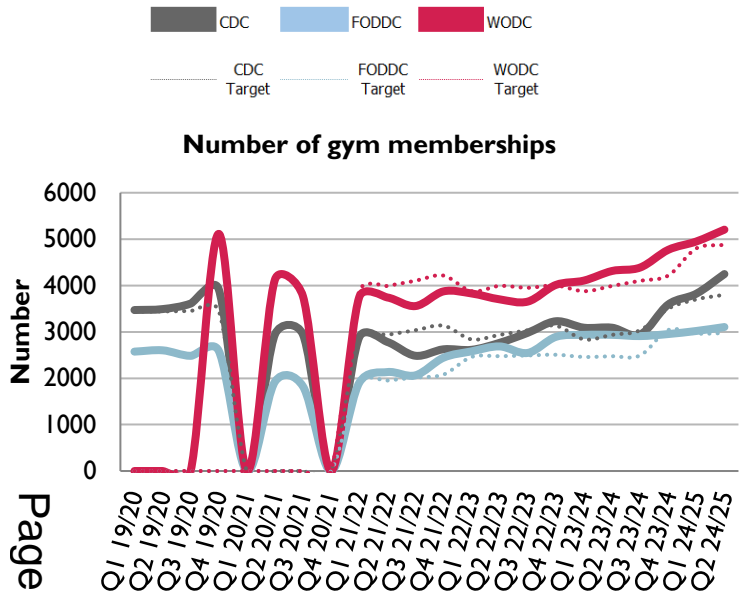
How do we compare?

The Data & Performance Team will investigate options.

Despite experiencing flooding issues during Q2, the number of missed collections per 100,000 remained below target for the fourth consecutive quarter. Ubico implemented a proactive plan during the flooding events to minimise disruptions and maintain service continuity.

Note: since the implementation of In-Cab technology, the data source for missed collections is Alloy, In-Cab's back office system. This data source is more accurate than the previous data source.

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



Direction of Travel

- Gym Memberships**
- Against last Quarter
 - Against last Year
- Leisure Visits**
- Against last Quarter
 - Against last Year

Q2 - Higher is Good

Gym Memberships	
Target	4,875
Actual	5,204

Leisure Visits	
Target	196,000
Actual	189,466

Gym Memberships - Improved since last quarter and last year
Leisure Visits- Slightly declined since last quarter but improved since last year

During Q2, gym memberships in West continued to increase compared to both the previous quarter and the same period last year. Visits to leisure facilities in West declined slightly compared to the previous quarter, but were up by 10,000 compared to the same period last year. Despite this growth, West fell slightly below its target due to disruptions from ongoing roofing and refurbishment works.

Woodstock Open Air Pool season ended on September 1st with new initiatives. From May 25th to July 21st, the pool offered unheated, cool water swimming with limited hours, followed by a heated period with extended hours from July 22nd for the summer holidays. The revised service provision for this season combined with the addition of a partnership with Yellow Submarine Charity, which provided a full café service.

Breakdown of Leisure Visits per facility:

Bartholomew Sports Centre	9747
Carterton Artificial Turf Pitch	6840
Carterton Leisure Centre	62,866
Carterton Pavilion	600
Chipping Norton Leisure Centre	21,717
Windrush Leisure Centre	65,250
Witney Artificial Turf Pitch	19,320
Woodstock Open Air Pool	3126

How do we compare?

The Data & Performance Team will investigate options.

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Executive response to recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 6 November 2024

Context

The Committee considered the report to the Executive on 20 November 2024 titled “Westhive Criteria”.

The Committee noted that 2 out of 6 funding rounds had concluded and that 5 out of 6 applications had been successful in reaching their crowdfunding targets (there are a further 9 applications in round 3). The Committee also noted that Westhive is attracting a greater diversity of projects compared to previous community grants funding.

The Committee noted that priority has been given to allocating time-limited UKSPF funding where applicable but raised concerns that the £120k budget set aside for Westhive was on course to be significantly under-spent in 2024/25, when it could be being used to benefit community projects. The Committee also raised anecdotal concerns about how accessible the scheme is to charities and local groups.

