



LOCAL PLAN MONITORING REPORT 2012/13

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- E.1 This is an update to the West Oxfordshire Local Plan monitoring report 2012 (which covered the period 1st April 2011 to 31st March 2012) and provides additional data for the following year - i.e. 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013.
- E.2 The report gives details of the following issues at 1st April 2013:
- Local Plan progress
 - Local Plan policy implementation
 - Neighbourhood Planning
 - Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)
 - Duty to co-operate

Local Plan Progress

- E.3 The Draft Local Plan was published for consultation in November 2012 and it was anticipated that it would be formally published in summer 2013. However, it has been decided to defer publication so that the results of the new Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) may be taken into account.

Policy Implementation

Housing

- E.4 During the reporting year (1/4/2012 – 31/3/2013) 278 additional homes were completed in the District. This figure is expected to increase over the next 7 – 8 years as further existing and future Local Plan allocations are built out (*Chart 1*). About 3,700 homes have been built since 2006 – over half of the South East Plan requirement.
- E.5 Although only an additional 28 newbuild affordable homes were completed in the reporting year, there are well over 600 with extant planning permission or in the pipeline for future delivery and it is expected that around 270 of these will be completed between 2013 and 2015. *Table 2* shows the locations and quantities of affordable housing completions since 2006/07.
- E.6 Interest in residential development continues to increase as we climb out of the recent recession and during 2012/13 planning permission was granted for 216 new homes on sites around the District: slightly higher than the total for 2011/12.
- E.7 About 60% of all new homes completed, during the reporting year, were delivered on previously-developed land, as forecast in the 2011/12 Monitoring Report.

Economy

- E.8 West Oxfordshire retains a relatively diverse local economy with manufacturing retaining an above average presence in the District, against a national picture of decline in this sector.
- E.9 Total business turnover from tourism related activities has increased by 2% to £260m since last year.

- E.10 The proportion of working age people claiming job seekers allowance has decreased by 0.2% to 1.2% since the last monitoring period. This remains lower than the regional and national averages.
- E.11 Completions of business related development have increased to 8,901m² during this monitoring period, although changes of use between different business types accounts for a large proportion of this as opposed to new-build floorspace.
- E.12 Loss of employment land continues to be resisted and as such, the main towns retain a flexible supply of land and premises for business development to meet existing demand.
- E.13 Town centre vibrancy and viability remains strong in the District.

Environment

- E.14 There have been no additional sites allocated for their wildlife value during the reporting year.
- E.15 There has been a 5.5% decrease in the BAP priority resource in West Oxfordshire recorded in this monitoring period.
- E.16 There has been an increase of two species of UK Biodiversity Action Plan species in West Oxfordshire since the last monitoring period
- E.17 The population of Water Voles in West Oxfordshire's waterways remains stable.
- E.18 There has been little change in the condition of SSSI units in the District Although Little Tew Meadows is recorded as changing from favourable to unfavourable recovering in 2012
- E.19 There has been continued decline in the number of farmland birds recorded in the District which does not reflect the general increase in the rest of Oxfordshire. Recent surveys indicate a decline in some species including lapwing and yellowhammer although numbers of skylark and linnets and grey partridge have increased.
- E.20 The sustainability of buildings in West Oxfordshire continues to improve with 538 domestic renewable energy installations with a capacity of 1,504Kw, recorded in the District in 2012/13.
- E.21 Applications for large scale solar farms continue to come forward with a 27MW proposal approved at Kencot.

Neighbourhood Planning

- E.22 There is one Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) underway in the District at Chipping Norton. There are no Neighbourhood Development Orders (NDOs) in place.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- E.23 The Council has agreed in principle to undertake the further work necessary to introduce the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) into West Oxfordshire. In November 2013 Cabinet agreed to publish the West Oxfordshire CIL Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule (PDCS) for consultation. The consultation runs from 11th December 2013 until 5th February 2014.

