WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Delivering great services locally

PERFORMANCE REPORT:

January 2024 - March 2024

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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

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

Overall Performance

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Overall, the Council's performance has been positive, with commendable progress in Number of visits to the leisure centres, Official Land Charge Search Times and Processing times for Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit. However, there are some indicators that are exhibiting a negative trend including the Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days and the Percentage of household waste recycled.

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

Note: Currently, the Waste Data Flow Data is received by the data team from Oxfordshire County Council, but it is a quarter behind. Therefore, the narrative and graphs within this report pertain to Q2 2023/2024 (July-September).

Percentage of Council Tax Collected

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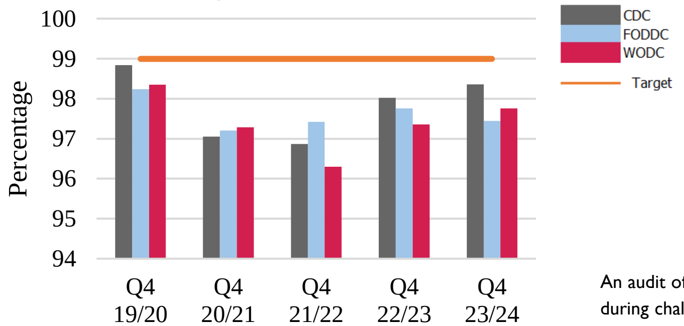

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter	N/A
Against last Year	

Slightly improved since last year

2023-24 – Higher is Good

Target	99%
Actual	97.76%

How do we compare?

Benchmarking via Gov.uk Tables and Individual Council Websites using CIPFA Nearest Neighbours - Current Dataset is up to Dec '23 (Q3 23-24)

Q3 23-24 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	**89.98**	**1/16**	**Top**
East Hampshire	86.42	3/16	Top
Bromsgrove	85.13	6/16	Second
Tewkesbury	84.96	9/16	Third
Stafford	83.1	14/16	Bottom
Stratford-upon-Avon	82.31	15/16	Bottom

An audit of the Council Tax Services indicated that a significant sum of arrears had accumulated during challenging circumstances associated with the pandemic. Whilst the recovery of arrears had been suspended for a time, it has since been reinstated, and the current recovery cycle is up to date with the service reporting progress in collecting the previous year's debt. The below table shows the percentage of aged debt that has been collected and the total outstanding:

2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	Total Outstanding
33.48%	33.18%	34.06%	£4,165,186

By March 2023, authorities in England had collected £35.7 billion in council tax for 2022-23, along with an additional £800 million in aged debt. They achieved an average in-year collection rate of 96.0%, marking a 0.2 percentage point increase from 2021-22 (source: gov.uk).

At the end of Q4, the Council observed a slight improvement in their in-year collection rates compared to the previous year, with an increase of 0.4%. While the Council's collection rate fell just short of the year-end target of 99% by 1.24%, there has been a consistent upward trend in collection rates over recent years, nearing pre-pandemic levels by a margin of 0.59%.

Percentage of Non-domestic rates collected

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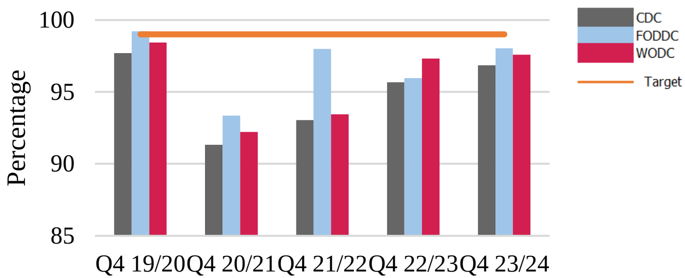

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter	N/A
Against last Year	⇧

Improved since last year

2023-24 – Higher is Good

Target	99%
Actual	97.59%

How do we compare?

Benchmarking via Gov.uk Tables and Individual Council Websites using CIPFA Nearest Neighbours – Current Dataset is up to Dec '23 (Q3 23-24)

Q3 23-24 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	**84.36**	**7/16**	**Second**
Hinckley and Bosworth	92.58	1/16	Top
Stratford-upon-Avon	84.79	5/16	Second
Tewkesbury	83.39	10/16	Third
East Hampshire	82.06	14/16	Bottom
Mid Sussex	79.31	16/16	Bottom

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

2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	Total Outstanding
51.24%	67.25%	48.29%	£924,001

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

By the end of the year, the Council observed a 0.27% increase in their collection rates compared to the corresponding period of the previous year. However, collection rates are just over 1% lower than pre-Covid-19 levels. The service remains committed to supporting businesses, actively reaching out through reminders, phone calls, and emails to encourage dialogue with the Councils so that we can support them via manageable repayment plans. All in year recovery processes are up to date.

Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims

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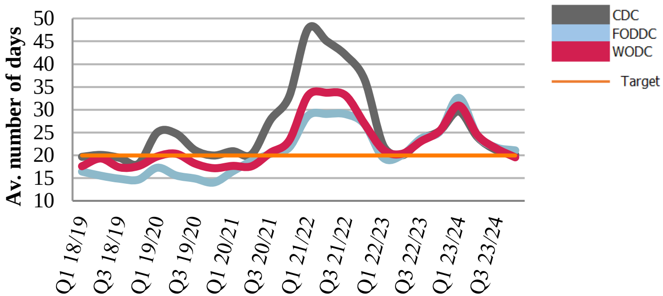


Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter	⇩
Against last Year	⇩

Improved since last quarter and last year

2023-24 – Lower is Good

Target	20
Actual	19.57

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 Dec 2023 and the percentage change from Q3 2022 for each authority, plus the data for all authorities in England

