

Tuesday, 2 December 2025

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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 Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB on **Wednesday, 10 December 2025 at 5.30 pm.**



Giles Hughes
Chief Executive

To: Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillors: Andrew Beaney (Chair), Genny Early (Vice-Chair), Adam Clements, Steve Cosier, Natalie King, Liz Leffman, Nick Leverton, Dan Levy, Paul Marsh, Stuart McCarroll, Michele Mead, Ruth Smith, Mark Walker, Alex Wilson and Alistair Wray

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. The quorum for the Committee is six members.
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 - 8)**
To approve the minutes of the Committee meeting held 11 November 2025.
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. **Report back on recommendations (Pages 9 - 12)**
For the Committee to note the Executive's response to any recommendations arising from the previous Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.
7. **Updates from Task and Finish Groups**
To receive any updates from the Committee's task and finish groups.
8. **2025/26 Quarterly Finance Review Q2 (Pages 13 - 36)**
Purpose
Pre-decision scrutiny of an Executive report detailing the financial performance of the Council in the second quarter of 2025/26.

Recommendation

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves to:

- I. Note the report and agree any recommendations it wishes to submit to the Executive.

9. **2025/26 Quarterly Service Review Q2 (Pages 37 - 100)**

Purpose

Pre-decision scrutiny of an Executive report detailing the service performance of the Council in the second quarter of 2025/26.

Recommendation

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves to:

- I. Note the report and agree any recommendations it wishes to submit to the Executive.

10. **Local Plan Annual Monitoring 2024/25 (Pages 101 - 162)**

Purpose

Pre-decision scrutiny of an Executive report detailing the Council's Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report for 2024/25.

Recommendation

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves to:

- I. Note the report and agree any recommendations it wishes to submit to the Executive.

11. **Promoting Rural Exception Sites**

Purpose

To receive a verbal update on the Council's work around promoting rural exception.

Recommendation

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee resolves to:

- I. Note the presentation and agree any recommendations it wishes to submit to the Executive.

12. **Committee Work Programme (Pages 163 - 168)**

Purpose:

For the Committee to review and note its work programme.

Recommendation:

That the Committee notes and comments on the work programme.

13. **Executive Work Programme (Pages 169 - 178)**

Purpose:

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

Recommendation:

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

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WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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

Held in the Committee Room 1, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28
INB at 5.30 pm on **Tuesday, 11 November 2025**

PRESENT

Councillors: Andrew Beaney (Chair), Genny Early (Vice-Chair), Steve Cosier, Natalie King, Nick Levertton, Dan Levy, Paul Marsh, Stuart McCarroll, Liam Walker, Ruth Smith, Alex Wilson and Alistair Wray

Officers: Madhu Richards (Director of Finance), Andrew Brown (Head of Democratic and Electoral Services), Giles Hughes (Chief Executive Officer), Phil Martin (Director of Place), Andrea McCaskie (Director of Governance and Regulatory Services), Ana Prelici (Senior Democratic Services Officer), Astrid Harvey (Strategic Policy and Partnerships Officer) and Mark Pritchard (Head of Communications and Corporate Strategy)

Other Councillors in attendance: Andy Graham, Rachel Crouch and Geoff Saul

54 Apologies for Absence and Temporary Appointments

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs: Clements, Leffman, Mead and Walker

55 Declarations of Interest

Declarations of interest were received from Cllr Smith in respect of minute number 59 in her capacity of the Leader of the Town Council, and from Cllr Levy due to his membership of the Cabinet.

56 Minutes of Previous Meeting

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 October be confirmed as an accurate record, subject to the inclusion of Cllr Marsh in the list of those present.

57 Chair's announcements

The Chair stated that Officers had suggested considering the meeting's start time and asked members to stay after the meeting to discuss this. No further announcements were received from the Chair.

58 Participation of the Public

There was no participation of the public.

59 Report back on recommendations

11/November2025

The Chair requested any comments in relation to the recommendations which had been received from the Executive.

A Member expressed the view that Members should provide input into the Local Plan, as doing so would ensure that the needs of communities and localities within the area could be better fulfilled. This was particularly relevant in the absence of a policy on Community Governance Reviews due to the impending Local Government Review.

RESOLVED: That the recommendations be noted.

60 Updates from Task and Finish Groups

It was confirmed that the Leisure Task and Finish Group, had now been concluded and that the Waste Transformation Task Group and the Public Conveniences groups were still ongoing

A brief update was provided on the Public Conveniences Task and Finish Group.

Members were informed that whilst none of the Town and Parish Councils had as yet responded to the question as to whether they wished to take on public conveniences in their areas, much useful information had been provided regards usage and maintenance costs.

In terms of the Waste Transformation Group, it was highlighted that the intention was to create an Oxfordshire wide waste transformation strategy in partnership with all the councils in Oxfordshire, which would examine 8 potential areas of business including, grounds maintenance and recycling. It was envisaged that recycling rates would also receive some consideration as part of the terms of reference.

RESOLVED: That the updates be noted

61 Local Government Reorganisation

The Director of Place and the Head of Communications/Strategy conducted a joint presentation which summarised the key criteria areas for the three proposals for Local Government Reorganisation. Extensive detailed information regards the 3 proposals were contained within the document previously circulated. These options included:

- (i) A single County unitary,
- (ii) two unitaries, covering Oxfordshire and West Berkshire
- (iii) Three unitaries covering Oxfordshire and West Berkshire

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The two unitary model for Oxfordshire and West Berkshire proposed in the report considered by Members, outlined a clear, evidence-based plan to deliver better, more efficient and more locally accountable public services. It proposed to create two new councils that offered the right balance between efficiency and local identity, each servicing around 450,000 – 500,000 people, meeting the Government's criteria and being large enough to be efficient and stable, but small enough to stay connected to communities.

The full proposal developed by Cherwell District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, West Berkshire Council and West Oxfordshire District Council was attached as Appendix 3 of the agenda pack.

Members considered the information presented and debated the pros and cons of the options, but acknowledged that ultimately the decision was one that would be taken by the Government.

Amongst the concerns raised was the lack of clarity regards investment in the rural economy and the future of farming, along with a review of mental health services. Concern was also expressed regards the likelihood of a changing profile for local Councillors, and the skill set that would be necessary in view of the expanded range of services and needs of the community following reorganisation. Other matters of concern related to the diminishing role of town and parish councils, which provided an invaluable service in terms of accessible local government to residents. Members were informed that it was of vital importance that consideration was given to the gap between the unitary council and the town and parishes, and how best to ensure those linkages remained strong in the future model. Moreover, it was necessary to ensure that the structure of the unitary facilitated this.

Based on the discussion, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee made a number of recommendations to the Executive.

RESOLVED: That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

1. Noted that since the statutory invitation to all councils in two tier areas, significant work has been undertaken by all Oxfordshire Councils and that West Oxfordshire and Cherwell District Councils' officers have engaged with officers across Oxfordshire and West Berkshire.
2. Considered the submission of a proposal for a two unitary model based on one new unitary council covering the entire existing boundaries of West Oxfordshire and Cherwell District Councils and Oxford City Council, with the working title of 'Oxford & Shires' and a second new unitary covering the entire existing boundaries of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils and West Berkshire Council, with the working title of 'Ridgeway'.
3. Noted that two other proposals will be submitted, one proposed by Oxfordshire County Council covering the Oxfordshire area and one from Oxford City Council covering the Oxfordshire and West Berkshire area.
4. Noted that should the Executive agree to submit the full proposal for the two unitary model, Cherwell District Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council will jointly submit it directly to Government in line with the Oxfordshire invitation letter.

5. Recommended that the Executive strengthen the focus on addressing the specific challenges faced in rural areas (e.g. mental health, agriculture) within the Two Unitary Authority proposal.
6. Recommended that the Executive strengthen the mentions of the equality aspects (e.g. Housing, Social Care, SEND) within the Two Unitary Authority proposal.
7. Recommended Continue to engage with Town and Parish Councils to clarify the role they will have in the context of LGR and reflect this within the model and strengthen the mention of this within the Two Unitary Authority proposals.

The Meeting closed at 7.38 pm

CHAIR

Executive response to recommendations on from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11 November 2025 on Local Government Reorganisation

Recommendation	Agreed Y / N?	Comment	Responsible Executive Member
1. Strengthen the focus on addressing the specific challenges faced in rural areas (e.g. mental health, agriculture) within the Two Unitary Authority proposal.	Y	I would like to thank Overview and Scrutiny for their thoughtful, thorough and constructive contribution. They have raised really positive points on how we can further strengthen the two unitary proposal before we submit it to government. Officers have taken notes on the comments raised and I have asked the document is updated to reflect their feedback before it is submitted. Town and Parish Councils are the bedrock of our communities. A fundamental aspect of the two unitary proposal is creating councils that are locally responsive and will work closely with our local councils in future to meet the needs of our communities. We will engage with our town and parish councils over the coming years to support them during the transition period to whatever new structure the government decides.	Councillor Andy Graham, Leader of the Council
2. Strengthen the mentions of the equality aspects (e.g. Housing, Social Care, SEND) within the Two Unitary Authority proposal.	Y		
3. Continue to engage with Town and Parish Councils to clarify the role they will have in the context of LGR and reflect this within the model and strengthen the mention of this within the Two Unitary Authority proposals.	Y		

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Executive response to recommendations on from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 September 2025 on the [Youth Development Officer Update](#)


Context

The Committee commissioned an update report on the work of the Youth Development Officer when setting its work plan for 2025/26. This is a discretionary service for the Council which builds on the findings of the Youth Needs Assessment undertaken in 2022. The Committee welcomed this initiative and the work being done by the Youth Development Officer and made a number of suggestions for consideration by the Executive.

Recommendation	Agreed Y / N?	Comment	Responsible Executive Member (name, title)	Lead Officer (name, title)
1. That the Youth Development Officer engages with private schools within the district area, as they have done with state schools.	Y	The Youth Development Officer will engage with private schools in the area to better understand what opportunities might exist and how they are engaging already with their wider community	Councillor Rachel Crouch, Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager
2. That the Youth Development Officer engages with sports clubs wishing to broaden their youth activities, seeking ways to reach young people who have historically faced barriers to engagement.	Y	The Youth Development Officer will engage with sports clubs and offer assistance to those clubs wishing to broaden their offer to reach young people facing barriers to engagement.	Councillor Rachel Crouch, Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager
3. That consideration is given to what more the Council could do to encourage volunteering, for example through local employers (including the Council itself).	Y	The Council could encourage other businesses to be pro-active in encouraging staff to have time to volunteer – as is Council policy. The Council could consider a comms campaign to promote the value of volunteering both externally and internally to	Councillor Rachel Crouch, Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager



		encourage staff to make better use of their volunteering time. The Council could invite Oxfordshire Council for Voluntary Action to come and talk to Councillors/ senior staff about what the state of volunteering in Oxfordshire and provide advice about what steps could help.		
4. That the Council seeks to secure the continuation of local youth development activities into the future beyond local government reorganisation.	Y	The Council will consider a legacy position for funding programmes to cover a period of 3 years from 2026/27 onwards. Further details will be brought forward.	Councillor Andy Graham, Leader of the Council	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager

 <p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>	<p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>
<p>Name and date of Committee</p>	<p>EXECUTIVE - 17 DECEMBER 2025</p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p>FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE REPORT 2025/26 QUARTER TWO</p>
<p>Wards affected</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>Accountable member</p>	<p>Cllr Alaric Smith Executive Member for Finance Email: alaric.smith@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Accountable officer</p>	<p>Madhu Richards, Director of Finance Email: madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Report Author</p>	<p>Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance Email: georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p>Annex A – Detailed Revenue Budget Comparison Annex B – Capital Spend against Budget</p>
<p>Purpose</p>	<p>To detail the Council's financial performance for Quarter Two 2025-2026</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>That the Executive resolves to: I. Note the Council's Financial Performance for Quarter Two 2025-2026</p>
<p>Corporate Priority</p>	<p>Working Together for West Oxfordshire</p>
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Exempt</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Consultees</p>	<p>None</p>

I. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the financial performance of the council's activities for the second quarter of the 2025/26 financial year from 1 April 2025 to 30th September 2025.
- 1.2. The report considers the significant variances in revenue income and expenditure against the approved revenue budget set by Full Council on 26th February 2025 which anticipated a contribution of £91,280 to General Fund reserves.
- 1.3. The report also includes progress in delivering the approved Capital Programme and a forecast revenue position at year end. This forecast should be viewed as indicative only at this stage of the financial year.

2. MAIN POINTS

Financial Performance Revenue Budget Monitoring - Summary

- 2.1. At quarter 2 (Q2) there is an overall cost of service underspend of **£272,063** against the profiled budget for the period. The key factors driving this revenue position are additional income from Trade Waste and Development Management, both of which have been exceptional in the first half of the year. Development Management income is 75% up on the same period last year due to the receipt of major applications and Trade Waste is up 52.7%.
- 2.2. There are no significant overspends to report for Q2, but any variance to the profiled budget that is over £10,000 has been included in this report.
- 2.3. Investment income through our Treasury Management activity is again performing significantly above budget, due in the main to interest rates falling more slowly over the last year than anticipated at the time of setting the 2025/26 budget. Our Treasury Management Advisors believe that there is likely to be one more interest rate cut of 0.25% this financial year. The year end forecast of an additional £375,000 of Investment interest above budget is prudent.
- 2.4. The table below sets out the summary revenue monitoring position for the 30th September 2025 against profiled budget by service area.

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL - Budget Monitoring

Revenue Budget Monitoring 2025/26 - Quarter 2, 1st April to 30th September 2025

	Quarter 2				
	Original Budget 2025/26	Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend	Forecast to Year End
	£	£	£	£	£
Service Area					
Democratic and Committee Services	1,412,297	810,189	822,529	12,340	13,108
Environmental & Regulatory Services	784,557	381,658	400,714	19,056	36,188
Environmental Services	8,285,567	3,118,182	3,046,027	(72,156)	(166,458)
Finance, Human Resources & Procurement	1,062,851	1,436,435	1,442,628	6,193	6,193
ICT, Change & Customer Services	2,230,097	2,093,081	2,101,259	8,178	8,178
Land, Legal & Property	841,492	549,903	539,421	(10,481)	962
Leisure & Communities	555,410	(776,530)	(757,252)	19,277	(40,455)
Planning & Strategic Housing	1,383,153	669,016	372,382	(296,633)	(329,819)
Revenues & Housing Support	1,592,014	414,429	446,315	31,885	28,169
Investment Property and Retained Services	682,434	669,073	679,352	10,279	(14,888)
Total cost of services	18,829,872	9,365,437	9,093,374	(272,063)	(458,823)
<u>Plus:</u>					
Investment income receipts	(1,156,228)	(578,114)	(811,060)	(232,946)	(375,000)
Cost of services before financing:	17,673,644	8,787,323	8,282,314	(505,009)	(833,823)

Significant Variances

A full list of variances by cost centre is included in Annex A. The most significant variances, listed by Service Area (as set out in the table above), are as follows:

Environment & Regulatory Services

2.5. Markets

A commercial operator now manages the markets in Witney & Chipping Norton. The outsourcing is designed to revitalise the markets with income to the Council increasing over time. At the point of transfer, income was at 50% of the budgeted target, a £17,000 overspend. The income target will be reviewed as part of the 2026/27 budget setting process to take account of the new operating model.

Environmental Services

2.6. Green Waste

Green Waste licence income has achieved £1.655m at the end of Q2, which represents 95.8% of the target for the year. Work is ongoing with Ubico to make sure that the contract sum is split accurately across Waste, Recycling and Cleansing so that the Council can have assurance that commercial elements of waste collection and recycling are, at the very minimum, covering their costs.

2.7 Trade Waste

Trade Waste is invoiced in April & September with payment taken by Direct Debit. In Q2 income is £197,000 above target. This is partially offset by expenditure of £29,000 on bins and boxes and an additional £13,000 for tipping the increased volume of waste from the growth in customer base. The forecast year end position is an underspend of £250,000. The budget for 2026/27 will be adjusted to consider the positive performance of the Trade Waste service and the contribution to service delivery. The exceptional performance of the Trade Waste service can be attributed to very active management of the customer base, invoicing and income collection by the Publica Trade Waste team in consultation with the Council's Waste team and Ubico.

2.8. Household Waste

There is an overspend from the external consultant work procured for an options appraisal of the Waste and Environmental Strategic Partnership (WESP). The intention was this should be funded through the Projects Reserve, but as there is a significant underspend in Environmental Services, it is prudent to retain this overspend in revenue.

Leisure and Communities

2.9. Communities Revenue Grant

There is an error in the base budget, which is causing an overspend of £8,510 at Q2 and forecast to increase to a £17,020 overspend at year end. This error will be corrected in the 2026/27 budget.

2.10. Recreational Facilities Development

There is a £16,000 overspend relating to the repayment of an unused portion of grant funding from Sports England. This was not known until after the 2024/25 year end and therefore it was not accrued for. The remainder of the expenditure is within the existing base budget.

2.11. Contract Management

The budget includes £50,000 for legal advice relating to the negotiations of the new leisure contract for 2027. This advice is more likely to be incurred in the second half of the year and is an underspend of £14,000 in Q2. Unbudgeted for spending includes £9,975 for the installation of energy saving showers at Carterton Leisure Centre. There are also a number of minor overspends for the appraisal of the Carterton Leisure Centre roof repairs and professional advice on the specification of the Solar PV installed. The annual contract sum is increased by CPI inflation mid year and could bring the year end contract sum to £100,000 more than budget.

Planning & Strategic Housing

2.12. Development Management

Planning Application income is £321,000 above target at Q2 due to the receipt of two major applications, offset by £63,000 of expenditure on agency staff. This income is an increase of £404,000 on the same period last year, an indication of the volatility of application income and

the difficulty in setting an appropriate budget. The income budget will be revised upwards for 2026/27 in line with advice from the Development Manager and the Head of Planning.

2.13. Development Management Appeals

It is difficult to predict when planning appeals will be lodged, or to forecast whether the full budget will be exhausted by the end of the year. The budget for 2026/27 will be reviewed based on the information available at the end of January 2026 and may be revised accordingly.

Retained Services

2.14. External Audit Fees

The fees for the audit of the 2025/26 financial year will not be published until the end of November. The base budget includes £158,000 for the audit of the Statement of Accounts and a further £50,000 for the audit of the Housing Benefit system, both of which are statutory requirements. There will also be an additional cost for the increased audit assurance requirements after the adoption of a new Accounting Standard IFRS 16 Leases.

2.15. Investment Property

As a whole, Investment Property and Industrial Estates are £38,575 underspent at the end of Q2. Within the portfolio there are individual properties that are performing well above or below targets i.e. Talisman income is £64,500 better than budget due to the base budget not taking into account the end of a rent-free period in the first quarter of the financial year. This underspend is expected to increase to around £118,000 by year end.

At the other end of the scale, Carterton Industrial Estate is £34,000 overspent due to costs to keep Units 1 – 3 secure and for preparations in advance of the construction of the new roof, including repairs to the rolling shutters, electricity supply works, surveys and inspections. The forecast for year-end assumes a continuation of security measures until the construction phase has been completed.

2.16 Marriotts Walk

This was purchased by the Council in January 2023 when it was showing the effects of an institutional landlord who was not motivated to invest in the site to make it a vibrant shopping destination. This was evident in the number of long-term vacant units and tenants who felt unsupported.

In only the third year of Council ownership the situation of the shopping centre has completely turned around and is nearing full occupancy, with only 1.62% of space empty as at the end of October 2025, compared to 4.74% at the end of Q1. New tenants have moved in and existing tenants, who had expressed their intention to either vacate at the end of their lease or exercise their break clause, have instead renewed.

In spring 2026, significant and creative improvements to the public areas are scheduled, to improve seating and planting and make the space more flexible for uses such as the annual markets. Combining this with a calendar of events at Christmas, the half term holidays, Easter and the summer holidays the Council is demonstrating its commitment to making Witney an attractive destination.

We are actively developing strategies to ensure Marriotts, Woolgate, Witney High Street, and Witney Market work together as a unified destination to attract more visitors, enhance the

visitor experience, and deliver a sustainable boost to the local economy. As a Council asset, Marriotts is not only key to the strategic plans for the economy of Witney but is also budgeted to contribute £464,582 towards the provision of front-line services in this financial year.

Budget Setting 2026/27

- 2.16. Meetings with budget holders have been running throughout September and October to discuss any budgetary implications from their Service Plans for 2026/27, staffing, inflationary increases in existing contracts and growth requests. Growth requests will, in the first instance go through SLT before being included in the budget working papers going forward to Executive for approval.
- 2.17. The first draft of the budget for 2026/27, the updated MTFS and Capital Programme will go to Executive on 17th December 2025 and to Overview & Scrutiny on 7th January 2026.
- 2.18. The second draft of the budget will go to Executive on 14th January for approval of the Fees & Charges Schedule, Council Taxbase for 2026/27 and permission to submit the NNDR I form by the 31st January statutory deadline.
- 2.19. Council Taxbase must be approved by 31st January under the Local Government Finance Act 1992. Fees & Charges across all Council services are reviewed every year and it is necessary that all fee earning services at least break even, with commercial services expected to make a surplus to help fund core services.
- 2.20. The final version of the budget, MTFS, Capital Programme and Strategy Papers for Investments, Capital and Treasury Management will go to full Council on 25th February.
- 2.21. It was expected that details of the Local Government finance settlement would be available earlier than normal this year but the delay of the Chancellor's Budget Announcement until the end of November has delayed the Local Government settlement announcement to just before Christmas. As reported in the Q1 budget monitoring report, modelling based on the provisional funding formula changes indicates a £943,000 loss of income over the three year period from 2026/27 to 2028/29.

Capital Programme

- 2.22. At the end of Q2 capital expenditure is £1,965,568 against an approved Capital Programme for the year of £16.165m, which includes slippage from 2024/25 of £4.9m related to the decarbonisation of Witney Leisure Centre, Waste Vehicle replacement and repairs to our buildings.

Capital Programme 2025/26

Scheme	Funded By	2025/26 Total Budget	Q2 Actual
Asset Repairs	Borrowing	1,500,000	192,381
Ubico Fleet - Replace Vehicle Hire Costs	Borrowing	4,721,266	
Replacement Sweepers	Borrowing	850,000	
In Cab Technology	Borrowing	100,000	
Witney ATP Refurbishment	Revenue Contribution	200,000	
Purchase of Temporary Accommodation	Capital Receipts	3,000,000	
CCTV - Upgrading	Capital Receipts	255,635	142,180
Improvement Grants (DFG)	Grant	880,000	549,254
UK Rural Prosperity Fund	Grant	0	33,378
Witney Leisure Centre PSDS	Grant/Borrowing	1,584,841	
Carterton Leisure Centre Solar PV Installation	Grant	0	256,800
Chipping Norton Leisure Centre PSDS	Grant/Borrowing	2,643,926	
IT Provision - Systems & Strategy	Revenue Contribution	100,000	15,261
Council Buildings Maintenance Programme	Revenue Contribution	250,000	110,968
IT Equipment - PCs, Copiers etc	Revenue Contribution	40,000	
Chipping Norton Creative	S106	0	21,805
Windrust Place Public Art	S106		2,976
Carterton Connects Creative (Swinbrook s106)	S106	39,500	984
Developer Capital Contributions	S106	0	639,581
		16,165,168	1,965,568

- 2.23. The Witney PSDS project is now in the construction phase with an estimated completion date of the end of February 2026. The Leisure, Assets, Finance and Climate teams are working together to deliver the project and are working in conjunction with GLL to mitigate any operational issues caused by the construction works. The Council has received grant funding of £1.649m towards the cost of this project, with an estimated contribution from the Council of £565,549.
- 2.24. The Council contribution includes a contingency against any additional costs that may arise during the construction phase that were not anticipated as part of the Investment Grade Proposal. The project must be completed by 31st March 2026 or under the terms of the funding, the grant will be forfeited and the Council will have to fund the entire £2.2m cost of the project.
- 2.25. The Council is set to complete on the purchase of a property in Witney in the first week of November which will provide 5 temporary emergency accommodation beds, the first property completion in a programme providing 30 additional emergency accommodation beds before the end of the financial year.
- 2.26. The programme is on track to deliver all 30 beds, with legal work currently in progress to complete on a further 6 properties by the end of Q3 and a final property in Q4. The properties will provide accommodation for both single people and families. Most of the properties will require modest to moderate refurbishment and re-configuration works which will take a little time to procure and therefore at this stage an estimated date for occupation is difficult to determine. Progress will be reported in the Q3 budget monitoring report.
- 2.27. Due diligence work is underway regarding a number of properties suitable for temporary emergency accommodation for both single people and families.

3. CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1. There are some key areas of optimism at the end of Q2 and these have been highlighted in the body of this report. There are no significant overspends in the first half of the year with the forecast for year-end a significant cost of service underspend, combined with Investment income from Treasury Management activity of around 32% above budget.
- 3.2. The forecast is extremely encouraging, but we must look ahead and prepare to fund the cost of the next stage of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and Devolution. There is currently no indication that there will be any funding from central government to help with these costs which are likely to be significant. Whilst the outcome of LGR for Oxfordshire will not be known until Q1 of 2026/27, it would be prudent to set aside funds as part of the 2026/27 budget setting process.
- 3.3. All areas will be closely monitored and reported on in future quarterly Financial Performance Reports.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

These are set out within section 2 of the paper.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from this paper.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1. Officers will continue to monitor budgets closely throughout the year to identify mitigating actions which will enable the overall budgetary position to be brought back in line with budget where possible.

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT

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

8. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

None arising from this report.

Annex A - Comparison of Q2 Budget Monitoring

	Q2 position			
	Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend	Forecast to Year End
	£	£	£	£
Democratic Services				
DRM001-Democratic Representation	205,754	206,118	365	365
DRM002-Support To Elected Bodies	251,456	255,075	3,619	3,619
ELE001-Registration of Electors	119,322	119,554	232	1,000
ELE002-District Elections	3,000	3,373	373	373
ELE004-Parliamentary Elections	104,899	105,034	135	135
ELE005-Parish Elections	0	4,869	4,869	4,869
ELE006-County Elections	48,000	50,660	2,660	2,660
ELE008-Police & Crime Commissioner Elections	0	3,658	3,658	3,658
SUP001-Administration	77,759	74,188	(3,571)	(3,571)
Total - Democratic Services	810,189	822,529	12,340	13,108

Environmental & Regulatory Services

	Q2 position			
	Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend	Forecast to Year End
	£	£	£	£
BUC001-Building Control - Fee Earning Work	51,633	56,947	5,314	5,314
BUC002-Building Control - Non Fee Earning Work	1,702	2,824	1,122	1,122
EMP001-Emergency Planning	8,795	10,803	2,008	2,008
ESM001-Environment - Service Mgmt & Supp Serv	52,009	52,009	(0)	(0)
PSH002-Private Sector Housing-Condition of Dwellings	1,500	0	(1,500)	(1,500)
REG001-Environmental Health General	0	0	0	0
REG002-Licensing	13,090	6,722	(6,368)	(6,368)
REG009-Environmental Protection	120,378	121,119	741	741
REG011-Authorised Process	(6,000)	(3,796)	2,204	2,204
REG013-Pollution Control	60,766	63,914	3,148	3,148
REG016-Food Safety	72,761	71,167	(1,594)	(1,594)
REG021-Statutory Burials	2,500	2,795	295	295
STC011 - Abandoned Vehicles	0	(650)	(650)	(650)
TAC309-Other Trading Services - Markets	2,525	16,860	14,335	31,467
Total - Environmental & Regulatory Services	381,658	400,714	19,056	36,188

TAC309 - The markets in Witney and Chipping Norton are now managed by a commercial operator. As the new model develops and attracts more traders to the revitalised markets, income is expected to grow over time. The income target will be reviewed as part of the 2026/27 budget setting process.

Finance, Human Resources & Procurement

	Q2 position			
	Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend	Forecast to Year End
	£	£	£	£
SUP003-Human Resources	124,435	128,423	3,988	3,988
HLD319 - New Initiatives	0	0	0	0
SUP009-Accountancy	217,997	219,097	1,100	1,100
SUP010-Internal Audit	116,594	119,821	3,227	3,227
SUP011-Creditors	20,218	19,861	(357)	(357)
SUP012-Debtors	28,683	26,833	(1,850)	(1,850)
SUP013-Payroll	27,289	27,289	0	0
SUP019-Health & Safety	17,412	17,495	83	83
SUP020-Training & Development	15,128	15,128	0	0
SUP033-Central Purchasing	19,810	19,810	0	0
SUP035-Insurances	5,081	5,081	(0)	(0)
Total - Finance, Human Resources & Procurement	1,436,435	1,442,628	6,193	6,193

ICT, Change & Customer Services

SUP002-Consultation, Policy & Research
 SUP005-ICT
 SUP008-Reception/Customer Services
 TMR002-Street Furniture & Equipment

Total - ICT, Change & Customer Services

Q2 position			
Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend	Forecast to Year End
£	£	£	£
1,875	0	(1,875)	(1,875)
655,744	661,804	6,059	6,059
306,201	304,661	(1,540)	(1,540)
(8,627)	(3,093)	5,533	5,533
2,093,081	2,101,259	8,178	8,178

	Q2 position			
	Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend	Forecast to Year End
	£	£	£	£
Land, Legal & Property				
ADB301-3 Welch Way (Town Centre Shop)	4,354	1,784	(2,569)	0
ADB302-Guildhall	(718)	(6,028)	(5,310)	(5,310)
ADB303-Woodgreen	168,694	169,783	1,089	1,089
ADB304-Elmfield	(60,000)	(59,701)	299	299
ADB305-Corporate Buildings	426,359	428,662	2,303	2,303
ADB306-Depot	26,061	27,264	1,203	1,203
FIE346-Marriotts	(385,436)	(379,154)	6,282	6,282
LLC001-Local Land Charges	(28,000)	(23,209)	4,790	20,000
SUP004-Legal	162,305	150,901	(11,404)	(11,404)
TAC303-Swain Court	236,284	229,119	(7,165)	(13,500)
Total - Land, Legal & Property	549,903	539,421	(10,481)	962

LLC001 - fee income has been consistent over the year but is below budget. The forecast for year end is a £20,000 income shortfall with expenditure falling within the existing budget.

SUP004 - employee costs for the shared service are underspent due to 2 vacancies at the beginning of the year that were recruited to in Q2

TAC303 - rental income is above budget with the forecast for year end relating to a further increase in income due to the base budget being too prudent. The income target will be reviewed as part of the 2026/27 budget setting process.

Q2 position			
Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend	Forecast to Year End
£	£	£	£

Leisure & Communities

CCR001-Community Safety (Crime Reduction)	176,766	180,891	4,125	4,125
CCR002-Building Safer Communities	(10,507)	(11,172)	(665)	0
CCR301 - Communities Revenue Grant	159,000	167,510	8,510	17,020
CCT001-CCTV	60,261	57,553	(2,708)	(2,708)
CSM001-Cultural Strategy	44,684	42,541	(2,143)	(2,143)
CUL001-Arts Development	(110,162)	(112,762)	(2,600)	(2,600)
ECD001-Economic Development	81,136	78,260	(2,876)	(2,876)
ECD010 – SPF Community and Place	(541,975)	(541,975)	0	0
REC001-Sports Development	101,873	108,768	6,895	6,895
REC002-Recreational Facilities Development	28,146	44,365	16,219	16,219
REC003-Play	43,329	50,595	7,266	7,266
REC301-Village Halls	7,535	7,535	0	0
REC302-Contract Management	(989,990)	(1,001,083)	(11,093)	(80,000)
SUP016-Finance - Performance Review	56,348	56,348	0	0
TOU001-Tourism Strategy and Promotion	55,066	53,412	(1,654)	(1,654)

Total - Leisure & Communities

(838,491)	(819,213)	19,277	(40,455)
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CCR301 - there is an error in the base budget which has created an overspend in Q2 of £8,510, this will increase to £17,020 by year end. This will be corrected in the 2026/27 budget.

REC002 - the overspend is a repayment to Sports England prior year unused grant money that was not spent as the project came in under budget. This was not known until after the year end 2024/25 so it was therefore not accrued for. The remainder of expenditure is within existing budget.

REC302 - The budget includes £50,000 for external legal advice related to the negotiation of the new leisure contract for 2027. This legal advice is likely to be needed in the second half of the year and is an underspend of £14,000 in Q2. Unbudgeted spend includes £9,975 for the installation of energy saving showers at Carterton LC. There are also number of minor overspends for the appraisal of Carterton LC roof repairs and professional advice on the specification of Solar PV installed. The annual contract income is increased by CPI inflation mid year and could bring the year end contract sum to a forecast of c£100,000 in excess of budget.

Environmental Services

	Q2 position			
	Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend	Forecast to Year End
	£	£	£	£
CCC001-Climate Change	93,238	94,315	1,077	1,077
COR301-Policy Initiatives - Shopmobility	8,936	8,335	(601)	0
CPK001-Car Parks - Off Street	165,468	162,146	(2,412)	(2,412)
ENI002-Grounds Maintenance	306,384	307,307	923	923
ENI303-Landscape Maintenance	39,212	36,989	(2,223)	(2,223)
FLD001-Flood Defence and Land Drainage	84,097	85,163	1,066	1,066
REG004-Dog Warden	25,000	26,230	1,230	5,000
REG019-Public Conveniences	90,469	94,282	3,813	6,000
REG023-Environmental Strategy	41,455	40,877	(578)	(578)
RYC001-Recycling	1,153,779	1,159,959	6,179	6,179
RYC002-Green Waste	(1,035,599)	(970,528)	65,071	65,000
RYC003-Food Waste	538,337	534,486	(3,851)	(3,851)
STC004-Environmental Cleansing	473,504	471,164	(2,340)	(2,340)
TRW001-Trade Waste	(53,068)	(207,457)	(154,389)	(250,000)

TRW002-Clinical Waste	(250)	0	250	250
WST001-Household Waste	1,063,869	1,087,319	23,451	23,451
WST004-Bulky Household Waste	9,124	(2,211)	(11,336)	(20,000)
WST301-Env. Services Depot, Downs Rd, Witney	114,229	116,742	2,513	6,000
Total - Environmental Services	3,118,182	3,045,117	(72,156)	(166,458)

RYC002 - income is at 96% of budget for the year. The income target will be reviewed as part of the 2026/27 budget setting process.

TRW001 - Trade Waste income is £197,000 ahead of target for the first half of the year, partially offset by £29,000 of expenditure on replacement bins and a £13,000 overspend on tipping charges - due to the higher volume of waste being collected. Invoices for September to March were raised in Q2, with the year end income position at least £295,000 above target. The year end forecast also includes additional expenditure on replacement bins and boxes.

WST001 - The overspend is due to external consultancy work undertaken by Activist on behalf of the Council to investigate options for a transformational waste strategy with Countywide partnership working.

WST004 - Bulky Waste income is £12,000 above target in Q2 and forecast to increase in the second half of the year

Planning & Strategic Housing

	Q2 position			
	Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend	Forecast to Year End
	£	£	£	£
DEV001-Development Control - Applications	(212,898)	(475,997)	(263,099)	(305,000)
DEV002-Development Control - Appeals	108,254	71,079	(37,175)	(20,000)
ENA001-Housing Enabling	74,992	72,431	(2,561)	(2,561)
ENI301-Landscape Initiatives	29,596	28,716	(880)	(880)
HLD315-Growth Board Project (Planning)	(26,695)	(26,525)	170	170
PLP001-Planning Policy	511,515	519,421	7,906	0
PLP004-Conservation	135,732	136,184	452	452
PSM001-Planning Service Mgmt & Support Serv	48,520	47,074	(1,446)	(2,000)
Total - Planning & Strategic Housing	669,016	372,382	(296,633)	(329,819)

DEV001 - Income is £321,000 above target due to major applications that have been received. This is offset by £63,000 of agency staff and a number of minor underspends.