Duty to Co-Operate

- E.24 In terms of the duty to co-operate, the Council continues to work constructively, actively and on an on-going basis with other local authorities and relevant bodies both in relation to the Local Plan and the supporting evidence base. A statement, setting out in detail, how the Council has fulfilled its duty to co-operate will be produced prior to the formal publication of the submission draft Local Plan.

I. INTRODUCTION

- I.1 Section 35 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended by the Localism Act, requires local authorities to prepare monitoring reports. These contain details of the implementation of the local development scheme (the Council's timetable for preparing its development plan) and the extent to which their local development plan policies are being achieved. The Act notes that these reports must be made available to the public and must cover a period 'which the authority considers appropriate in the interests of transparency'. That period must be no longer than 12 months.
- I.2 The West Oxfordshire Local Plan Monitoring Report 2012 expressed the Council's commitment to try to make current and relevant data available as soon as practicably possible after it had been collected. This half-yearly update is a step towards meeting that commitment and, as noted in the 2012 report, it is our intention to publish either full reports or updates at least every six months, in future.
- I.3 Because this interim report builds upon the material contained within the last full monitoring report (2012) it should be read in conjunction with that document (<http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/files/download/9624-5158.pdf>), particularly where general or historic information is sought, such as the District's landscape character or heritage assets. This type of background data and that which is subject to relatively minor change in the short term (tourism spend and employment statistics are examples) will be reported upon, in detail, in the main reports at the start of each financial year (1st April).

2. LOCAL PLAN PROGRESS

- 2.1 The Council has in place a project plan known as a 'Local Development Scheme' or LDS. This sets out which planning documents will be produced and when so that local communities and businesses are able to get involved at the appropriate time.
- 2.2 The LDS identifies two main development plan documents under preparation: the Core Strategy (now referred to as the Local Plan) and a Site Allocations and Development Management document.

Local Plan

- 2.3 The new Local Plan provides the overall strategy for the District in the period 2011 – 2029.
- 2.4 Building on several earlier rounds of consultation, a Draft Local Plan was published in November 2012 and in response, around 2,000 comments were received.
- 2.5 It had been the Council's intention to formally publish and submit the Local Plan in summer 2013 however a decision was taken to defer publication pending the outcome of a new housing study for Oxfordshire.
- 2.6 Once the outputs of that study are known the Council will be in a position to determine how and when to proceed with the Local Plan.
- 2.7 The LDS will be updated and all interested parties notified accordingly.

Site Allocations and Development Management

- 2.8 The LDS also includes a second development plan document – a Site Allocations and Development Management DPD which would sit alongside the Local Plan and deal with smaller site allocations (e.g. housing) and development management policies (policies used to help guide day to day planning decisions).
- 2.9 Some initial consultation took place in 2008 and a decision will be made on whether and when to progress the Site Allocations document once the new Oxfordshire housing study is made available and the Council is in a clearer position on the content and timing of the new Local Plan.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

3. HOUSING

Provision and delivery over the plan period

- 3.1 In this section we provide information on the amount, type and location of new housing built in the District as well as how much is forecast to come forward.

Number of new homes built

- 3.2 278 additional homes have been completed between 1st April 2012 and 31st March 2013. This brings the total of new homes completed since 2006 to 3,698. Well over half of these have been provided on large allocated sites and redundant industrial premises (see *Table 1* below).

Site	Total units for the site	Completed since 1 st April 2006
Bridge Street Mills, Witney	226	212
Early's of Witney	217	151
Madley Park, Witney	1,149	324
Local Plan Proposal 13: Marriotts Walk	143	143
Dark Lane, Witney	161	161
Shilton Park, Carterton	1,505	629
Parker Knoll, Chipping Norton	133	133
East Eynsham	100	90
Marlborough School, Woodstock	63	63
Shilton Road, Carterton	63	63

Table 1 - Development on larger sites between 1st April 2006 and 31st March 2013

- 3.3 As these larger sites have been completed, there has been a planned reduction in the build rate within the District from a peak of 865 homes in 2007/8 (the highest build-rate for over 20 years) to 278 homes completed during the reporting year. *Chart 1* shows how these larger sites and smaller permissions have been brought forward and managed to address the requirements of progressive development plans (i.e. Oxfordshire Structure Plan, South East Plan and, currently, West Oxfordshire Local Plan) and to ensure that minimum annual requirements have always been met or exceeded.