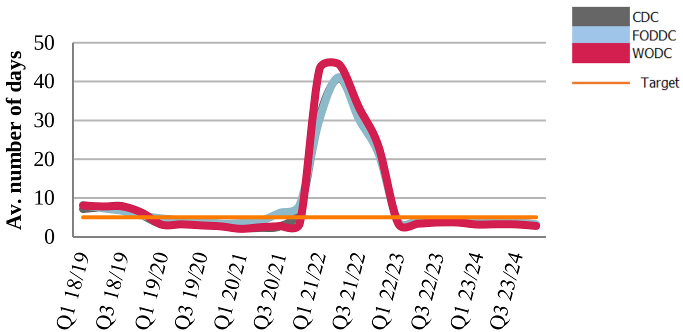
	Number of Claimants at end of December 2023	Percentage Change since December 2022	CIPFA Nearest Neighbours Rank (Higher = less claimants)
West Oxfordshire	**4,358**	**1.42%**	**4/16**
Harborough	2,934	0.89%	1/16
South Oxfordshire	4,997	1.59%	10/16
Stafford	6,714	4.5%	16/16

Throughout Q4, processing times for new Council Tax Support (CTS) claims consistently stayed under the 20-day target, averaging 14.13 days. By year-end, the Council achieved a cumulative average of 19.57 processing days, marking the first time since Q2 2020/21 the cumulative target was met and achieving the lowest cumulative year-end processing times since 2019/2020. Notably, this represents a decrease of 1 day from the previous quarter.

Automation of tasks received directly from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and customers is currently operating at a level of 60–70%. This automation allows for a heightened focus on processing applications and addressing reported changes. Furthermore, the UC section of the DWP is actively exploring enhancements to the data sent to local authorities. Ongoing testing of the system is underway as part of these improvement efforts.

The automation of processing applications for the DWP and the trial for reduced phone line opening hours have released capacity for officers to process claims, contributing to the reduction in the processing times.

Processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter	⇩
Against last Year	⇩

Decreased since last quarter last year

2023-24 – Lower is Good

Target	5
Actual	2.81

The processing times for Council Tax Support Change Events continue to comfortably meet the target of 5 days, with processing times decreasing compared to both the last quarter and the previous year.

How do we compare?

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

Processing times for Housing Benefit Change of Circumstances

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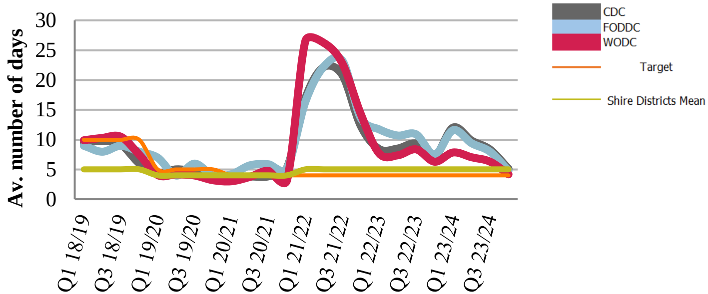


Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter	↓
Against last Year	↓

Improved since last quarter and last year

2023-24 – Lower is Good

Target	4
Actual	4.2

How do we compare?

SPARSE provide benchmarking data on the speed of processing for HB CoCs. The latest data set is 2022-23

Q3 23-24 Benchmark	Days	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	**5**	**5/16**	**Top**
Test Valley	3	1/16	Top
Harborough	7	7/16	Second
East Cambridgeshire	8	10/16	Third
Stroud	9	14/16	Third
South Oxfordshire	15	16/16	Bottom

Please see Processing times for Council Tax Support new claims.

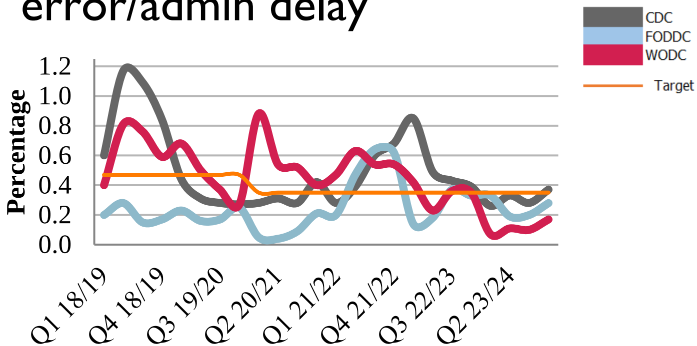
At the end of Q4, the average days to process HB changes decreased, with the Council averaging 2.34 days; however, since the target is cumulative, the ongoing statistics show higher figures. Despite being above the target, the decrease in HB Change applications amplifies the impact of delays in assessing an application due to outstanding evidence required on average processing days. It's important to emphasise that the processing times commence from the moment the service receives an application, irrespective of its completion status. Therefore, even incomplete applications are included in the count from receipt, potentially exaggerating the figures.

It should be noted that the number of expected changes that would affect Housing Benefit are reducing significantly, as can be seen by the number of HB changes assessed compared to the number of CTS changes assessed.

HB Changes – 3,313
CTS Changes – 6,213

Managed migration of HB to Universal Credit is being rolled out from April 2024 across the country.

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



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Increased since last quarter but declined since last year

2023-24 – Lower is Good

Target	0.35%
Actual	0.17%

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

How do we compare?

TBC

Note: the national target is 0.47%. In 2020-21, the service set a more stringent target of 0.35%

(Snapshot) Long Term Empty Properties

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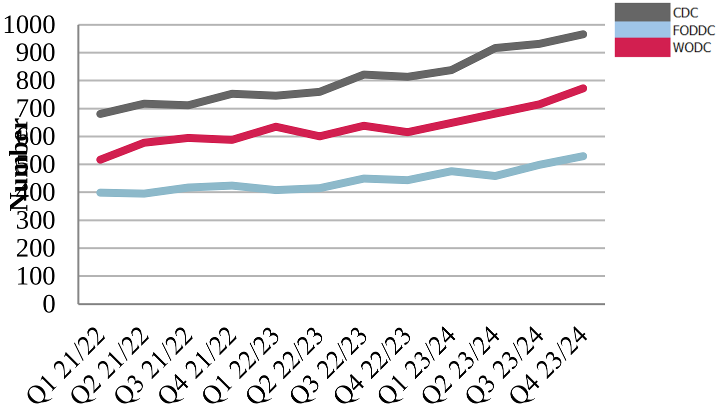

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter ↑

Against last Year ↑

increased since last quarter and last year

2023-24 – Lower is Good

No Target

772

The graph indicates a clear upward trend in property additions, although properties continue to be added and removed from the list. To address this trend, the Council's Long-Term Empty Homes Strategy is undergoing a refresh. This strategy aims to identify the reasons behind properties remaining empty and seeks to alleviate housing needs within the district. By understanding the causes of empty properties, the Council can develop targeted interventions to address the issue and ensure that these properties are utilised effectively to meet housing demands.