DEV002 - it is difficult to predict when planning appeals will be lodged or to forecast whether the full budget will be exhausted by the end of the year. The budget for 2026/27 will be reviewed based on the information available at the time

	Q2 position			
	Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend	Forecast to Year End
	£	£	£	£
Retained Services				
COR002-Chief Executive	243,507	248,650	5,143	6,500
COR003-Corporate Policy Making	37,665	37,280	(385)	0
COR004-Public Relations	204,861	208,373	3,513	0
COR005-Corporate Finance	404,957	410,516	5,559	5,559
COR006-Treasury Management	13,350	12,600	(750)	(1,500)
COR007-External Audit Fees	104,156	129,000	24,844	25,000
COR008-Bank Charges	39,250	34,618	(4,632)	(10,264)
COR012 - Publica Review	176,932	176,932	(0)	0
COR302-Publica Group	123,370	130,060	6,690	5,000
FIE341-Town Centre Properties	(204,709)	(201,248)	3,461	5,000
FIE342-Miscellaneous Properties	42,194	32,253	(9,942)	0
FIE343-Talisman	(609,513)	(677,047)	(67,535)	(118,000)

FIE344-Des Roches Square	(215,745)	(219,288)	(3,543)	(5,000)
FIE345-Gables at Elmfield	0	5,415	5,415	5,415
NDC001-Non Distributed Costs	408,000	417,399	9,399	18,799
TAC304-Witney Industrial Estate	(85,710)	(84,072)	1,638	3,277
TAC305-Carterton Industrial Estate	(14,144)	19,859	34,004	50,000
TAC306-Greystones Industrial Estate	(4,100)	(6,173)	(2,073)	(4,147)
TAC308-Other Trading Services - Fairs	4,751	4,224	(527)	(527)
Total - Retained Services	669,073	679,352	10,279	(14,888)

COR007 - fees for the audit of the 2025/26 financial year will not be published until the end of November. The base budget includes £158,000 for the audit of the Statement of Accounts and a further £50,000 for the audit of our Housing Benefit system, both of which are statutory requirements. There will also be an additional cost for the increased audit assurance requirements subsequent to the adoption of IFRS 16 Leases.

FIE343 - Rental income for Unit 13 has been incorrectly excluded from the base budget for 2025/26, this error will be corrected for the 2026/27 budget but will cause a £107,000 underspend in the current financial year. There is also £11,000 of service charge income that relates to 2024/25 giving a Q2 underspend for rental income of £64,500.

TAC305 - the overspend relates to expenditure to secure the vacant units 1 - 3 in advance of the construction of the new roof, including repairs to the rolling shutters, electricity supply works, surveys and inspections. The forecast for year end assumes a continuation of security measures until the construction phase has been completed.

Revenues & Housing Support

	Q2 position			
	Current Budget	Actual Exp	Variance (under) / over spend	Forecast to Year End
	£	£	£	£
HBP001-Rent Allowances	192,543	195,855	3,312	0
HOM001-Homelessness	76,145	80,730	4,585	9,171
HOM004-Refugees	0	185	185	0
HOM005-Homelessness Hostel Accommodation	(1,995)	(137)	1,858	5,000
HOM006 - The Old Court	22,520	31,068	8,548	8,548
HOM007-Afghan Resettlement Programme	(168,193)	(168,193)	0	0
HOM008-Homes for Ukraine	16,840	16,840	0	0
LTC001-Council Tax Collection	212,750	218,734	5,984	(5,000)
LTC011-NNDR Collection	66,497	64,826	(1,672)	(5,000)
PSH001-Private Sector Housing Grants	25,798	26,248	450	450
PSH004-Home Improvement Service	(28,475)	(19,842)	8,633	15,000
Total - Revenues & Housing Support	414,429	446,315	31,885	28,169

PSH004 - the overspend is due to the cost of external contractors we use to conduct minor adaptations to residents homes i.e. installing external hand rails and internal grab rails. This budget will be reviewed for 2026/27.

Annex B

Capital Programme 2025/26

Scheme	Funded By	2025/26 Total Budget	Q2 Actual
Asset Repairs	Borrowing	1,500,000	192,381
Ubico Fleet - Replace Vehicle Hire Costs	Borrowing	4,721,266	
Replacement Sweepers	Borrowing	850,000	
In Cab Technology	Borrowing	100,000	
Witney ATP Refurbishment	Revenue Contribution	200,000	
Purchase of Temporary Accommodation	Capital Receipts	3,000,000	
CCTV - Upgrading	Capital Receipts	255,635	142,180
Improvement Grants (DFG)	Grant	880,000	549,254
UK Rural Prosperity Fund	Grant	0	33,378
Witney Leisure Centre PSDS	Grant/Borrowing	1,584,841	
Carterton Leisure Centre Solar PV Installation	Grant	0	256,800
Chipping Norton Leisure Centre PSDS	Grant/Borrowing	2,643,926	
IT Provision - Systems & Strategy	Revenue Contribution	100,000	15,261
Council Buildings Maintenance Programme	Revenue Contribution	250,000	110,968
IT Equipment - PCs, Copiers etc	Revenue Contribution	40,000	
Chipping Norton Creative	S106	0	21,805
Windrush Place Public Art	S106		2,976
Carterton Connects Creative (Swinbrook s106)	S106	39,500	984
Developer Capital Contributions	S106	0	639,581
		16,165,168	1,965,568

a

b

c

d

- a. Expenditure relates to the works on the roof of The Old Court, Chawley Park dilapidations and The Downs Road Depot. The replacement roofing works at Units 1-3 Carterton Industrial Estate and Station Lane are moving to the construction phase in November for completion in Spring 2026. These works will fully exhaust the £1,500,000 in the capital programme by the end of the financial year.
- b. A full waste vehicle strategy will be coming forward from the Waste Transformation Programme for Member consideration in Q3. This strategy will look to maximise the efficiencies attainable through partnership working across the County, that the Council could never achieve through unilateral action.
- c. Completion on a property in Witney is due in the first week of November. This property will provide 5 bedrooms and requires only modest works before tenants can move in. Negotiations are at an advanced stage on a further 6 properties suitable for temporary emergency accommodation, both for single people and families. These properties will however require reconfiguration and upgrading.
- d. The Witney PSDS project began the construction phase in September and has an estimated completion date of the end of February 2026.

 <p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>	<p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>
<p>Name and Date of Committee</p>	<p>EXECUTIVE – 17 DECEMBER 2025</p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p>SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT 2025-26 QUARTER TWO</p>
<p>Wards Affected</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>Accountable Member</p>	<p>Councillor Andy Graham – Leader of the Council. Email: andy.graham@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Accountable Officer</p>	<p>Giles Hughes – Chief Executive Officer. Email: giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Report author</p>	<p>Alison Borrett – Senior Performance Analyst. Email: alison.borrett@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Purpose</p>	<p>To provide details of the Council's operational performance at the end of 2025-26 Quarter Two (Q2).</p>
<p>Annex</p>	<p>Annex A - Council Priorities report Annex B - Corporate Plan Action Tracker Annex C - Performance indicator report</p>
<p>Recommendation.</p>	<p>That the Executive Resolves to: I. Note the 2025/26 Q2 service performance report.</p>
<p>Corporate Priorities</p>	<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
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>NO</p>
<p>Exempt</p>	<p>NO</p>
<p>Consultees/ Consultation</p>	<p>Publica Directors, Business Managers, Service Managers and Service Leads.</p>

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. This includes 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:
- The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule was formally adopted by Full Council on 1 October. An implementation plan is now being developed, with the levy scheduled to take effect from 31 January 2026.
 - Following the successful September Executive on Tour event held in Carterton, initial engagement with residents began for the Carterton Area Strategy through a focus group session, helping shape early priorities for the emerging strategy. A key milestone was the formal launch of the Economic Regeneration Lead, who will work with Cllr Sumner to drive the strategy forward.
 - New commercial operators took over the management of Witney and Chipping Norton markets from 1 August, bringing a fresh approach that has revitalised the atmosphere and increased footfall. Meanwhile, specialist markets at Marriotts Walk continue to attract visitors and add vibrancy to the local offer.
 - West Oxfordshire became the first district in Oxfordshire to endorse the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), following Executive approval on 10 September. Officers continue to play an active role in partnership forums and working groups to support biodiversity net gain across the district.
 - Ecological surveys were completed across five council-owned sites over the summer, as part of the Council's commitment to enhancing biodiversity. The consultant's reports are now under review, with recommendations for habitat improvements and nature-based enhancements to be implemented in 2026.
 - A communications strategy has been developed to support the Coronation Community Orchard Scheme, with monthly meetings between the Nature Recovery team and Communications officers to oversee delivery. Two management workshops, on tree pruning and wildflower grassland (orchard understory) management, are planned for early 2026.

- Construction is underway at Windrush Leisure Centre through the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme. The project will significantly reduce carbon emissions and improve energy efficiency across the site.

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 The Council's overall performance remains positive, with continued progress in key areas. Revenue collection for Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates is ahead of expectations, planning determination times remain well above target and customer satisfaction continues to be exceptionally high. Leisure services also performed strongly, with sustained engagement in gym memberships and leisure centre visits and the delivery of affordable homes significantly exceeded quarterly expectations. However, some challenges persist. Processing times for Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit change events, while improving, remain above target due to the cumulative nature of the metric and operational complexities linked to Universal Credit migration. Freedom of Information response times dipped below the target and performance in Land Charges searches were affected by staffing pressures late in the quarter. Environmental performance also faces ongoing challenges, with household recycling rates impacted by seasonal factors and wider national trends.

3.2 Service performance above target:

- Percentage of Council Tax Collected (58.99% against a target of 58%)
- Percentage of Non-Domestic Rates Collected (60.59% against a target of 58%)
- Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims (19.16 days against a target of 20 days)
- Percentage of Housing Benefit overpayment due to LA error/admin delay (0.12% against a target of 0.35%)
- Customer Satisfaction (98.27% against a target of 90%)
- Building Control Satisfaction (100% against a target of 90%)
- Percentage of major planning applications determined within agreed timescales (81.82% against a target of 70%)
- Percentage of minor planning applications determined within agreed timescales (98.21% against a target of 65%)
- Percentage of other planning applications determined within agreed timescales (97.33% against a target of 80%)
- Number of Affordable Homes Delivered (202 against a target of 138)
- Percentage of high-risk food premises inspected within target timescales day (100% against a target of 90%)
- Percentage of high-risk notifications risk assessed within 1 working day (100% against a target of 95%)
- Residual Household Waste per Household (kg) (89.58 against a target of 90)
- Missed bins per 100,000 (41.02 against a target of 120)
- (Snapshot) Number of gym memberships (5,749 memberships against a target of 5,023 memberships)
- Number of visits to the leisure centres (226,202 visits against a target of 189,446)

3.3 Service Performance below target:

Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events (9.23 days against a target of 5 days) and Processing times for Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances (7.8 days against a target of 4 days)

The Council saw a reduction in processing times for both Council Tax Support (CTS) change of events and Housing Benefit (HB) changes of circumstances compared to Q1. However, cumulative averages remain above the respective targets of 5 days for CTS and 4 days for HB, with CTS changes averaging 9.23 days and HB changes averaging 7.8 days.

The improvement in CTS processing times was largely driven by automation enhancements and the clearance of a backlog during Q1. Around 85% of income-related changes were batch processed during the quarter, significantly accelerating turnaround times. Notably, the average CTS processing time for July to September was just 2.71 days, well within target.

While further improvements are anticipated, the cumulative nature of the metric means it is unlikely to fall within target before the end of the financial year.

Housing Benefit continues to present challenges. The team are prioritising Full Claim Reviews mandated by the DWP, which are often complex and subject to delays in receiving full supporting evidence.

The HB caseload now primarily consists of pension-age claimants and temporary accommodation cases, following the migration to Universal Credit. With fewer HB changes occurring, any delay has a more pronounced impact on average processing times.

To support residents and strengthen financial resilience, the Council continues to deliver targeted initiatives through the Low Income Family Tracker (LIFT). Campaigns include:

- **Benefit Maximisation:** Identifying households not receiving their full entitlement, such as Attendance Allowance, Pension Credit, and Council Tax Support.
- **Income Deficit Support:** Targeting households in financial deficit to provide tailored advice and assistance.
- **Pension Credit Campaign:** Letters sent to 233 pension-age households resulted in 68 successful claims, unlocking over £250,000 in financial support.
- **Warm Homes Campaign:** Promoting eligibility for the Warm Home Discount among low-income households with high energy costs.

These initiatives are helping to reduce financial vulnerability and ensure residents receive the support they are entitled to.

Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days (83.16% against a target of 90%)

During Q2, the Council responded to 83.16% of Freedom of Information (FOI) requests within the 20-day timeframe, a decline from 89.1% in Q1 and below the target of 90%. The majority of requests continue to be directed toward Development Management, Environmental Services (ERS), Revenues and Benefits, and Housing, reflecting sustained public interest in these areas.

To strengthen transparency and improve FOI performance, the Council is taking a proactive approach to reviewing internal processes and identifying opportunities for improvement. This includes exploring ways to streamline request handling, enhance coordination across high-volume service areas, and reinforce awareness of statutory response times. By embedding best practices and promoting a culture of responsiveness, the Council aims to restore compliance with national standards and ensure residents continue to receive timely access to information.

Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed (cumulative) (38.46% against a target of 30%)

As of the end of Q2, the cumulative percentage of planning appeals allowed stands at 38.46%, exceeding the Council's internal target of no more than 30%. Between 1 July and 30 September 2025, five appeals were determined, with one upheld in favour of the applicant, resulting in a Q2-specific allowance rate of 20%.

Of these five appeals:

- Three were Upland applications, none of which were allowed (0% allowance rate).
- Two were Lowlands applications, with one allowed (50% allowance rate).

As this metric is cumulative, the allowance rate may fluctuate throughout the year depending on the number and outcome of appeal decisions received.

While the general target is for no more than 30% of appeals to be allowed, the Growth and Infrastructure Act 2013 introduced a formal system for assessing the performance of local planning authorities. Under the designation criteria, an authority may be identified as underperforming if 10% or more of its total planning decisions are overturned at appeal.

This measure of decision quality is assessed over a rolling two-year period and is applied separately to major and non-major development categories. It's important to note that the 10% threshold is based on the total number of decisions made, not just those that are appealed. Authorities exceeding this threshold in either category may be designated, allowing applicants to submit certain types of applications directly to the Secretary of State. Currently, West Oxfordshire is below the threshold for both major and non-major appeals, sitting at around 7.9% and 1.1%, respectively.

Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days (82.09% against a target of 90%)

The Council's performance against the 10-day target for completing official Land Charges searches declined in Q2, falling from 98.67% in Q1 to 82.09%, below the 90% target.

Performance remained strong through July and August, consistently exceeding target (97.78%), but a sharp drop in September impacted the quarterly average. This was primarily due to the long-term absence of a Land Charges team member, which reduced resilience across the service. Despite these challenges, the average turnaround time for searches was only 7.25 days, remaining below the 10-day target.

To address this, additional support has been deployed from the Customer Service and Support Service Team, enabling specialist staff to focus on completing searches. These measures are expected to stabilise performance and improve continuity going forward.

Percentage of household waste recycled (56.23% against a target of 62%)

During Q2, the Council recorded a decline in its household recycling rate of around 2.5% compared to the same quarter last year. This mirrors a broader national trend, where recycling rates have been under pressure due to seasonal and structural factors.

Despite this dip, West Oxfordshire continues to perform strongly. For the 2023/24 financial year, the district ranked among the top 20 councils in England for household waste recycling and remains within the top quartile of all English local authorities. This reflects the Council's ongoing commitment to environmental sustainability and effective waste management.

Nationally, recycling rates continue to face challenges, and West Oxfordshire is no exception. During the summer months, the district experienced unusually dry weather, which led to a 25% drop in garden waste tonnages compared to the same period last year. Because garden waste

represents a significant share of the recycling stream, this seasonal decline has had a noticeable impact on overall recycling performance.

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.

4. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

4.1 This report will be reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 10 December 2025. The draft minutes of that meeting will be circulated to all Members and any recommendations from the Committee will be reported to the 17 December 2025 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. SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 A Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) is not required because it is a quarterly review report for the Executive to note.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 None

(END)



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL PRIORITIES REPORT
July – September 2025

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

In early 2022, West Oxfordshire District Council conducted its first Youth Needs Assessment, engaging nearly 4,000 young people aged 11 to 25 through surveys and focus groups, alongside feedback from 177 parents. The assessment revealed significant challenges, including the lasting impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on education, social lives, and access to services.

Following a review of the findings in October 2023, the Council committed to strengthening youth engagement and approved the recruitment of a full-time Youth Development Officer in February 2024. Since taking up the role, the officer has engaged with over 29 community groups, four secondary schools, and multiple town and parish councils. Six thematic priorities have been identified: developing new youth provision, sustaining existing services, improving safety and wellbeing, supporting work and skills, promoting volunteering, and amplifying youth voice.

Key initiatives include:

- Supporting the revival of youth clubs in areas with limited provision, such as Eynsham and Stonesfield.
- Facilitating partnerships to address anti-social behaviour and mental health, including work with Witney Town Council and Thames Valley Police.
- Promoting youth-friendly employment and exploring a Youth Assembly to engage young people in climate action and local democracy.

To support youth-led innovation, the Council allocated £20,000 from its COMF budget to fund initiatives through Westhive, its civic crowdfunding platform. As of Spring 2025, 12 projects have been successfully funded, with over £412,000 pledged and a dedicated £20,000 ringfenced for youth-led ideas. The Council continues to pledge up to £12,000 per project, encouraging young residents to shape their communities.

The Council's commitment to youth and housing is also reflected in the 'Our House' project, launched in 2018 in partnership with Cottsway Housing and Aspire Oxfordshire. This initiative provides shared accommodation and tailored support for single individuals under 35 on out-of-work benefits. In July 2024, the Executive approved a two-year funding extension to continue the programme until October 2026, recognising its success in supporting young people into employment, education, and independent living.

In parallel with other strategic initiatives, the Council remains actively involved in shaping the future of local government through the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) process. The government intends to replace the current two-tier system of district and county councils with new unitary authorities and has invited councils to submit proposals that meet national criteria.

In response, five councils, including West Oxfordshire, have collaborated on a proposal to create two new unitary authorities: Oxford and Shires Council and Ridgeway Council. Under this proposal:

- Oxford and Shires Council would include Cherwell, Oxford City, and West Oxfordshire.
- Ridgeway Council would encompass South Oxfordshire, Vale of White Horse, and West Berkshire.

These names are working titles and may change. The aim is to establish financially sustainable, locally accountable councils that deliver high-quality services while maintaining strong community connections. The proposal also ensures continuity of key services—such as social care—by retaining existing arrangements from Oxfordshire County Council and West Berkshire Council, avoiding costly disaggregation.

The proposal focuses on improving service delivery, economic development, infrastructure, environmental protection, and addressing local priorities such as housing and flooding. A public engagement exercise ran from 4 June to 16 July 2025, with results expected in late November. Residents were invited to share their views via twocouncils.org and attend local events.

While this two-unitary model is one of three options under consideration, Oxfordshire County Council has submitted a competing proposal for a single countywide unitary authority, arguing it would offer stronger, simpler services and greater financial resilience. A third option proposes three unitary councils, including a standalone Greater Oxford authority.

The government is expected to make a final decision in 2026, with implementation likely in 2028.

Enabling a Good Quality of Life for All



Actions we are taking

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), introduced by the Government in 2008, ensures that new developments contribute fairly and transparently to vital infrastructure such as schools, roads, and community facilities. Following the commissioning of new viability evidence in March 2023 and an eight-week public consultation in August–September 2024, West Oxfordshire District Council formally submitted its updated CIL Charging Schedule for independent examination in March 2025. A public hearing was held on 10 June 2025.

The independent examiner approved the Draft Charging Schedule in July 2025, subject to one modification: a reduction in the proposed rate for larger residential developments (250+ homes) from £225 to £150 per square metre, excluding strategic development areas. The Council formally adopted the Charging Schedule on 1 October 2025, with implementation confirmed for 31 January 2026. From that date, CIL will apply as a fixed charge on certain types of new development — including new homes and extensions — calculated based on floor area. It will operate alongside existing Section 106 (S106) planning obligations to help fund essential infrastructure across the district. A proportion of CIL receipts will also be passed directly to the relevant town or parish council to support locally determined priorities.

The Salt Cross Garden Village continues to progress as a flagship sustainable development for West Oxfordshire. Designed to include schools, community facilities, employment opportunities, and 2,200 homes, the development is guided by the Salt Cross Area Action Plan (AAP). A key component of the AAP is the Council's Net Zero Carbon Development policy, which aims to ensure that Salt Cross is net zero in operation.

The Council's revised Net Zero Carbon Development policy was found sound by the Planning Inspector in August 2025, subject to several modifications. A six-week public consultation on the proposed modifications opened on 3 October 2025, allowing stakeholders to comment before final adoption. It will close on 14 November 2025. The modifications aim to improve clarity and practicality, and once adopted, will position Salt Cross as a leading example of sustainable placemaking in the UK. The first homes are still expected around 2029–2030.

The Carterton Area Strategy remains a central focus of West Oxfordshire's Local Plan 2041. A key milestone was reached during the Executive on Tour event in Carterton, which featured a dedicated focus group session with residents. This session provided an important opportunity for early public engagement, helping to shape the direction of the emerging strategy and offering insights into local priorities and aspirations.

The event also marked the formal launch of the newly appointed Economic Regeneration Lead, who will play a pivotal role in driving the strategy forward. Working closely with Cllr Sumner, the Lead will ensure Carterton's growth is sustainable and aligned with broader district objectives. To build on this momentum, further consultation is planned to deepen community involvement and refine the strategic focus. An Outcomes Framework will be developed to guide implementation, track progress, and ensure the strategy delivers tangible benefits for the town.

Key themes identified for Carterton's future include:

- Enhancing the town centre and public realm.
- Supporting business growth and inward investment.
- Improving transport and connectivity.
- Aligning housing development with employment opportunities.
- Strengthening links with RAF Brize Norton and the wider industrial base.

A dedicated Carterton Area Strategy Officer is still expected to be appointed in early 2026, with a full strategic blueprint anticipated by 2028.

The Carterton and Surrounding Area LCWIP was formally approved by Oxfordshire County Council on 9 October 2025. The plan outlines a 10-year strategy to improve walking, wheeling, and cycling infrastructure, aiming to reduce car dependency and promote active travel. It was shaped by public consultation and will guide future funding bids and infrastructure delivery across Carterton and nearby communities.

Eynsham LCWIP entered public consultation on 29 September 2025, with the consultation closing on 27 October 2025. The draft plan proposes improvements to active travel routes and infrastructure, including traffic-free paths and heritage-sensitive wayfinding. Both LCWIPs support the Council's climate goals and ambitions for healthier, more connected communities.

The proposed upgrades to Witney High Street and Market Square — including resurfacing, new seating, tree planting, and better accessibility — are under review following the close of a statutory consultation on 17 October 2025. If objections were raised, a report will be submitted to the Cabinet Member for Highway Management later this year.

One issue already flagged is the reduction in taxi rank spaces, which has prompted a closer look at the design to ensure it meets the needs of all users while supporting the town's regeneration goals. The Council is reviewing feedback to ensure the final design reflects the needs of all users and supports the town's long-term regeneration.

Creating a Better Environment for People and Wildlife



Actions we are taking

West Oxfordshire District Council has completed the Preferred Policy Options consultation for its emerging Local Plan 2041. This stage outlines the strategic direction for managing growth and development across the district, including updated objectives and preferred approaches to housing, transport, climate, economy, infrastructure, and wellbeing. It does not include specific site allocations; a separate consultation focused on development locations is expected later in 2025. The consultation ran from 26 June to 8 August 2025, hosted online via the Council's engagement platform, with hard copies available at Council offices and libraries. A series of public drop-in events were held across the district, alongside online sessions, enabling residents and stakeholders to engage directly with planning officers. Feedback gathered will inform the next stage of plan preparation.

The Council continues to develop its evidence base, including the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and Phase I Water Cycle Study, building on the Environment Agency's 'Spheres of Influence' pilot. Site assessments are underway, evaluating factors such as flood risk and foul water capacity to inform future allocations. Additional central government funding has been secured to support the Regulation 18 stage, and developer contributions are being captured through the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) to ensure infrastructure keeps pace with growth.

The Council is actively progressing its Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) strategy. A flagship initiative is the habitat bank at Pudlicote Farm, where low-productivity farmland is being restored to wildflower meadows, wetlands, and native woodlands. This project, developed in partnership with landowners and the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment, will generate biodiversity units for developers and contribute to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). Most Council-owned land is unsuitable for BNG delivery due to either small amenity grassland patches or existing high ecological value, so the focus is shifting to LNRS implementation.

The Local Nature Recovery Strategy was endorsed by the Executive on 10 September 2025, making West Oxfordshire the first district council in Oxfordshire to do so. Publication by Oxfordshire County Council is expected in November 2025. The Council's Nature Recovery Team meets monthly with Communications officers to implement a new communications strategy. Two management workshops—on tree pruning and wildflower grassland management—are planned for early 2026, with a contingency training programme in place should funding not be fully spent by March.

Ecological consultants have surveyed five sites over the summer, with reports now under review. Recommendations for biodiversity enhancements and revised management practices will be implemented in 2026. The Council continues to explore investment in farmer-led woodland planting schemes to support carbon sequestration and climate resilience.

The Council is also supporting the Windrush in Witney project, a landscape-scale initiative to restore floodplains through grazing, floral enhancement, and willow pollarding. Although the initial funding bid scheduled for August was missed, the Council's nature recovery team continues to support the Wychwood Forest Trust, with a revised bid now planned for November 2025. A workshop day is being organised to finalise the application.

Other ongoing initiatives include the Coronation Community Orchard Scheme, which has funded 17 orchards to date and has been extended to March 2026, and the Deer Park South Access Project, which has delivered improved public access and environmental education. A habitat survey has been completed, and land management plans are being developed.

The Council continues to facilitate the Evenlode Catchment Partnership and is engaging with the Windrush Catchment Partnership to explore further collaboration. Climate resilience was discussed at the last quarterly meeting, and the Principal Ecologist now sits on the newly established steering group.

The Nature and Health Inequality project is ongoing, with officers running sessions in Witney and Chipping Norton. Collaborative working has enabled engagement with YouMove families, in partnership with the Community Physical Activity Officer, and with researchers from the University of Oxford.

Finally, Ubico has submitted a business case to compost material at the Station Lane depot, aiming to reduce the need for purchased compost. The Council is also reviewing its capacity to manage County-owned verges, with the aim of enhancing biodiversity through revised maintenance practices.



Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency

Actions we are taking

West Oxfordshire District Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency in June 2019, committing to become a carbon-neutral council by 2030. This ambition is being delivered through the Climate Change Strategy 2025–2030, approved in July, alongside the Carbon Action Plan 2024–2030 and the West Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Plan. Together, these documents outline coordinated actions to reduce emissions, enhance biodiversity, and build climate resilience.

The Council has made significant progress in decarbonising its estate. Heat decarbonisation plans for Elmfield Council Offices, Welch Way, and the Old Court House were completed in March 2024. Solar PV installation at Elmfield is now operational, enabling tenants to benefit from renewable energy while allowing the Council to recover costs through recharges or power purchase agreements.

At Windrush Leisure Centre, the £1.6 million PSDS Phase 3c decarbonisation project is on target, with contractors on-site and construction progressing as planned. A change in project management has not affected programme or cost delivery.

However, the PSDS Phase 4 project for Chipping Norton Leisure Centre has been cancelled following a decision by SLT and Members not to utilise the £2.2 million grant funding. This will significantly impact the Council's ability to meet its 2030 carbon neutrality target. Similarly, the lack of grant funding for Carterton Leisure Centre (PSDS 3b) means that while solar PV has been installed, the centre continues to produce high levels of carbon emissions, limiting the effectiveness of decarbonisation efforts.

Energy efficiency measures at 3 Welch Way are progressing, with funding for low-carbon heating and solar PV to be included in the 2026/27 budget.

The Council continues to expand its electric vehicle charging infrastructure, with 76 EV charging points now operational across Council-owned car parks. Participation in the Oxfordshire Local EV Infrastructure (OxLEVI) programme is ongoing, with preferred suppliers appointed and plans to triple public EV provision by 2025.

A Waste Environmental Services Programme (WESP) business case is being drafted with partners. However, it currently lacks consideration of infrastructure needs such as net zero depots and fleet decarbonisation. A fleet review has been completed, and procurement is underway for four electric food waste vehicles, with further electrification planned for vehicles due for replacement.

The Council remains a key partner in CAPZero, a community energy plan covering eight parishes. Work continues to accelerate domestic and commercial retrofit, using Arup's preliminary retrofit report to identify priority actions. The Council is promoting ESOX assessments and grant funding for commercial retrofit.

The Greenlight online hub continues to support community-led climate action, with recent updates including a retrofit competition, funding information, and expanded resources. The Council is also engaging with town and parish councils, catchment partnerships, and external stakeholders to support climate mitigation and resilience. Youth networks are being identified to improve climate awareness and empower younger generations.

The Sustainability Impact Assessment Tool (SIAT) is now mandatory for all Council decisions, with staff and members trained to assess climate and nature impacts across projects and policies.

In the private housing sector, the Council is preparing to enforce Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES) for privately rented homes. Reported breaches will be investigated and enforced. A report was submitted to the Executive in April 2025 to secure funding for an Asset Management Strategy, which will include carbon efficiency assessments of tenanted buildings.

Through the Home Upgrade Grant Phase 2 (HUG2), 15 homes received funding in Year 1 to improve energy efficiency. Eligibility has expanded to households with incomes up to £39,000 and EPC ratings of D or below. The Council is working with Welcome the Warmth and Oxfordshire County Council to deliver insulation, solar PV and low-carbon heating systems.

A countywide energy baseline and modelling exercise is nearing completion, with Executive approval granted to progress to a district-level Local Area Energy Plan (LAEP). Local Plan energy policies are under review ahead of the Regulation 19 submission.

West Oxfordshire was named the top-performing rural district in the UK in the 2025 Council Climate Action Scorecards, reflecting strong strategic planning and community engagement. Key initiatives contributing to this recognition include the Better Housing Better Health programme, Coronation Community Orchard Scheme, and ongoing carbon literacy training.



Working Together for West Oxfordshire

Actions we are taking

As West Oxfordshire District Council enters the final year of UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) and Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF) funding, its priority is to ensure a seamless transition and avoid a sudden drop-off in support for local communities and businesses. To sustain momentum, the Council is extending key projects into the 2025/26 funding year, with final allocations of £327,146 (UKSPF) and £214,829 (REPF) confirmed.

The Council has launched several new business support schemes, including the West Oxfordshire Business Boost Grant, offering up to £5,000 for capital investment projects that promote growth, innovation, and sustainability. This scheme complements existing grants such as:

- Shop Front Improvement Grants – up to £1,000
- Visitor Economy Grants – up to £10,000
- Rural Enterprise Growth Grants – up to £20,000

Applications for these closed in July 2025, and delivery partners remain on track. Six-month impact reporting begins in October.

The Westhive civic crowdfunding platform continues to be a flagship initiative. By the end of Round 4 (July 2025), 28 projects were supported with a combined value of £948,172. A detailed report is due to go to the Executive on 12 November 2025.

Recent highlights include:

- Youth Development Officer initiatives inspiring youth-led projects in Stonesfield, Freeland, and Eynsham.
- Youth Partnership established with Witney Town Council and Thames Valley Police, focusing on exploitation and inclusion.
- YouMove programme now supports over 500 families, offering free and low-cost access to leisure activities.
- Leisure Cards scheme under the GLL contract provides free access to leisure centres for participants experiencing poor mental health.

The Council continues to engage with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) through forums in major settlements and biannual Health and Wellbeing Alliance meetings. In 2024/25, £273,682 in UKSPF funding was distributed to VCS groups via Westhive.

New initiatives include:

- Recruitment of a Food Action Plan Officer to support delivery of the West Oxfordshire Food Action Plan.
- Launch of the Community Activity Grant (CAG) scheme, with decisions due in October 2025, offering £500–£1,000 for small-scale community action projects.
- Introduction of the Community Insight Profile Grant Scheme, funded by OCC Public Health, to support VCS groups in Witney Central. Decisions are expected in November 2025.

The Carbon Action Fund has performed strongly, supporting SMEs to reduce their carbon footprint. It has been submitted for consideration for an LGC Award. Meanwhile, the Tools for Tomorrow initiative is addressing gaps in local construction trade provision.

An additional £60,000 has been invested in the Westhive Community Infrastructure Fund, supporting projects focused on inclusion, mental health, and youth engagement.

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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
In Progress	Work on the action is underway, though a fixed timeline has not yet been set.
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
I.I	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. 	Explore how the Council leads Youth Engagement, ensuring youth are engaged across the wide range of activity it undertakes.	Youth Dev Officer liaising with internal colleagues inc Climate, Economic Development and Communications.			On Target	Rachel Crouch	Heather McCulloch
			Customer Experience Improvement Programme	Completed	01/07/2020	01/01/2024	Complete	Andy Graham	Giles Hughes

I.2	Putting Residents, Young and Old, at the Heart of What We Do	The Council will act with outstanding levels of transparency and accountability, with high standards of governance and trustworthiness.	<p>Proposal to implement a robust system and process for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > the allocation of matters to the councils' forward plans > report preparation, consultation and approval > transparency and publication of decision making; and > decision tracking. 	Completed	01/05/2021	31/12/2023	Complete	Andy Graham	Giles Hughes
I.3		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.	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.	The Procurement Act 2023 came into effect in February, introducing new processes based on contract value. These changes are now reflected in our updated contract procedure rules, which apply to all purchases across Publica and our partner councils. To support officers, we've launched a new Procurement Toolkit—a step-by-step guide with templates and legal/policy requirements for each stage. Toolkit training will be available in December, and the Procurement Team remains on hand to support procurements over £30,000.			In Progress	Alaric Smith	Ciaran O'Kane / Phil Martin
		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.	Adopt and implement CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy).	The Council's CIL charging schedule was formally adopted by Full Council on 1 October. An implementation plan is currently being developed based on a CIL effective commencement date of 31 January 2026.	01/11/2019	31/08/2024	Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Hugo Ashton	Giles Hughes / Chris Hargraves
			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.	Completed	01/09/2023	20/11/2024	Complete	Tim Sumner	Rachel Biles

2.1

Enabling a
Good Quality
of Life for All

Explore opportunities for green investment for strategic development areas eg through the Carterton Masterplan and also through the Pan-Regional Partnership.	The Pan-Regional Partnership concluded in May 2025. A joint Officer and Oxford Growth Commission event, hosted with PGC Chair Neale Coleman, included a tour of strategic growth sites showcasing green investment opportunities, particularly at Salt Cross Garden Village. Further initiatives are progressing through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund in collaboration with the Low Carbon Hub and Green Fund, helping businesses develop energy action plans and secure funding for sustainable infrastructure. Looking ahead, the Carterton Area Strategy will gain momentum with the appointment of a new Economic Development Lead.	01/01/2023	31/08/2025	On Target	Tim Sumner, Andrew Prosser	Sam Stronach
Explore how the Local Plan can address the issue of securing long term maintenance of green infrastructure on large SDAs.	Good progress continues to be made on the emerging Local Plan with a spatial options consultation taking place from 3 November to 22 December 2025. The updated timetable for the Local Plan indicates that the final draft plan will be published in May 2026. This will address a broad range of policy topics including the provision and maintenance of green infrastructure on strategic sites.	31/08/2022	31/08/2025	On Target	Andrew Prosser	Chris Hargraves
Consideration of community stewardship and maintenance of Strategic Development Areas – how do we enable this?	Good progress continues to be made on the emerging Local Plan with a spatial options consultation taking place from 3 November to 22 December 2025. The updated timetable for the Local Plan indicates that the final draft plan will be published in May 2026. This will address a broad range of policy topics including the provision and maintenance of green infrastructure on strategic sites.	31/08/2022	31/08/2025	On Target	Andrew Prosser	Chris Hargraves

2.2		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.		Carterton Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Project (LCWIP) will be submitted to OCC's Cabinet Member Decision for Transport on 9 October for formal adoption. Eynsham LCWIP is underway.	10/09/2021		In Progress	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon
		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.	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.	Initial assessment shows that partnership working with an RP offers the potential to leverage funding and Homes England grant, whilst de-risking financial exposure for the Council. Live example at Woodford Way currently being progressed.	01/04/2023		On Target	Alaric Smith, Geoff Saul	Giles Hughes
			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
			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).	Routes to direct Council Intervention have been explored and a Council Owned company has been discounted. Alternative routes such as Joint Venture, Land trading, Profit share and commissioning models are more favourable. A recent example is partnership working with an RP to appraise, commission and develop a Council land asset at Woodford Way. This approach protects the Councils interests, offers protection from financial and resource risk, and it also provides clarity on the desired outcome.	01/04/2023		On Target	Geoff Saul	Giles Hughes

2.3

The Council will be a hive of activity to help build and support thriving towns and villages that provide residents with a high quality of life by supporting a vibrant local economy, homes and infrastructure that meet people's needs, excellent

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.