Where were these new homes built?

- 3.4 Both the adopted and emerging Local Plans seek to steer the majority of new development towards the more sustainable service centres. In line with this strategy, during the reporting year, nearly 80% (220) of all additional dwellings were completed within these service centres, with Carterton contributing 73, Woodstock 43 and Witney 32. Continuing this policy approach, over 70% of the new homes with extant (unimplemented) planning permissions will be completed in the District's service centres.
- 3.5 Between 2001 and 2013 nearly 60% of all housing completions (3,810 of 6,469) in West Oxfordshire, have taken place on sites allocated through the development plan process. Many of the adopted Local Plan allocations have now been completed, or are nearing completion, and during the reporting year nearly 200 of the 278 homes completed were on previously unidentified sites. Since 2001, over 40% of all new dwellings have been completed on previously unidentified sites – an average of well over 220 homes each year.
- 3.6 Looking forward, nearly 80% of all homes with full unimplemented planning permission (at 1st April 2013) will be built on previously unidentified sites. Although the sources of certain types of site, such as redundant barns and business premises, are likely to reduce over time, it is expected that delivery from such 'windfall' sites will continue.
- 3.7 It should be noted that, in addition to the 300-plus sites that benefitted from full planning permission at 1st April 2013 (and will provide around 930 new homes), there were a number of other sites which had been granted planning permission subject to the signing of a legal agreement. Between them, these other sites have the potential to deliver over 1,200 additional homes.

Proportion of 'brownfield' and 'greenfield' development

- 3.8 The 2012 Monitoring Report indicated that over 40% of the homes built in the 2011/12 period had been delivered on previously-developed land and suggested that the proportion for 2012/13 would be much higher. In fact 60% of the homes completed in the reporting year were on brownfield land, although the ratio is expected to gradually decrease.
- 3.9 Since 1st April 2001, 46% of all new homes built in the District have been completed on previously-developed land - a very high percentage given the rural character of the area. This is illustrated on *Chart 2*.