Maintaining registers of long-term empty properties can help monitor the situation, target interventions, and communicate with property owners more effectively. The LTE list is constantly being addressed, with all owners being contacted by email, phone or letter, in an attempt to bring properties back into use.

How do we compare?

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

(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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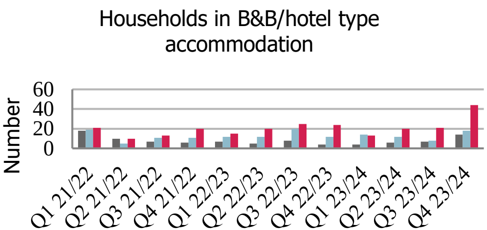
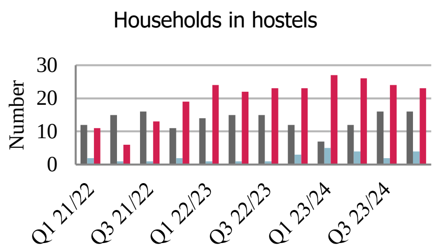
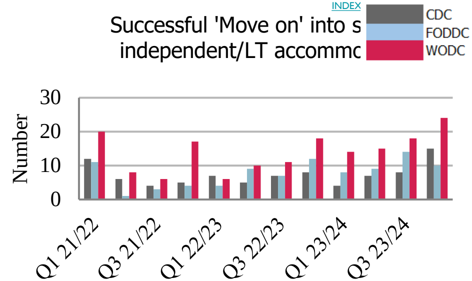






Direction of Travel

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	↑

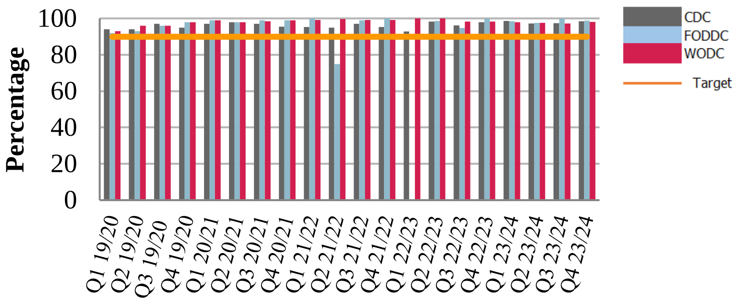
How do we compare?

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

Homelessness remains a significant challenge for all three Councils, putting considerable pressure on Housing services, systems, and pathways. The service has observed a notable surge in homelessness applications during Q4. This rise is attributed to various factors, including heightened pressures on the countywide support system. Contributing to this strain are several factors: an influx of individuals leaving refugee hotels, reduced capacity in adult homelessness pathways, and a scarcity of affordable housing options outside the social rented sector. Additionally, the surge in homelessness has led to increased competition for available social rented accommodations, resulting in prolonged stays for individuals transitioning from hostels and B&Bs.

The team persistently works towards preventing homelessness, successfully averting homelessness for 294 households so far this year—154 within the statutory 56-day period and 140 before statutory duties were triggered. It's important to note that these figures are approximations and have not yet been officially confirmed through the reporting system.

Customer Satisfaction - Telephone



Higher is Good

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Slightly improved since last quarter but steady since last year

Target	90%
Q4 Actual	98.17%
2023-24 Actual	97.95%

How do we compare?

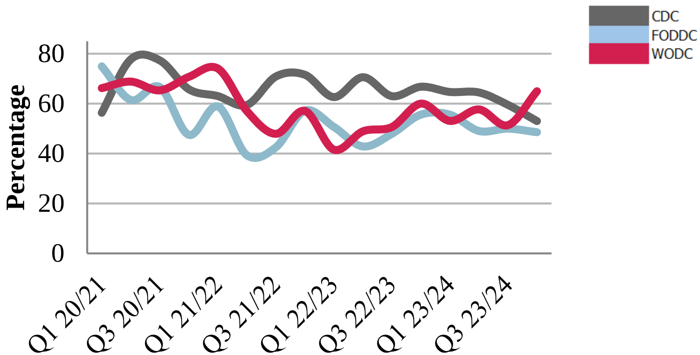
The Govmetric Channel Satisfaction Index is a monthly publication of the top performing councils across the core customer access channels. At least 100 customers need to be transferred to the survey to be included in the league table so even if satisfaction is high, it may not be included i.e. September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

	Jan Rank	Jan Net Sat.	Feb Rank	Feb Net Sat.	Mar Rank	Mar Net Sat.
Cotswold	4	93%	2	98%	2	97%
Forest	N/A	N/A	1	98%	1	98%
West Oxfordshire	**1**	**99%**	**4**	**96%**	**3**	**96%**

Services provided via the telephone consistently yield high satisfaction.

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

Customer Satisfaction - Email



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Improved since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

No Target

Q4 - 64.95%

2023-24 - 55.66%

622 residents responded to the survey, of which 404 were satisfied. This equates to a rate of 64.95% satisfaction for the quarter, up from 51.4% during Q3.

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

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

How do we compare?

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

Customer Satisfaction - Face to Face

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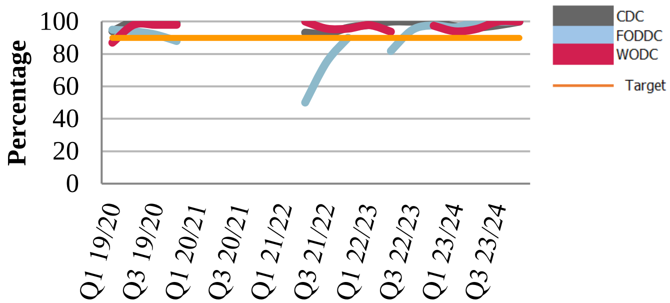

Higher is Good

Target	90%
Q4 Actual	100%
2023-24 Actual	96.89%

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Steady since last quarter but improved since last year

Customer Satisfaction from face to face interactions continues to be high, with a 100% satisfaction rate for the quarter, with all 39 individuals surveyed satisfied with the service.