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.	The current Business Case and block plan drawings for Woodford Way demonstrates that a housing scheme can feasibly be developed which integrates sufficient car parking whilst retaining the existing EVPC provision. The proposed parking solution includes the car parking capacity available at the Marriotts multi-storey car park in close proximity to the site. The recent car parking strategy makes this position clear, but even more, further work is being done to quantify this.	01/04/2023		On Target	Geoff Saul	Michael David
Further exploration of modular building – how, where and with whom including visits manufacturers. To understand options for delivery.	Modular Building companies have been researched (including Timber frame SIPs and container homes) however appropriate sites have not yet been identified.	01/04/2023		On Target	Geoff Saul	Giles Hughes
Emergency accommodation – Acquisition of - consider the balance – single/couple and family accommodation).	A total of 28 bedspaces have been identified in the pipeline for acquisition. These are predominantly to meet the needs of single persons which is the overriding demand from the housing register. Each property transaction is at varying stages of surveys, legal work in preparation for completion and exchange of contracts.			In Progress	Geoff Saul	Jon Dearing
Completion of housing development at Walterbush Road, Chipping Norton.	Longstop date for development partner extended to 1st December 2025. Development partner has now confirmed that the sale to them is unlikely to proceed due to inability to secure funding. Officers are working on alternative option to bring forward.	01/10/2021	31/07/2023	Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Geoff Saul	Jasmine McWilliams
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.	Complete	01/04/2023	31/09/2024	Complete	Geoff Saul	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.	Carterton Strategic Plan now underway and being led by Phil Martin - Director of Place. Strong inter-relationship with the emerging West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2043.			In Progress	Duncan Enright	Chris Hargraves

2.4

health and wellbeing and ensuring equal access to opportunity for all.

Strategy and plan for reinvigorating the District's Charter Markets	<p>Since 1 August, Cotswold Markets have taken over the charter markets in Chipping Norton and Witney, creating a fresh atmosphere that's boosted public engagement and positive feedback. We'll monitor progress and seek opportunities to grow the market offer.</p> <p>Local traders report increased footfall and renewed competition on market days. Councillor Duncan Enright has filmed a segment at the markets, due for release soon.</p> <p>Income from the markets will help support start-up businesses with stalls, while specialist markets will continue at Marriotts Walk throughout the year. Market operators will also help shape Public Realm improvements to ensure markets thrive alongside new developments.</p>			Complete	Duncan Enright	Sam Stronach
Take an active role as member of Cotswolds Plus Local Visitor Economy Partnership (LVEP) and engagement with neighbouring LVEP's.				On Target	Duncan Enright	Chris Jackson
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>We are progressing work to secure Section 106 funding for a wayfinding signage project in Witney, with an executive report drafted and stakeholder engagement underway.</p> <p>Through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), we are delivering a Shop Front Improvement Grant Scheme with Planning, and several businesses have already applied for funding. We have launched the Rural Enterprise Growth Grant and West Oxfordshire Business Boost Grant, and are supporting the Tourism Team with the Visitor Economy Grant Scheme, due to conclude in Q3. A programme of Business Breakfast Briefings is now in place, featuring sector speakers to provide support and gather feedback on the local economy. We continue to support town partnerships and share updates regularly through Chamber of Trade meetings.</p>	01/12/2022	31/05/2025	On Target	Duncan Enright	Sam Stronach
Oxfordshire County Council improvements to Witney Town Centre linked to Marriotts Walk redevelopment where appropriate.	<p>Proposed High Street and Market Square improvements are back out for consultation, concluding later in October 2025. The County Council will review the responses and, if necessary (i.e. if objections are received) prepare a report to be presented to the Cabinet Member for Highway Management at a meeting scheduled for later in 2025.</p>			Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Duncan Enright	Sam Stronach

2.5			Guide the future delivery of Salt Cross new garden village and associated infrastructure to enable delivery of Salt Cross Science Park.	Area Action Plan policy. Planning Inspector's decisions have been received by WODC finding the Net Zero policy 2 to be legally sound subject to modifications. Modifications have been agreed with the Inspector and sustainability appraisal updated. 6 week public consultation will follow 3rd October - 14 November 2025. Inspector's final report due December 2025 & opportunity for WODC to adopt the AAP. The 2020 outline planning application (OPA) is being reviewed in light of the examined AAP & in preparation of AAP adoption. A programme has been agreed with GDL & planning performance agreement is being updated for WODC & OCC.	01/01/2018	31/12/2034	Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Duncan Enright	Andrea Clenton
			Marriotts Walk – implementation of CBRE recommendations inc. securing new tenants, public realm improvements & making enhanced use of the square.	Work ongoing with CBRE to manage void units in a challenging market. Unit 12 lease completed and fitout in progress. Unit 6 Agreement for Lease completed and planning permission granted, landlord fitout in progress. Terms agreed with prospective tenant for Unit 14a. Public Realm designs and costings in train.			On Target	Duncan Enright	Jasmine McWilliams
			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.	Following a successful Executive on Tour event in Carterton, residents engaged in a focus group to help shape the emerging Carterton Area Strategy and share early priorities. The event also marked the launch of the new Economic Regeneration Lead, who will drive the strategy with Tim Sumner to ensure sustainable growth aligned with district objectives. Next steps include further consultation and development of an Outcomes Framework to guide delivery and measure progress. The Economic Regeneration Lead will focus on key themes: improving the town centre and public realm, supporting business growth and investment, enhancing transport and connectivity, aligning housing with jobs, and strengthening links with RAF Brize Norton and the wider industrial base.	01/02/2022	31/05/2025	Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Alaric Smith, Hugo Ashton, Geoff Saul, Tim Sumner	Sam Stronach
		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.	Ubico Grounds Maintenance Contract – review contract with aim of securing both biodiversity enhancements and budgetary savings.	Ongoing, Ubico have submitted a business case to compost material at the Station Lane depot to reduce the need to purchase. Currently reviewing capacity to take on the management of County owned verges to encourage biodiversity. Wildflower meadows at Woodgreen have been managed. No use of Glyphosate at Woodgreen also agreed.	01/04/2025	01/03/2026	On Target	Lidia Arciszewska	Si Pocock-Cluley

3.1	Creating a Better Environment for People and Wildlife	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.	Ecological consultant has been surveying and assessing the 5 sites over the summer and their report has been submitted. This is being reviewed over the winter period and a set of recommendations for changes to management and other biodiversity enhancements will be agreed for implementation during 2026. Roadside verge nature reserves are also in discussion with the Ubico contract managers to facilitate a change in management regime.	01/02/2022	01/03/2026	On Target	Lidia Arciszewska	Si Pocock-Cluley / Hannah Kenyon
		Support DEFRA funded Landscape Recovery Project (contiguous with the Evenlode and Windrush Catchments) in partnership with the North East Cotswolds Farmer Cluster and the Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership.	Meeting attended with the landscape recovery project officers to discuss Biodiversity Net Gain considerations with WODC Principal Ecologist and Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment on 17th September 2025. Support was given to the project and further meetings and discussed will be needed in due course.			In Progress	Lidia Arciszewska	Chris Hargraves
		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.	August 2025 submission of bid was missed. Ongoing support being provided to Wychwood Forest Trust by WODC nature recovery team - Principal Ecologist is liaising regularly with WFT CEO. It is likely that this will be refreshed in January 2026 with a project team meeting to discuss the way forward and agree next steps. WFT CEO is adamant that they do not want to submit a bid application that is not robust and cannot be fully supported. It also needs to be updated in light of recent policies, including the Oxfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy, and staffing changes at the Lower Windrush Valley Project.	01/05/2022	01/03/2025	Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon
		Coronation Community Orchard Scheme	A communications strategy has been produced. The Nature Recovery team meet monthly with Comms officers to discuss implementation of the strategy. Two management workshops are being organised for delivery early in the new year - one on tree pruning and the other on wildflower grassland management (orchard understory). Contingency plan in place if money is not spent by end of March 2026 (training programme during summer/autumn 2026), which has been agreed with Defra.	01/11/2023	21/03/2025	On Target	Andrew Prosser/Lidia Arciszewska	Hannah Kenyon

3.2	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	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.	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.	Continue to explore potential investment in farmer-led woodland planting schemes for carbon sequestration.			In Progress	Lidia Arciszewska, Andrew Prosser	Chris Jackson / Hannah Kenyon
3.3		Help people to connect with nature by improving understanding of and public access to green spaces and the countryside.	Deer Park South Access Project – Infrastructure improvements to enhance public access to woodland adjacent to strategic development area.	Completed. Habitat survey has been received.	01/12/2022	31/05/2025	Complete	Duncan Enright	Hannah Kenyon
			Tackling inequalities in nature	Nature and Health Inequality project is continuing. With officers attending and running sessions in both Witney and Chipping Norton. Collaborative working has allowed connection with the YouMove families, working with the Community Physical Activity Officer. Officers are continuing to work with local charities and councils, as well as researchers from the University of Oxford.			On Target	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon / Heather McCulloch
3.4		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.	Officer group to convene with Local Nature Partnership - maintain relationship with LNP and work with partners to develop workstreams.	LNRS went through full Executive on the 10th of September and the publication (by Oxfordshire County Council) was endorsed. West Oxfordshire were the first district council in Oxfordshire to do so. Ongoing involvement with the LNP, including invitation to attend the annual partnership forum meeting on 12th November 2025 (for LNRS launch), and involvement with policy and BNG working groups.	01/07/2022	01/07/2025	On Target	Lidia Arciszewska, Duncan Enright	Hannah Kenyon
			Explore the potential for the Council to acquire land for Biodiversity Net Gain and nature-based carbon sequestration.	Most of council land probably unsuitable for BNG either due to small-patches of amenity grassland in housing estates which would be difficult to enhance and manage in the long term, or sites that already have high ecological value. This will be considered further after the site management plans have been reviewed as the potential for BNG will be understood better after the baseline has been confirmed (5 priority sites only). Perhaps this KPI should be changed to relate more specifically to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy as there has been a lot of work on this over last few months and it will be published in November, so the priority is shifting towards its delivery.	8/12/2024	31/03/2026	On Target	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon

3.5	all.	Work with others to facilitate environmentally sensitive flood management of our river catchments.	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).	Facilitating the Evenlode Catchment Partnership through the SLA and attendance at meetings. Discussed climate resilience at the last quarterly meeting. Principal Ecologist sits on the newly established steering group. In discussions with the Windrush Catchment Partnership as to how the Council can support this partnership more.			On Target	Lidia Arciszewska, Andy Graham	Hannah Kenyon
			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.	Good progress continues to be made on the emerging Local Plan with a spatial options consultation taking place from 3 November to 22 December 2025. The updated timetable for the Local Plan indicates that the final draft plan will be published in May 2026. This will address a broad range of policy topics including the water environment within site allocations.	01/06/2022	31/12/2024	On Target	Hugo Ashton	Chris Hargraves / Hannah Kenyon
		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.	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.	PSDS 3c Windrush Leisure Centre (on target) - In the construction phase with contractors on-site. Change in project management. Programme and cost on track. PSDS 4 Chipping Norton Leisure Centre (off target) - SLT and Members have decided to cancel the decarbonisation project and not to utilise the £2.2m grant funding that has been awarded to the Council. Significant impact on the Council's ability to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030, as set out in the approved Carbon Action Plan 2024-2030.			Off Target	Andrew Prosser, Dan Levy, Alaric Smith	Hannah Kenyon
			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.	PSDS 3b Carterton Leisure Centre - lack of grant funding to decarbonise the leisure centre will significantly affect the council's ability to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. The installation of solar provides clean and green energy to the centre, however does not help to remove the large amount of carbon emissions.	31/10/22	31/03/25	Off Target	Andrew Prosser, Tim Sumner	Hannah Kenyon

4.1	Responding to the Climate and Ecological Emergency		Waste Vehicle Strategy - Supporting the Waste team on the development of the strategy to reduce emissions from the Council's waste vehicle fleet.	Waste Environmental Services Programme (WESP) business case being drafted with partners. It does not yet consider infrastructure, i.e. net zero depots and waste fleet, which is key to a sustainable waste service. Vehicle procurement underway to purchase 4 x electric food waste vehicles. Review of whole fleet undertaken to identify potential to electrify vehicles due for replacement.			On Target	Lidia Arciszewska	Si Pocock-Clulely / Hannah Kenyon
			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.	Completed. West Oxfordshire Climate Change Strategy 2025-2030 approved in July.	01/07/23	30/6/2024	Complete	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon
			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.	Completed. Sustainability impact assessments are now mandatory for all Council decisions.	01/02/2023	01/04/2024	Complete	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon
			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.	Energy efficiency measures at 3 Welch Way being progressed. Funding for low carbon heating and solar PV to be included in the 26/27 budget.	01/08/2022	01/12/2023	On Target	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon
4.2		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.	Biodiversity Action Plan – Develop and deliver workstreams to restore nature and enhanced biodiversity in the District.	Nature recovery actions with the highest impact are being prioritised. (this should refer to the Nature Recovery Plan published by the council?)	01/03/2023		In Progress	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon
	The Council will be a community leader in	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	Consider how proactive should WODC be in facilitating retrofit for the 'able to pay' market.	Continued to work with the CAPZero project team on accelerating domestic and commercial retrofit. Using Arup's preliminary retrofit report to identify actions to accelerate domestic retrofit. Promoting ESOX assessments and grant funding for commercial retrofit.			In Progress	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon

4.3	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.		Greenlight – nature and online hub to facilitate community action for a greener future.	Engaging with town and parish councils, catchment partnerships and other external stakeholders on climate mitigation and resilience. Identifying youth networks which can be used to improve climate awareness and support younger generations taking climate action.			In Progress	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon
			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.	Reported breaches of MEES for privately rented homes will be investigated and enforced.	01/07/2023		On Target	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon
			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.	Completed	01/06/2023	01/03/2025	Complete	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon
4.4		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.	Explore opportunities with partners to encourage renewable energy within the District.	Countywide energy baseline and modelling being finalised. Executive approval to progress to a district Local Area Energy Plan.(LAEP). Local Plan energy policies under review for the Reg 19 submission.			On Target	Andrew Prosser	Giles Hughes / Hannah Kenyon
4.5		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.	Install EV charging points across the District.	OxLEVI tender submissions have been awarded (preferred supplier).	26/05/2023	01/01/2025	Off Target but Mitigation in Place	Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon
5.1	Working Together for	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.	Continued progress across our business support programmes for UKSPF and REPF. We were able to open the West Oxfordshire Business Boost grant fund in addition as budget available, extending support to more local businesses. Delivery partners remain on track, and six-month reporting will begin in October to monitor impact. We're also exploring plans for a celebratory event to recognise achievements and strengthen community connections.			On Target	Duncan Enright	Sam Stronach

	West Oxfordshire		Successful implementation of new Grant Scheme: a) Crowdfunding, b) Community and Voluntary Sector Service Level Agreements and c) Youth initiatives.	a) Crowdfunding (Westhive) platform is operational. By end of Round 4 (July 25) 28 projects supported with total value of £948,172.00. Detailed report due to go to Executive on 12th Nov 2025. b) 3 YR SLA programme implemented and being monitored. An update report went to Executive on 10th Sept 2025. c) Youth initiatives are being developed by the Youth Dev officer	01/12/2022	31/05/2025	On Target	Alaric Smith with Rachel Crouch, Andrew Prosser and Lidia Arciszewsk	Heather McCulloch
5.3		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.	Completed	01/12/2022	31/05/2025	Complete	Andrew Prosser	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	Ongoing engagement with VCS services through forums in major settlements and twice yearly Health and Wellbeing Alliance meetings. Will be recruiting in this quarter a Food action plan officer to support taking actions of the Food Action Plan forward. Implemented the CAG grant scheme - decisions in Oct 2025 - to support small community action projects. Designed the Community Insight Profile grant scheme (OCC Public health funded) - to support VCS groups to work in Central Witney ward - decisions in Nov 2025. 12 out of the 28 successful Westhive projects will benefit children and young people.	01/12/2022	31/05/2025	On Target	Rachel Crouch	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 set up home in the District.	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.	A Youth Partnership has been established alongside Witney Town Council and TVP. Youth Dev officer continues to engage with communities to establish provision where this is lacking eg Stonesfield, Freeland and Eynsham You Move - programme to tackle financial barriers faced by families to being active - continues to grow with over 500 families taking up membership and benefitting from free and low cost access to opportunities. Participants experiencing from poor mental health are benefiting from the Leisure Cards scheme as part of the GLL contract which provides free access to the leisure centres.			In Progress	Rachel Crouch, Tim Sumner	Heather McCulloch

		Have Your Say Events – focussed topic event for young people.	No plans for a one-off Have your say event at this stage. Priority is being given to developing engagements which have more legacy.			In Progress	Rachel Crouch	Heather McCulloch
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WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Delivering great services locally

PERFORMANCE REPORT:
July - September 2025

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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 other Local Authorities within Oxfordshire County Council. The Councils included are Cherwell, Oxford City, South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse.

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.

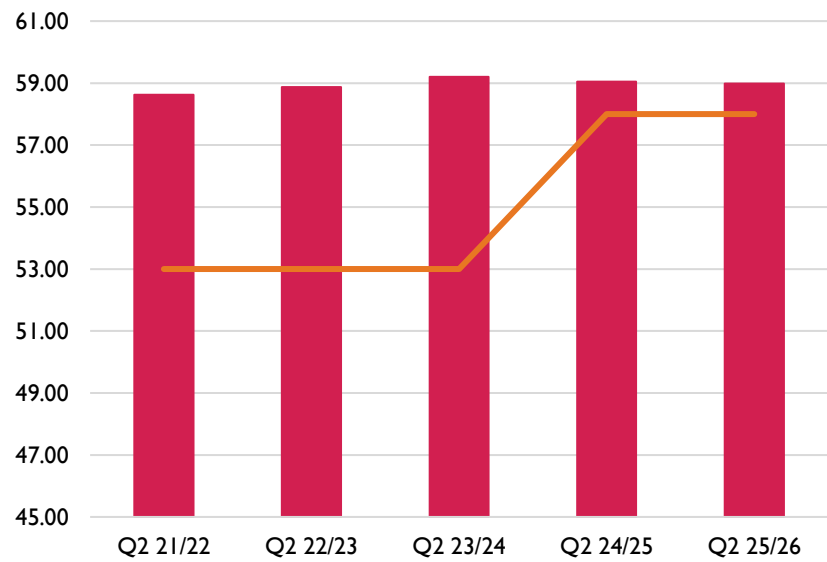
Overall Performance

The Council's overall performance remains positive, with continued progress in key areas. Revenue collection for Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates is ahead of expectations, planning determination times remain well above target and customer satisfaction continues to be exceptionally high. Leisure services also performed strongly, with sustained engagement in gym memberships and leisure centre visits and the delivery of affordable homes significantly exceeded quarterly expectations.

However, some challenges persist. Processing times for Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit change events, while improving, remain above target due to the cumulative nature of the metric and operational complexities linked to Universal Credit migration. Freedom of Information response times dipped below the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) target and performance in Land Charges searches were affected by staffing pressures late in the quarter. Environmental performance also faces ongoing challenges, with household recycling rates impacted by seasonal factors and wider national trends.

Moving forward, the Council remains committed to further enhancing its performance and service delivery. A key focus is on the development and implementation of automation and self-service options, aimed at providing customers with accessible and efficient self-help tools. By enabling customers to independently address their queries and concerns, the Council anticipates a reduction in the need for repeated interactions, streamlining services and improving overall efficiency. The Council will continue to monitor the impact of these improvement programs, assessing their effectiveness in reducing customer contact and enhancing operational processes to ensure the delivery of high-quality services to the community.

Percentage of Council Tax Collected



— Target

Direction of Travel

Against last Year
↓
Slightly decreased since last year

Higher is Good

Target	58%
Actual	58.99%

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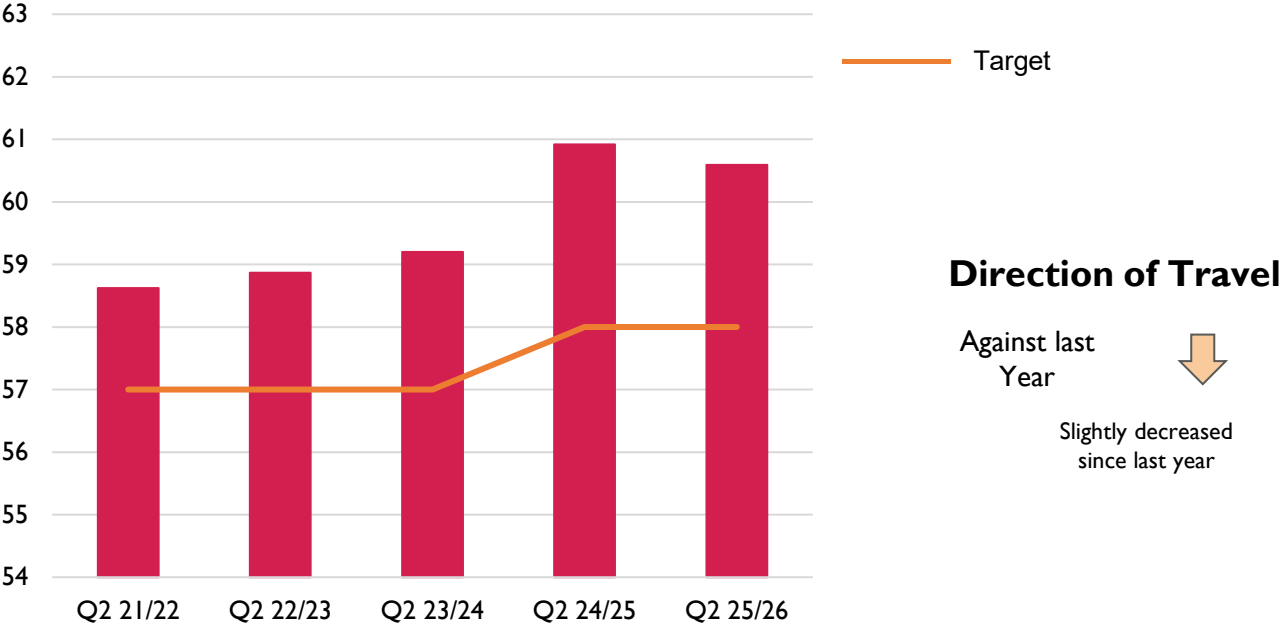
How do we compare?

Benchmarking via Gov.uk Tables and Individual Council Websites using other Local Authorities within Oxfordshire - Current Dataset is up to March '25 (2024-2025)


2024-2025 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
Cherwell	98.06	1/5	Top
West Oxfordshire	98.02	2/5	Top
South Oxfordshire	97.94	3/5	Second
Vale of White Horse	97.91	4/5	Third
Oxford	96.49	5/5	Bottom

By the end of Q2, the Council met its collection target and surpassed pre-pandemic levels by 1.7%. While 12-month payment plans are slightly reducing early-year collection, the year-on-year drop is just 0.06%, suggesting the trend may be stabilising.

Percentage of Non-domestic rates collected



Direction of Travel

Against last Year

 Slightly decreased since last year

Higher is Good

Target	58%
Actual	60.59%

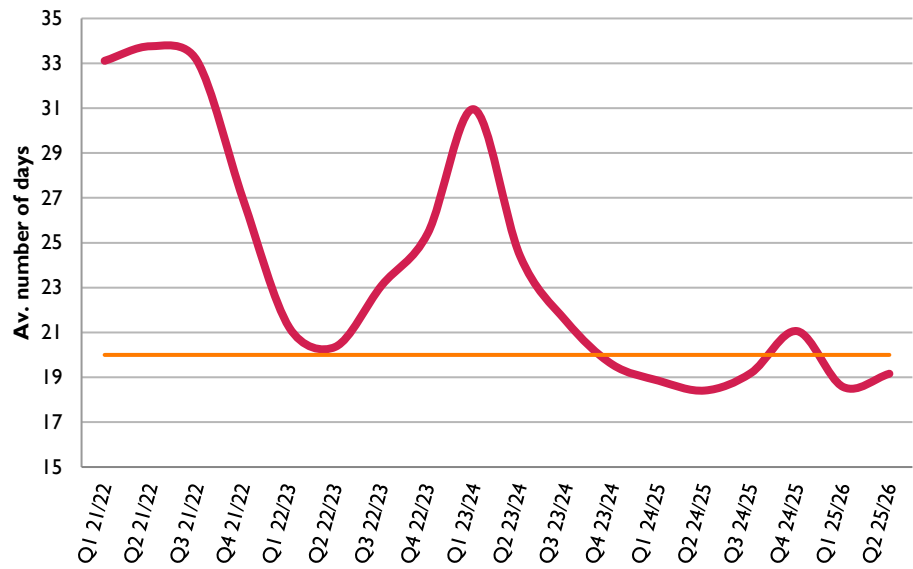
How do we compare?

Benchmarking via Gov.uk Tables and Individual Council Websites using other Local Authorities within Oxfordshire - Current Dataset is up to March '25 (2024-2025)

2024-2025 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
Cherwell	98.83	1/5	Top
West Oxfordshire	97.66	2/5	Top
Oxford	97.21	3/5	Second
Vale of White Horse	97.08	4/5	Third
South Oxfordshire	96.64	5/5	Bottom

By the end of Q2, the Council exceeded its collection target, with performance just 0.13% below last year. Recovery work is up to date, and earlier staff training has supported flexible working across Council Tax and NDR, helping reduce backlog and strengthen resilience.

Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter



Against last Year



Increased since last quarter and last year

Lower is Good

Target

20

Actual

19.16

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How do we compare?

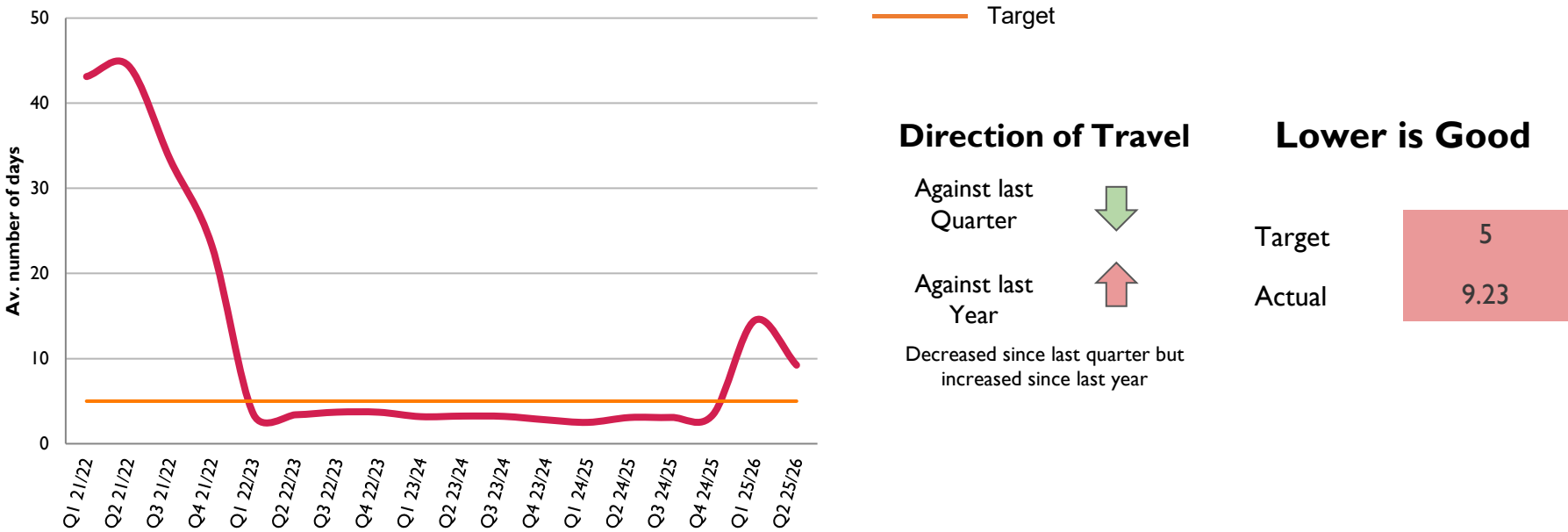
Gov.uk produces tables to show a snapshot of the number of CTS claimants at the end of each financial year. The below table shows number of claimants at the end of June 2025 and the percentage change from June 2024 for each authority.

	Number of Claimants at end of Sept 2024	Percentage Change since Sept 2023
Oxford	8,479	-7.33%
Cherwell	5,962	-1.18%
West Oxfordshire	4,374	-0.32%
Vale of White Horse	5,095	5.79%
South Oxfordshire	5,312	6.58%

Processing times rose slightly this quarter, likely due to a 20% increase in applications between Q1 and Q2, but the 20-day target was still met. Performance remains consistent, reflecting strong operational focus.

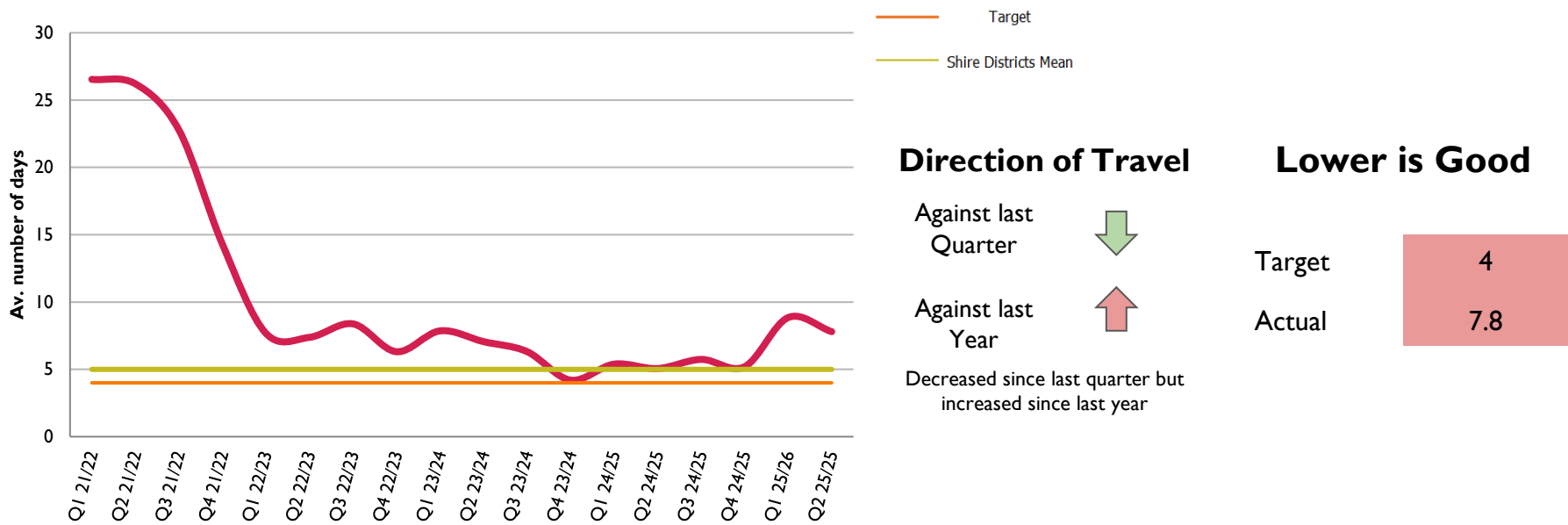
Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events

Page 73



In Q2, the Councils processing times continued to improve, with a cumulative average of 9.23 days—down 5.26 days from Q1. Automation and backlog clearance contributed to this progress, with quarterly averages well within the 5-day target, reaching just 2.71 days for July-September.

Processing times for Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances



Page 74

How do we compare?

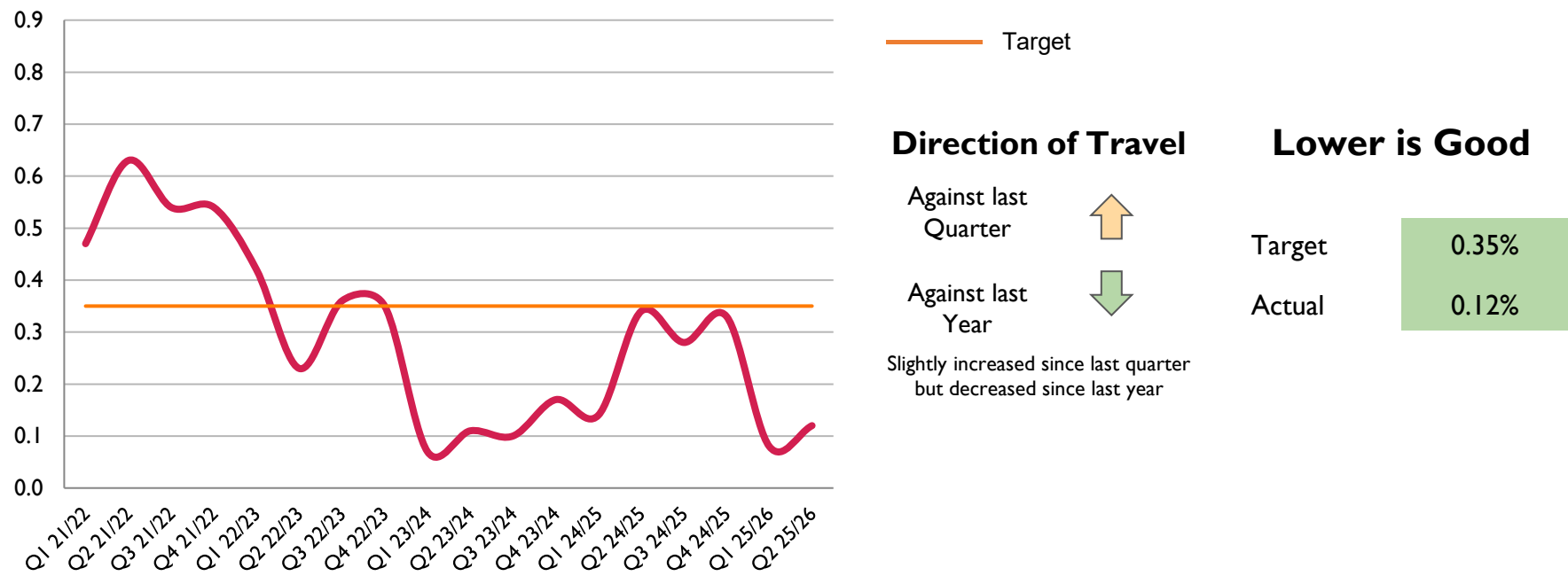
Gov.uk produces tables showing statistics on the average number of days to process a change in circumstance of an existing Housing Benefit claim. Latest Release – January – March 2025 (Q4 24-25)

Q4 24-25 Benchmark	Days	County Rank	Quartile
Cherwell	1.79	1/5	Top
Vale of White Horse	2.37	2/5	Top
South Oxfordshire	2.46	3/5	Second
West Oxfordshire	4.30	4/5	Third
Oxford	12.92	5/5	Bottom

In Q2, processing times improved but remained above the 4-day target. Following the migration to Universal Credit, new applications have declined, but the remaining caseload, primarily pension-age and temporary accommodation claims, is sensitive to delays, meaning even minor hold-ups can disproportionately affect processing times.