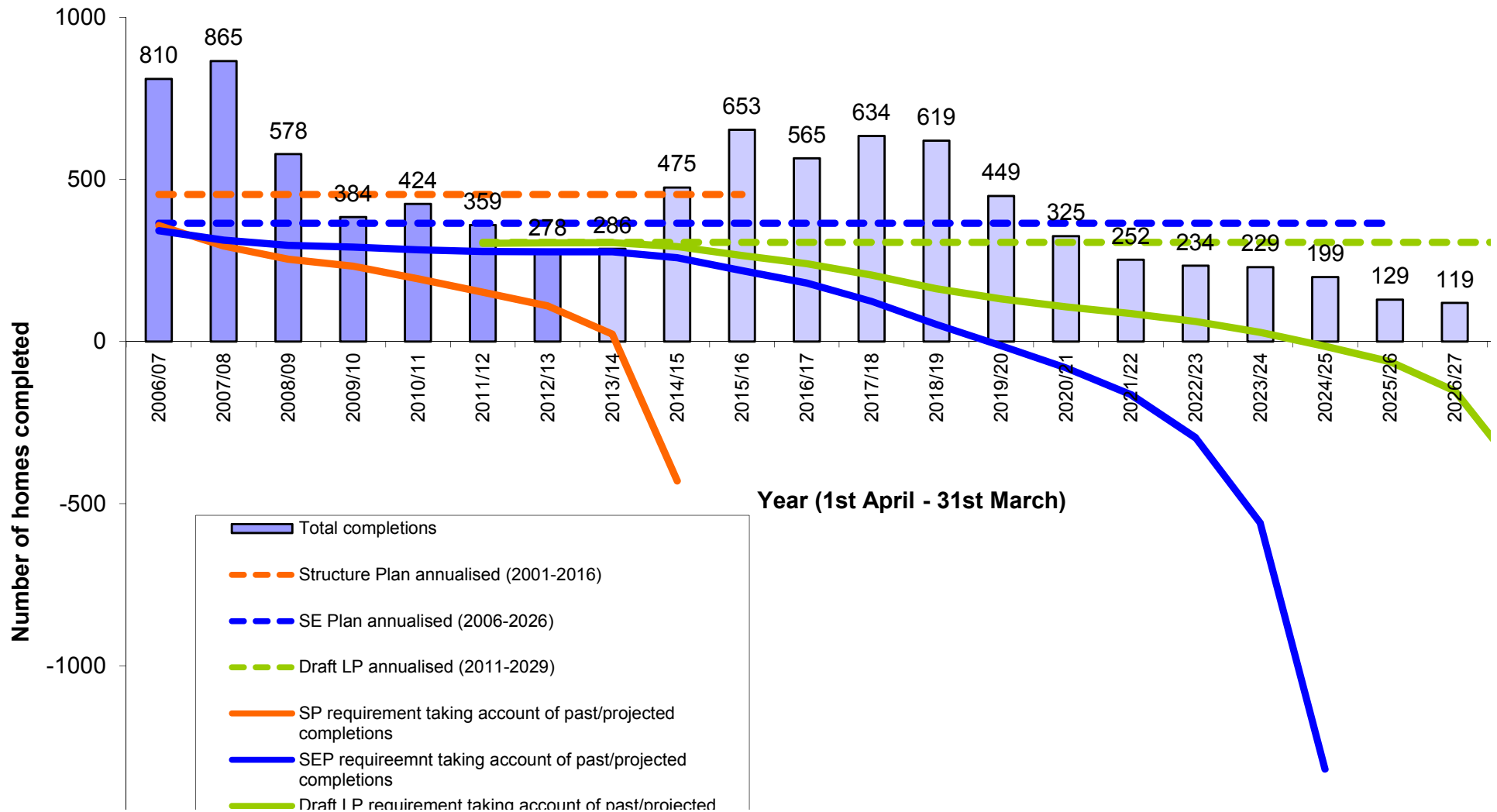


Chart 1: Actual and projected completions showing changing development plan trajectories