How do we compare?

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

Note that any gaps in the data indicate no surveys were returned. This is especially apparent when the offices were closed during the pandemic.

Customer Call Handling - Average Waiting Time

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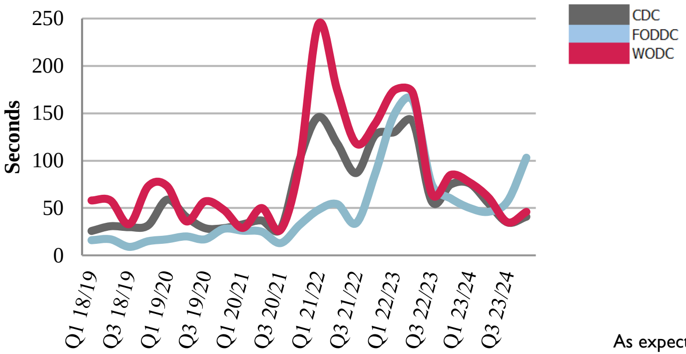


Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

increased since last quarter but declined since last year

Lower is Good

No Target

Q4 - 46 Seconds

2023-24 – 66.5 Seconds

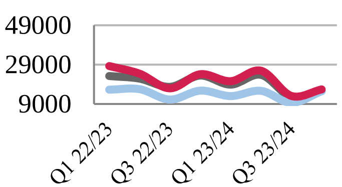
How do we compare?

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

As expected, the average call waiting time increased in Q4, aligning with the traditionally higher workload during this period, primarily due to annual billing and garden waste renewals. The Council experienced a modest increase of 11 seconds compared to the previous quarter but notably decreased by 39 seconds compared to Q4 of the previous year. This decrease in waiting time compared to last year can be attributed to the implementation of the phone trial model at the Council. This model has enabled the strategic allocation of resources to the phone lines during peak demand periods.

The Council saw a decline of over 7,000 calls compared to the same period the previous year, as depicted in the chart to the right. This data reflects an overarching trend of lower call numbers over time, a trajectory expected to persist owing to sustained initiatives in Channel Choice, aimed at fostering customer self-service options.

Call Volume over Time



Number of complaints upheld

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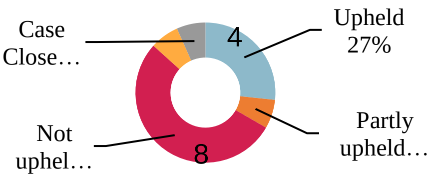
Complaints by Status



Direction of Travel

Complaints upheld or partly upheld at Stage 1

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Steady since last quarter and last year

No Target

How do we compare?

The complaints and enquiries received in the period by the Ombudsman. The decisions made in the period by the Ombudsman. Compliance with recommendations recorded during the period by the Ombudsman.

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

During Q4, the Council experienced a decrease in complaints received from last quarter. The majority of the cases were not upheld.

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 October 2021.
The new process has the following stages:

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

Complaints Upheld or Partially Upheld Breakdown

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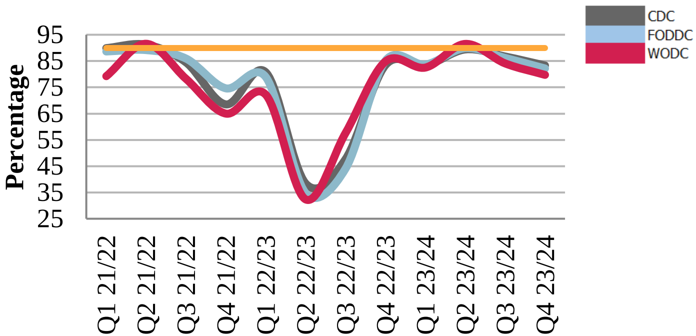
Service area	Description	Outcome/learning	Decision	Response time (days)
Housing	Upset with handling of case	Breach of the standard practice as verbal decision was not followed up with written confirmation - officers reminded to follow best practice	Partly Upheld	10+
Waste and Recycling	Food Caddy not arrived in a timely manner	System Error uncovered - Dealt with by Depot/Contact Monitoring Officer	Upheld	5
Revenues and Benefits	Incorrect customer pursued for a debt	Dealt with by Service	Upheld	10+
Revenues and Benefits	Unhappy regarding Officers rude and dismissive attitude	Dealt with by Service and apology offered	Upheld	10
Trees	Tree not being inspected regularly, and incorrect information relayed by Customer Services	Updated the Customer Services Script to ensure correct information	Upheld	10

Percentage of FOI requests answered within 20 days



Direction of Travel

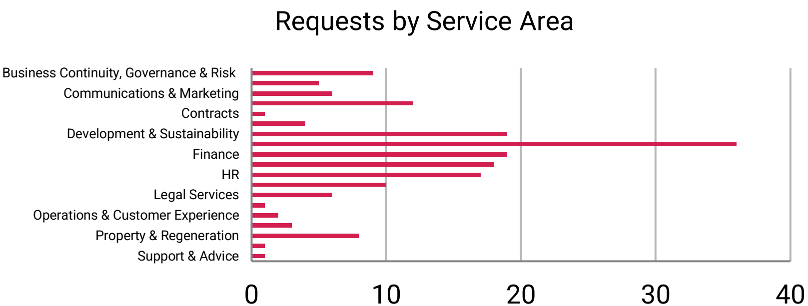
Against last Quarter

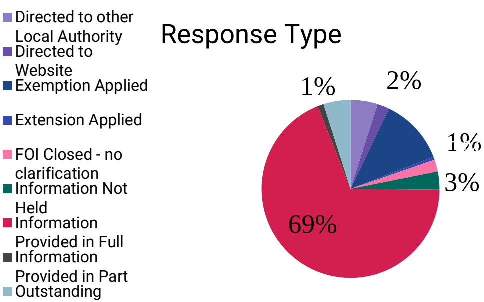
Against last Year

Declined since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

Target	90%
Q4 Actual	84.14%
2023-24 Actual	84.51%





Note: This is a new metric and the Data Team would welcome comments on the preferred observations