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

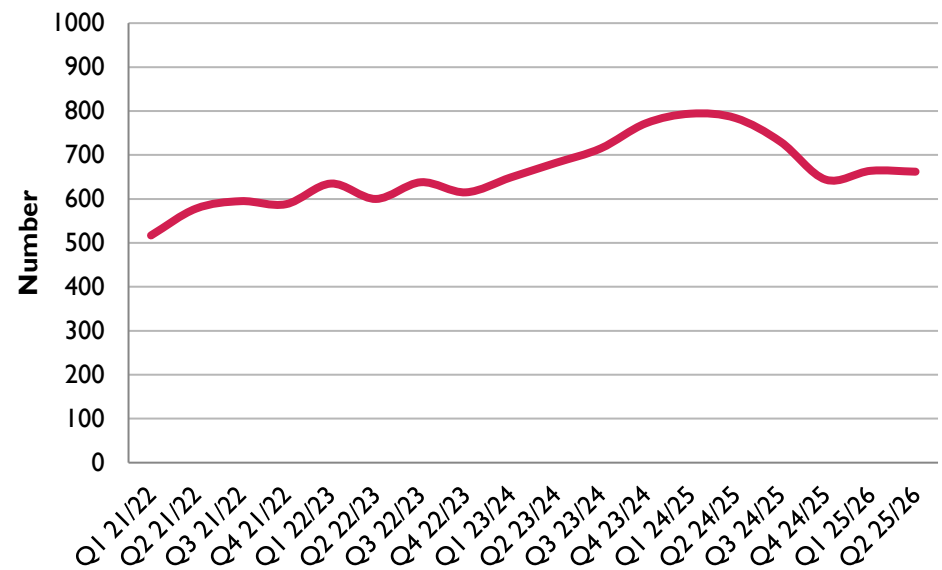
Page 75



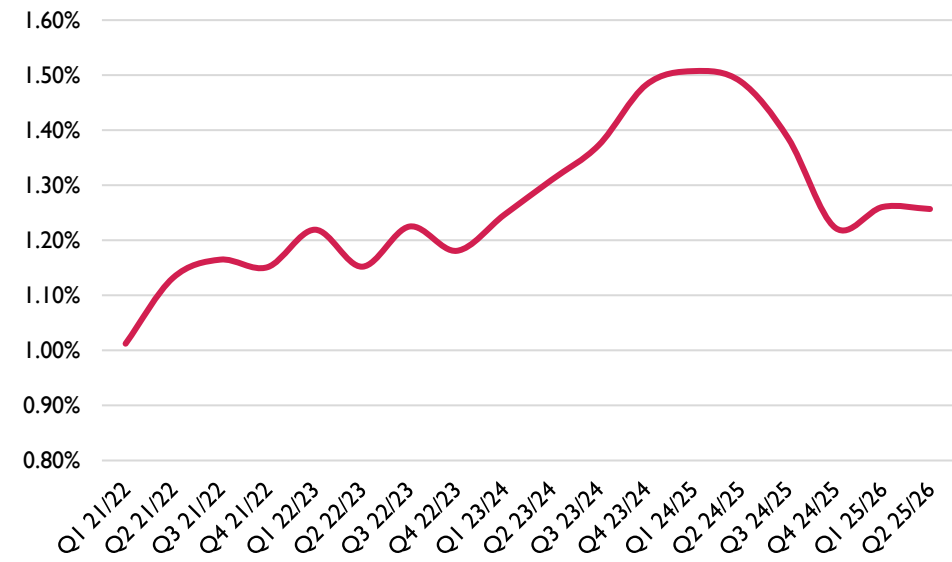
The Council remains below the national target of 0.48% and the stricter service target of 0.35%.

(Snapshot) Long Term Empty Properties

Page 76



% of LTEs of the Total Housing Stock



Direction of Travel

Lower is Good

Against last Quarter



Against last Year



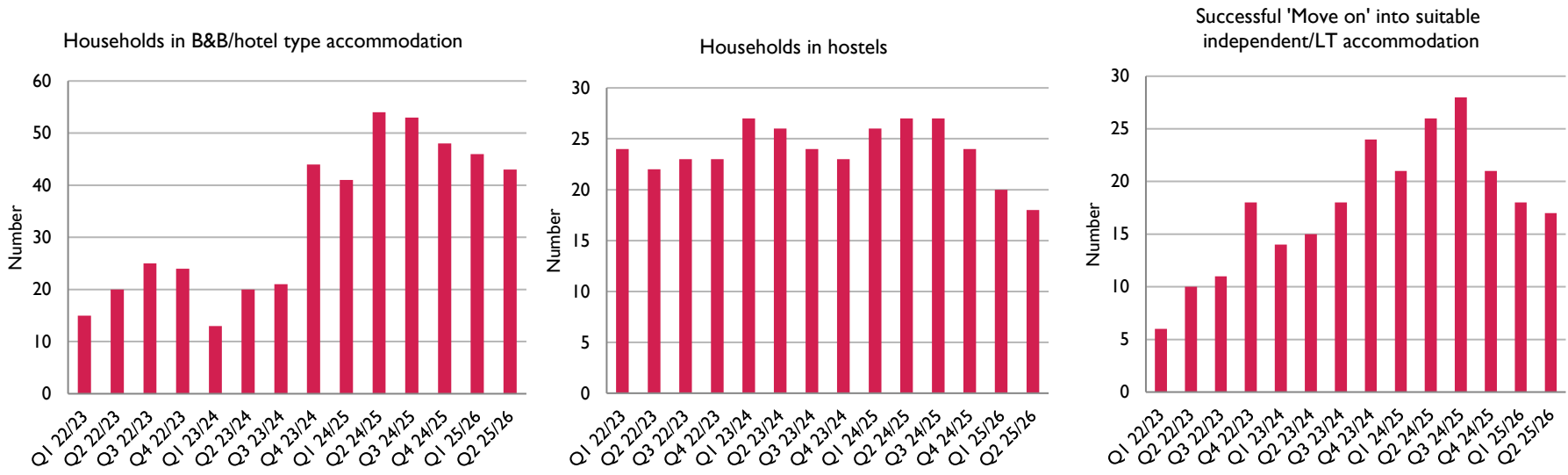
Slightly decreased since last quarter and decreased since last year

662

The Council saw a slight reduction in long-term empty properties, though 38 were newly registered between August and September, 25 of which are currently for sale. This may reflect a broader housing market slowdown, possibly linked to the quieter summer period.

(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

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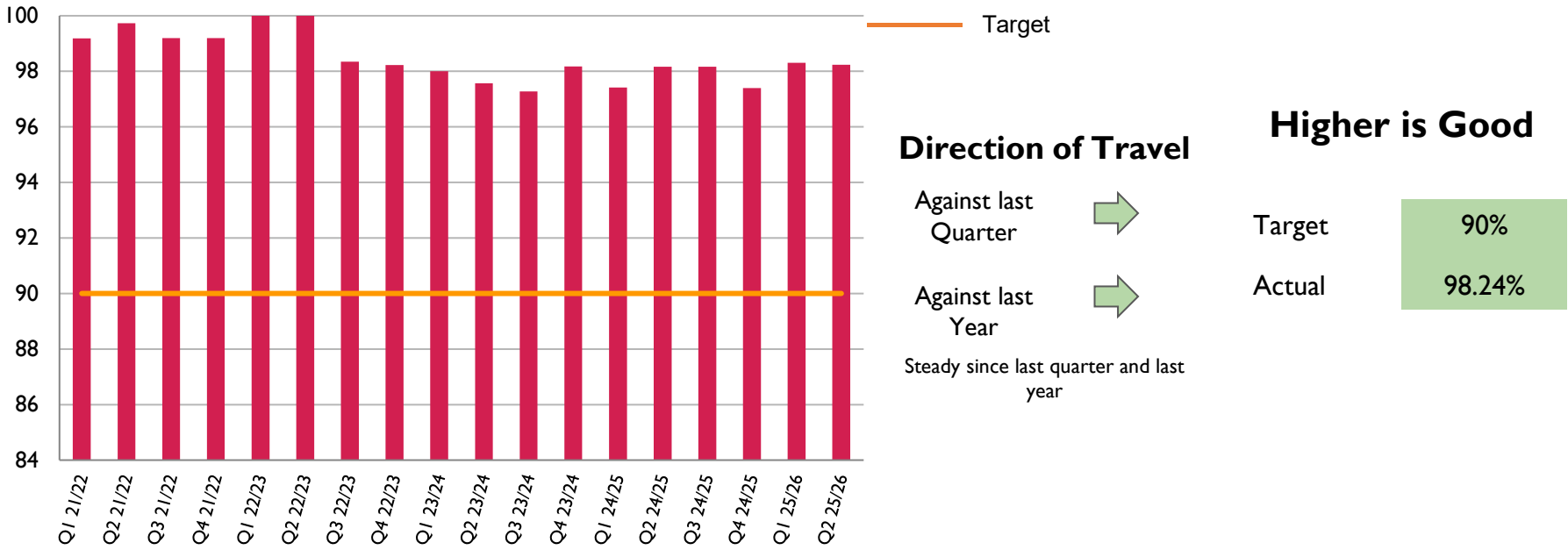
Direction of Travel

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	⬇️

The number of people in temporary accommodation has steadied, following a reduction in those placed in insecure B&B-style housing during the first quarter. This improvement reflects both strong preventative work and effective collaboration with local housing providers. Programmes like the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) are helping to boost the supply of self-contained temporary units and efforts are underway to expand the council's own own hostel stock by 30 bedrooms by 31st March 2026.

Customer Satisfaction - Telephone

Page 78



How do we compare?

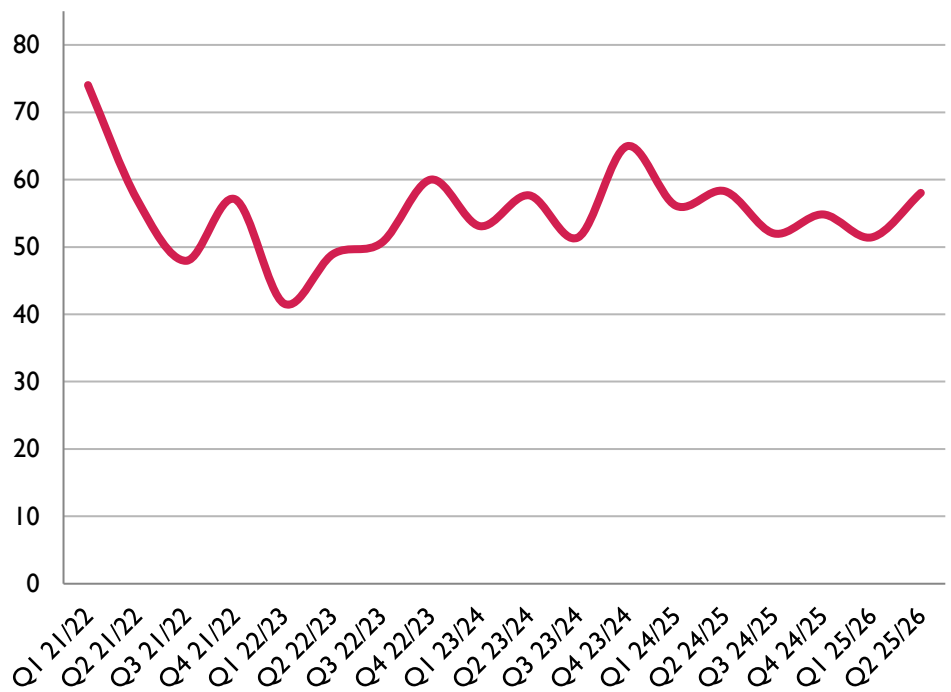
The Govmetric Channel Satisfaction Index is a monthly publication of the top performing councils across the core customer access channels. At least 100 customers need to be transferred to the survey to be included in the league table so even if satisfaction is high, it may not be included.

A total of 569 residents participated in the survey, of these, 559 customers reported being satisfied with the service, reflecting a high level of overall satisfaction.



	July Rank	July Net Sat.	Aug Rank	Aug Net Sat.	Sept. Rank	Sept. Net Sat.
West Oxfordshire	2	96%	4	95%	2	98%

Customer Satisfaction - Email

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Direction of Travel

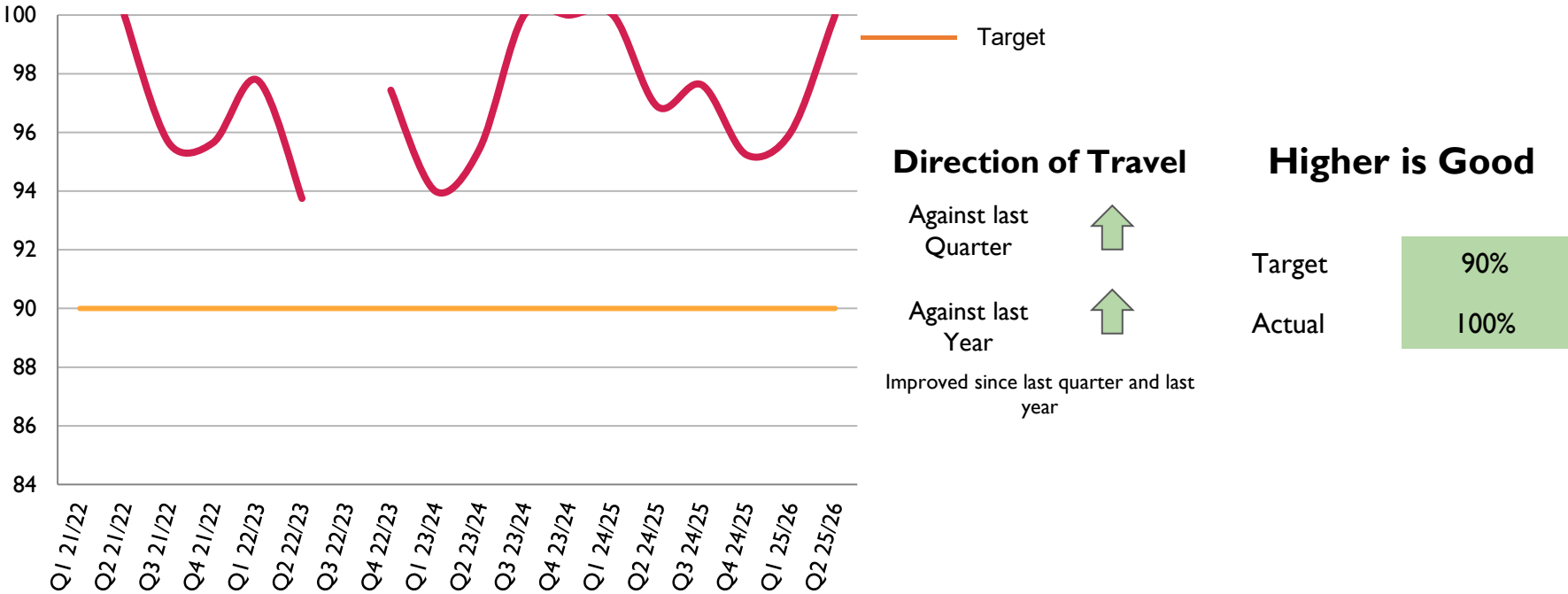
- Against last Quarter 
- Against last Year 
- Improved since last quarter and steady since last year

Higher is Good

58.03%

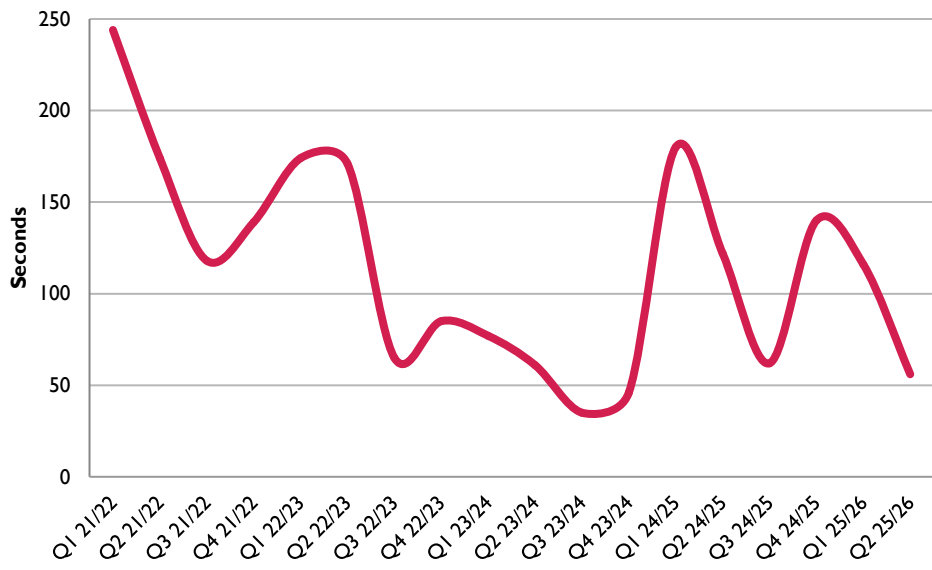
498 residents responded to the survey, with 289 expressing satisfaction (58.03%), up from 51.43% in Q1, with all outbound customer service emails including a survey link. The team continually monitors feedback closely and proactively seeks opportunities to enhance the overall customer experience.

Customer Satisfaction - Face to Face





Customer satisfaction with face-to-face interactions remains consistently strong.

Customer Call Handling - Average Waiting Time



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

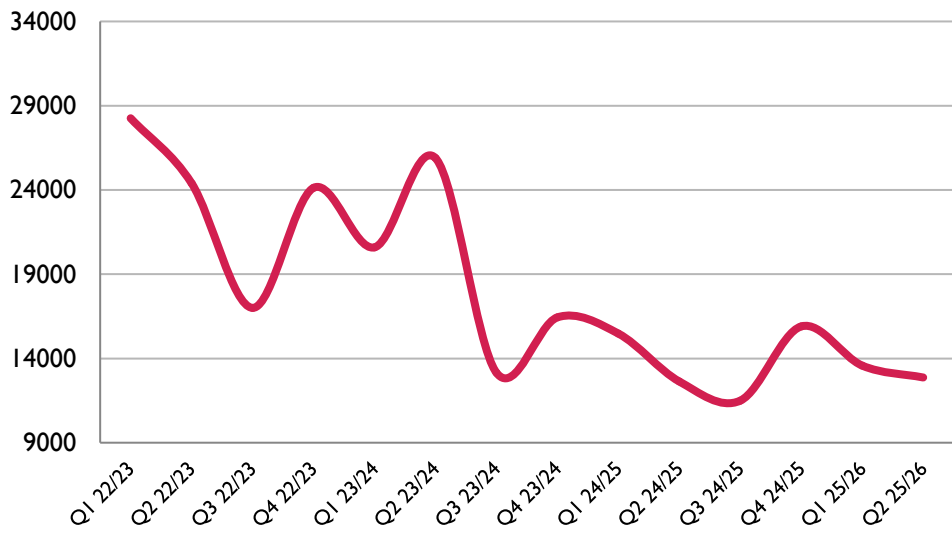
Against last Year 

Decreased since last quarter and last year

Lower is Good

56 Seconds

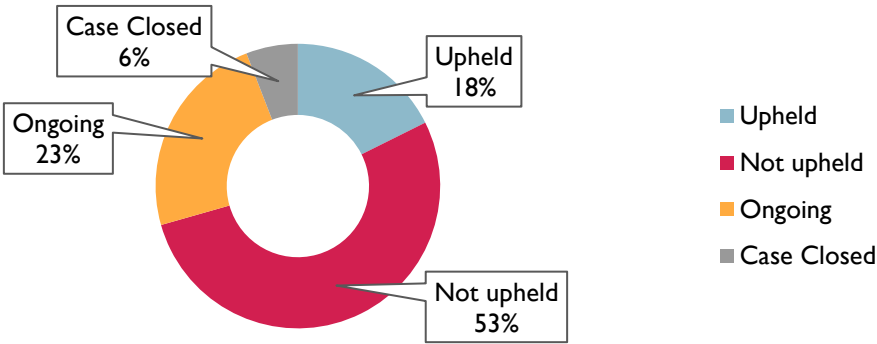
Call Volume over Time



Average call waiting time improved by around a minute compared to the same period last year, despite a slight rise in call volumes. The shift toward digital channels continues to support shorter phone hours and reflects changing customer behaviour, with strong operational oversight and regular staff training helping maintain stable performance.


Number of complaints upheld


Complaints by Status



Direction of Travel

Complaints upheld or partly upheld at Stage 1

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Increased since last quarter and last year

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.

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

A new Customer Feedback Procedure went live on the 1st April 2025.

The new process has the following stages:

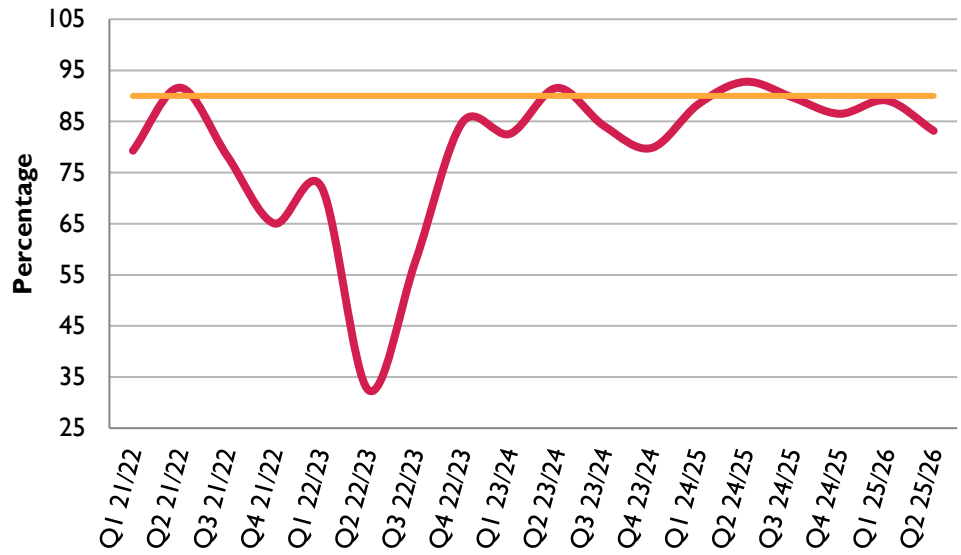
- Stage 1: A review of the complaint will be undertaken by an Operational Manager within the Service Area to which the complaint relates. A response needs to provide within 10 working days from the date that we advised that the complaint was valid.
- Stage 2: Requests for Stage 2 will be acknowledged and logged within five working days of the escalation request being received. Upon receipt of a Stage 2 request, an investigation into the complaint will be undertaken by the Complaint Officer or a member of the Complaints Team. A response will be provided to the customer within 20 working days from receipt of the request to escalate the complaint to Stage 2. Stage 2 is the organisation's final response; the complainant can then refer their complaint to the LGO.

2024-25	Complaints Investigated	Percentage Upheld	Upheld decisions per 100,000 residents	Percentage Satisfactory Remedy	Percentage Compliance with Recommendations
Cherwell	3	33	0.6	100	N/A
Oxford	2	50	0.6	0	100
South Oxfordshire	1	0	0	N/A	N/A
Vale of White Horse	1	100	0.7	100	N/A
West Oxfordshire	1	100	0.8	0	100

Complaints Upheld or Partially Upheld Breakdown

Service area	Description	Outcome/learning	Decision	Response time (days)
West Oxfordshire				
Data Protection	Data breach by contractor for sending out mass mailouts.	Apology offered by service.	Upheld	10
Revenues & Benefits	Incorrectly billed for Council Tax.	Apology offered by service.	Upheld	7
Waste & Recycling	Waste not being picked up.	Recollection sent and an apology offered.	Upheld	5
Waste & Recycling	Garden waste bin not being picked up.	Refund offered for licence.	Upheld	9

Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days



Target

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter



Against last Year



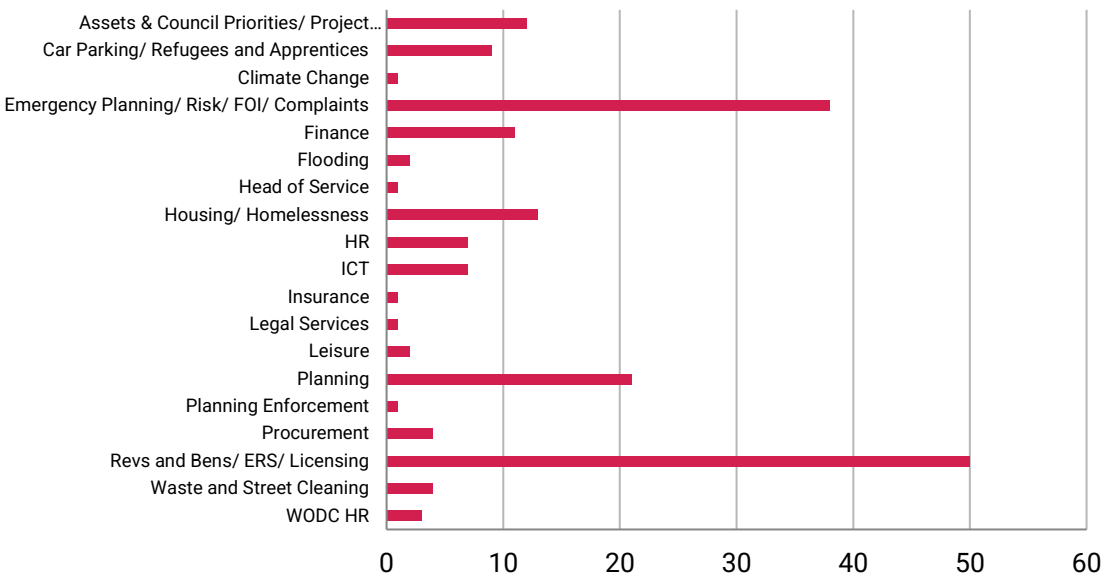
Declined since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

Target	90%
Actual	83.16%

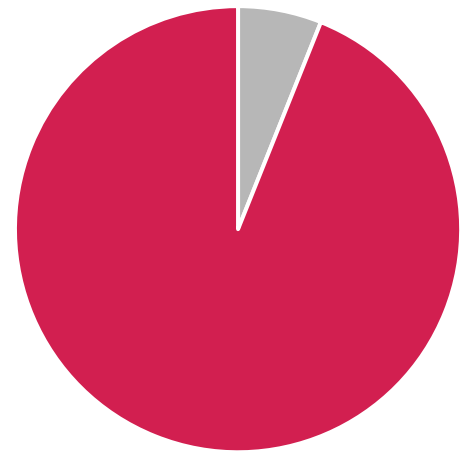
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Requests by Service Area



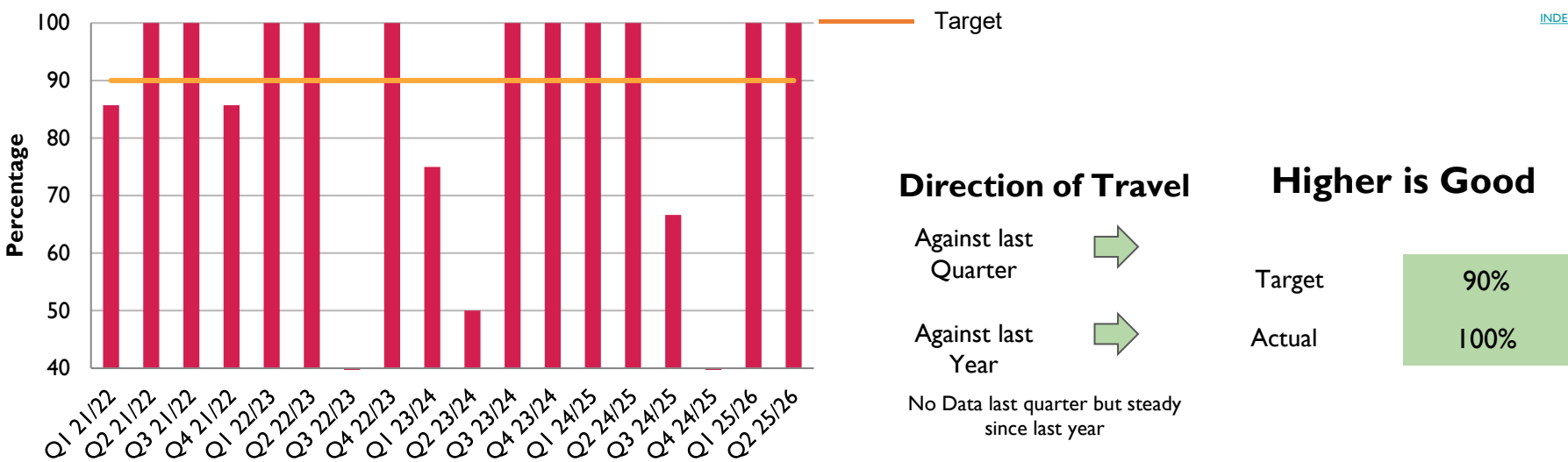
Reason FOI request was not Answered within 20 Days

- FOI admin backlog
- Service Area not provided Information in time



All Freedom of Information requests for the quarter have been addressed.

Building Control Satisfaction



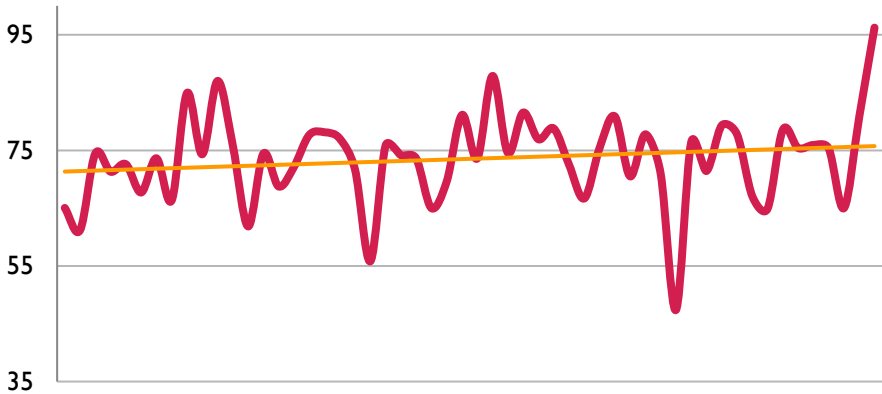
Satisfaction survey data continues to present challenges due to low response rates, with only one received this quarter. To improve this, a webform was developed and has been attached to completion certificates from October onwards.

How do we compare?

Percentage of share in the market

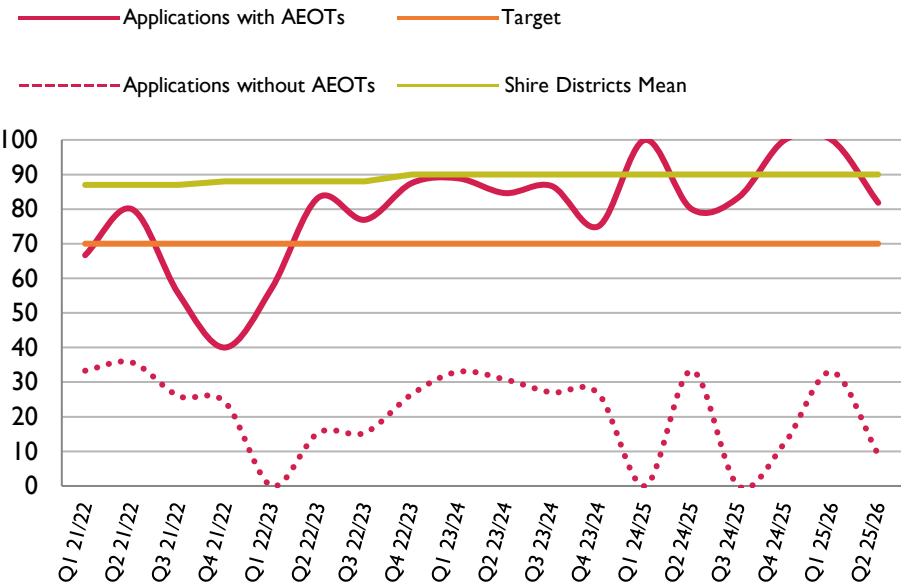
	July	Aug.	Sept.	Number of Apps for Quarter
West	61%	81%	96%	148

The below chart shows market share over time from April 2021



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

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Direction of Travel Higher is Good

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Declined since last quarter but steady since last year

Target	70%
Actual	81.82%

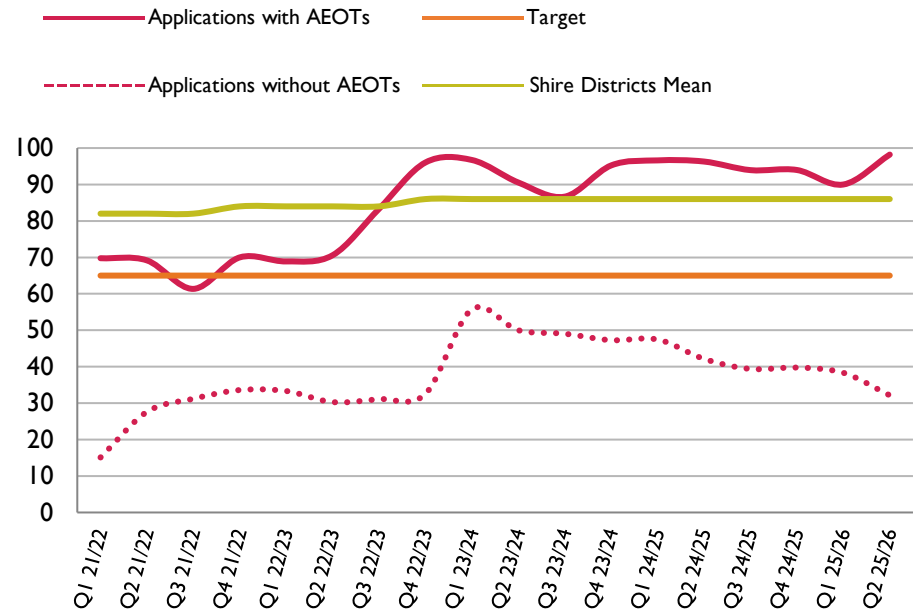
How do we compare?

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


Q1 25-26 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
Vale of White Horse	100	1/5	Top
West Oxfordshire	100	1/5	Top
Oxford	89	3/5	Second
South Oxfordshire	83	4/5	Third
Cherwell	78	5/5	Bottom


The service demonstrated consistently strong performance in Q2, with nine out of eleven Major applications processed within the agreed timescales.

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



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Increased since last quarter and steady since last year

Higher is Good

Target

65%

Actual

98.21%

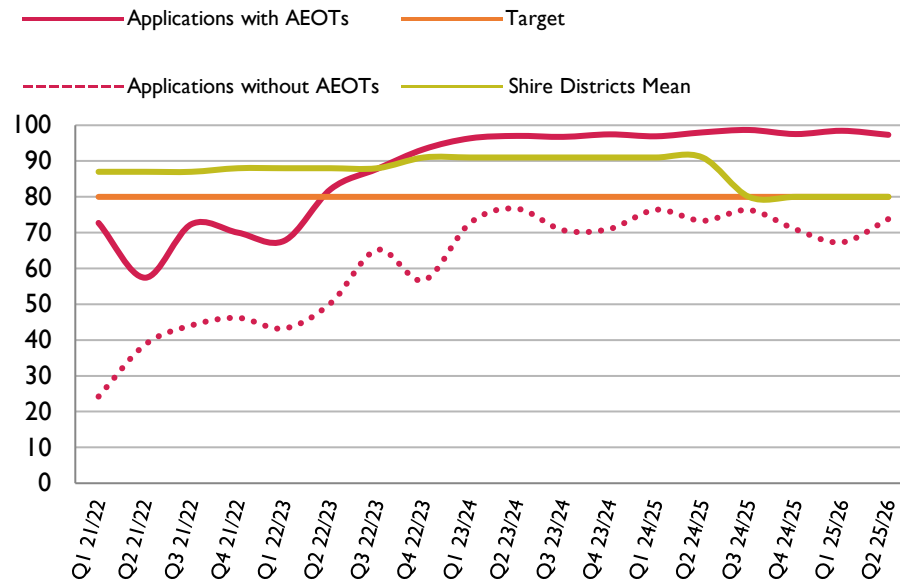
How do we compare?