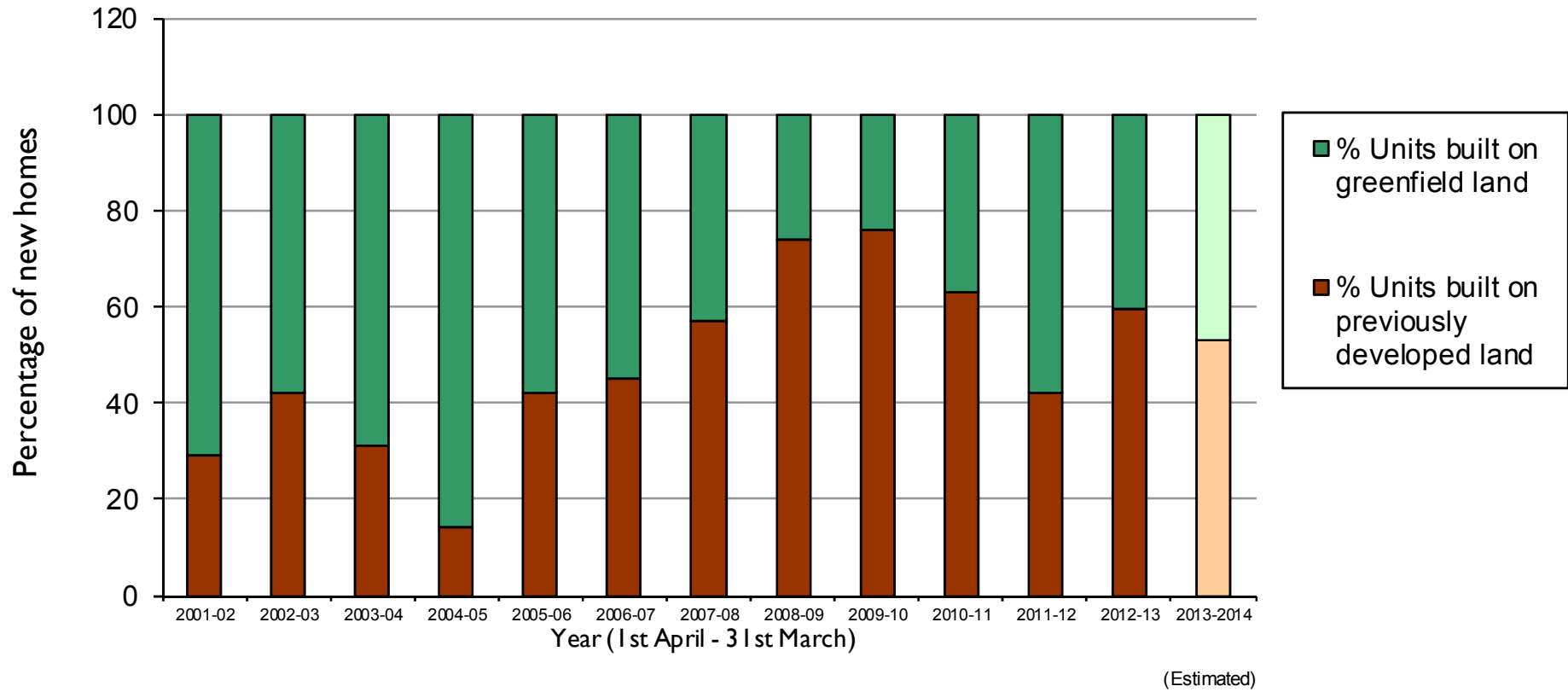


Chart 2 - Proportion of new homes completed on previously developed and greenfield land in West Oxfordshire

Type and Mix of New homes

- 3.10 Local authorities are expected to examine the needs of the different groups within their areas and to address those needs, partly, through the delivery of suitable residential accommodation. As well as obvious problems, like affordability, it is important that a local authority understands the differences that issues such as age, location, disability, etc can have on demand. To better understand this complex demand, a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was carried out across the whole of Oxfordshire in 2008 <http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/files/publications/8628-496.pdf> . A new study is currently in progress and will help to inform the emerging Local Plan.
- 3.11 The 2008 SHMA and successive West Oxfordshire Housing Needs Assessments (the latest update can be found here: <http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/files/download/8630-4588.pdf>) have identified the delivery of affordable housing as a key issue in the District. To try to address this need, nearly 800 new affordable homes have been built within the District since 2006 and *Table 2* shows their locations. 174 of these new build affordable homes were provided on Rural Exception Sites (RES) which cater for specific local housing needs on sites that would not normally be released for residential development. *Table 3* shows housing delivery on RES sites since 1992.
- 3.12 The Council is currently committed to providing at least 150 affordable homes between 2012 and 2014 and there are extant planning permissions for over 560 affordable homes, plus a number of potential sites in the pipeline.
- 3.13 During the reporting year 28 new affordable homes were built, with just over 270 expected during the period 1st April 2013 – 31st March 2015. 19 of those completed in the reporting year (68%) were in Carterton, with the remaining 9 (32%) being in the more rural areas. This is in line with the Council's aim of providing at least 30% of new affordable homes outside of the three larger settlements (Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton). A much higher percentage of those to be built over the period 2013 – 2015 (48%) will be in the more rural areas.