Building Control Satisfaction

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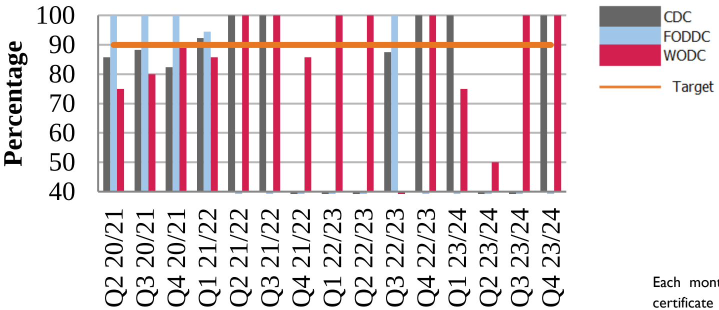


Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year N/A

Improved since last quarter
No data from last year

Q4 – Higher is Good

Target	90%
Actual	100%

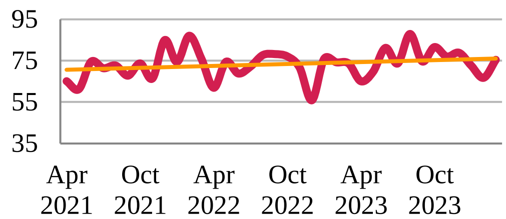
Each month, the service conducts telephone interviews with customers who have received a completion certificate during the month. The customer rates the service on helpfulness of staff, quality of technical advice and other information, responsiveness, value for money, and overall satisfaction.

The data on satisfaction surveys still faces challenges with a low number of returns, as only one survey was received during Q4.

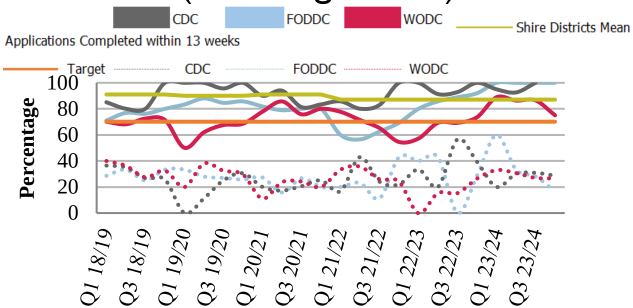
Building Control had 136 applications in Q4 and retains a strong share of the market. The below chart shows market share over time.

How do we compare?
Percentage of share in the market

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Number of Apps for Quarter
Cotswold	47%	48%	57%	124
Forest	60%	70%	62%	88
West	**73%**	**67%**	**75%**	**136**



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



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Decreased since last quarter but slightly improved since last year

Q4 – Higher is Good

Target	70%
Actual	75%

YTD - Cumulative

Target	70%
Actual	84.44%

How do we compare?
Major Developments - % within 13 weeks or agreed time – LG Inform

Q3 23-24 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	**87**	**10/16**	**Third**
East Cambridgeshire	100	1/16	Top
Rushcliffe	100	1/16	Top
Stratford-on-Avon	92	7/16	Second
Lichfield	79	13/16	Third
Bromsgrove	33	16/16	Bottom

The service has exceeded its target in processing major applications within the designated timeframes, but there's been a recent performance dip compared to the previous quarter, albeit with a slight increase of 1.47% from the same period last year. However, the cumulative percentage of applications determined within agreed timescales for 2023-24 remains comfortably above the 70% target, standing at 84.44%, up from 75.53% in 2022-23.

During Q4, eight major applications were determined, while throughout the entire 2023-24 period, a total of 45 major applications were determined.

See slide for Minor Developments for further narrative

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

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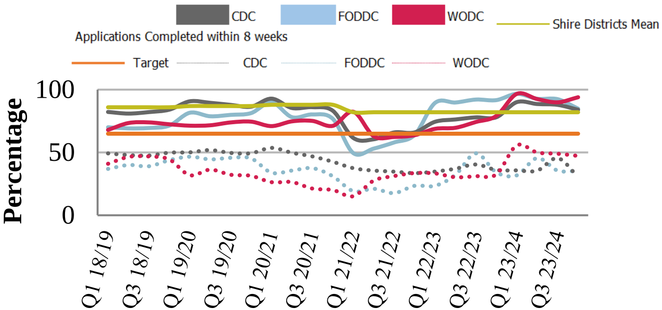

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter ↑

Against last Year ↑

Slightly declined since last quarter but improved since last year

Q4 – Higher is Good

Target	65%
Actual	94.05%

YTD - Cumulative

Target	65%
Actual	91.16%

How do we compare?

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

Q3 23-24 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	**85**	**9/16**	**Third**
Stroud	97	1/16	Top
Mid Sussex	95	2/16	Top
East Hampshire	89	6/16	Second
Rushcliffe	81	12/16	Third
Stafford	68	16/16	Bottom

The service has performed very well processing Minor applications within time. 84 minor applications were determined in Q4.

The Development Management Improvement Plan, initiated following the PAS report, remains actively pursued, with significant progress achieved on many key recommendations. Notably, the implementation of a new negotiation protocol for the Councils. Additionally, work is underway on further suggestions, such as the creation of a concise Householder application report template.

The Council are experiencing a larger number of speculative Major applications as they can no longer demonstrate a 5 year land supply. It should be noted that due to impending resourcing challenges within the service, it is anticipated that the number of applications determined within time is likely to decrease over the next quarter.

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

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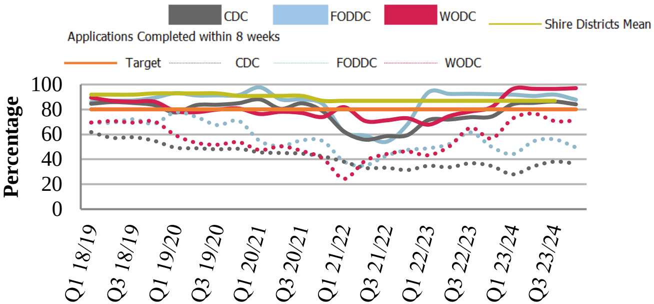

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Improved since last quarter and last year

Q4 – Higher is Good

Target	80%
Actual	97.03%

YTD - Cumulative

Target	80%
Actual	96.59%

How do we compare?