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

Q1 25-26 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
Vale of White Horse	93	1/5	Top
Oxford	91	2/5	Top
West Oxfordshire	90	3/5	Second
South Oxfordshire	87	4/5	Third
Cherwell	79	5/5	Bottom

This quarter, delays persist due to the absence of a dedicated Landscape Officer, though recruitment is progressing with interviews held. The team is preparing for increased demand from upcoming legislative changes and remains committed to delivering sustainable, high-quality development despite national policy challenges.

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



Direction of Travel

Against last
Quarter



Against last
Year



Steady since last quarter and last
year

Higher is Good

Target

80%

Actual

97.33%

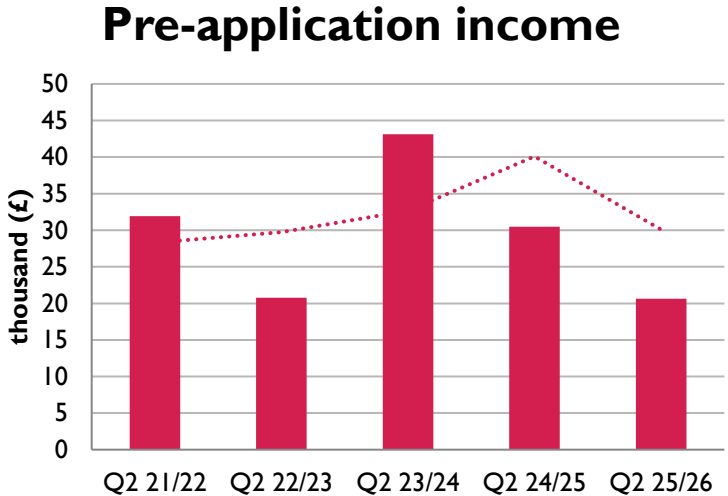
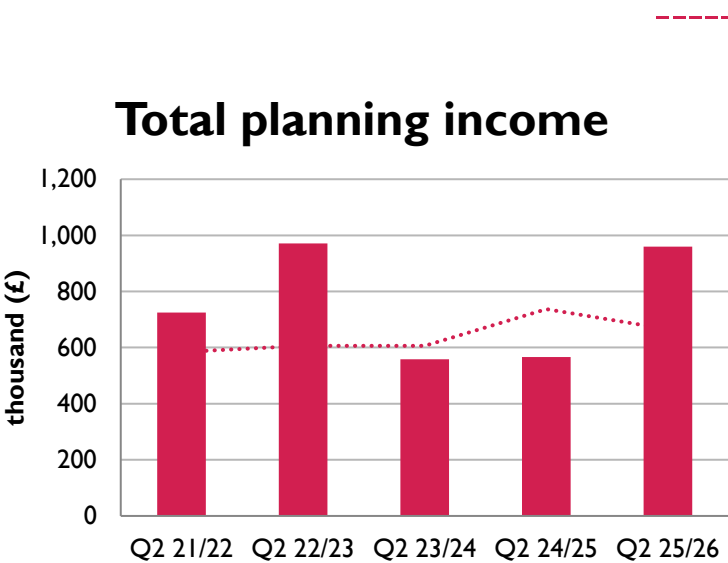
How do we compare?

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

Q1 25-26 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	98	1/5	Top
Vale of White Horse	96	2/5	Second
South Oxfordshire	96	3/5	Second
Oxford	88	4/5	Third
Cherwell	79	5/5	Bottom

Determination times remain high, with 187 applications processed in Q2, including 182 within agreed timescales.

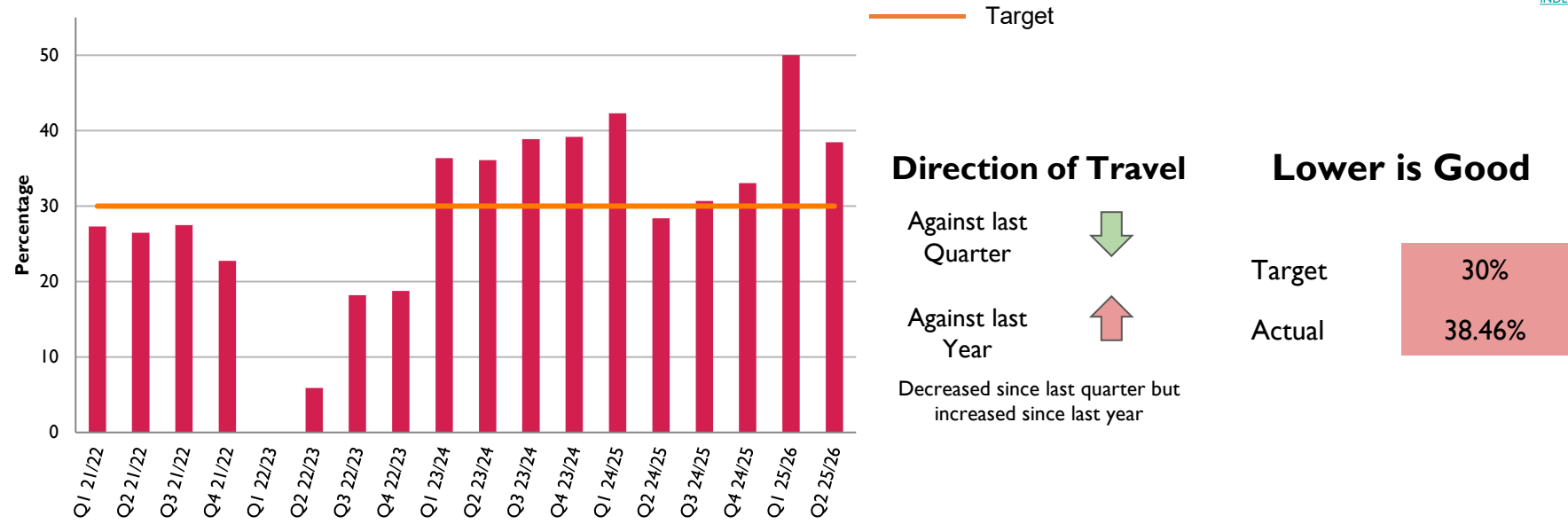
Total Income achieved in Planning & Income from Pre-application advice



Direction of Travel		Higher is Good	
Total Planning Income		Total Planning Income (£)	
Against last Quarter	↑	Target	665,087
Against last Year	↑	Actual	959,309
Pre-Application Income		Pre-Application Income (£)	
Against last Quarter	↓	Target	30,087
Against last Year	↓	Actual	20,617
Total Income increased since last quarter and last year			
Pre-App Income decreased since last quarter and last year			

In Q2, the Council recorded high financial performance, with strong income received during the summer months contributing positively towards the annual target. However, pre-application uptake in West remains low, and the team is currently exploring pricing adjustments alongside a renewed focus on Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs).

Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed (cumulative)



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How do we compare?

Percentage of planning appeals allowed – LG Inform

Q1 25-26 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
Vale of White Horse	17	1/5	Top
South Oxfordshire	27	2/5	Top
Oxford	29	3/5	Second
Cherwell	43	4/5	Third
West Oxfordshire	50	5/5	Bottom

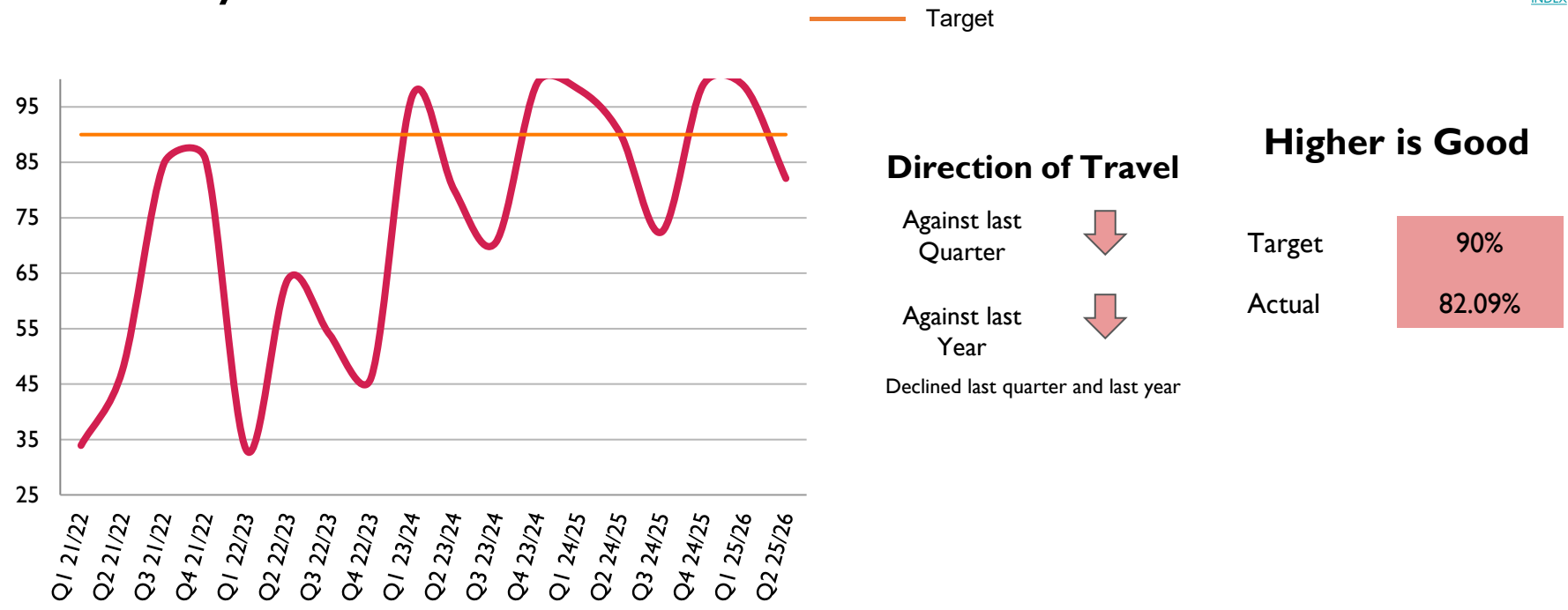
This indicator aims to ensure that no more than 30% of planning appeals are allowed in favor of the applicant, with a lower percentage being more favorable. According to the latest statistics from the Planning Inspectorate, the national average for Section 78 planning appeals granted is 28% (source: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

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

	Decided	Allowed	% Allowed
Uplands	7	2	28.57%
Lowlands	6	3	50.00%

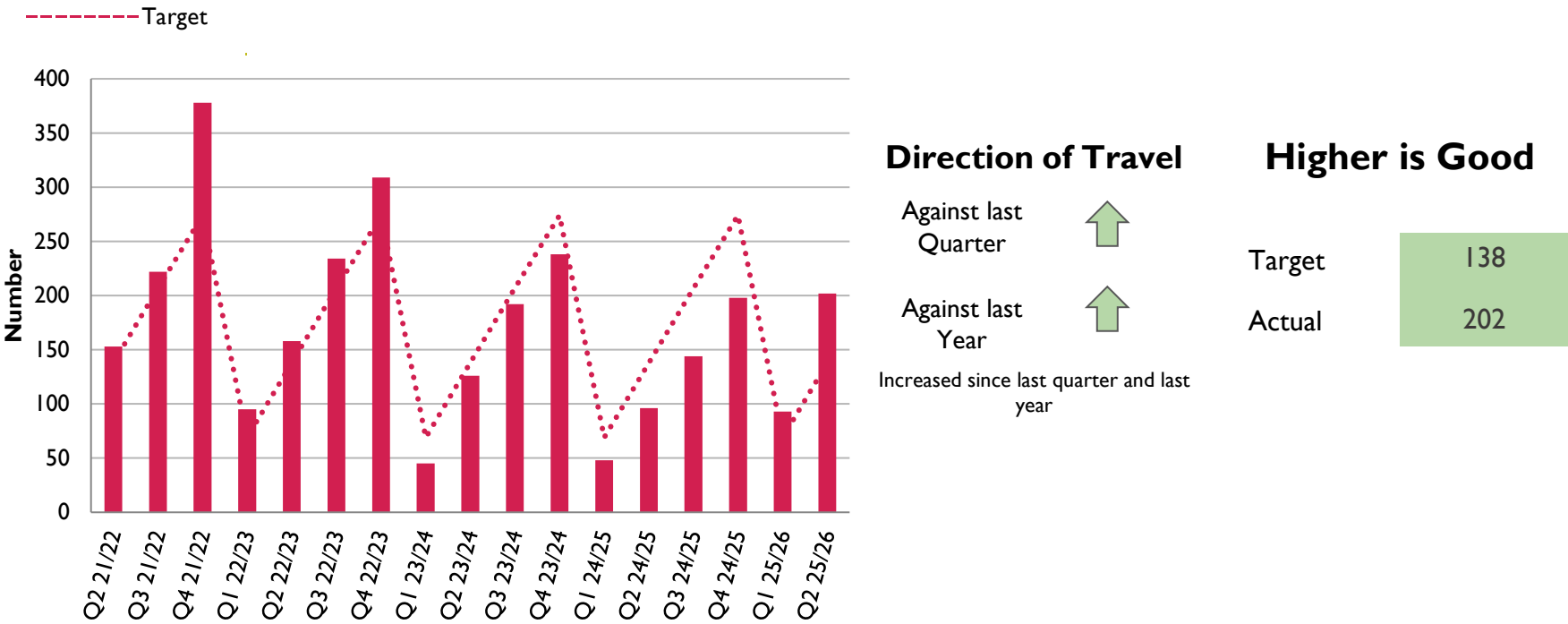
Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days

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Performance fell from 98.67% in Q1 to 82.09% in Q2, mainly due to a long-term staff absence from late August. July and August exceeded the 90% target, and additional support has been deployed to improve resilience and restore performance.

Number of affordable homes delivered (cumulative)



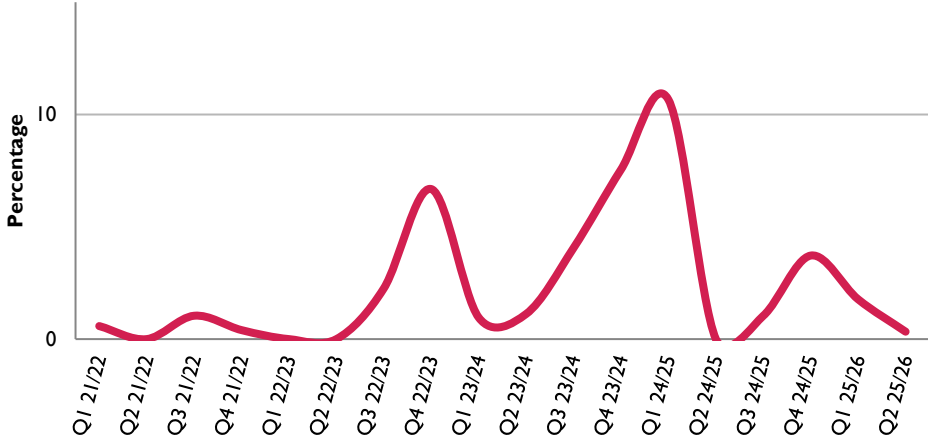
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The Council delivered 109 affordable homes in Q2, bringing the year-to-date total to 202, with 43 homes for social rent, maintaining a strong focus on genuinely affordable tenures, which now make up 50% of all affordable homes delivered this year.

A key milestone this quarter was the completion of the affordable home development in Aston, delivering 40 new affordable homes through a partnership with Stonewater, supported by Homes England grant funding. The scheme is 100% affordable and includes sustainable features such as solar panels and air source heat pumps, supporting both housing need and environmental goals.

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)



Direction of Travel

Number of Fly Tips			Number of Fly Tips Collected	
Against last Quarter	↓		136	
Against last Year	↓			
Percentage Enforcement Action			Percentage Enforcement Action	
Against last Quarter	↓		0.33%	
Against last Year	↑			

Fly Tips – Declined since last quarter and last year
 Enforcement Action – Declined since last quarter but slightly increased since last year

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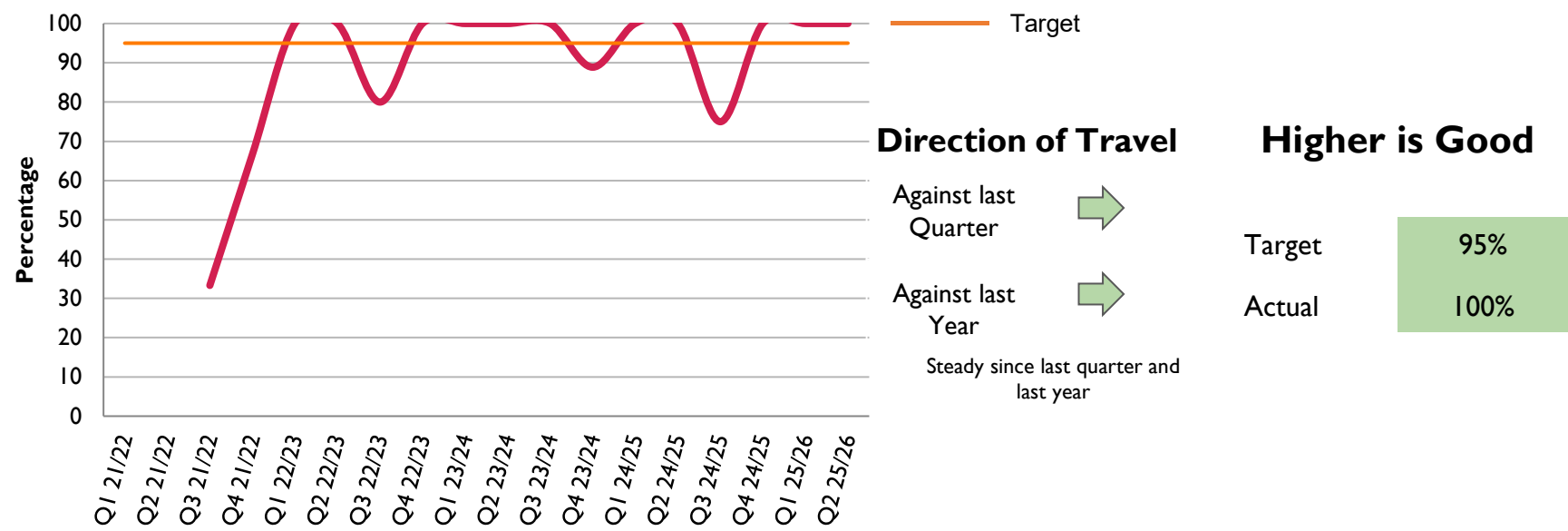
How do we compare?

Number of Fly Tips reported for year 2023-24 for Local Authorities in England – Gov.uk. The latest dataset available is 2023-24.

	Total Fly Tips	Total Enforcement Actions	Total FPNs	% FPNs per Fly Tip	County Rank	Quartile
Vale of White Horse	445	580	18	4.04%	1/5	Top
South Oxfordshire	873	467	21	2.41%	2/5	Top
Cherwell	1101	1136	26	2.36%	3/5	Second
West Oxfordshire	1135	76	13	1.15%	4/5	Third
Oxford	4959	297	7	0.14%	5/5	Bottom

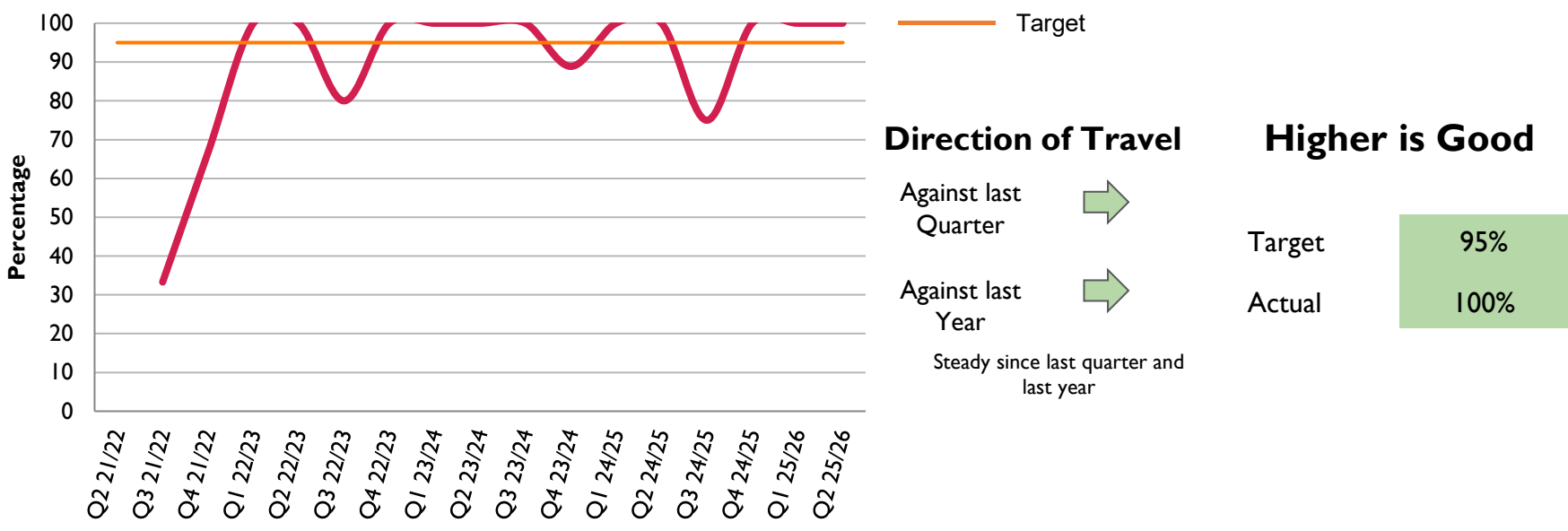
In Q2, the service continued preparations for stop-and-search operations, school engagement, and public awareness campaigns. Consultation began on a proposed district-wide PSPO to tackle dog fouling and require dogs to be under control, with penalties of £100 or up to £1,000 if prosecuted. Work also progressed on plans for PSPOs addressing anti-social behaviour, supported by Police enforcement.

Percentage of high-risk food premises inspected within target timescales



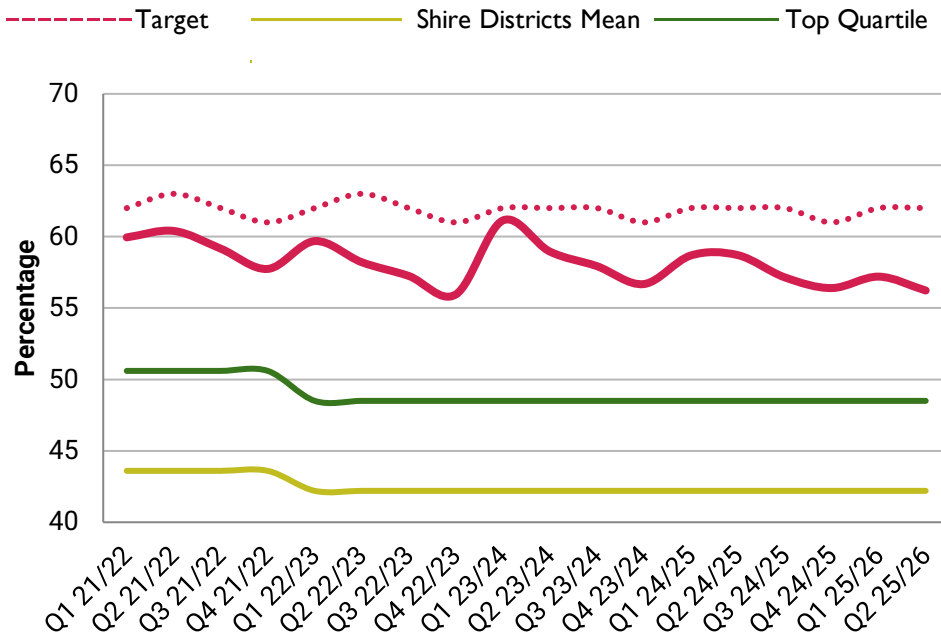
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Five High-Risk food inspection was undertaken during Q2, which were completed within the target timeframes.



One notification was received during Q2 which was assessed within one working day.

Percentage of household waste recycled



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter
↓

Against last Year
↓

Declined since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

Target	62%
Actual	56.23%

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How do we compare?

Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting – Gov.uk. The latest dataset available is from 2023-2024.

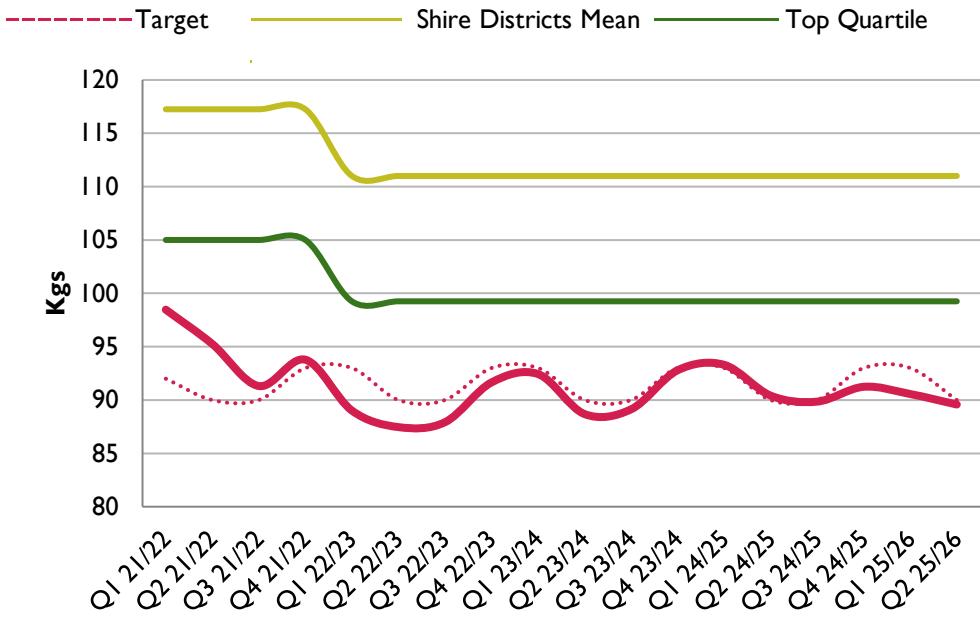
2023-24 Benchmark	%	County Rank	Quartile
South Oxfordshire	62.9%	1/5	Top
Vale of White Horse	60.7%	2/5	Top
West Oxfordshire	57.2%	3/5	Second
Cherwell	53.2%	4/5	Third
Oxford	48.3%	5/5	Bottom

During Q2, there was a decline of around 2.5% in the household recycling rate compared to the same period last year.

In 2023/24, household recycling rates across England varied widely, ranging from 15.8% to 62.9% among local authorities. The national average recycling rate rose slightly to 42.3%, marking a 0.6 percentage point increase from the previous year.


Amid this national landscape, West Oxfordshire ranked among the top 20 councils in England for household waste recycling for the financial year 2023-2024, highlighting its strong performance and commitment to environmental sustainability.

Residual Household Waste per Household (kg)



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter 

Against last Year 

Improved since last quarter and last year

Lower is Good

Target	93
Actual	89.58

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How do we compare?

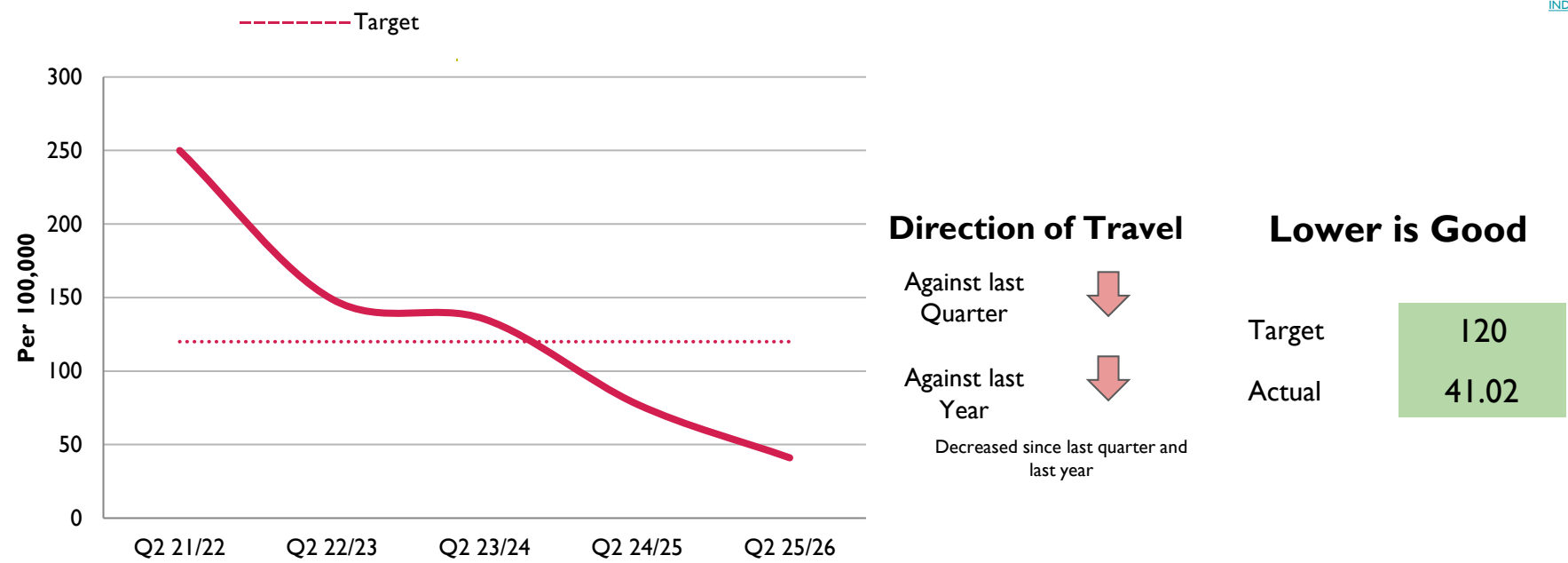
Residual household waste per household (kg/household) – Gov.uk. The latest dataset available is from 2023-2024.

2023-24 Benchmark	Kg	County Rank	Quartile
Vale of White Horse	303.2	1/5	Top
South Oxfordshire	304.8	2/5	Top
Oxford	335.7	3/5	Second
West Oxfordshire	344.7	4/5	Third
Cherwell	396.9	5/5	Bottom

During Q2, the Council remained below its residual waste target and ranked within the top quartile of English district councils, with levels under 99.25 kg per household—reflecting continued strong performance in waste reduction.

Missed bins per 100,000

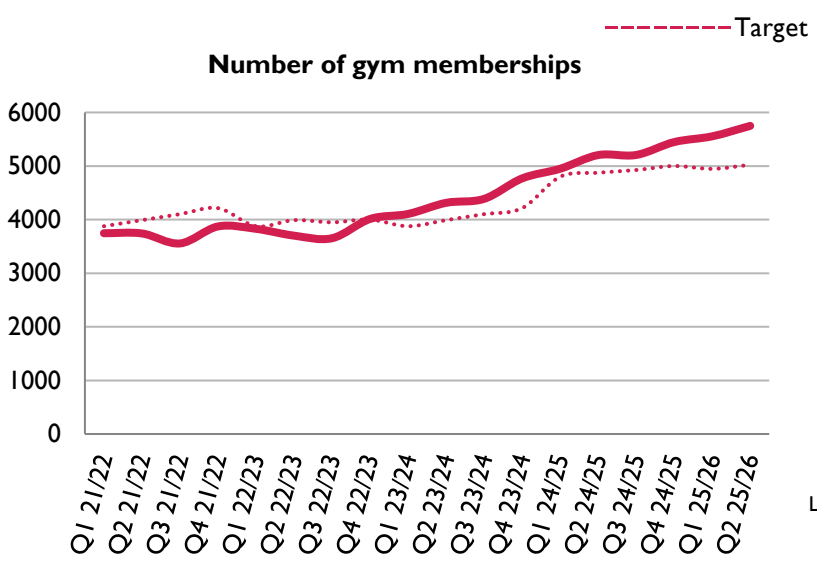
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The Council recorded 41.02 missed bins per 100,000, well within target, and overall service performance has improved following recent measures. Whilst assisted collection issues persist, they have dropped by around 60% since last quarter. A vehicle breakdown in August temporarily disrupted services for residents in narrow access areas but strengthened team and contractor relationships continue to support progress.


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 

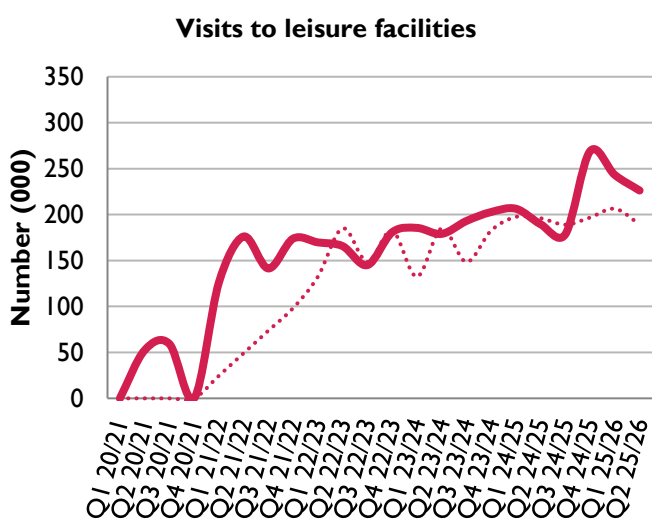
Gym Memberships – Improved since last quarter and last year

Leisure Visits- Declined since last quarter but improved since last year

Higher is Good

Gym Memberships	
Target	5,023
Actual	5,749

Leisure Visits	
Target	189,446
Actual	226,202




The Council exceeded its leisure targets in Q2, achieving 14.4% above target for memberships and 19.4% above target for visits, reflecting strong public engagement with its facilities.

Breakdown of Leisure Visits per facility:

Facility	Q1 24-25	Q2 24-25	Q3 24-25	Q4 24-25	Q1 25-26	Q2 25-26
Bartholomew Sports Centre	9,681	9,747	5,506	16,712	20,268	17,195
Carterton Artificial Turf Pitch	6,840	6,840	6,840	9,252	858	1810
Carterton Leisure Centre	70,220	62,866	57,100	64,139	57,346	63,254
Carterton Pavilion	600	600	600	600	600	320
Chipping Norton Leisure Centre	22,907	21,717	18,804	54,713	47,750	40,080
Windrush Leisure Centre	76,286	65,250	73,237	103,947	95,596	81,676
Witney Artificial Turf Pitch	19,320	19,320	16,487	19,640	19,557	15,724
Woodstock Open Air Pool	516	3,126	0	0	1,137	6,143

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 <p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>	<p>WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL</p>
<p>Name and Date of Committee</p>	<p>EXECUTIVE – 17 DECEMBER 2025</p>
<p>Subject</p>	<p>LOCAL PLAN ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT (AMR)</p>
<p>Wards Affected</p>	<p>ALL</p>
<p>Accountable Member</p>	<p>Councillor Hugo Ashton – Executive Member for Planning and Sustainable Development. Email: hugo.ashton@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Accountable Officer</p>	<p>Andrew Thomson – Planning Policy Manager Email: andrew.thomson@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Report Author</p>	<p>Andrew Thomson – Planning Policy Manager Email: andrew.thomson@westoxon.gov.uk</p>
<p>Summary/Purpose</p>	<p>To consider the Council's Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.</p>
<p>Annexes</p>	<p>Annex A – Local Plan Annual Monitoring Report 2024-2025</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>That the Executive Resolves to: I. Note the content of the report.</p>
<p>Corporate Priorities</p>	<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
<p>Key Decision</p>	<p>NO</p>
<p>Exempt</p>	<p>NO</p>
<p>Consultees/ Consultation</p>	<p>There is no requirement to consult on the Annual Monitoring Report.</p>

I. 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 2024 – 2025 AMR covers the period 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025 (referred to as 'the monitoring year').
- 1.5** The AMR is attached at Annex A and the key points of interest are summarised in Section 2 below.

2. AMR 2024/2025 – OVERVIEW

Local Plan Progress

- 2.1** The AMR reports on the Council's progress of preparing a new Local Plan covering the period to 2043, against the Local Development Scheme (October 2025). It sets out that three stages of Regulation 18 consultation were completed in 2022, 2023 and 2025 respectively. It notes that further Regulation 18 consultation on Preferred Spatial Options is in progress.