The Committee recommends a review of how the Westhive budget is utilised and intends to consider the outcomes in early 2025.

Recommendation and response

Item	Recommendation	Agree (Y / N)	Comment	Responsible Executive Member	Lead Officer
Westhive criteria	That the Council reviews how funding for Westhive is utilised with a view to ensuring that the budget allocated by the Council can be distributed effectively and fully for the benefit of communities.	Y	A review will be conducted in early 2025 and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be able to consider the outcomes of the review at a meeting in March.	Councillor Alaric Smith, Executive Member for Finance; Councillor Rachel Crouch, Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities.	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager

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WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME
1 DECEMBER 2024 – 30 APRIL 2025

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Council currently operates the Strong Leader and Executive form of governance. The Council has appointed one Overview and Scrutiny Committee which has the power to investigate Executive decisions and any other matters relevant to the district and its people, making recommendations to the Council, Executive or any other Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council. Overview and Scrutiny has an important role in holding the Executive to account and in contributing to policy development.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee operates a work plan which is agreed annually but provides for flexibility to enable the Committee to respond to emerging issues or priorities. The work plan will include a mix of Executive reports that have been selected for pre-decision scrutiny, and reports on other Council services, topics or issues which have been specifically requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In setting and reviewing its work plan, the Committee will be mindful of the constraints of the organisation and may prioritise based on the following considerations (TOPIC criteria):

Timeliness: Is it timely to consider this issue?

Organisational priority: Is it a Council priority?

Public Interest: Is it of significant public interest?

Influence: Can Scrutiny have meaningful influence?

Cost: Does it involve a high level of expenditure, income or savings?

Call in

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider any “call-in” of an executive decision that has been made but not yet implemented. This enables the Committee to consider whether the decision made is appropriate given all relevant information (but not because it would have made a different decision). It may recommend that the Executive, an Executive Member or the Council should reconsider the decision.

Item	Executive Member	Lead Officer
Wednesday, 4 December 2024		
Ubico Business Plan 2025-26	Executive Member for Environment - Cllr Lidia Arciszewska	Simon Anthony, Business Manager - Environmental Services Simon.Anthony@publicagroup.uk
Waste Fleet Purchase	Executive Member for Environment - Cllr Lidia Arciszewska	Bill Oddy, Assistant Director for Commercial Development Bill.Oddy@publicagroup.uk
Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2023-24	Executive Member for Planning - Cllr Hugo Ashton	Chris Hargraves, Head of Planning chris.hargraves@westoxon.gov.uk
Service Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Two	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
Wednesday, 8 January 2025		
Supporting market town and village centres	Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Economic Development - Cllr Duncan Enright	Sam Stronach, Economic Development Manager Sam.Stronach@westoxon.gov.uk
Registered Provider Discussion	Executive Member for Housing and Social Care - Cllr Geoff Saul	Michael David, Housing Delivery Programme Manager michael.david@westoxon.gov.uk
Affordable Housing Delivery Update	Executive Member for Housing and Social Care - Cllr Geoff Saul	Michael David, Housing Delivery Programme Manager michael.david@westoxon.gov.uk

Knights Court Business Case	Executive Member for Housing and Social Care - Cllr Geoff Saul	Business Manager - Assets & Council Priorities - Andrew Turner
Environmental Services Review and Ubico Contract	Executive Member for Environment - Cllr Lidia Arciszewska	Bill Oddy, Assistant Director for Commercial Development Bill.Oddy@publicagroup.uk
Wednesday, 5 February 2025		
Budget 2025 – 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Madhu Richards, Director of Finance madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk
Wednesday, 5 March 2025		
Community Grants	Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities - Cllr Rachel Crouch	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk
Community Safety Partnership	Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities - Cllr Rachel Crouch	Emmylou Brossard, Safer Communities Officer Emmylou.Brossard@westoxon.gov.uk
The Nature Recovery Plan	Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery - Cllr Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon, Climate Change Manager hannah.kenyon@westoxon.gov.uk
Climate Change Strategy	Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery - Cllr Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon, Climate Change Manager hannah.kenyon@westoxon.gov.uk
West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041 – Preferred Options Consultation	Executive Member for Planning - Cllr Hugo Ashton	Chris Hargraves, Head of Planning chris.hargraves@westoxon.gov.uk