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

Q3 23-24 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	**96**	**3/16**	**Top**
Mid Sussex	99	1/16	Top
Horsham	94	7/16	Second
South Oxfordshire	91	11/16	Third
Stafford	86	13/16	Bottom
Harborough	81	16/16	Bottom

Determination times for Other applications have slightly increased since last quarter by 0.6% but remain markedly improved since this time last year by 15.18%.

236 Other applications were determined in Q4.

See slide for Minor Developments for additional narrative

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

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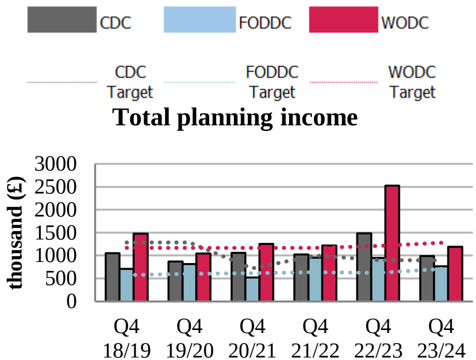

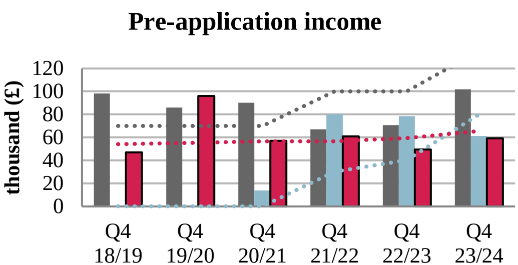

Direction of Travel

Total Planning Income

Against last Quarter ↑

Against last Year ↓

Pre-Application Income

Against last Quarter ↓

Against last Year ↑

Total income increased since last quarter but declined since last year
Pre-App Income declined since last quarter but increased since last year

2023-24 – Higher is Good

Total Planning Income (£)	
Target	1,277,373
Actual	1,193,137

Pre-Application Income (£)	
Target	65,373
Actual	59,258

At the end of Q4, the planning income for the Council fell slightly short of its target by approximately 6%, with pre-application income also coming in below target by around 9%. However, it's worth noting that the income generated from pre-applications saw a significant 20% increase compared to the previous year.

Additionally, the service has observed that a couple of major application submissions, initially slated for Q4, have been delayed and are now anticipated to be submitted during Q1. This adjustment is expected to contribute to an improvement in next year's income.

How do we compare?

Planning Advisory Service (PAS) planned to benchmark back in 2021. No data is available in the public domain, but the data team has been in contact with PAS to find further information and are awaiting an update.

Percentage of Planning Appeals Allowed (cumulative)

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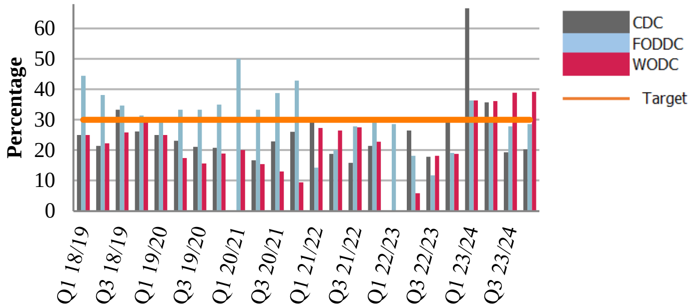

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Increased since last quarter and last year

2023-24 – Lower is Good

Target	30%
Actual	39.19%

How do we compare?

Percentage of planning appeals allowed – LG Inform

Q3 23-24 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	**33**	**9/16**	**Third**
East Cambridgeshire	0	1/16	Top
Test Valley	18	5/16	Second
Lichfield	33	9/16	Third
South Oxfordshire	40	15/16	Bottom
Bromsgrove	67	16/16	Bottom

This indicator seeks to ensure that no more than 30% of planning appeals are allowed (low is good).

Between 1 January 2024 and 31 March 2024 ten appeals were decided, with six being supported. This quarter's allowance rate stands at 40%. However, the cumulative total for the year remains slightly above target at 39.19%. Of the ten appeals determined this quarter, four were related to Uplands applications, with two supported, resulting in a 50% allowance rate. Additionally, six appeals were related to Lowlands applications, with four supported, equating to a 33% allowance rate.

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

	Decided	Allowed	% Allowed
Uplands	17	5.5	32.35
Lowlands	20	9	45

The enforcement project, focusing on enhancing the front end for registering enforcement issues, is currently in progress, with the new user forms allowing cases to be triaged quicker. It is anticipated to result in a decrease in repeat customer contact/chasing, as well as a reduction in the number of non-breach cases due to improved online reporting facilities and back office triage.

Percentage of official land charge searches completed within 10 days

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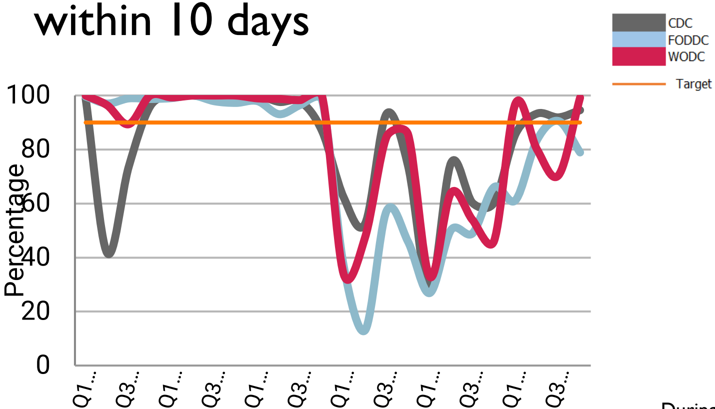


Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter	⇧
Against last Year	⇧

Improved since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

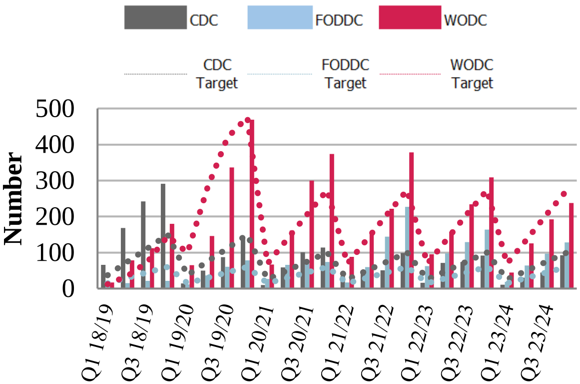
Target	90%
Q4 Actual	99.23%
2023-24 Actual	85.32%

During Q4, the Council achieved its target for the first time since Q1, demonstrating a significant improvement from the last quarter by around 28%. Furthermore, since this time last year, the percentage of searches completed within 10 days has increased by 53.04%.