The Council's most recent Local Development Scheme (LDS) was approved in October 2025, setting out the expected timetable for Local Plan preparation up to submission for Examination by September 2026.

Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan (AAP)

- 2.2** The AMR provides an update on the progress of the Salt Cross AAP. Consultation on the proposed Main Modifications to Policy 2 – Net Zero Carbon Development took place from 3 October to 14 November 2025 with the Inspector's final report anticipated potentially in December 2025 or January 2026. The District Council hopes to then be in a position to formally adopt the AAP shortly thereafter.

Neighbourhood Planning

- 2.3** The AMR provides an update on Neighbourhood Planning in West Oxfordshire, explaining that there are now 10 'made' (adopted) Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) in West Oxfordshire.
- 2.4** The AMR explains that a further 7 NDPs are currently in preparation.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 2.5** The AMR provides an update on the District Council's progress with introducing the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) into West Oxfordshire setting out that, following receipt of the Inspector's report in July 2025, the CIL Charging Schedule was formally adopted on 1 October 2025, with an effective charging date of **31 January 2026**.

Duty to Co-Operate

- 2.6** 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 continued to fulfil its obligations under the duty throughout the monitoring period.
- 2.7** 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 2043.

Implementation of Local Plan Policies

- 2.8** 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

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

Overall Strategy

- 2.10** A total of 1,368 planning applications were determined during the monitoring period (1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025). The majority of these (1,186 applications) were approved or resolved to be approved subject to a legal agreement.
- 2.11** 43% of the applications determined were for relatively minor 'householder' type proposals and 22% were for full or outline planning approval.
- 2.12** 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.
- 2.13** 59 appeals were determined during the monitoring period. The majority of these were dismissed with 19 being allowed or allowed in part.

- 2.14** £2,143,908 was collected towards new infrastructure from new development in West Oxfordshire between 1 April 2024 and 31 March 2025. Over £1.1m was spent on new infrastructure during the same period.
- 2.15** 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. The Council's most recent IFS covering the period 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025 is available [online](#).

Providing New Homes

- 2.16** Planning permission was granted for 687 new dwellings during the monitoring period, a net gain of 667 dwellings. This included approval of an outline planning application for 450 dwellings on appeal in relation to the East Witney SDA adopted local plan allocation.
- 2.17** 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.
- 2.18** There were 300 net residential completions in the monitoring period. This is significantly lower than both the Local Plan housing requirement of 1,125 dwellings and also the previous standard method calculation of housing need (549 dwellings per annum), which the Council was utilising for housing land supply calculations during the monitoring period.
- 2.19** It is also important to note that since the start of the current Local Plan period between the 1st April 2011 and 31st March 2025, a total of 8,019 new homes have been completed which falls below the requirement of 9,200 set in the Local Plan for the period. This shortfall of 1,181 homes is largely a result of slower than anticipated delivery on a number of adopted local plan allocations.
- 2.20** Approximately 157 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. The delivery of new social rented homes is particularly welcome given that these are not a formal policy requirement of the adopted Local Plan.
- 2.21** Of the total housing completions, over 50% were therefore classed as affordable, slightly above the requirements of Local Plan Policy H3 which adopts a tiered approach ranging from 35% - 50% depending on location.
- 2.22** 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.
- 2.23** 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.

- 2.24** 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.
- 2.25** Using this alternative measure of housing need, the Council was however unable to demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing land at 31 March 2025.

Sustainable Economic Growth

- 2.26** A total of approximately 2,500m² 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.
- 2.27** In addition to the above new floorspace there were changes of use between business uses, for example at Eagle Industrial Estate, where permission was granted from change of use of existing brewery to Class E use.
- 2.28** Any new business development approved in the rural parts of the District during the monitoring period was relatively minor in nature.
- 2.29** The majority of tourism-related development during the monitoring period was for new tourist accommodation.
- 2.30** Town centres continue to diversify with a number of approvals for residential development arising from the conversion of existing uses.

Transport and Movement

- 2.31** 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.
- 2.32** The AMR recognises, however, that access to some key services remains poor in some areas of West Oxfordshire and car ownership remains higher than the rest of the county.
- 2.33** An update on Local Plan 2031 identified highway infrastructure schemes is provided. Notably, the access to Witney (Shores Green) junction improvement scheme started on-site in spring 2025 and is due to be completed by summer 2026.

Environmental and Heritage Assets

- 2.34** No major development was approved within the Cotswolds National Landscape – a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) during the monitoring period.
- 2.35** 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.
- 2.36** There have been no significant changes to the area of protected habitats or number of protected species in West Oxfordshire during the monitoring period.

2.37 The number of heritage assets recorded as being 'at risk' on Historic England's Heritage at Risk register has fallen from 8 in 2023 to 5 in 2025.

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)

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Section 1 - 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 2024 – 31st March 2025** 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 2043.
- 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 October 2025 and progress against the key milestones is summarised in the table below.

Table I - West Oxfordshire Local Development Scheme Key Milestones (November 2024 - to date)

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 June – August 2025	COMPLETE
Regulation 18 consultation on preferred spatial options – November - December 2025	IN PROGRESS
Regulation 19 publication of pre-submission draft Local Plan May 2026	Not yet undertaken
Regulation 22 submission of draft Local Plan September 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.

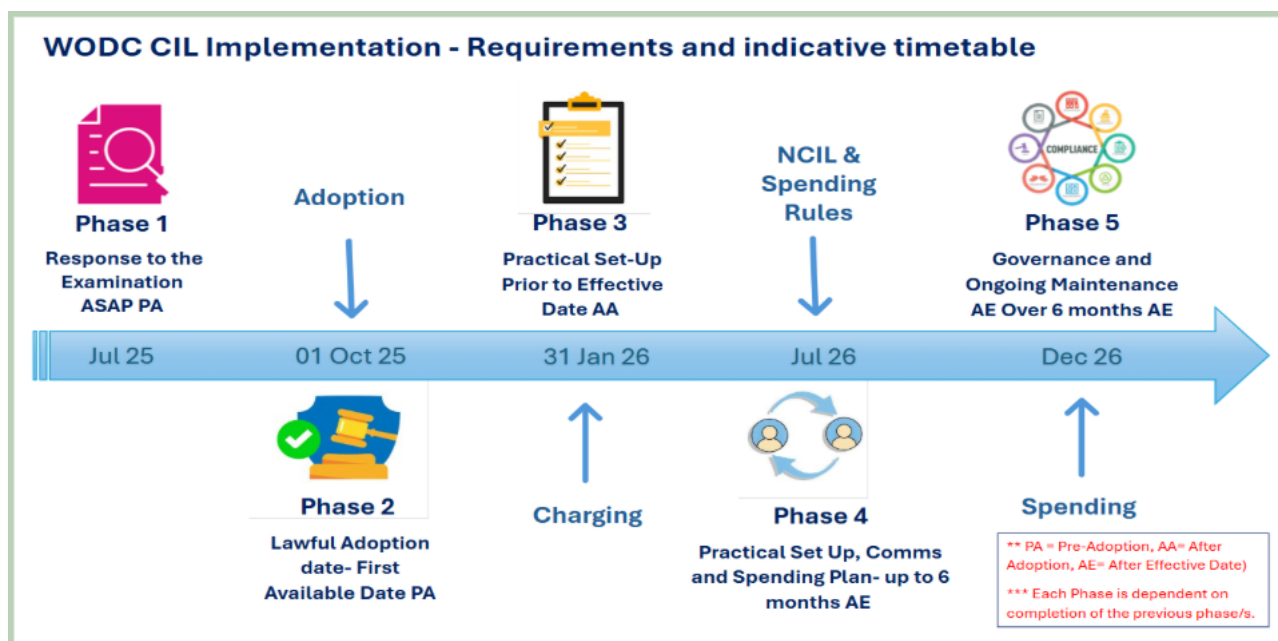
- 2.10 Following a pause in the examination to enable additional work on infrastructure phasing to be undertaken, the appointed Inspectors wrote to the District Council in May 2022 to confirm that the AAP is capable of being found ‘sound’ subject to a number of Main Modifications (MMs).
- 2.11 Consultation 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 to re-consider Policy 2.
- 2.15 The District Council submitted a revised version of Policy 2 and updated supporting evidence in April 2025 and a hearing session was held on 30 June. Following the hearing, the Inspector issued a post-hearing letter which concluded that Policy 2 as proposed to be modified is consistent with national policy and capable of being found ‘sound’ subject to a number of Main Modifications. Consultation on those Main Modifications took place from 3 October to 14 November 2025 with the Inspector’s final report anticipated in December 2025 or January 2026. The District Council hopes to then be in a position to formally adopt the AAP shortly thereafter. Further information is available on the Salt Cross Garden Village AAP web page^[1].

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 2.1 The Council submitted a new CIL Charging Schedule for examination on 4 March 2025, and a hearing session was held on 10 June 2025. The CIL Inspector issued his report on 18 July 2025 concluding that, subject to modifications, including a reduction in the proposed rate for larger residential developments of 250 or more homes, from £225 per square metre to £150 per square metre (excluding adopted Local Plan strategic development areas), the schedule provides an appropriate basis for the collection of the levy in West Oxfordshire.
- 2.2 The CIL Charging Schedule was formally adopted on 1 October 2025, with an effective charging date of **31 January 2026**. The diagram below gives an overview of the process for CIL becoming chargeable and ongoing governance for the monitoring and spending of CIL funds.

^[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/>

Figure 1 - CIL indicative timetable 25/26



Botley West

- 2.3 The Botley West Solar Farm is a proposal for an 840MW solar farm to the west of Oxford within the districts of West Oxfordshire, Cherwell and the Vale of White Horse. The proposal is classed as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) due to its size and as such, the decision on whether to approve the scheme is made by the Government following examination.
- 2.4 The examination of the proposed solar farm opened on 13 May and closed on 13 November 2025. A recommendation on whether to grant development consent is due by February 2026

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

- 2.5 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	Date of adoption	Purpose
Affordable Housing	27 October 2021	Supplements Local Plan Policy H3 – Affordable Housing and provides detailed guidance on the delivery of new affordable housing in West Oxfordshire. Link: Affordable Housing SPD Final (adoption version 27 October 2021)

Developer Contributions	31 July 2023	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. Link: Developer Contributions SPD Document
Combe Village Design Statement	28 July 2023	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. Link: Combe Village Design Statement
West Oxfordshire Design Guide	2016	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. Available to download here: Supplementary planning documents - West Oxfordshire District Council

Neighbourhood Planning

- 2.6 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.
- 2.7 Ten 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
Brize Norton	September 2025	https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/zsvj4xow/brize-norton-neighbourhood-plan-made_astrid-harvey.pdf
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/g4okpjt/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/wbenslr3/regulation-l9-charlbury-decision-statement-l4-june-2021-astrid-harvey-l.pdf
Eynsham	6 February 2020	https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/ngkckyhi/eynsham-neighbourhood-plan.pdf

NDP	Date of adoption	Weblink
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

2.8 In addition, there are a further seven NDPs currently being prepared as outlined below.

- Ascott-under-Wychwood
- Ducklington
- Hanborough
- Minster Lovell
- North Leigh
- Stonesfield
- Wootton by Woodstock

Duty to Cooperate

- 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. It applies during the period of plan-preparation i.e. up to the point at which the plan is submitted for examination.
- 2.10 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.
- 2.11 The District Council will continue to work closely with other local authorities and statutory bodies in the preparation of the new Local Plan 2043. Early engagement has already been undertaken through three rounds of informal Regulation 18 consultation, and this will continue up until the point of submission and beyond as appropriate.
- 2.12 The Oxfordshire local planning authorities (LPAs) have collectively signed Statements of Common Ground to identify the relevant strategic, cross-boundary matters on which the Oxfordshire local planning authorities will be required to co-operate. A duty to co-operate forum has been established to ensure ongoing and meaningful engagement in relation to these strategic matters.
- 2.13 Relevant strategic, cross-boundary matters identified between the Oxfordshire authorities include: Housing need and supply; gypsy and traveller needs; employment and jobs needed; natural environment; and climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- 2.14 Statements of Common Ground 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 **1,368** planning applications were determined within the monitoring period (1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025).

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 2024-2025

Type of decision	Number of applications 24/25
Approved / Subject to SI06	1,186
Prior approval granted / not required	47
Split decision	0
Refused	80
Withdrawn	45

Type of decision	Number of applications 24/25
Prior approval refused	10
TOTAL	1,368

Figure 2 - Types of planning decision 2024 – 2025

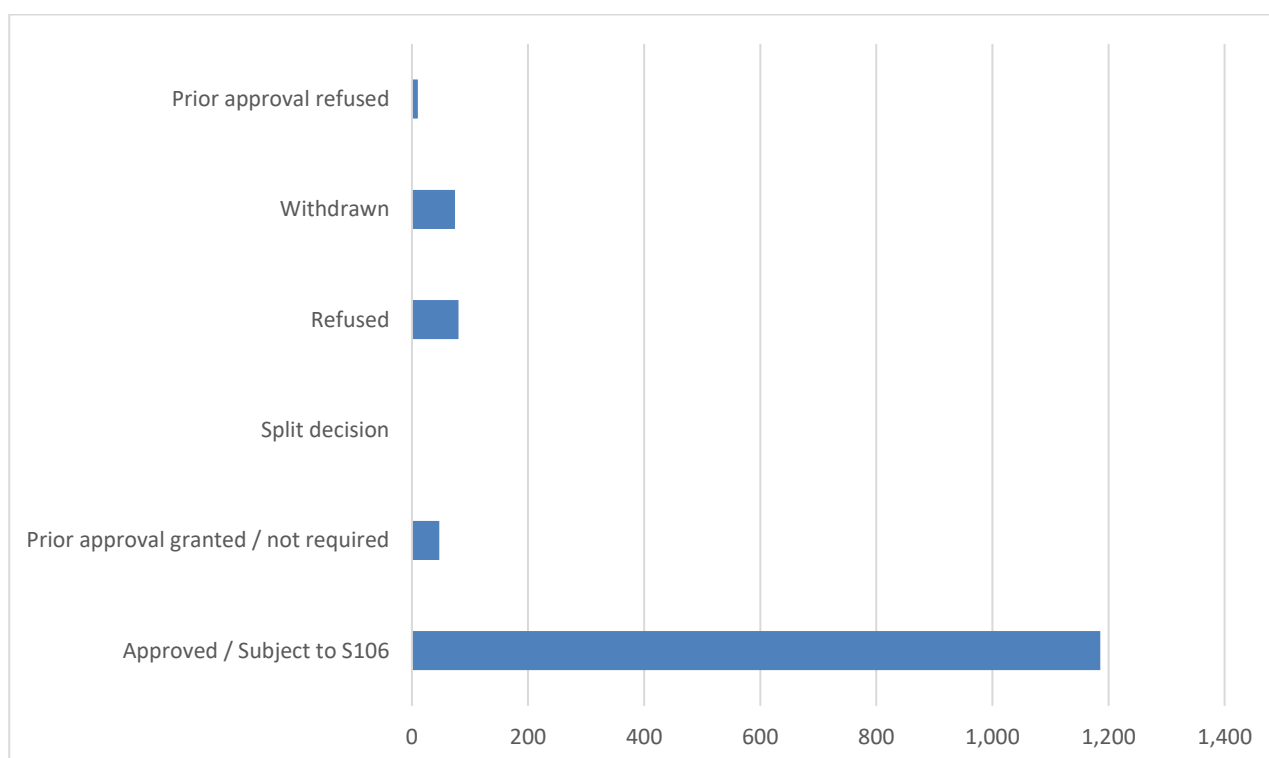


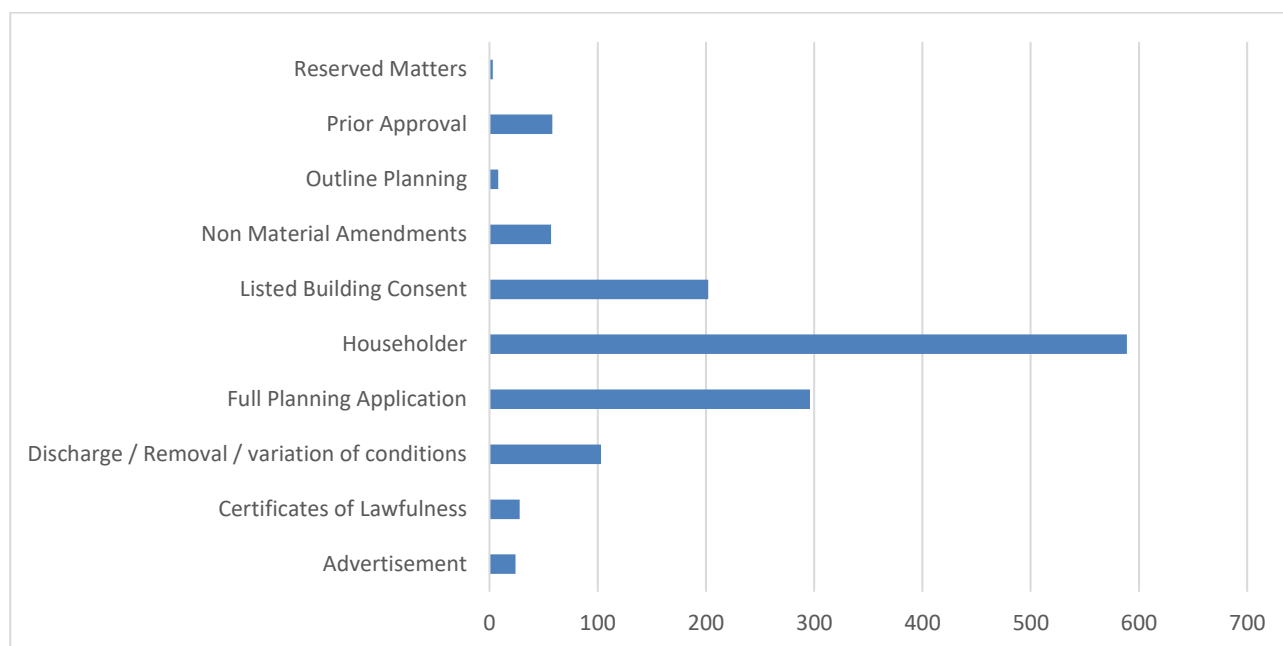
Table 5 - Types of planning application 2024 – 2025

Type of application	Number of Applications 24/25
Advertisement	24
Certificates of Lawfulness	28
Discharge / Removal / variation of conditions	103
Full Planning Application	296
Householder	589
Listed Building Consent	202
Non-Material Amendments	57

Outline Planning	8
Prior Approval	58
Reserved Matters	3
TOTAL	1,368

4.8 Of the **1,368** applications that were determined, the largest proportion were householder applications.

Figure 3 - Types of planning application 2024 – 2025



Planning Appeals (links to Policy OSI)

- 4.9 A total of **59** planning appeals were determined within the monitoring period. The majority of these (**39**) were dismissed, with **19** allowed and **1** allowed in part.
- 4.10 The allowed appeals included a number of residential schemes as illustrated in table 6 below including major developments at North Leigh and Witney.

Table 6 - Appeals allowed for residential development 2024 – 2025

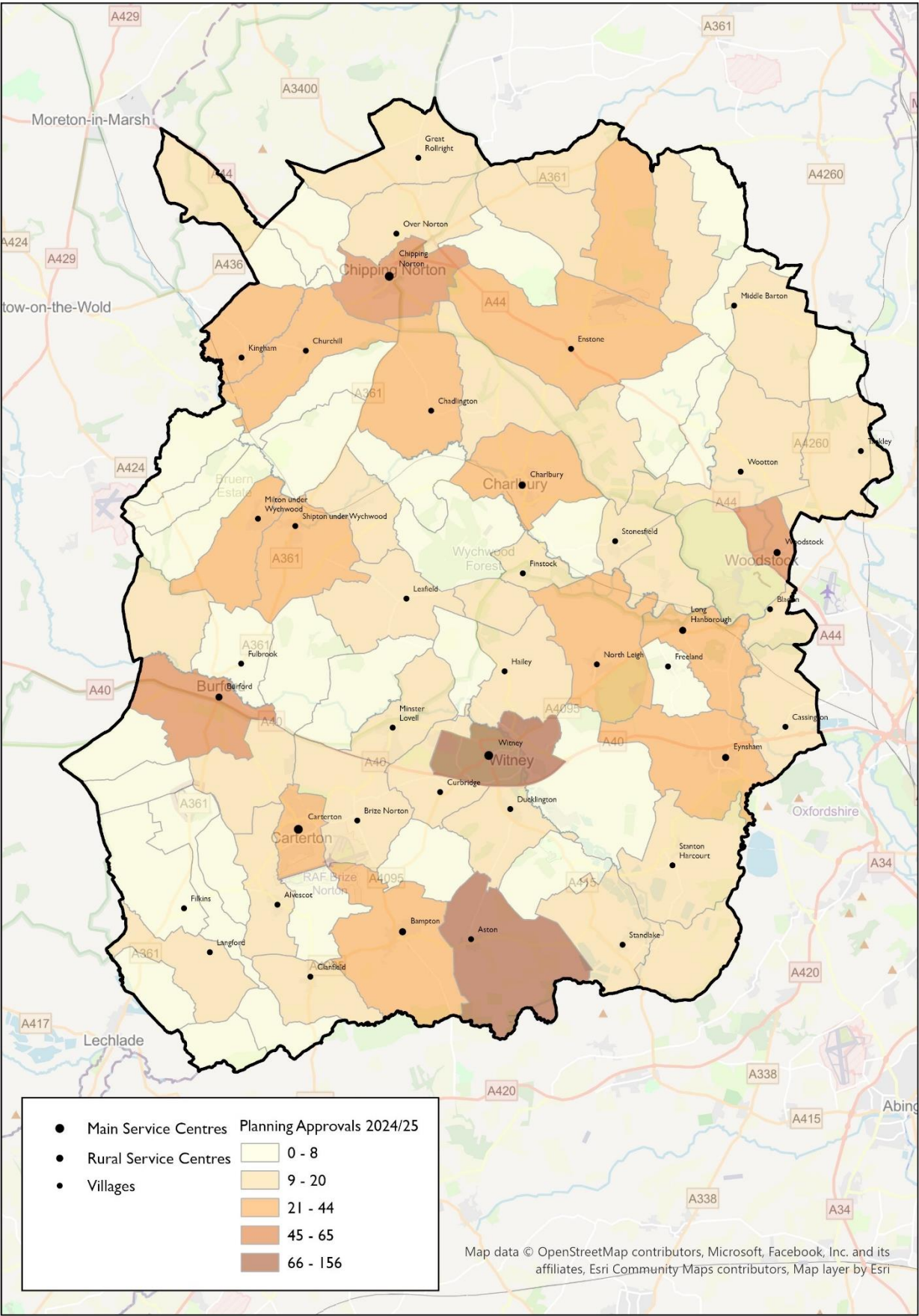
Reference	Location	Description
22/00838/OUT	Land At Chapel Lane Enstone	Outline planning permission for residential development (up to 8 dwellings), access, parking, public open space, landscaping and associated development infrastructure. (some matters reserved)
22/02740/FUL	Land North of A4095 North Leigh	Erection of a single storey dwelling with attached kennel, office and kitchen building along with construction of a kennel block all to be used in association with the existing dog training facility
23/00794/OUT	Land South Of I New Yatt Road North Leigh	Outline planning application (with all matters reserved except for means of access) for the erection of up to 43 residential dwellings, including affordable housing, public open space, landscape planting, sustainable drainage system and new access arrangements from New Yatt Road (amended plans)
23/00860/FUL	Land Formerly Known As The Square Church Enstone	Erection of a single dwelling
20/02654/OUT	Land South East Of Oxford Hill Witney	Outline planning application (with all matters reserved except access) for the erection of up to 450 dwellings together with associated open space and green infrastructure (Amended)
23/02245/FUL	Wychwood Garage Fairspear Road Leafield Witney OX29 9NU	Demolition of the existing garage, bungalow, associated buildings and hardstanding. Construction of seven dwellings with associated works
23/03070/FUL	Land West Of Colt House Aston Road Bampton	Erection of five single storey age restricted dwellings (55 years) for older people with access, landscaping and associated infrastructure
23/01182/FUL	Churchfields Care Home Pound Lane Cassington	Erection of a two-storey detached key worker nurses accommodation block and associated works

Reference	Location	Description
	Witney OX29 4BN	
23/02971/FUL	48 Black Bourton Road Carterton OX18 3HE	Erection of 9 dwellings and associated external works
23/02197/FUL	Mutchmeats Ltd Abattoir New Close Lane Ducklington Witney OX29 7GX	Erection of two semi-permanent single storey self-contained sleeper cabins (Retrospective)
24/01368/S73	Vicarage Field Church Road Milton Under Wychwood Chipping Norton OX7 6LQ	Variation of condition 2 of planning permission 21/00776/FUL to allow design and layout changes to both dwellings including the addition of two dormers and two rooflights (plot 1) and provision of office with dormer window above garaging (plot 2) (amended)
24/01030/FUL	South Lawn Farm South Lawn Swinbrook Burford OX18 4EN	Conversion of stables/tack room into two bedroom living accommodation (Part Retrospective)

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 4 below shows the concentrations of planning approvals in each town and parish between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025.
- 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.

Figure 4 - All planning applications approved 2024 – 2025



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

- 4.14 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 5 - West Oxfordshire car ownership statistics, Census 2021

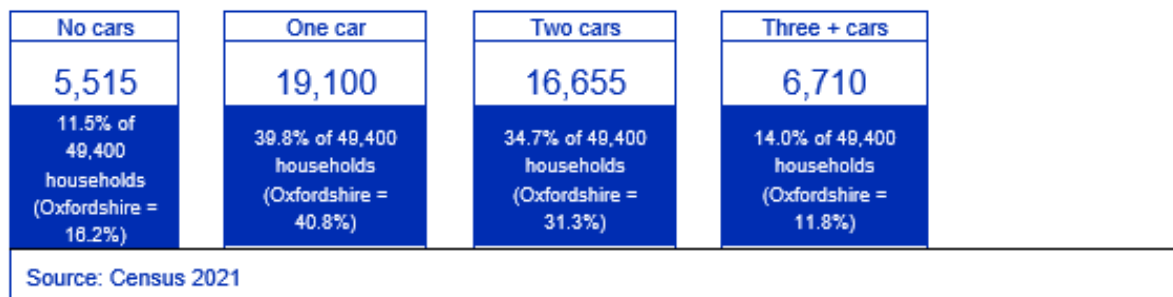
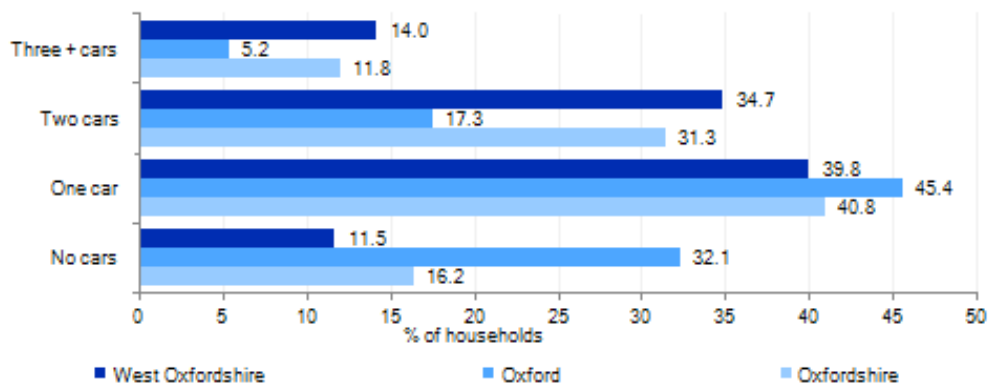


Figure: Car ownership
Source: Census 2021



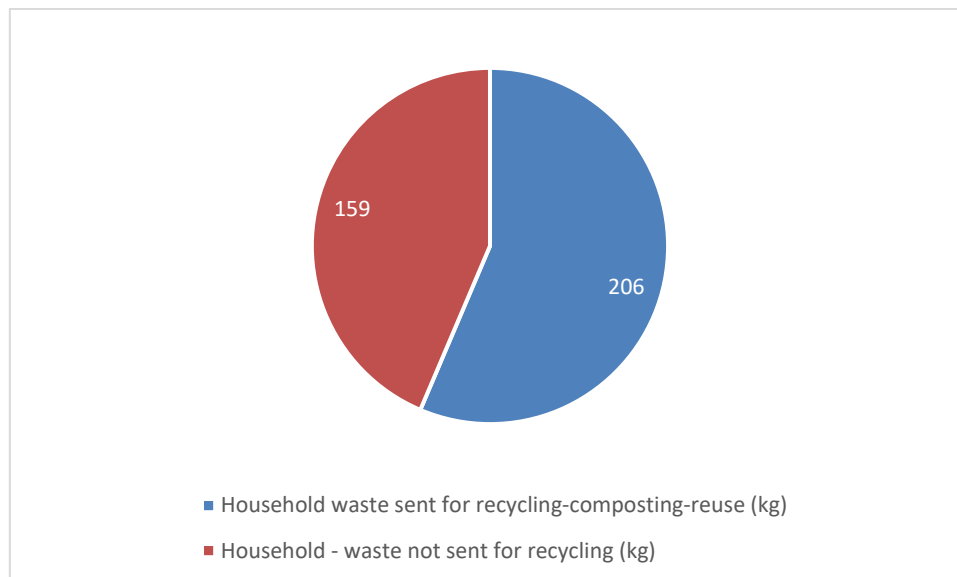
Proximity of development to public transport (links to Policies OSI, OS2 and OS3)

- 4.15 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.
- 4.16 Financial contributions towards improved bus services have been secured through new development that has been delivered in the district during the monitoring period.
- 4.17 There were 9 new residential development schemes approved during the monitoring period, located within 1.6km of a railway station. The total number of dwellings approved was 12, although one of these was for a replacement dwelling, so a net gain of 11. One approval was for an ancillary dwelling.
- 4.18 A total of 6 approvals were granted for residential development that were relatively isolated in terms of access to good transport links, totalling a net gain of 2 dwellings. These included two replacement dwellings and a couple of agricultural to residential conversions.

Waste and recycling (links to Policy OS3)

- 4.19 A total of 364.8 kg of residual waste per household was collected by the local authority between 2024 and 2025. 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 56% of waste recycled, composted or re-used within the period.

Figure 6 -Proportion of residual waste per household sent for recycling, composting or reuse in West Oxfordshire 2024 - 2025



Previously Developed (Brownfield) Land Redevelopment (links to Policies OS1, OS2 and OS3)

- 4.20 The Local Plan seeks ensure that development makes the most efficient use of land. There is relatively limited previously developed (brownfield) land available in the district since the majority of former industrial sites have already been developed, yet a large amount of residential development has been delivered on previously developed land, though conversion or redevelopment.
- 4.21 Approximately 69 dwellings out of 687 (10%) were approved on previously developed land during the monitoring period.

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

- 4.22 There were 7 approvals for residential development within Flood Zones 2 or 3 including at East Witney where part of the allocation on the land to the west of the Stanton Harcourt Road is in the flood zone, however, residential development would be located in areas of low flood risk. In addition to the East Witney approval, permission on sites FZ2 or FZ3 areas, totalled 5 further dwellings during the monitoring period¹. The majority of these approvals were for conversion or redevelopment of existing buildings.

¹ Calculated using GIS analysis – Any planning application boundary that intersects flood zones 2 or 3.

- 4.23 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.
- 4.24 There were incidents of highway flooding recorded during the monitoring period, however.
- 4.25 Incidents of highway and property flooding in West Oxfordshire are often a result of sewer inundation and overfilling 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)

- 4.26 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.
- 4.27 The annual water quality report for the Evenlode (2024)², recorded high nitrate concentrations, primarily from agriculture, are compounded by high phosphate concentrations downstream of sewage treatment works.
- 4.28 Sewage treatment works are a major contributor to phosphate pollution, accounting for 65% to 83% of the average phosphate contribution across the catchment. Water quality significantly decreases below STWs, and the flow in receiving water bodies is often insufficient to mitigate daily STW discharges.
- 4.29 No waterbodies in the Evenlode catchment achieved good ecological status in 2024, with water quality generally decreasing from headwaters to the confluence.

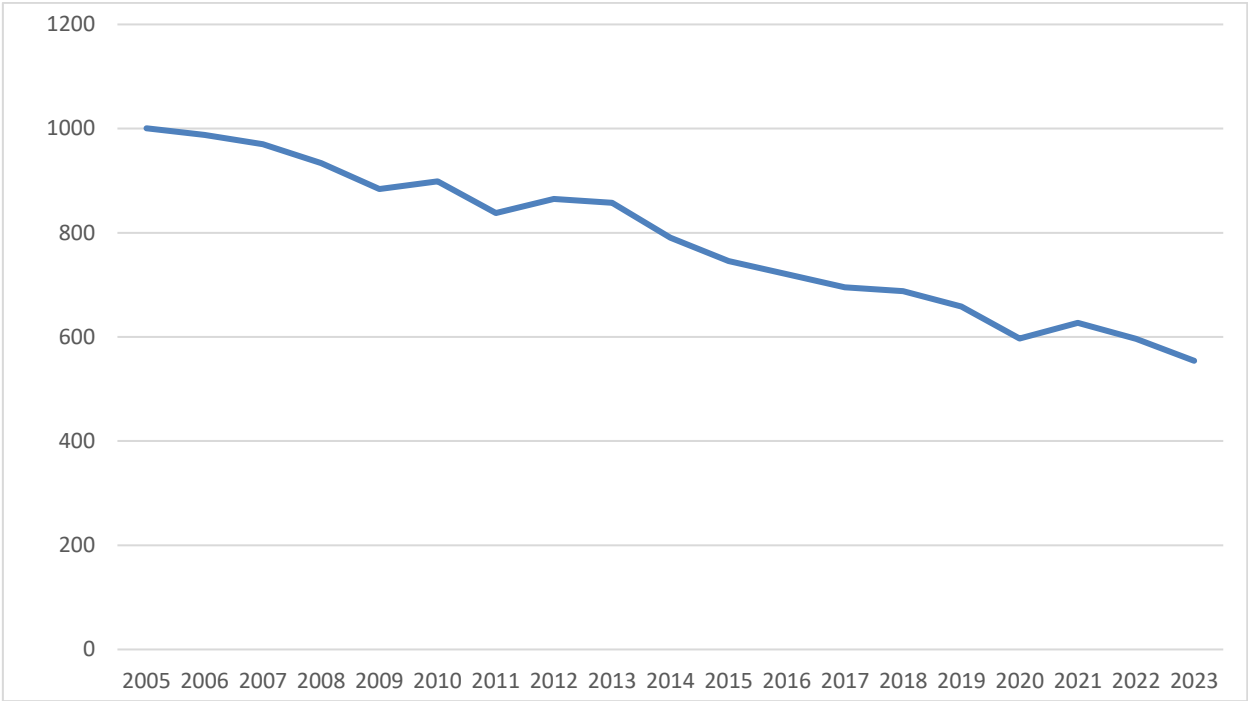
Climate and Carbon (links to Policies OS1, OS2, OS3 and OS4)

- 4.30 The government publish statistics³, 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.
- 4.31 Figure 7 below, shows the trend in greenhouse gas emissions in West Oxfordshire since 2005. Notably, there has been a steady decrease since 2011 with a slight uptick in 2021.