Service Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Three	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
Financial Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Three	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Madhu Richards, Director of Finance madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk
Wednesday, 16 April 2025 - no items currently scheduled		



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE WORK PROGRAMME
INCORPORATING NOTICE OF DECISIONS PROPOSED TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE
SESSION AND NOTICE OF INTENTION TO MAKE A KEY DECISION
1 NOVEMBER 2024 – 28 FEBRUARY 2025

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

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

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

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

Key Decisions

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

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

The Council has decided that a cost or saving of an amount greater than £150,000 is necessary to constitute expenditure or savings which are significant for the purposes of this definition.

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

Matters To Be Considered in Private

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

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

Documents and Queries

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

Democratic Services – Email: democratic.services@westoxon.gov.uk Tel: 01993 861000.

West Oxfordshire District Council: Executive Members 2024/25

Name of Councillor	Title and Areas of Responsibility
Andy Graham (Leader)	Leader of the Council: Overview of all Executive Portfolios; Policy Framework; Town and Parish Council Engagement; Council Plan; Strategic Partnerships (including Pan Regional Partnership, Future Oxfordshire, South East Councils and OXLEP); Oxfordshire Leaders; Publica and Partnerships Authorities and Ubico; Democratic Services; Communications; Legal Services; Counter Fraud; Emergency Planning; Assets of Community Value, Customer Services.
Duncan Enright (Deputy Leader)	Economic Development: Economic Development; Business Development; Visitor Economy; Town and Village Regeneration; Customer Services.
Alaric Smith	Finance: Finance & Management; Council Tax and Benefits; Asset Management; South West Audit Partnership; Performance Management; Capital Investment Strategy; Strategic Housing Investment; Financial Aspects of Major Projects; Customer Services.
Hugo Ashton	Planning: Local Plan; Government Planning Policies and Guidance; Development Management; Ensuring Planning Policies meet 2030 Requirements; Customer Services.
Tim Sumner	Leisure and Major Projects: ; Conservation and Historic Environment; Leisure Provision (including Swimming Pools); Culture and Heritage; Public Art; Agile Working; Car Parking; Customer Services.
Rachel Crouch	Stronger, Healthy Communities: Voluntary Sector Engagement; Health and Safety; Community and Public Health; Refugee Resettlement Programme; Young People; Equality and Diversity; Customer Services.
Geoff Saul	Housing and Social Care: Housing Allocations; Homelessness; Provision of Affordable Homes; Sheltered Housing Accommodation; Safeguarding – Community Safety Partnership; Crime and Disorder; Neighbourhood Policing; Scrutiny of Police and Crime Commissioner, Customer Services.
Lidia Arciszewska	Environment: •Flood Alleviation/Natural Flood Management and Sewage; Environmental Partnerships – WASP and Evenlode; North East Cotswold Cluster; Waste Collection and Recycling; Landscape and Biodiversity; Air Quality; Land Use, Food Production and Farming; Street Scene (Cleansing, Litter and Grounds Maintenance); Customer Services.
Andrew Prosser	Climate Action and Nature Recovery: Energy Advice; Renewable Energy and RetroFit Investment; Biodiversity (Across the District); Carbon Neutral by 2030; Fossil Fuel Dependence Reduction; Local, National and County Liaison on Climate Change; Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Rollout, Customer Services.