Site	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	Totals
Cheatle Crescent, Burford					13			13
Shilton Park, NE Carterton		38	38	17	40			133
Queens Road, Carterton		9						9
Shilton Road, Carterton							19	19
Quarry Road, Chadlington*						12		12
Little Lees, Charlbury*							7	7
Parker Knoll, Chipping Norton	40	13						53
Rock Hill, Chipping Norton	13							13
Furlong Row, Clanfield	3							3
Mill Lane, Clanfield*			6					6
Queens Crescent, Clanfield	5							5
Stonesfield Road, Combe*						8		8
Ducklington Mill, Ducklington			8					8
Crossways, Enstone					4			4
Filandic, Enstone		2						2
Manor Close, Enstone						5		5
Merton Close, Eynsham*					40			40
Eynsham East						50		50
Swan Lane, Hanborough*						24		24
The Elms, Langford*						8		8
Fairspear Road, Leafield*	10							10
Ansell Way, Milton-u-Wychwood						10		10
Choicehill, Over Norton*			6					6
Akeman Street, Ramsden*				5				5
Malthouse Farm, Standlake					2			2
Oxford Downs CC, Standlake		2						2
16 Blackditch, Stanton Harcourt*						16		16
The Dorrells, Stanton Harcourt							2	2
The Ridings, Stonesfield*						8		8
Early's of Witney	10	1						11
Dark Lane, Witney		15	33					48
MadleyPark, North East Witney	14	47	3					64
Tower Hill Works, Witney	18	6						24
Bridge Street Mill, Witney		53						53
Marriotts Walk, Witney					20			20
Valance Crescent, Witney					11			11
Wadards Meadow, Witney					4			4
Springfield School, Witney						12		12
Banbury Road, Woodstock*					16			16
Marlborough School, Woodstock					13	15		28
Hensington Farm, Woodstock						5		5
Marriott Close, Wootton*						8		8
TOTALS	113	186	94	22	163	181	28	787
*Sites developed under the Local Plan's Rural Exception Policy								

Table 2 - Locations of new-build affordable housing completed 2006/07 – 2012/13

Parish	Number of dwellings	Year(s) completed
Ascott-under-Wychwood	6	1997
Bampton	31	1992
Charlbury	51	1994, 2003, 2013
Clanfield	6	2008
Enstone	8	1992
Fulbrook	12	1992
Hailey	12	1999
Kingham	13	1998, 2002
Langford	16	1994, 2011
Leafield	10	2006
Over Norton	6	2008
Ramsden	5	2009
Shipton-under-Wychwood	10	1995
Stonesfield	16	2005, 2011
Tackley	16	1994, 1997
Woodstock	31	1992, 2010
Wootton	15	2000, 2011
Eynsham	40	2010
Chadlington	12	2011
Combe	8	2011
Long Hanborough	24	2011
Stanton Harcourt	16	2011
	364	

Table 3 - Rural Exception Sites completed by parish since 1992

- 3.14 Since 2006, the tenure mix of affordable housing completions has been consistent with the Council's aim of providing two social rent homes for every intermediate one, with 65% of the 787 homes completed being for social renting. During the reporting year, 18 of the 28 completions were for this type of tenure. The majority of the affordable homes with extant planning permission at 1st April 2013 (where the tenure is known) are for social rent (89%).
- 3.15 For the third year running, the proportion of smaller 1 and 2 bed units has fallen, compared to the larger 3, 4 and 5 or more bed properties (see *Chart 3*). Nevertheless, a greater number of the smaller homes were completed in the reporting year (121) than either the 3-bed units (112) or those with 4 or more beds (42) and this reflects the continuing drop in occupancy rate¹.

¹ It is unknown how many bedrooms were included in 3 of the dwellings completed.