²² [Evenlode Catchment Partnership – 2024 Water Quality Report - Earthwatch Europe](#)

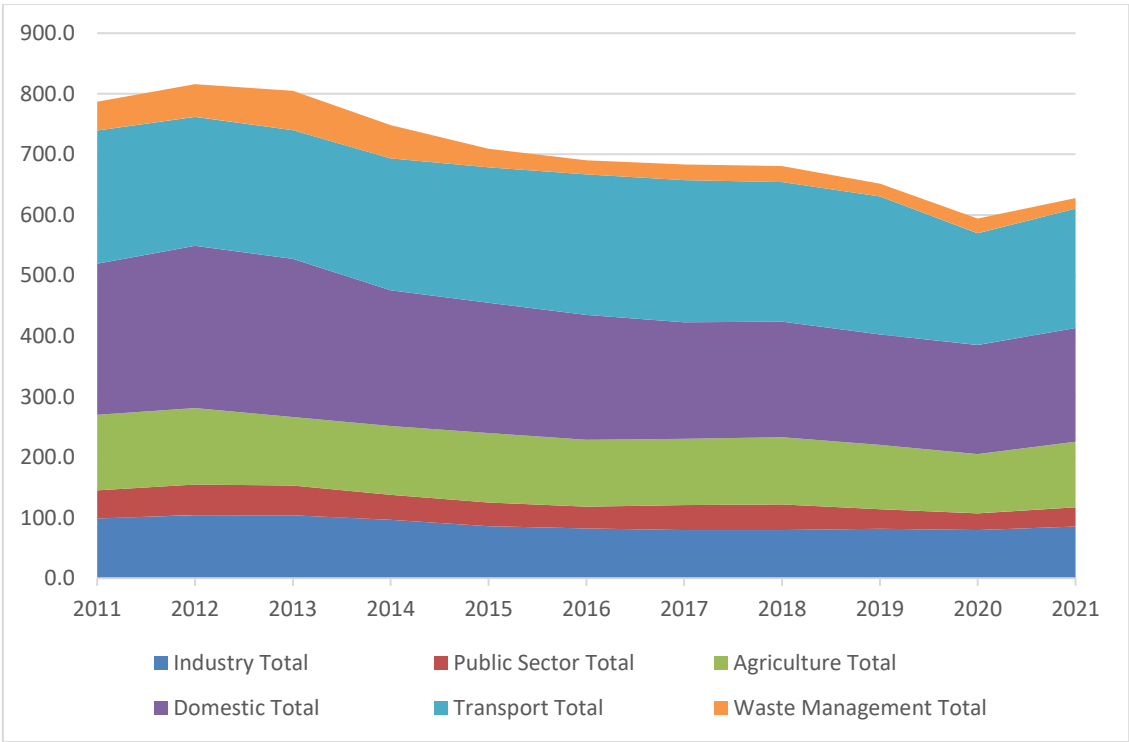
³ UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions statistics, 2005 to 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
[West Oxfordshire Climate Change Strategy 2025 v3.pdf](#)

Figure 7 – West Oxfordshire greenhouse gas emissions since 2005



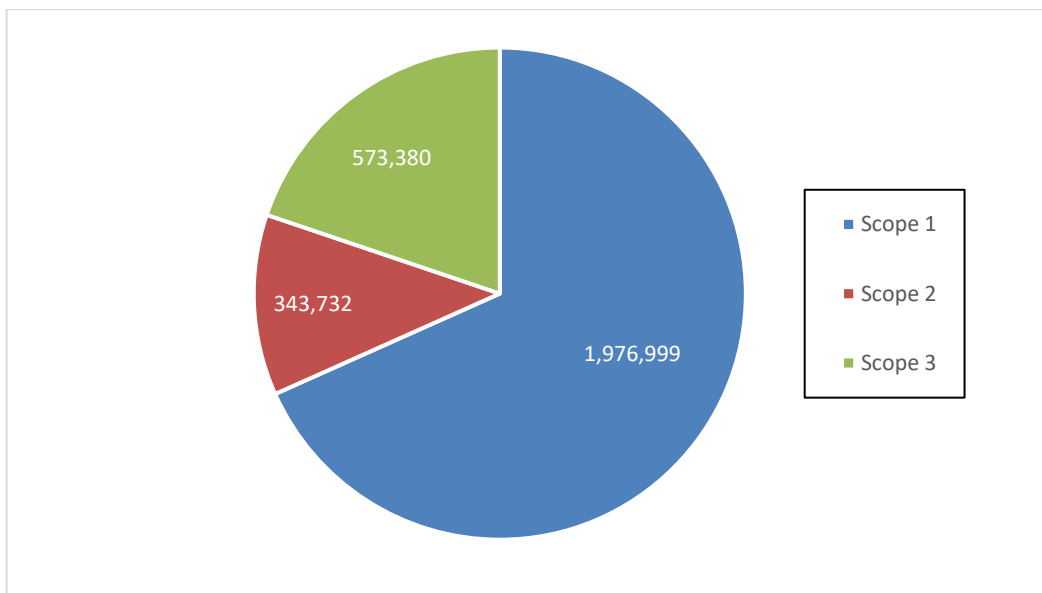
- 4.32 The majority of greenhouse gas emissions in West Oxfordshire arise from domestic and transport emissions, which account for over 58% of the total.
- 4.33 Further action to reduce emissions from residential development and transport will be necessary to meet targets for net zero emissions by 2050 or earlier.

Figure 8 - West Oxfordshire Greenhouse gas emissions by sector 2011 - 2021



- 4.34 WODC has 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.
- 4.35 Total carbon emissions from the council's own operations for 2023/24 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.
- 4.36 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 2024⁴ provides an updated version of the Climate Action 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 9 - West Oxfordshire District Council Carbon Emissions (kgCO₂e)



Provision of Supporting Infrastructure (links to Policy OS5)

- 4.37 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.

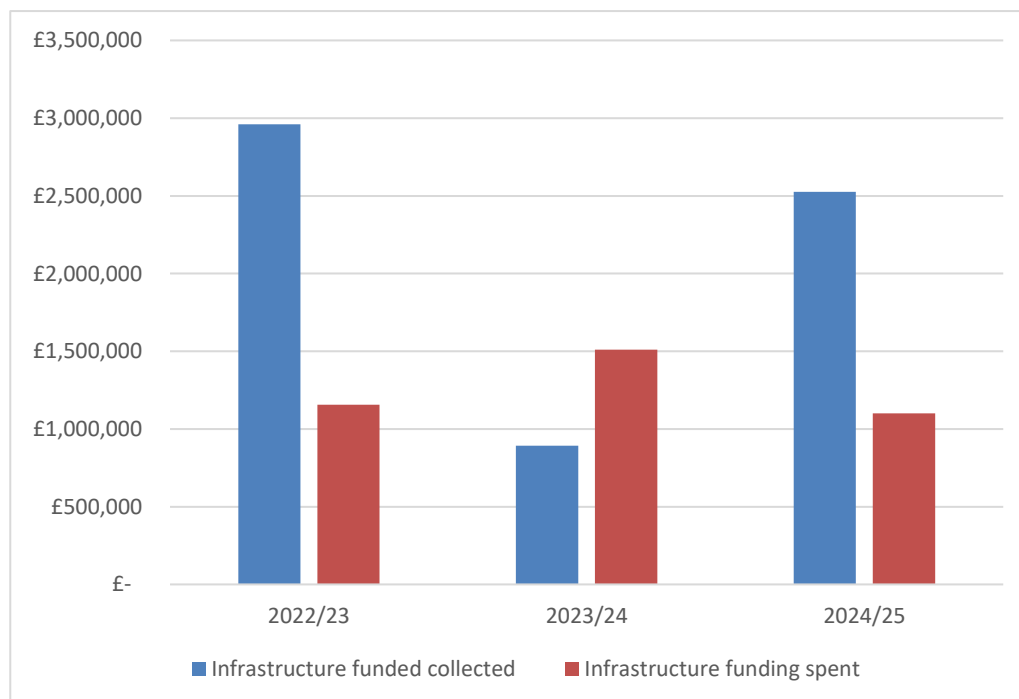
⁴ <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/tslaufqh/wodc-carbon-action-plan-20242030-oct-24.pdf>

- 4.38 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.
- 4.39 Evidence⁵ 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.
- 4.40 West Oxfordshire District Council adopted CIL on 1st October 2025, however it will not become chargeable until **31 January 2026**, so within the monitoring period, all monies received were via S106 legal agreements.
- 4.41 The Council collected a total of **£2,143,908.13** of infrastructure funding allocated but not spent 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 2024 – 2025

Year	Infrastructure Funding Agreed	Infrastructure funding collected	Infrastructure funding spent
2024 - 2025	£3,440,837.95	£2,525,351.53	£1,101,130.81
Total	£3,440,837.95	£2,525,351.53	£1,101,130.81

Figure 10 - Section 106 infrastructure funding collected and spent 2022 – 2025



⁵ <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/nzwnkumu/funding-gap-analysis-note-march-2025.pdf>

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 2024/25, a total of 300 new homes were completed, below the housing need for the district (549 dwellings per annum⁶) and below the Local Plan requirement (1,125 dwellings).
- 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 2025, a total of 8,019 new homes have been completed, set against a requirement for 9,200 over the same period (i.e. a shortfall of 1,181 dwellings over a 14 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 2025.
- Affordable housing continues to come forward as a significant proportion of total housing permitted and completed in the District.
- Approximately 157 new affordable homes were completed during the monitoring period, over half of the total housing completions.
- Notwithstanding increased delivery of new affordable homes, the affordability ratio in West Oxfordshire has generally worsened over the lifetime of the plan, increasing from 8.03 in 2011 to 12.2 in 2021, but has fallen substantially since then to 9.5 in 2024.
- 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.

⁶ Based on the previous standard method figure for West Oxfordshire in place during the monitoring period

4.42 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.

4.43 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)

4.44 Planning permission was granted for **687** new dwellings during the monitoring period, representing a net gain of **667**.

Table 8 - New permissions for residential development 2024 - 2025 (net residential dwellings)

Year	New permissions for residential development (net dwellings)
I April 2024 – 31 March 2025	667

4.45 The majority of permissions across the monitoring period were ‘major’ i.e. developments of greater than 10 units.

4.46 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).

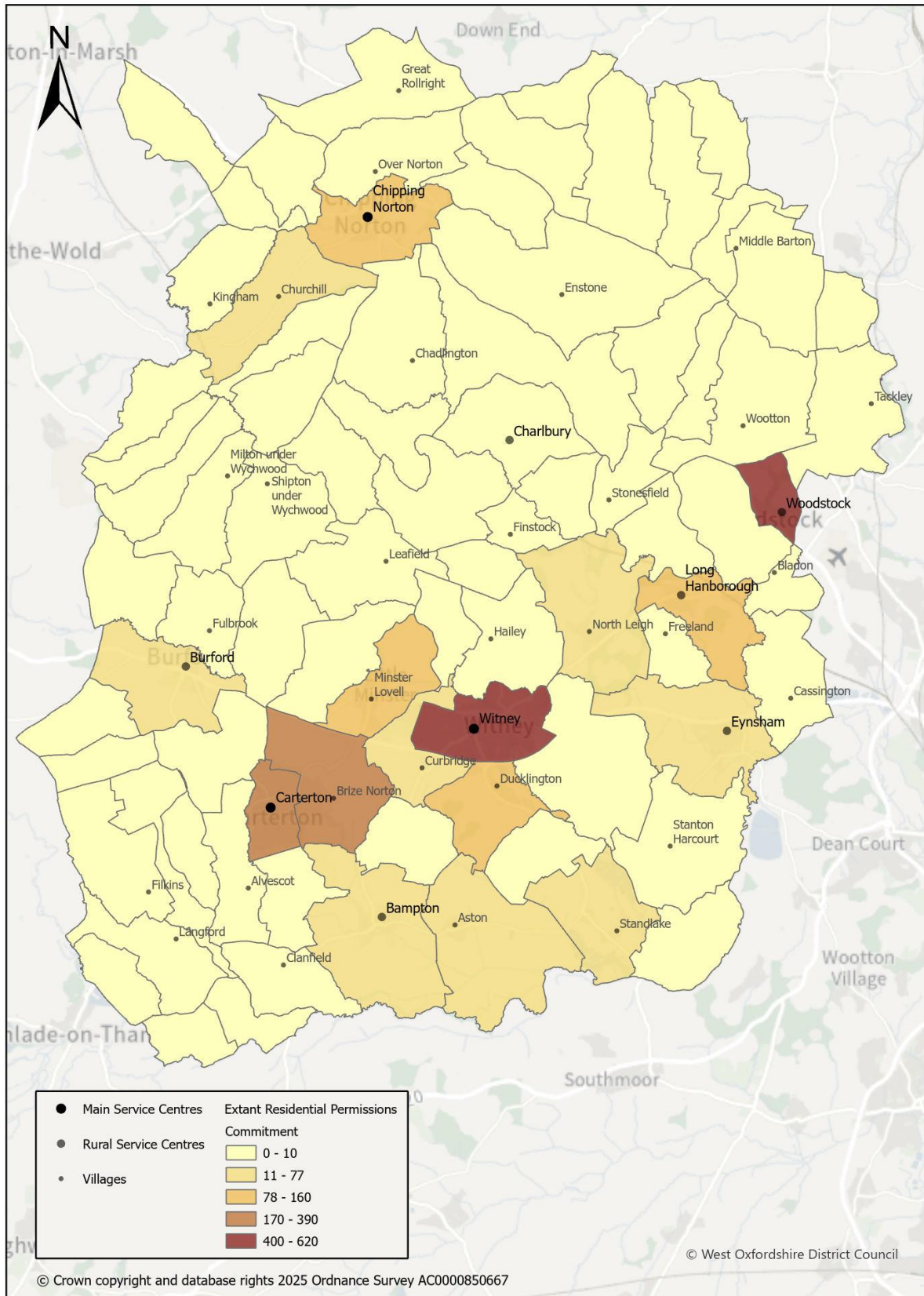
4.47 Total commitments for new residential development are illustrated in Table 9 below. It shows that the largest numbers of outstanding commitments (dwellings with planning permission that are yet to be built) are within and on the edge of Carterton, North Leigh and Witney.

4.48 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 2025

Site Name	Number of units yet to be built as of 1st April 2025	Parish
North Curbridge, Local Centre (West Witney)	39	Witney
North Curbridge (West Witney)	74	Witney
Land west of Downs Road, Curbridge	75	Curbridge
Land east of Carterton (Brize Meadow)	156	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
Land East of Witney Road, Ducklington	120	Ducklington
Campbells Close, Woodstock	18	Woodstock
Land south of Hit or Miss Farm, Banbury Road, Chipping Norton	82	Chipping Norton
Land north of Witney Road, North Leigh	55	North Leigh
Land south of I New Yatt Road, North Leigh	43	North Leigh
Land north of Foxwood Close, Aston	39	Aston
Chipping Norton War Memorial Hospital, Horsefair, Chipping Norton	14	Chipping Norton
Station Garage, Station Road, Kingham,	10	Churchill
Land to the rear of 65 High Street, Standlake	7	Standlake
Site Of Former 19, Burford Road, Carterton	10	Carterton
Car Park Rear Of 58 West End, Witney	10	Witney
TOTAL	1,157	

Figure 11 - Residential Commitments by Parish 2025



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

4.49 The adopted 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.

4.50 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)
- 1,125 dwellings per year (2024 – 2025)

4.51 Notably, in the period 1st April 2011 – 31st March 2025, a total of 8,019 new homes were completed in West Oxfordshire, set against a requirement of 9,200 new homes over the same period. Delivery was effectively on track until 2023, but has dropped off during the monitoring period, with a shortfall now of approximately 1,181 over the whole Plan period to date.

4.52 This shortfall can largely be attributed to slower than anticipated delivery of new housing on some larger local plan allocated sites, compared to the anticipated housing trajectory set out in the Local Plan.

4.53 From 2023/24, the Council reverted to the Standard Methodology for housing need for the purpose of calculating housing land supply. At that time this equated to a housing need of 549 dwellings per annum.

Figure 12 - Net residential completions in West Oxfordshire 2011 – 2025



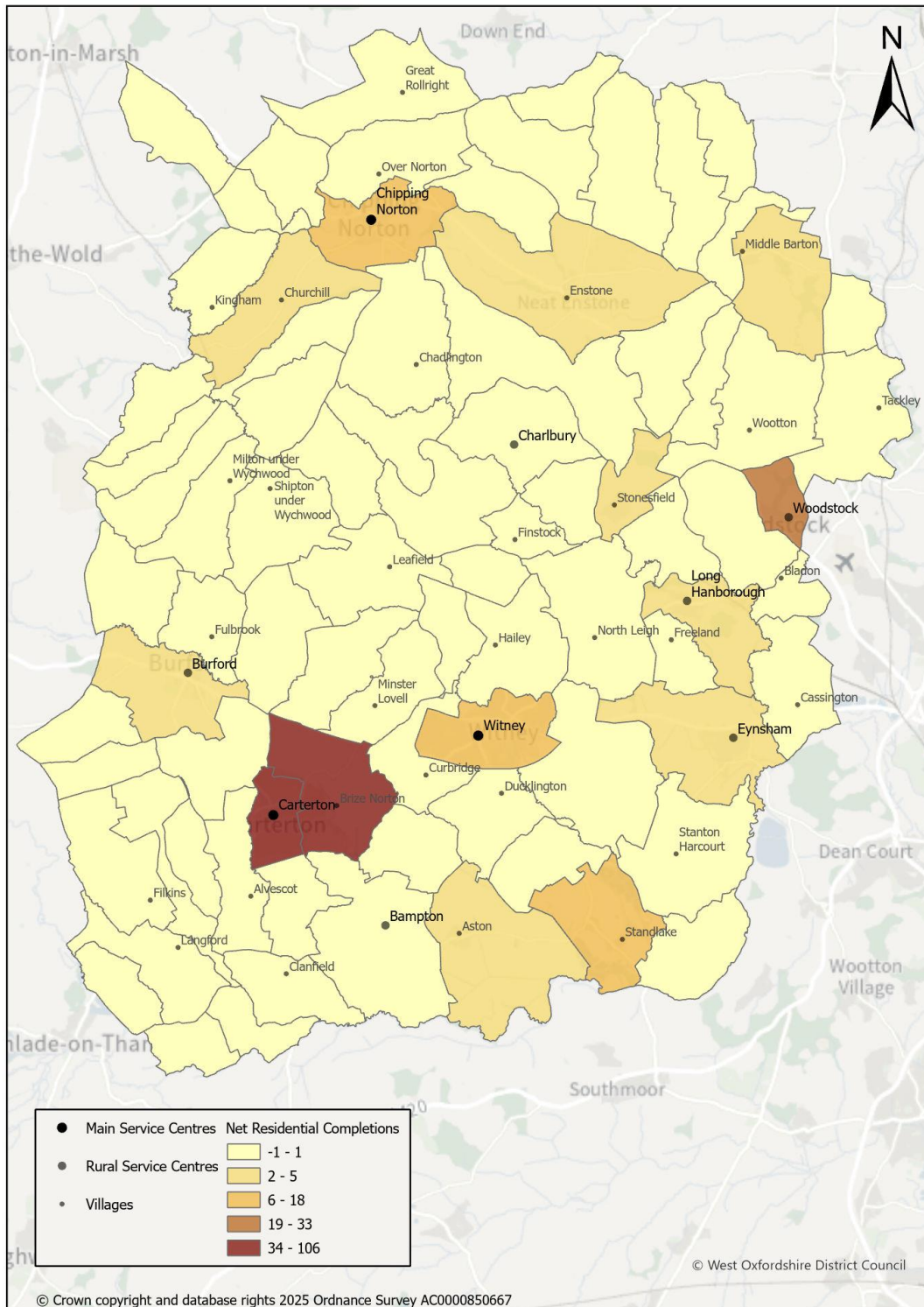
4.54 In December 2024, the basis of the standard method calculation of housing need was updated through the NPPF and for West Oxfordshire, this led to an increased level of need of 905 dwellings

per annum. The Council was unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply based on this measure at 31 March 2025.

Net Housing Completions 2024 – 2025 (links to Policies H1 and H2)

4.55 A total of **300** new homes were completed in 2024/25, falling short of the Local Plan requirement of 1,125 for the year. Figure 13 below shows the location of these completions on a spatial basis.

Figure 13 - Net residential completions 2024 – 2025



Housing allocations (links to Policies H1, H2 and various site allocations)

4.56 The adopted Local Plan allocates a number of strategic and non-strategic housing sites, a large number 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. The location of these allocated sites is shown on figure 14 below.

Figure 14 - West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2031 housing allocations



4.57 Table 10 below lists the various local plan housing allocations and the total number of completions recorded up to 1st April 2025.

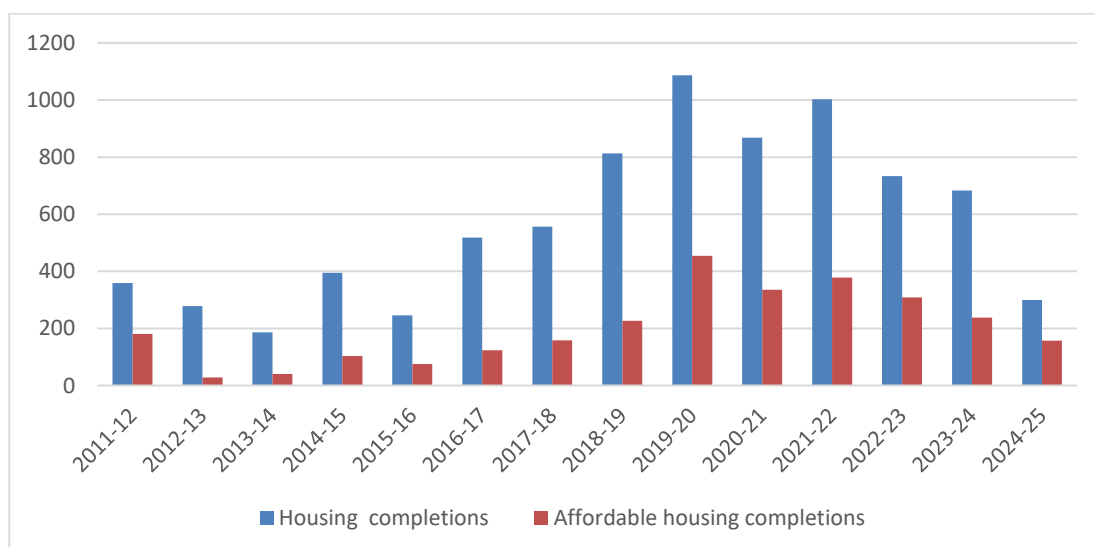
Table 10 - Expected and actual completions on allocated sites

Site Name	Allocated total dwellings	Expected completions 2018-2025 (Local Plan Housing trajectory)	Total Completions to 31 March 2025
East Witney SDA	450	175	0
North Witney SDA	1,400	325	0
Woodford Way Car Park	50	50	0
Land west of Minster Lovell	125	125	126
REEMA North and Central	300	121	81
Land at Milestone Road, Carterton	200	200	76
Land at Swinbrook Road, Carterton	70	70	71
East Chipping Norton SDA	1,200	427	173
Salt Cross Garden Village	2,200	880	0
West Eynsham SDA	1,000	312	237
Land east of Woodstock	300	275	217
Land north of Hill Rise, Woodstock	120	120	0
Land north of Banbury Road, Woodstock	180	30	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)

- 4.58 The Office for National Statistics September 2025 data reveals that the average house price is £423,000 up 4.2% from July 2024 and the average monthly rent is £1,281 up 2.4% in the same period.
- 4.59 Notwithstanding increased delivery of new affordable homes, the affordability ratio in West Oxfordshire has generally worsened over the lifetime of the plan, increasing from 8.03 in 2011 to 12.2 in 2021, but has fallen substantially since then to 9.5 in 2024. The affordability ratio is the ratio of median house price to median gross annual-based earnings of local residents.
- 4.60 The Local Plan sets out the different forms of housing that come under the definition of 'Affordable housing'. These include social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing.
- 4.61 Over 50% of the homes completed in in the district were classed as 'Affordable housing'. This was slightly above the requirements of Local Plan Policy H3 which adopts a tiered approach ranging from 35% - 50% depending on location. 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.
- 4.62 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.
- 4.63 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.
- 4.64 A total of **£2,755,134.67** was collected towards the provision of affordable housing during the monitoring period.
- 4.65 Much of this is awaiting allocation, but the Council remains in discussion with affordable housing providers about allocating this funding effectively.

Figure 15 - Proportion of affordable housing completions 2011 – 2025



Affordable Housing Permissions (links to Policy H3)

- 4.66 A total of **263** on-site affordable housing units were secured through legal agreement in 2024/25 and will be delivered through future monitoring periods.
- 4.67 These affordable units will be focused within the main service centres of Witney and Carterton and the larger village of North Leigh.

Table 11 - Affordable Housing required from S106 planning obligations signed 2024-2025

1 April 2024 – 31 March 2025		
20/02654/OUT	Land Southeast Of Oxford Hill, Witney	180
22/03539/FUL	Land (E) 429494 (N) 207689, Monahan Way, Carterton	35
23/00794/OUT	Land South Of I New Yatt Road, North Leigh	18
23/01206/FUL	Land West of Witney North of A40 And East of, Downs Road, Curbridge, Witney	30
Total		263

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

- 4.68 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 and 120,941 in 2024. 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.
- 4.69 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.
- 4.70 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
- 4.71 Details of the new permissions granted over the monitoring period for different types and sizes of residential property are set out in table 12. 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 12 - Proportion of residential types and sizes granted permission between 2024 and 2025

Size	Percentage
1 bed	16
2 bed	31
3 bed	21
4+ bed	32

4.72 It can be seen that during the monitoring period, there was a very even balance of different sized units permitted with a slight skew towards 3 and 4+bed units.

Meeting the needs of elderly (links to Policy H4)

4.73 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 13 below.

Table 13 - Specialist elderly accommodation permissions and completions 2024 - 2025

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	38 assisted living units completed during monitoring period with 21 still to be completed Care home has been completed during 2024/25 period
23/03070/FUL	Erection of five single storey age restricted dwellings (55 years) for older people with access, landscaping and associated infrastructure	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 – construction commenced in autumn 2024 and completion expected in 2025
25/00496/FUL	Conversion of existing single dwelling (class use C3) to Ofsted registered children's home (class use C2).	Malt Barn Burford Road Brize Norton Carterton Oxfordshire OX	Permission granted

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

- 4.74 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.
- 4.75 One site exceeded the threshold for the delivery of on-site self-build residential plots during the monitoring period at East Witney.
- 4.76 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)

- 4.77 There were no new planning applications for new gypsy and traveller accommodation during the monitoring period.
- 4.78 As at September 2024, 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 Show person yards, with 24 plots accommodating 26 households.
- 4.79 WODC jointly commissioned a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) with the other Oxfordshire local planning authorities. The findings of the study, published in December 2024, will be considered in the determination of any future planning applications and in developing the new Local Plan 2043.

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

- 4.80 There were no planning applications granted permission at Cuckoowood Farm during the monitoring period.

SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH

SUMMARY

- The new permission rates for employment development have remained relatively 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 or changes of use between business uses. 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. 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.

4.81 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.

4.82 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.

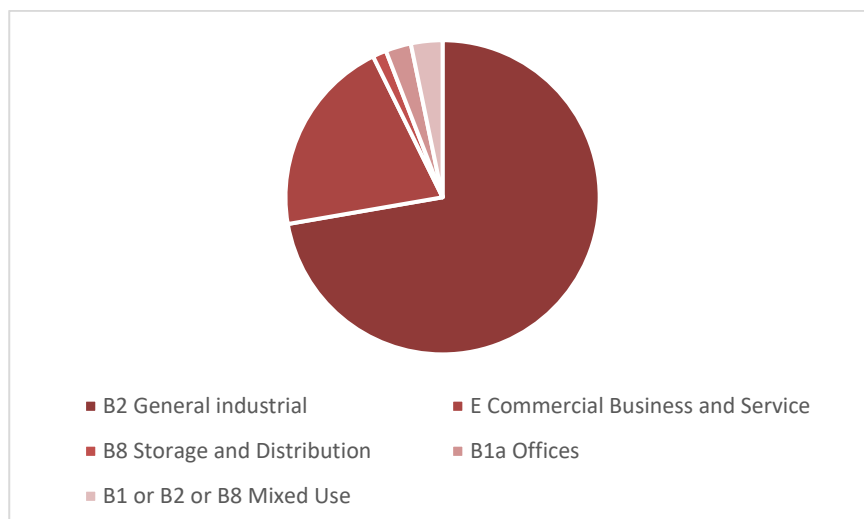
New Employment Permissions (links to Policy EI)

4.83 A total of approximately 2,500² of new business floorspace (net) was granted permission between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025.

4.84 The largest proportion of new employment floorspace permitted was for General Industrial development. In addition to new floorspace there were changes of use between business uses, for example at Eagle Industrial Estate, Witney, where permission was granted from change of use of existing brewery to Class E use.

4.85 The largest individual proposal was for the change of use of land from mixed use to B2 (General Industrial) for car servicing and repairs (retrospective), at Ramsden.

Figure 16 - proportions of new employment floorspace permitted 2024 – 2025

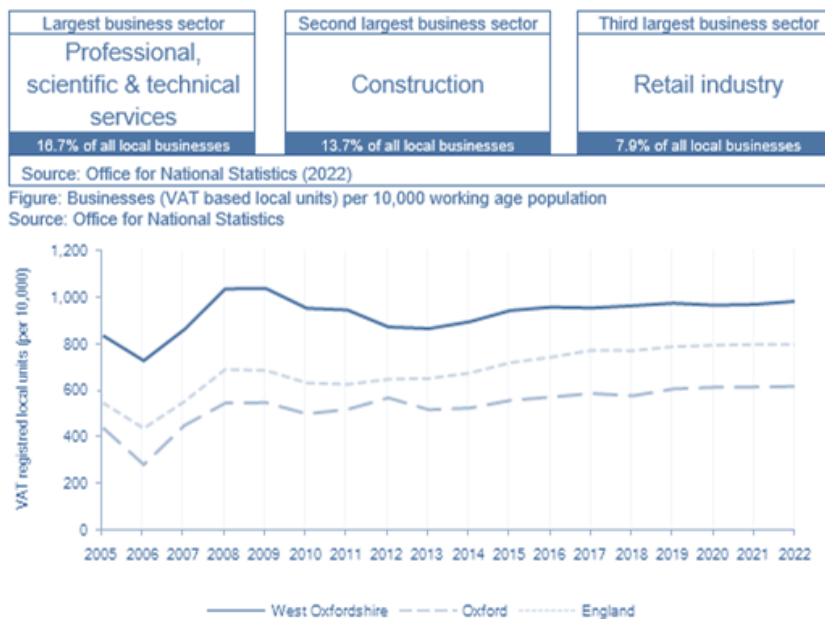


- 4.86 There were no new approvals for employment and commercial development during 2024-25 on land identified to meet the employment needs of the Local Plan.
- 4.87 As part of the supporting evidence for the new Local Plan, the Council has commissioned an economic needs assessment which will provide up to date evidence on the amount and type of new employment floorspace needed in the period up to 2041.

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

- 4.88 Figure 17 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 17 - West Oxfordshire largest business sectors, ONS 2022



- 4.89 The majority of businesses employ less than five people. Businesses employing less than 10 people represent approximately 86% of all local businesses.
- 4.90 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.
- 4.91 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.
- 4.92 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.

Table 14 - New permissions for commercial and business development in service centres and larger villages

Parish Name	Permission Reference	Description
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Minster Lovell	24/01986/FUL	Erection of an industrial unit with 4 bays (amended description).
Ramsden	24/02605/FUL	Change of use of land from mixed use to B2 (General Industrial) for car servicing and repairs (Retrospective)
Enstone	24/02206/FUL	Erection of test building together with associated development.
Leafield	24/02667/FUL	Change of use and conversion of a traditional agricultural building to office and associated warehouse use (class E) and associated works.
Chilson	24/01893/FUL	Change of use and conversion of agricultural building to office use (class E)
Ascott-under-Wychwood	24/02209/FUL	Change of use and extension of two traditional agricultural buildings to an office and associated studio (class E)

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

4.94 A total of approximately 6,700m² of new agricultural floorspace was permitted during the monitoring period, primarily relating to the formation of new storage for equipment and farm produce.

4.95 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 15 - New permissions for change of use and re-use of non-residential buildings in West Oxfordshire 2024 – 2025

Permission Reference	Description	Parish Name
24/02209/FUL	Change of use and extension of two traditional agricultural buildings to an office and associated studio (class E)	Ascott-under-Wychwood
24/02667/FUL	Change of use and conversion of a traditional agricultural building to office and associated warehouse use (class E) and associated works.	Leafield
24/01893/FUL	Change of use and conversion of agricultural building to office use (class E)	Chilson
24/02605/FUL	Change of use of land from mixed use to B2 (General Industrial) for car servicing and repairs (Retrospective)	Ramsden

- 4.96 There have been several holiday lets and other tourism related developments permitted during the monitoring period, supporting an increase in tourism accommodation and activity in the district.
- 4.97 The most significant tourism related development approved during the monitoring period was for the redevelopment of Mill House Hotel in Kingham to provide x 38 bedrooms.
- 4.98 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.

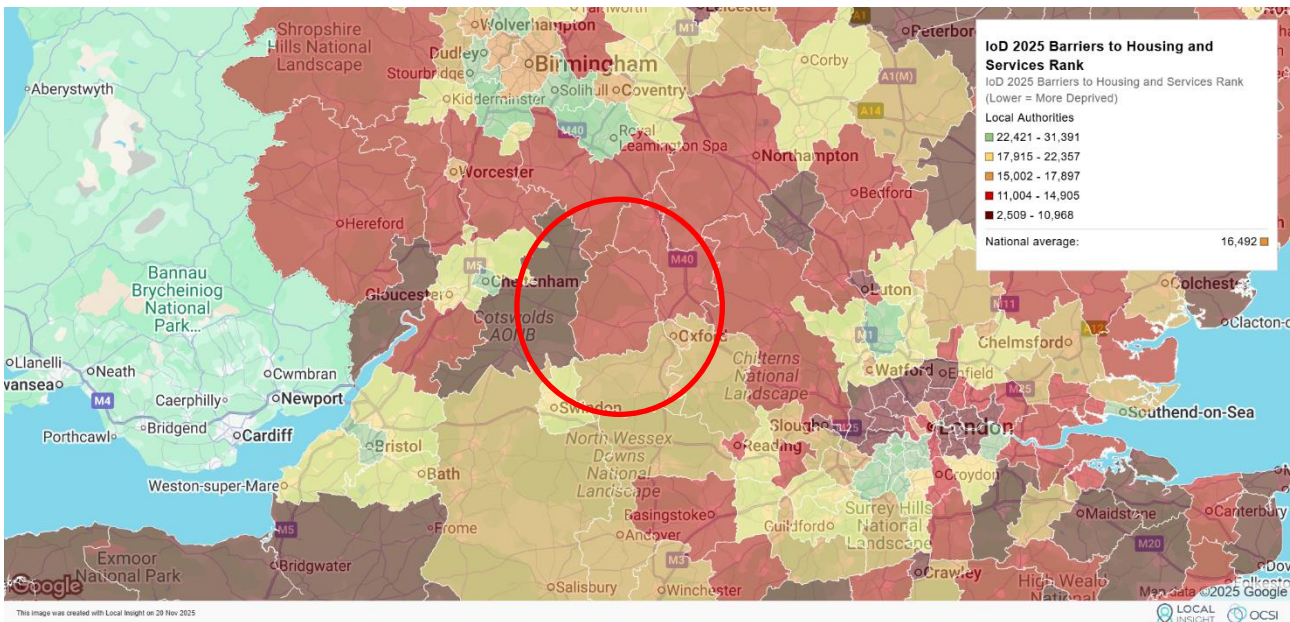
Table 16 - New permissions for tourism development in West Oxfordshire 2024 – 2025

Permission Reference	Description	Parish Name
24/02866/FUL	Erection of two Airbnb cabins with associated change of use, access, and ancillary equipment. (Retrospective).	Alvescot
24/00126/FUL	Change of use from dwelling to letting rooms, proposed rear extension, enlargement of the rear car park and alterations to the access and associated internal works (amended plans)	Clanfield
22/03311/FUL	Redevelopment of the Mill House Hotel site to provide a 38 bedrooms hotel and ancillary facilities including restaurant, alehouse, reception/bakehouse, and demonstration barn. Associated provision of parking, landscaping and reinstatement of the former mill leat (Amended plans and information received)	Kingham
23/02297/FUL	Proposed new dwelling to replace redundant stables and store, to create holiday let (amended plans)	Bampton
24/01056/FUL	Change of use of self-contained staff living accommodation ancillary to the public house to an Airbnb (C3 dwellinghouse)	Cassington

Local services and community facilities (links to Policy E5)

- 4.99 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.
- 4.100 Figure 18 below shows that West Oxfordshire district is relatively in line with the average of deprived areas nationally for this measure of deprivation.