The Land Charges Lead was recognised at the Local Land Charges Awards and was awarded the Best Performing Searches Team Member award.

How do we compare?
No benchmarking currently available. The Data & Performance Team will investigate options

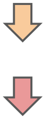
Number of affordable homes delivered (cumulative)



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year



Decreased since last quarter and last year

2023-24 – Higher is Good

Target	274
Actual	238

During Q4, a total of forty-six properties were delivered across Hailey, Enstone, and Carterton, comprising 26 for affordable rent and 20 for shared ownership. Delays in handovers, particularly related to third-party work scheduling, have impacted expected completions in Carterton and Enstone. As a result, deliveries have been pushed back to Q1-Q2 2024-2025.

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

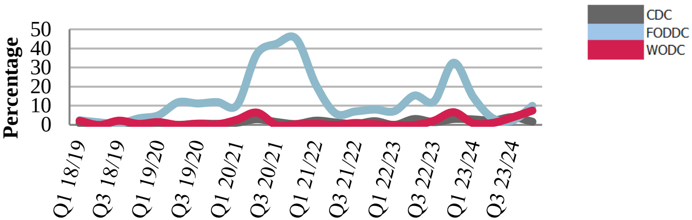
How do we compare?

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

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

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

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



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Direction of Travel

Number of Fly Tips

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Percentage Enforcement Action

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

No Target

Number of Fly Tips Collected

243

Percentage Enforcement Action

7.55%

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

How do we compare?

Number of Fly Tips reported for year 2022-23 for Local Authorities in England
There are 301 authorities with a total of 995545 Fly Tips reported (Range - 34830)

	Total Fly Tips	Total Enforcement Actions	Total FPNs	FPNs per Fly Tip	CIPFA Nearest Neighbours Rank	Quartile
West	**1150**	**53**	**14**	**0.012**	**6/16**	**Second**
Horsham	1212	287	65	0.053	1/16	Top
Tewkesbur y	655	29	1	0.001	10/16	Third
Stroud	859	11	0	0	16/16	Bottom

In Q4, there was a notable increase in the number of fly-tipping incidents reported, while the percentage of enforcement actions experienced an increase of around 3%.

To address this trend, the service is proactively reviewed its systems to streamline enforcement efforts. This includes a comprehensive examination of duplicate report input procedures to ensure efficient handling of cases.

The proposed surveillance cameras are scheduled for implementation in Q1 at fly tipping hotspots.

Percentage of high risk food premises inspected within target timescales

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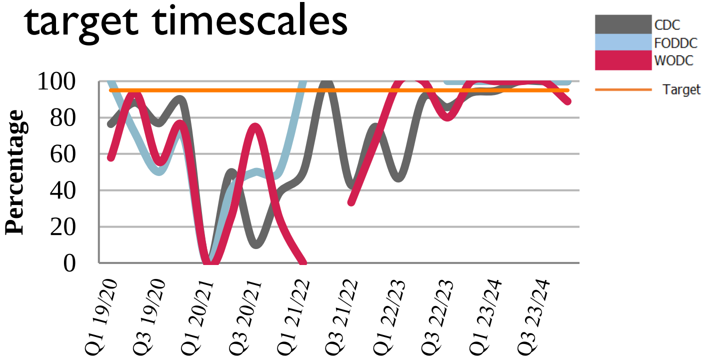


Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter ⇩

Against last Year ⇩

Declined since last quarter and last year

Q4 – Higher is Good

Target	95%
Actual	88.88%

YTD - Cumulative

Target	95%
Actual	96.42%

The Council conducted nine inspections, with eight completed within the designated timescales. The missed inspection had been initially arranged on time but was later canceled by the other party; however, it has since been completed.

Throughout the year, a total of 28 inspections were carried out, with 27 of them inspected within the target timescales.

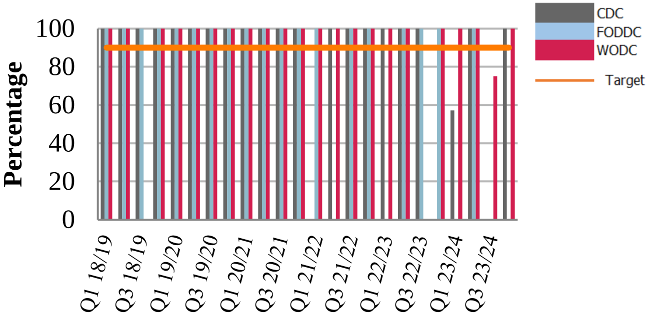
High risk work is naturally prioritised, which can have an impact on lower risk scheduled inspection rates. The service now has a useful dashboard, which is helpful for monitoring team performance and tracking lower risk scheduled inspections within the team.

How do we compare?

APSE performance networks are introducing benchmarking for environmental sectors for 2023-24

Percentage of high risk notifications risk assessed within 1 working day

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



Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Increased since last quarter and steady since last year

Q4 – Higher is Good

Target	90%
Actual	100%

YTD - Cumulative

Target	90%
Actual	90.90%

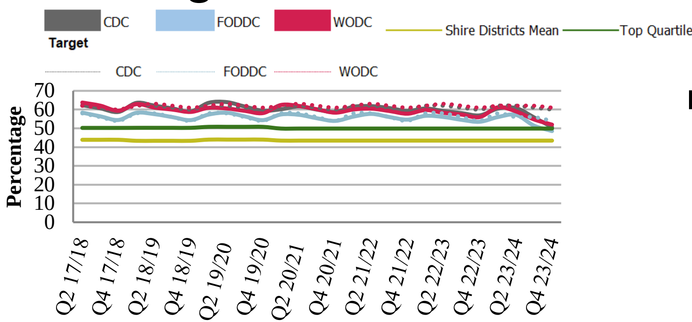
One notification was received during Q4 which was assessed within one working day.