3.16 *Table 4* indicates the response to this demand for smaller housing with three times as many 1 and 2-bed units being permitted in the reporting year than either 3-bed or larger 4 or more bed properties. Where the number of bedrooms is known, 67% of the properties with extant planning permission will include just 1 or 2 bedrooms. Although the proportion of smaller properties completed has fallen since last year, both the number and the proportion of one and two bed homes permitted in 2012/13 are higher than in 2011/12.

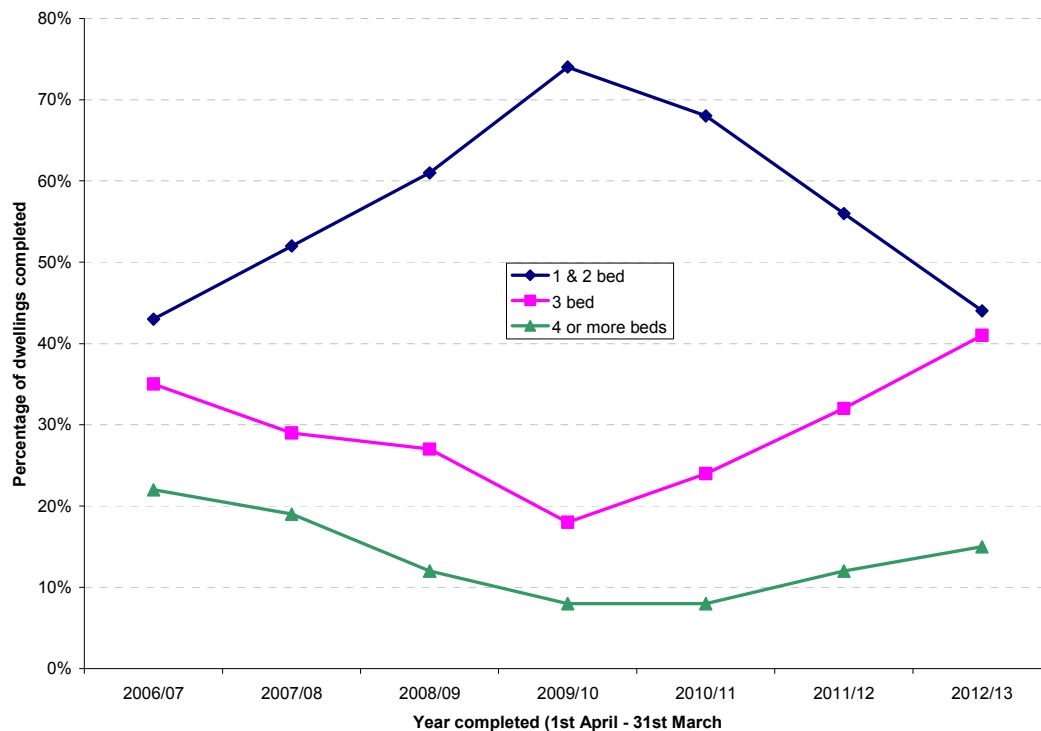


Chart 3 - Number of bedrooms in completed dwellings

DETAILED PLANNING PERMISSIONS GRANTED BY YEAR			
<u>Year</u>	<u>1 & 2 bed</u>	<u>3 bed</u>	<u>4 or more beds</u>
2006/07	58%	31%	11%
2007/08	57%	31%	12%
2008/09	61%	22%	17%
2009/10	57%	29%	14%
2010/11	50%	32%	18%
2011/12	58%	30%	12%
2012/13	61%	20%	19%

Table 4 - Annual residential permissions by bedroom numbers

Future delivery of new homes.