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

Item for Decision	Key Decision (Yes / No)	Open or Exempt	Decision – Maker	Date of Decision	Executive Member	Lead Officer
20 November 2024						
Infrastructure Funding Statement 2023/24	No	Open	Executive	20 Nov 2024	Executive Member for Planning - Cllr Hugo Ashton	Chris Hargraves, Head of Planning chris.hargraves@westoxon.gov.uk
Adoption of Asset Management Plan	Yes	Open	Executive	20 Nov 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Claire Locke, Interim Executive Director claire.locke@publicagroup.uk
Leisure Strategic Outcomes Planning Model	No	Open	Executive	20 Nov 2024	Executive Member for Leisure and Major Projects - Cllr Tim Sumner	Rachel Biles, Leisure Strategy Manager rachel.biles@westoxon.gov.uk
Financial Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Two	No	Open	Executive	20 Nov 2024	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Madhu Richards, Director of Finance madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk
Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit Collaboration Agreement	Yes	Open	Executive	20 Nov 2024	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Emma Cathcart, Head of Service, Counter Fraud and Enforcement Unit emma.cathcart@cotswold.gov.uk
Council Tax Support Scheme 2025/2026	Yes	Open	Executive Council	20 Nov 2024 27 Nov 2024	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager - Environmental, Welfare & Revenue Service mandy.fathers@publicagroup.uk

Westhive Criteria	No	Open	Executive	20 Nov 2024	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk
West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041 Update	No	Open	Executive	20 Nov 2024	Executive Member for Planning - Cllr Hugo Ashton	Chris Hargraves, Head of Planning chris.hargraves@westoxon.gov.uk
11 December 2024						
Annual Monitoring Report	No	Open	Executive	11 Dec 2024	Executive Member for Planning - Cllr Hugo Ashton	Chris Hargraves, Head of Planning chris.hargraves@westoxon.gov.uk
Knights Court Business Case	Yes	Open	Executive	11 Dec 2024	Executive Member for Housing and Social Care - Cllr Geoff Saul	Business Manager - Assets & Council Priorities - Andrew Turner
Service Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Two	No	Open	Executive	11 Dec 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
Draft Budget 2025 – 2026, Version One	Yes	Open	Executive	11 Dec 2024	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Madhu Richards, Director of Finance madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk
Affordable Housing Delivery Update	No	Open	Executive	11 Dec 2024	Executive Member for Housing and Social Care - Cllr Geoff Saul	Michael David, Housing Delivery Programme Manager michael.david@westoxon.gov.uk

Mid-Point Review of Car Parking Strategy	No	Open	Executive	11 Dec 2024	Executive Member for Leisure and Major Projects - Cllr Tim Sumner	Susan Hughes, Business Manager for Support and Advice Susan.Hughes@publicagroup.uk
15 January 2025						
Review of the Future Oxfordshire Partnership	No	Open	Executive Council	15 Jan 2025 29 Jan 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Officer giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
Contract Award for the Parking ICT system	Yes	Fully exempt <i>Commercially sensitive information</i>	Executive	15 Jan 2025	Executive Member for Leisure and Major Projects - Cllr Tim Sumner	Maria Wheatley, Shared Parking Manager maria.wheatley@publicagroup.uk
Draft Budget 2025 – 2026, Version Two	Yes	Open	Executive	15 Jan 2025	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Madhu Richards, Director of Finance madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk
Environmental Services Review and Ubico Contract	Yes	Open	Executive	15 Jan 2025	Executive Member for Environment - Cllr Lidia Arciszewska	Bill Oddy, Assistant Director for Commercial Development Bill.Oddy@publicagroup.uk
Provision of an Empty Property Lending Scheme	Yes	Open	Executive	15 Jan 2025	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager - Environmental, Welfare & Revenue Service mandy.fathers@publicagroup.uk
12 February 2025						
Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) Update 2025	Yes	Open	Executive	12 Feb 2025	Councillor Hugo Ashton, Executive Member for Planning.	Chris Hargraves, Head of Planning chris.hargraves@westoxon.gov.uk

Budget 2025 – 2026	Yes	Open	Executive Council	12 Feb 2025 26 Feb 2025	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Madhu Richards, Director of Finance madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk
12 March 2025						
Climate Change Strategy	Yes	Open	Executive	12 Mar 2025	Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery - Cllr Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon, Climate Change Manager hannah.kenyon@westoxon.gov.uk
West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2041 – Preferred Options Consultation	No	Open	Executive	12 Mar 2025	Executive Member for Planning - Cllr Hugo Ashton	Chris Hargraves, Head of Planning chris.hargraves@westoxon.gov.uk
Service Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Three	No	Open	Executive	12 Mar 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
Financial Performance Report 2024-25 Quarter Three	No	Open	Executive	12 Mar 2025	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Madhu Richards, Director of Finance madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk
Key Decision Delegated to Executive Member						

UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Rural England Prosperity Fund	No	Open	Executive Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Economic Development - Cllr Duncan Enright	31 Dec 2024	Deputy Leader of the Council and Executive Member for Economic Development - Cllr Duncan Enright	Emma Phillips, Market Town Officer Emma.phillips@westoxon.gov.uk
Key Decisions Delegated to Officers						
Allocation of S106 Monies to Witney Town Council to Design, Build and Operate a New Third Generation (3G) Pitch at West Witney Sports Ground	Yes	Open	Executive Assistant Director - Communities - Andy Barge	11 Sep 2024 Before 31 Mar 2025	Executive Member for Leisure and Major Projects - Cllr Tim Sumner	Rachel Biles, Leisure Strategy Manager rachel.biles@westoxon.gov.uk
Dry Mixed Recycling Bulking and Haulage Contract	Yes	Part exempt	Executive Assistant Director - Commercial Development - Bill Oddy	11 Sep 2024 Before 31 Mar 2025	Executive Member for Environment - Cllr Lidia Arciszewska	Simon Anthony, Business Manager - Environmental Services Simon.Anthony@publicagroup.uk Assistant Director - Commercial Development - Bill Oddy
Standing Delegation: Settlement of Legal Claims	Yes	Open	Head of Legal Services - Helen Blundell	Before 31 Dec 2024	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith, Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Helen Blundell, Interim Head of Legal Services helen.blundell@fdean.gov.uk

Review and Repurpose Earmarked Reserves to Mitigate against Four Main Financial Risks	Yes	Open	Director of Finance - Madhu Richards	31 Dec 2024	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Madhu Richards, Director of Finance madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk
Allocation of New Initiatives Funding	Yes	Open	Chief Executive & Head of Paid Service - Giles Hughes	Before 31 Mar 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Officer giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
Allocate Funding from the Project Contingency Earmarked Reserve	Yes	Open	Director of Finance - Madhu Richards	Before 31 Mar 2025	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Madhu Richards, Director of Finance madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk
Other Business for Council Meetings						
Polling District and Places Review	No	Open	Council	27 Nov 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Sharon Ellison, Electoral Services Manager sharon.ellison@westoxon.gov.uk
District Boundary Review - Council Size Proposal	No	Open	Council	27 Nov 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services andrew.brown@westoxon.gov.uk
Review of standards arrangements To provide a Summary of WODC Member Conduct Complaints.	No	Open	Audit and Governance Committee Council	26 Sep 2024 27 Nov 2024	Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee - Councillor Carl Rylett	Christine Elsasser, Interim Democratic Services Officer christine.elsasser@westoxon.gov.uk

Recommendations of the Constitution Working Group	No	Open	Council	27 Nov 2024	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services andrew.brown@westoxon.gov.uk
Outcome of Member Survey on Meeting Start Times	No	Open	Council	27 Nov 2024	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services andrew.brown@westoxon.gov.uk
Council meetings programme 2025/26	No	Open	Council	29 Jan 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services andrew.brown@westoxon.gov.uk
Review of Members' Allowances Scheme To report to council following a mid-point review of the Members' Allowances Scheme 2023-27 conducted by the Council's Independent Remuneration Panel.	No	Open	Council	29 Jan 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services andrew.brown@westoxon.gov.uk

Community Governance Reviews To consider the Council's approach to Community Governance Reviews following the motion passed by Council on 24 July 2024.	No	Open	Council	26 Mar 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services andrew.brown@westoxon.gov.uk
Strategic Partnerships Update	No	Open	Council	26 Mar 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Astrid Harvey, Strategic Policy and Partnerships Officer Astrid.Harvey@westoxon.gov.uk

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