Throughout the year, a total of 11 notifications were received, 10 assessed within the target timescale.

How do we compare?

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

Percentage of household waste recycled



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Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Declined since last quarter but slightly improved since last year

Higher is Good

Target	61%
Q4 Actual	51.91%
2023-24 Actual	56.68%

How do we compare?

Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting

Q4 22-23 Benchmark	%	CIPFA Rank	Quartile
West Oxfordshire	**53.1**	**4/16**	**Top**
South Oxfordshire	55..42	1/16	Top
Tewkesbury	47.58	6/16	Second
Harborough	38.5	10/16	Third
Hinckley and Bosworth	36.68	14/16	Bottom
Bromsgrove	31.98	16/16	Bottom

In Q4, recycling rates experienced a slight decrease of approximately 1.26% compared to the preceding quarter. Nevertheless, there has been a marginal improvement of about 0.73% in recycling rates compared to the same period last year. Although the Council is observing a modest upward trend annually, there is a broader national trend of declining recycling rates, as evidenced by England's recycling rate dropping by 0.8% to 43.3% in 2022/23.

The Council actively participated in the national 'Recycle Week 2023' campaign held in October 2023. This year's theme, 'Big Recycling Hunt,' targeted commonly overlooked or unknown recyclable items. Additionally, during Q3, the focus extended to food waste recycling initiatives around Halloween and Christmas, accompanied by tailored messaging promoting recycling and waste reduction during the festive season.

Residual Household Waste per Household (kg)

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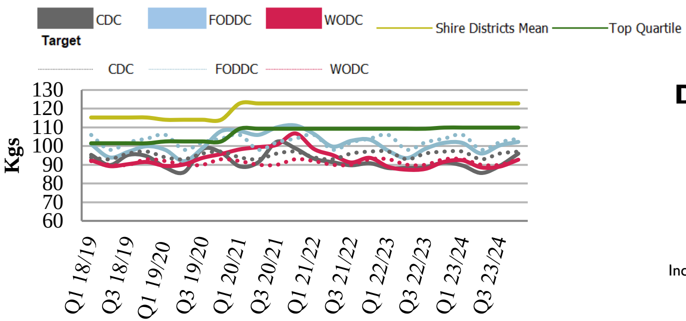


Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter

Against last Year

Increased since last quarter and last year

Lower is Good

Q4 Target	93
Q4 Actual	92.79
2023-24 Target	366
2023-24 Actual	363

How do we compare?

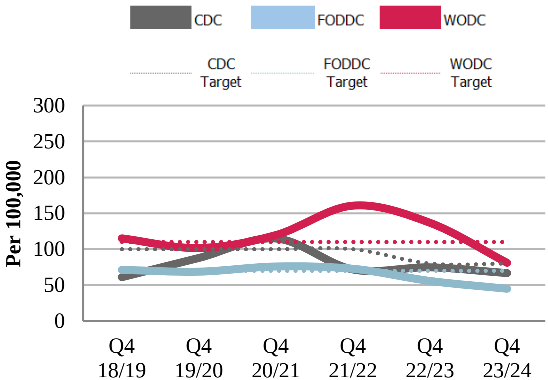
Residual household waste per household (kg/household)

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

During Q4, the Council observed a rise in the volume of household waste, with an increase of around 5% per household compared to the previous quarter, totaling 92.79kg. In comparison to the same period the previous year, there was an average increase of just over 1kg per household.

Overall, all household waste tonnages have seen a slight increase compared to the previous year (2022-2023), yet they still fall below the levels recorded in 2021-22.

Missed bins per 100,000



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Lower is Good

Direction of Travel

Against last Quarter ⇩

Against last Year ⇩

Improved since last quarter and last year

Q4 Target	110
Q4 Actual	81.37
2023-24 Target	440
2023-24 Actual	419

In Q4, the number missed bins per 100,000 stayed below target and saw a drop of around 14% from the preceding quarter, despite some disruptions from minor flooding and road closures impacting collection routines. In comparison to the corresponding period last year, the number of missed bins per 100,000 collections decreased by roughly 40%. Furthermore, these misses mark the lowest recorded since 2018/19.

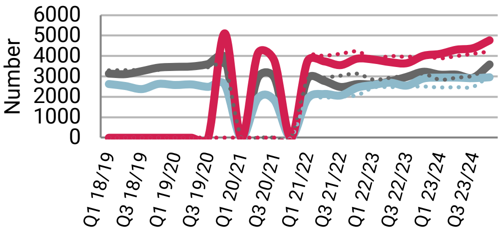
How do we compare?

The Data Team are currently working with partners to compile the data return for APSE performance networks which will then provide benchmarking for this metric.

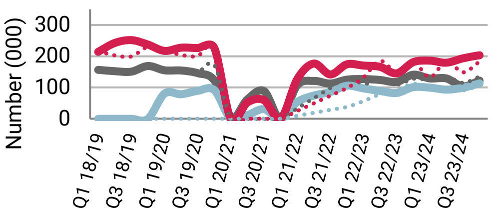
Note: since the implementation of In-Cab technology, the data source for missed collections is Alloy, In-Cab's back office system. This data source is more accurate than the previous data source.

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

Number of gym memberships



Visits to leisure facilities



How do we compare?

The Data Team are currently working with partners to compile the data return for APSE performance networks which will then provide benchmarking for this metric.

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- Improved since last quarter and last year

Higher is Good

Gym Memberships

Target	4214
Actual	4769

Leisure Visits – Q4

Target	182,560
Actual	202,757

Leisure Visits – End of Year

Target	648,310
Actual	760,272

The leisure targets were reviewed at the end of 2021-22, resulting in higher visitor number targets. Visits to leisure facilities increased compared to the previous quarter, surpassing the quarterly target by 11%. During Q4, gym memberships also rose compared to both the previous quarter and the same period last year.

Learn to Swim participation figures continue to decline, this trend may persist due to a national shortage of swim instructors and the backlog reduction resulting from the COVID-19 facility closures.

The Council successfully secured over £330,000 in Capital Grant Funding to enhance the energy efficiency of leisure facilities.

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