Figure 18 - Barriers to housing and services deprivation – West Oxfordshire compared with surrounding areas



- 4.101 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.
- 4.102 Records indicate that there have been proposals relating to the expansion and improvement of community services and facilities during the monitoring period.
- 4.103 These will help to ensure the continued integrity of community uses and support activity of communities in West Oxfordshire.

Table 17 - Planning permission for new community services and facilities 2024 – 2025

Permission	Description	Parish
23/03239/FUL	Change of use from planning class light industrial use to community centre (F2(b)) (amended)	Witney
23/01361/FUL	Construction of new two storey teaching building, extension of existing sports changing room facilities, and modifications and improvements to external areas to provide additional car parking and to improve vehicle access.	Woodstock
24/01476/FUL	Erection of a detached garden building for use as an additional classroom.	Burford
24/01384/FUL	Erection of a clubhouse, storage and scorer's hut (revised plans and additional information submitted).	Shipton-under-Wychwood

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

4.105 Permission was granted for conversion of the methodist church in North Leigh to a dwelling and the former surgery at Long Hanborough was also approved for residential development.

Table 18 - Loss of community services and facilities 2024 – 2025

Parish Name	Reference	Address	Description
Standlake	23/02464/FUL	61 High Street Standlake Oxfordshire OX29 7RH	Demolition of existing engineering workshop. Erection of 2 dwellings with associated parking, turning, landscaping, private amenity space and access to include the installation of solar panels on south-western elevations (retrospective).
Long Hanborough	24/01834/FUL	Long Hanborough Surgery 56 Churchill Way Long Hanborough Witney Oxfordshire OX29 8JL	Change of Use from Class E (doctors surgery) to Class C3 to create 5 dwellings including external alterations to include 2 x dormers to match existing dormer, alterations to the fenestration, new render to all elevations and new bike stores.
Finstock	24/02294/FUL	Crown Barn Shop and Post Office School Road Finstock	Change of use of former community shop (previously an outbuilding to existing dwelling) to create granny annexe together with reinstatement of domestic curtilage all to pertain to existing main dwelling, Crown House.
Woodstock	24/02238/FUL	Store 16 Oxford Street Woodstock Oxfordshire OX20 1TS	Change of use and conversion of retail building to 2 flats with residential use (class C3) with associated works including erection of external staircase, insertion of rooflights and two dormer windows.
Woodstock	24/00651/FUL	Land North of Lince Lodge Blenheim Park Woodstock Oxfordshire	Conversion of existing kennels to form a single residential dwelling with roof mounted PV and associated parking and works
Burford	24/02152/FUL	Burford Methodist Church 75 High Street Burford Oxfordshire	Conversion of Methodist church back to a residential dwelling (self-build)
Witney	24/02573/FUL	21 - 23 Market Square Witney Oxfordshire OX28 6AD	Conversion of retail storage/ancillary space to two flats (Amended Plans)

Town Centre Vitality and Viability (links to Policy E6)

4.106 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

4.107 There were 41 new permissions granted within or on the edge of these town centres within the monitoring period (excluding Listed Building Consents).

Table 19 - Planning approvals within town centres 2024 – 2025

Town Centre	Number of new approvals	Proposals of note
Witney	10	The most significant approvals in the town centre include the demolition of the existing hall and erection of a 2-bed home. Also, in Market Square the conversion of retail storage to 2 flats.
Carterton	1	The only town centre approval in Carteron was a variation of condition to allow design changes for a previously approved new commercial and residential scheme.
Chipping Norton	8	The most significant approvals in the town centre included the change of use from Class E to part Class E and Part Class C3 and conversion to form 4 flats (at Barclays Bank). Other approvals were mainly minor alteration works and advertisement consents.
Burford	13	The majority of new permissions granted within Burford town centre were for conversions such as Burford Methodist Church being converted back to a residential dwelling as a self-build. Other approvals were mainly minor alteration works and advertisement consents.
Woodstock	9	The most significant approval in Woodstock town centre included the Change of use of E(c)(ii) professional services basement store to C3 (residential) use.

4.108 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.

4.109 Town centre surveys were undertaken in November 2023 (this information is looking to be updated in 2026 by Economic Development) 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).

- 4.110 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.
- 4.111 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 de-scoped A40 bus priority project.

4.112 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.

4.113 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)

4.114 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.

4.115 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

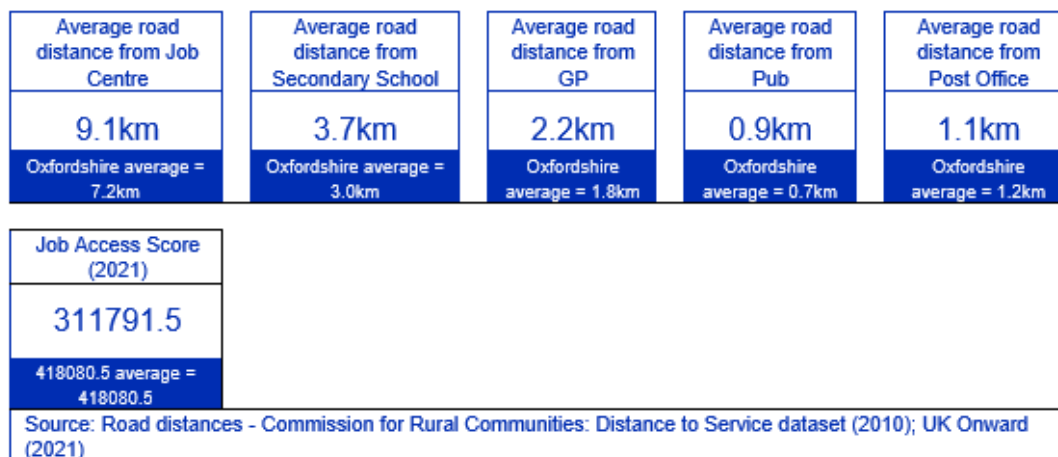
Rural Service Centres

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

4.116 Planning permission was granted for 20 residential schemes at the service centres during the monitoring period totalling 571 dwellings, so although a large proportion of residential development is being directed to the most sustainable locations in accessibility terms⁷, a proportion of development is being directed towards larger villages, some of which are less accessible.

4.117 Notwithstanding the fact that most development is directed towards service centres, the rural nature of the district and fact that many settlements in the district have limited or no services at all, accessibility to key services and facilities in West Oxfordshire is relatively poor, resulting in relatively high car dependency.

Figure 19 - West Oxfordshire accessibility to key services and facilities 2021⁸



⁷ See Policies OS2 and H2 for further information

⁸ Oxfordshire Insight – Local Insight profile for West Oxfordshire. OCSI 2022

Highway Improvements (links to Policy T2)

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

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

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

Table 20 - Travel Plans submitted and monitored during monitoring period

Year	Proposal	Contribution / Spend
2024/25	Erection of food store and 10 flats with associated parking landscaping and access.	£900 Travel Plan monitoring

4.121 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. The Council currently holds £12,147.00 that is yet to be allocated towards highways and sustainable transport projects. It is important to note that Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) is the main collector of contributions for highway works. OCC is required to publish an Infrastructure Funding Statement annually⁹.

4.122 The Local Plan also identifies a number of strategic highway infrastructure schemes. The latest position in relation to each of these schemes is summarised below.

Table 21 - Local Plan 2031 identified highway infrastructure schemes

Scheme Name	Status
Shores Green Slip Roads	<p>Started - Oxfordshire County Council are delivering new west-facing slip roads at the A40/ B4022 Shores Green junction at Witney. This scheme is funded by Housing Infrastructure Growth Deal funding and Section 106 developer contributions.</p> <p>The project will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access to Witney • Enable access to the A40 for local and through traffic without the need to travel through Witney town centre or use the A40/ Ducklington Lane junction • Alleviate congestion and air quality issues in Witney town centre • Deliver improved walking and cycling paths and crossings on the B4022 and alongside the A40, ultimately improving safety of connections between South Leigh, High Cogges and Witney • Support the delivery of more homes at Witney

⁹ Oxfordshire County Council Infrastructure Funding Statements can be downloaded on the OCC website here: [Infrastructure funding statement | Oxfordshire County Council](#)

Scheme Name	Status
	<p>Construction commenced on the scheme in spring 2025 and is due to be completed by summer 2026.</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.
Access to Carterton	<p>Not Started - The Access to Carterton project looks to improve the connection between Carterton and the A40 via the B4477. This project has been split into two phases. To deliver phase I Oxfordshire County Council have received over £3million in Section 106 contributions to improve the safety of the B4477 between Carterton at Monahan Way and the A40. This funding has been received from developments in the local area, in particular the Brize Meadow development of 700 homes. This will support safe and sustainable travel between Carterton and the surrounding area for all users.</p> <p>The aim is to deliver phase I by 2029.</p> <p>The second phase of Access to Carterton (currently unfunded) will be progressed as part of the Local Plan 2043 and will explore access to the A40 to support any strategic sites that may be allocated to Carterton in this Local Plan.</p>
A40 improvements	<p>Started - Oxfordshire County Council 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. A park and ride has been built north of Eynsham village on the A40 eastbound. This is an 850-space park and ride with electric vehicle charging, cycle storage and public toilets. The park and ride will be accessible 24-hours a day.</p> <p>The aim of the park and ride is to provide regular and reliable public transport services and improve congestion on the A40. This will support Eynsham village and surrounding communities, communities north of Eynsham on the A40 and proposed developments including Salt Cross and West Eynsham Strategic Development Area and developments at Witney and Carterton.</p> <p>Construction of the park and ride was completed in Autumn 2024. The planning application for the A40 Eynsham park and ride to Wolvercote project was submitted on 27 June 2025 and is awaiting determination. Once approved, the scheme will be delivered in phases pending funding availability, beginning with connection to the Eynsham Park and Ride which is scheduled to open in 2027.</p>

Scheme Name	Status
Witney High Street and Market Square enhancements	<p>Not Started - In 2022 Oxfordshire County Council was awarded £1.98m from the UK Government's Active Travel England Tranche 3 fund to take forward Witney High Street and Market Square enhancements. The scheme seeks to deliver active travel improvements that support and maintain the traffic arrangement on Witney High Street and Market Square. The improvements aim to complement the town's history and character but would also help to improve the look and feel of Witney for visitors and for those arriving by walking, cycling or public transport.</p> <p>The project objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance public spaces while protecting the town's history and character • Support local businesses and the markets • Make it easier and more enjoyable to walk, wheel and cycle • Upgrade access to public transport • Improve safety for all users <p>The scheme is due to be completed 2025/26.</p>
West Witney walking and cycling path and crossings	<p>Not Started - As part of development in West Witney, Oxfordshire County Council have received Section 106 funding to progress active travel improvements in West Witney. The aim of these improvements is to facilitate safer, more convenient and more direct walking and cycling connections between West Witney and the rest of Witney. This will support local and national carbon emission reduction targets and support community health. These improvements are identified as important connections in Witney Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan also.</p> <p>The project involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resurfacing, widening and lighting (where appropriate) of the bridleway between Centenary Way and Deer Park Road • Delivery of a signalised crossing on Deer Park Road adjacent to the bridleway entrance/ exit • Delivery of a signalised crossing on Deer Park Road north of the junction of Deer Park Road/ Curbridge Road and Thorney Leys <p>The scheme is due to be completed 2025/26.</p>

ENVIRONMENTAL AND HERITAGE ASSETS

<p>SUMMARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 102 Local Wildlife Sites in West Oxfordshire, totalling 1761.83 hectares. The area of Local Wildlife Sites has increased by 24.72 hectares since last year (2024). There are 16 Local
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Geological sites in West Oxfordshire. The area of Local Geological sites has not changed since last year.

- There are 6,803 hectares of NERC S41 habitats in West Oxfordshire. This has increased by 1,680ha since 2024.
- There have been records of 145 priority species in West Oxfordshire within the last 10 years. We have not received records from two priority species in the last 10 years.
- The farmland bird index for West Oxfordshire is 1.18, which shows the index fell 0.2 from 2023.
- 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 24 applications for new residential development approved within or on the edge of conservation areas in West Oxfordshire, totalling approximately 39 dwellings during the monitoring period.
- There were 197 applications for Listed Building consent during the monitoring period. Of these, 192 were approved.

4.123 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 – a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) landscape character, biodiversity, green infrastructure, sport and recreation, renewable energy, flood risk, pollution and heritage.

4.124 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 EH1)

4.125 In line with national policy, the Local Plan has a generally restrictive policy against major development within the Cotswolds National Landscape – a designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

(AONB), with great weight applied to conserving and enhancing the area's natural beauty, landscape and countryside including wildlife and heritage.

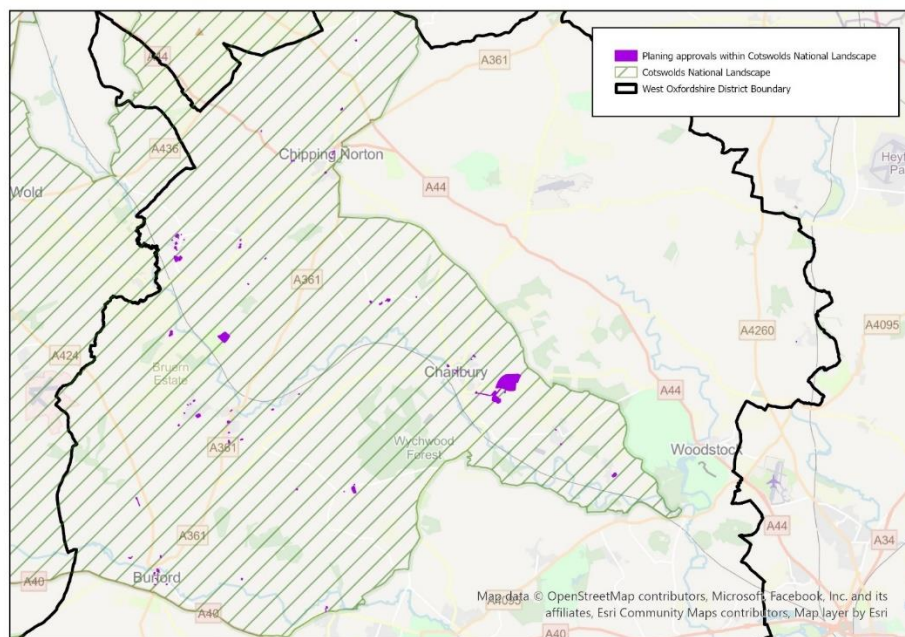
4.126 The Local Plan allocates no land for residential development within the Cotswolds National Landscape, but planning permission was granted for approximately 10 new dwellings during the monitoring period.

4.127 None of these proposals are major in nature and relate predominantly to the development of replacement dwellings or subdivisions.

4.128 There were 111 new permissions granted for a mix of development types and land uses within the Cotswolds National Landscape during the monitoring period, including:

- 34 householder applications approved
- 17 Full Planning approvals granted
- 26 applications for listed building consent granted

Figure 20 - Location of planning applications approved within Cotswolds National Landscape 2024 – 2025

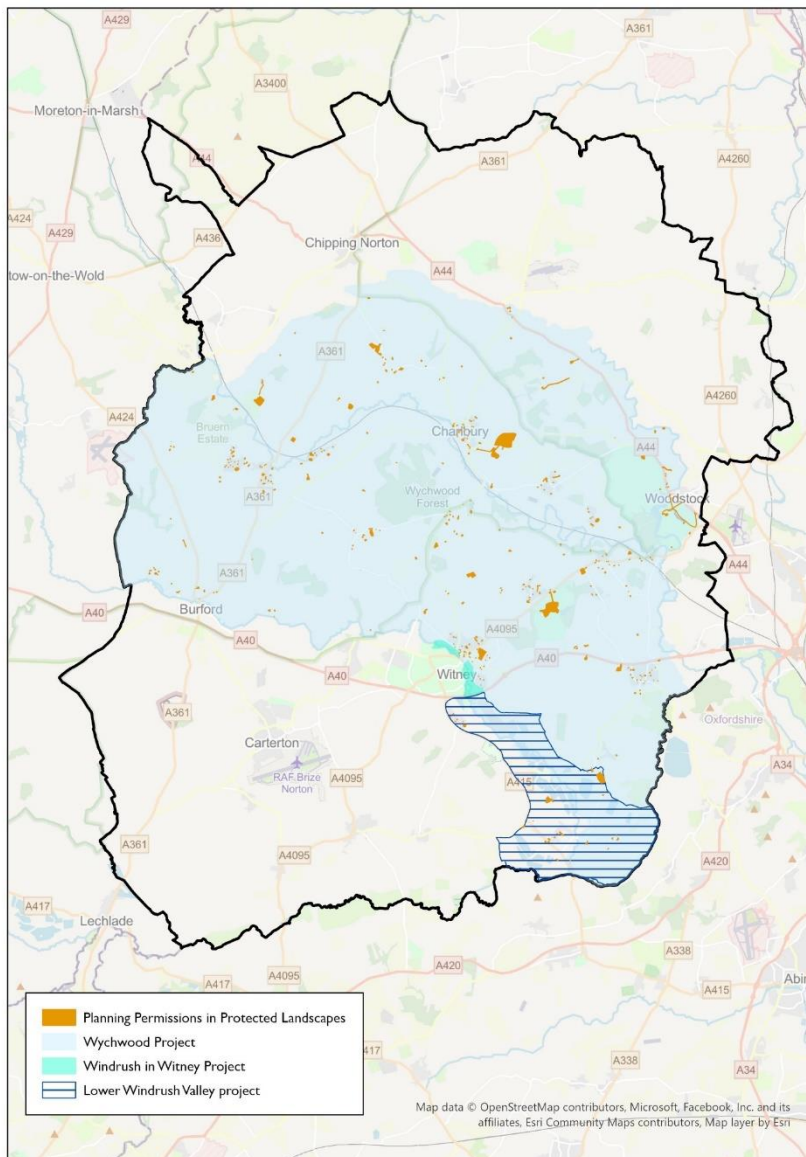


4.129 In addition to the Cotswolds National Landscape, the Local Plan identifies a further three special policy areas, that have been identified for special landscape protection, conservation and enhancement:

- 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.

4.130 A total of 506 planning approvals were granted within these various landscape project areas during the monitoring period.

Figure 21 - Location of planning approvals in landscape project areas 2045 - 2025



Biodiversity (links to Policy EH3)

4.131 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.

4.132 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.

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

Table 22 - Areas of sites designated for Intrinsic Environmental Value in West Oxfordshire

Designation	2024	2025
Local Geological Site	333.33	333.33
Local Wildlife Site	1737.11	1761.82

4.134 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.

4.135 There are **102** Local Wildlife Sites in West Oxfordshire. The area of Local Wildlife Sites has increased by **24.72 hectares** since last year. The area of Local Geological sites has not changed since last year.

4.136 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

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

4.138 Table 25 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.

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

Table 23 - Changes in area of UK priority habitat

S4I Habitat	2024 (area in ha)	2025 (area in ha)
Coastal And Floodplain Grazing Marsh	1517.67	1540.71
Eutrophic Standing Waters	339.45	362.4
Hedgerow (Priority Habitat)	7.85	0
Lowland Beech and Yew Woodland	17.15	17.15
Lowland Calcareous Grassland	189.34	444.96
Lowland Dry Acid Grassland	12.55	12.55
Lowland Fens	53.73	50.17
Lowland Meadows	237.28	253.58
Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland	1578.25	2916.11
Lowland Wood Pasture and Parkland	783.31	803.27
Mesotrophic Lakes	221.11	141.64
Open Mosaic Habitats on Previously Developed Land	33.09	41.65
Purple Moor Grass and Rush Pasture	1.24	1.24
Reedbeds	2.13	2.96
Rivers	29.24	29.18
Traditional Orchards	57.85	63.62
Wet Woodland	31.21	40.11
TOTAL	5122.55	6802.64

Changes in number of UK priority species

4.140 The number of priority species in West Oxfordshire is **145**.

4.141 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.

4.142 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 year¹⁰ 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.

4.143 During the monitoring period, money was secured, collected and spent on Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) schemes in the district as set out in Table 26 below.

Table 24 - Funds secured, collected and spent for BNG projects 2024/25

Planning Reference	Value	Purpose
20/02654/OUT	£12,000.00	Funds secured and collected for BNG relating to Land Southeast Of, Oxford Hill, Witney

Sport and recreation (links to Policy EH5)

4.144 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.

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

Table 25 - Planning approvals for sport and recreation developments, 2024 – 2025

Proposal	Location
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

¹⁰ <https://www.westoxon.gov.uk/media/nvtbk0ob/nature-recovery-plan-2024-to-2030.pdf>

Renewable Energy Provision (links to Policy EH6)

4.146 There were several applications for larger, utility scale solar scheme in West Oxfordshire during the monitoring period, many of which were approved.

Table 26 - Planning approvals for utility scale solar development 2024 – 2025

Planning Reference	Location	Description	Decision
25/00003/PN56	Carterton	Installation of 150 Solar PVs as part of the Schools Energy Efficiency Programme.	P3APP
24/01070/FUL	Ducklington	Engineering operations including the laying of underground electricity cables and associated infrastructure to connect the consented solar farm to the overhead line at the junction of Curbridge Road and A415	Approved
24/02457/NMA	Aston	Erection of 40 new dwellings with the provision of a new access and associated works and landscaping (amended plans). Non-material amendment to allow the removal of false chimneys (plots 6,9,22,23,24 and 40), additional solar panels (plots 6-9) and changes to internal space/household storage (plots 22-24 and 40) with the addition of a small, obscure glazed window on what were previously internal bathrooms in relation to house type 2).	APP
24/01085/FUL	Little Tew	Installation of 10.44kW ground mounted solar PV system to serve 1-3 Showell Farm Cottages	APP
24/03036/PN56	Witney	Installation of 110no. Solar PV Array (48.4kWp) equipment on flat roofs of a non-domestic building (Wood Green Secondary School)	P3APP
24/01101/FUL	Witney	Installation of rooftop solar panels on council offices.	APP
24/03289/FUL	Eynsham	Installation of 8no. Electric Vehicle (EV) charging spaces, unmanned amenities building and PV solar canopy structure with associated substation, LV switchboard and ancillary works. Alterations to an existing access and creation of a new access onto B4449	Refused

Flood Risk (links to Policy EH7)

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

- 4.148 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.
- 4.149 There were 7 approvals for residential development within Flood Zones 2 or 3 including at East Witney where part of the allocation on land to the west of the Stanton Harcourt Road is in the flood zone. However, the proposed area of built residential development would be located in areas of low flood risk. In addition to the East Witney approval, permission on sites FZ2 or FZ3 areas, totalled 5 further dwellings during the monitoring period¹¹. The majority of these approvals were for conversion or redevelopment of existing buildings.

Heritage (links to Policy EH9)

- 4.150 There were approximately 24 applications for new residential development approved within or on the edge of conservation areas in West Oxfordshire, totalling approximately 39 dwellings during the monitoring period.
- 4.151 There were 197 applications for Listed Building consent during the monitoring period. Of these, 192 were approved.
- 4.152 Historic England maintain a list of heritage assets¹² 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 2025. 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 27 - 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.	Stable
Rectangular enclosures 1100yds (1010m) NW of Mount Owen Farm	Scheduled Monument	Extensive significant problems	Arable ploughing	Declining

¹¹ Calculated using GIS analysis – Any planning application boundary that intersects flood zones 2 or 3.

¹² <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/results/?advsearch=1&county=Oxfordshire&searchtype=harsearch>

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 major localised problems	Deterioration - in need of management	Declining
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

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 1 OCTOBER 2025 – 31 JANUARY 2026

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 Activities

The Committee may undertake its functions through the following types of activities:

- Holding the Executive to account as a critical friend
- Pre-decision scrutiny of Executive decisions before they are taken
- Considering any “call-in” of an Executive decision that has been made but not yet implemented
- Contributing to policy development
- Undertaking task and finish reviews to explore particular issues in depth
- Scrutiny of the Council’s annual budget proposals
- Performance review and monitoring
- Being a convener and engaging with external organisations
- Scrutiny of the Council’s crime and disorder functions

Work Plan

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?

Principles of good scrutiny

The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny has developed four principles of good scrutiny which are reflected in statutory guidance:

- Provide constructive “critical friend” challenge
- Amplify the voices and concerns of the public
- Be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role
- Drive improvement in public services

Current and planned working groups

Title	Purpose	Membership	Status	Target completion date
Leisure	To consider the leisure management options appraisal before it is presented to the Executive, with particular focus on the evaluation criteria.	1.Cllr Stuart McCarroll (Chair) 2.Cllr Joy Aitman 3.Cllr Mike Baggaley 4.Cllr Jane Doughty 5.Cllr Andy Goodwin 6.Cllr Sandra Simpson	Ongoing	September 2025
Public Conveniences	To consider any emerging proposals for the future of the Council's public conveniences facilities.	1.Cllr Genny Early (Lead Member) 2.Cllr Andrew Coles 3.Cllr Ed James 4.Cllr David Melvin 5.Cllr Elizabeth Poskitt	Ongoing	TBC
Waste transformation	To consider any proposals for transforming waste services within the district following phase two of the Publica transition.	1. Cllr Ruth Smith (Chair) 2. Cllr Thomas Ashby 3.Cllr Sandra Cosier 4.Cllr Sandra Simpson 5.Cllr Alistair Wray	Planned	March 2026

Item	Executive Member	Lead Officer	Report commissioned by
15 October 2025			
Local Plan Spatial Options	Executive Member for Planning - Cllr Hugo Ashton	Andrew Thomson, Planning Policy Manager Andrew.Thomson@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive
11 November 2025			
Local Government Reorganisation	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Officer giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk	Council Executive
10 December 2025			
2025/26 Quarterly Finance Review Q2	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive
2025/26 Quarterly Service Review Q2	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk	Executive
Local Plan Annual Monitoring 2024/25	Executive Member for Planning - Cllr Hugo Ashton	Andrew Thomson, Planning Policy Manager Andrew.Thomson@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive

Promoting Rural Exception Sites	Executive Member for Planning - Cllr Hugo Ashton	Chris Hargraves, Head of Planning chris.hargraves@westoxon.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
7 January 2026			
Draft Budget 2026/27 version 2	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive
4 February 2026			
Supporting mental health initiatives	Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities - Cllr Rachel Crouch	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Community Grants Update	Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities - Cllr Rachel Crouch	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
West Oxfordshire Nature Recovery Plan	Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery - Cllr Andrew Prosser	Melanie Dodd, Senior Biodiversity Officer Melanie.Dodd@publicagroup.uk	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
4 March 2026			
Community Safety Partnership	Executive Member for Housing and Social Care - Cllr Geoff Saul	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager	Overview and Scrutiny Committee

		heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk	
Procurement and Contract Management Strategy	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Ciaran Okane, Business Partner - BP Insurance Ciaran.Okane@publicagroup.uk	Executive
2025/26 Quarterly Finance Review Q3	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk	Executive
2025/26 Quarterly Service Review Q3	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk	Executive
20 May 2026 - Annual Council day			
Additional topics, to be scheduled			

**EXECUTIVE WORK PROGRAMME
INCORPORATING NOTICE OF DECISIONS PROPOSED TO BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE
SESSION AND NOTICE OF INTENTION TO MAKE A KEY DECISION
1 DECEMBER 2025 – 31 MARCH 2026**

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 the intention to exclude the press and public for part of a meeting.

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 is possible that matters may be rescheduled to a date which is different from that given on the Forward Plan. This may be the case for key decisions and the intention to hold a private meeting. 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 parts of the meeting may be held 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 2025/26

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 Oxford to Cambridge, Oxfordshire Joint Leaders and South East Councils); Oxfordshire Leaders; Publica and Partnerships Authorities and Ubico; Democratic Services; Communications; Legal Services; Emergency Planning; Assets of Community Value.
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; Counter Fraud.
Hugo Ashton	Planning: Local Plan; Government Planning Policies and Guidance; Development Management; Ensuring Planning Policies meet 2030 Requirements; Customer Services.
Tim Sumner	Leisure and Carterton Area Strategy: ; Leisure Provision (including Swimming Pools); Carterton Area Strategy.
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; Culture, Arts and Heritage.
Geoff Saul	Housing and Social Care: Housing Allocations; Homelessness; Provision of Affordable/social Homes; Sheltered Housing Accommodation; Safeguarding – Community Safety Partnership; Crime and Disorder; Neighbourhood Policing; Scrutiny of Police and Crime Commissioner.
Lidia Arciszewska	Environment: •Flood Alleviation/Natural Flood Management and Sewage; Environmental Partnerships – WASP and Evenlode CP, Windrush CP; 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); Food safety; licensing; Housing (private landlords); Environment safety; Car Parking.
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, Conservation and Historical Environment.

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
Council 3 December 2025						
Appointment of Independent Member of the Audit and Governance Committee	No	Open	Council	3 Dec 2025	Councillor Carl Rylett, Vice Chair of West Oxfordshire District Council	Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services andrew.brown@westoxon.gov.uk
Constitution Working Group Recommendations	No	Open	Council	3 Dec 2025	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Andrew Brown, Head of Democratic and Electoral Services andrew.brown@westoxon.gov.uk
Programme of Meetings 2026/27	No	Open	Council	3 Dec 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Ana Prelici, Senior Democratic Services Officer Ana.Prelici@westoxon.gov.uk
Executive 17 December 2025						
Waste and Environment Services Programme	Yes	Part exempt	Executive	17 Dec 2025	Executive Member for Environment - Cllr Lidia Arciszewska	Si Pocock-Cluley, Environmental Services and Waste Transformation Lead si.pocock-cluley@westoxon.gov.uk
Proposals for devolution to a Mayoral Strategic Authority	Yes	Open	Council Executive	3 Dec 2025 17 Dec 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Officer giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
2025/26 Quarterly Finance	No	Open	Executive	17 Dec 2025	Executive Member for Finance -	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance

Review Q2					Cllr Alaric Smith	georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk
2025/26 Quarterly Service Review Q2	No	Open	Executive	17 Dec 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
Draft Budget 2026/27 version 1	Yes	Open	Executive	17 Dec 2025	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk
Local Plan Annual Monitoring 2024/25	No	Open	Executive	17 Dec 2025	Executive Member for Planning - Cllr Hugo Ashton	Andrew Thomson, Planning Policy Manager Andrew.Thomson@westoxon.gov.uk
Public Spaces Protection Order; A40 between Witney and Burford	No	Open	Executive	17 Dec 2025	Councillor Lidia Arciszewska, Executive Member for Environment.	Philip Measures, Service Leader philip.measures@publicagroup.uk
Westhive - future hosting options A report to set out the preferred options for hosting the Westhive funding scheme	No	Open	Executive	17 Dec 2025	Executive Member for Stronger, Healthy Communities - Cllr Rachel Crouch	Heather McCulloch, Community Wellbeing Manager heather.mcculloch@westoxon.gov.uk
Asbestos Management Policy Set out how Asbestos will be managed within the Council to allow compliance with legal	Yes	Open	Executive	17 Dec 2025	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Amy Kemmett, Health and Safety Business Partner Amy.Kemmett@westoxon.gov.uk

obligations.						
Executive 14 January 2026						
Salt Cross Garden Village Area Action Plan (AAP)	No	Open	Executive Council	14 Jan 2026 28 Jan 2026	Executive Member for Planning - Cllr Hugo Ashton	Chris Hargraves, Head of Planning chris.hargraves@westoxon.gov.uk
Draft Budget 2026/27 version 2	Yes	Open	Executive	14 Jan 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk
Woodford Way	No	Open	Executive	14 Jan 2026	Executive Member for Housing and Social Care - Cllr Geoff Saul	Michael David, Housing Delivery Programme Manager michael.david@westoxon.gov.uk
Enforcement Agent Commissioning	No	Open	Executive	14 Jan 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager - Environmental, Welfare & Revenue Service mandy.fathers@publicagroup.uk
Council 28 January 2026						
New Fee For Primate Licenses	No	Open	Council	28 Jan 2026	Executive Member for Environment - Cllr Lidia Arciszewska	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager - Environmental, Welfare & Revenue Service mandy.fathers@publicagroup.uk
Executive 11 February 2026						
Budget 2026/27 & medium term financial strategy	Yes	Open	Executive Council	11 Feb 2026 25 Feb 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk

Long Term Council Tax Empty Property Premium Exemption of Proposed Demolition Properties	No	Open	Executive	11 Feb 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Mandy Fathers, Business Manager - Environmental, Welfare & Revenue Service mandy.fathers@publicagroup.uk
Street Cleansing Vehicle Procurement	Yes	Open	Executive	11 Feb 2026	Executive Member for Environment - Cllr Lidia Arciszewska	Si Pocock-Cluley, Environmental Services and Waste Transformation Lead si.pocock-cluley@westoxon.gov.uk
Council 25 February 2026						
Council tax 2026/27	No	Open	Council	25 Feb 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk
Executive 11 March 2026						
Procurement and Contract Management Strategy	No	Open	Executive	11 Mar 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Ciaran Okane, Business Partner - BP Insurance Ciaran.Okane@publicagroup.uk
2025/26 Quarterly Finance Review Q3	No	Open	Executive	11 Mar 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Georgina Dyer, Head of Finance georgina.dyer@westoxon.gov.uk
2025/26 Quarterly Service Review Q3	No	Open	Executive	11 Mar 2026	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Alison Borrett, Senior Performance Analyst Alison.Borrett@publicagroup.uk
Approval of Regulation 19 Draft Submission Local Plan	Yes	Open	Executive	11 Mar 2026	Executive Member for Planning - Cllr Hugo Ashton	Andrew Thomson, Planning Policy Manager

for Public Consultation						Andrew.Thomson@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	Before 31 Mar 2026	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						
Oxfordshire Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (OxLEVI) Programme	No	Open	Executive Director of Finance - Madhu Richards	15 Nov 2023 Before 31 Dec 2025	Executive Member for Climate Action and Nature Recovery - Cllr Andrew Prosser	Hannah Kenyon, Climate Change Manager hannah.kenyon@westoxon.gov.uk
Delegation on Purchase of Emergency Accommodation Seeking approval to delegate decision making around the purchase of Emergency Housing Accommodation in order	Yes	Fully exempt <i>Exempt on the grounds that it would otherwise disclose the Council's</i>	Director of Finance - Madhu Richards	31 Mar 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Madhu Richards, Director of Finance madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk

to meet market demands.		<i>intention to offer of properties and the funds it is making available with which to do so.</i>				
Standing Delegation: Settlement of Legal Claims	Yes	Open	Head of Legal Services - Leonie Woodward	Before 31 Mar 2026	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham, Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Leonie Woodward, Head of Legal Leonie.Woodward@cotswold.gov.uk
Allocation of New Initiatives Funding	Yes	Open	Chief Executive & Head of Paid Service - Giles Hughes	Before 31 Mar 2026	Leader of the Council - Cllr Andy Graham	Giles Hughes, Chief Executive Officer giles.hughes@westoxon.gov.uk
Review and Repurpose Earmarked Reserves to Mitigate against Four Main Financial Risks	Yes	Open	Director of Finance - Madhu Richards	Before 31 May 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Madhu Richards, Director of Finance madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk
Allocate Funding from the Project Contingency Earmarked Reserve	Yes	Open	Director of Finance - Madhu Richards	Before 31 May 2026	Executive Member for Finance - Cllr Alaric Smith	Madhu Richards, Director of Finance madhu.richards@westoxon.gov.uk
Leisure Planned Investment Programme	Yes	Open	Executive	10 Sep 2025	Executive Member for Leisure and Carterton Area Strategy -	Stuart Wilson, Leisure Contracts Lead

			Director of Place - Phil Martin	Before 31 Mar 2026	Tim Sumner	stuart.wilson@publicagroup.uk
Public Toilet Review	Yes	Part exempt	Executive Director of Finance - Madhu Richards	10 Sep 2025 Before 31 Mar 2026	Executive Member for Environment - Cllr Lidia Arciszewska	Fiona Woodhouse, Parking Projects & Contracts Officer Fiona.Woodhouse@publicagroup.uk