- 3.17 The 2012 monitoring report noted that the District's future supply of housing would have regard to the provision indicated by both the South East Plan, with a target of 7,300 homes between 2006 and 2026, and the Draft West Oxfordshire Local Plan which requires a minimum provision of 5,500 homes between 2011 and 2029.
- 3.18 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local planning authorities to demonstrate that they have a five year supply of deliverable housing sites plus an additional buffer of 5% to ensure choice and competition. *Tables 5a and 5b*, illustrating West Oxfordshire's 5-year housing land supply measured against the two targets noted above, include that 5% buffer.
- 3.19 In accordance with Government guidance, the figures shown are for the next five years – i.e. from 1st April 2014 onwards. It should be noted that, for robustness, the 5-year calculations exclude the following:
- a windfall allowance - despite the fact that since 2001 an average of 220 homes have been completed each year on previously-unidentified sites and even on sites of less 10 units, the average 'windfall' completion rate is well over 100 homes;
 - the Strategic Development Areas (SDAs) identified in the Draft Local Plan (apart from the North Curbridge site, which now has a resolution to grant outline planning permission subject to completion of a Section 106 legal agreement);
 - sites identified as suitable and deliverable through the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA).
- 3.20 The National Indicator 159 is a measure of the supply of ready-to-develop housing sites. A figure of 100% represents a 5-year supply and to achieve this percentage, or higher, is considered good performance against the indicator. The percentages in *Tables 5a and 5b* are 150% and 136% based on the South East Plan and Draft West Oxfordshire Local Plan respectively. In effect, this demonstrates that there is a 7½ year and 7 year supply of deliverable housing sites depending on which housing target is used.
- 3.21 *Table 6* identifies the amount of housing expected to come forward in each of the Draft Local Plan Sub-Areas. This table includes only sites with extant planning permission or those that have been allocated in the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011. No allowance is included for SDAs identified in the emerging Local Plan (other than North Curbridge which now benefits from a resolution to grant permission subject to a legal agreement), future windfall sites or submitted SHLAA sites.

	SOURCE	HOMES	NOTES
A	Total SE Plan provision 2006-2026	7,300	
B	Homes completed 1/4/06–31/3/13	3,698	
C	Housing completions expected 1/4/13 – 31/3/14	286	
D	Remaining provision required	3,316	A – B - C
E	Plan period years remaining (1/4/14-31/3/26)	12	
F	Annualised requirement 1/4/14-31/3/19	276	D ÷ E
G	Requirement for next 5 years (2014 to 2018)	1,380	F x 5
H	Requirement for next 5 years including 5% buffer	1,449	
I	Revised annualised requirement	290	
J	Deliverable homes on allocated sites with planning permission from 1/4/2014	279	See Appendix 1
K	Deliverable homes on exception sites with planning permission from 1/4/2014	42	See Appendix 1
L	Deliverable homes on sites with permission which were previously unidentified from 1/4/2014	756	Those sites which have not yet started are discounted by 9% to allow for possible lapses ² - See Appendix 4 (available as separate download)
M	Deliverable homes on sites with permission subject to legal agreement	846	See Appendix 2
N	Deliverable homes on sites allocated in the Local Plan but without planning permission	250	See Appendix 3
	Total deliverable dwellings	2,173	J + K + L + M + N

Table 5a - Summary of supply of deliverable sites (SEP)

The formula for calculating the proportion of dwellings that are deliverable (NI 159) is:-

$$\frac{\text{The number of dwellings that can be built on deliverable housing sites}}{\text{The housing supply requirement}} \times 100$$

i.e. $2,173 \div 1,449 \times 100 = 150\%$ (the equivalent of a 7½ year provision)

² Since 2006, about 9% of dwellings permitted on small previously unidentified sites have lapsed.

	SOURCE	HOMES	NOTES
A	Draft Local Plan Provision 2011 – 2029	5,500	
B	Homes completed 1/4/11–31/3/13	637	
C	Housing completions expected 1/4/13 – 31/3/14	286	
D	Remaining provision required	4,577	A - B - C
E	Plan period years remaining (1/4/14-31/3/29)	15	
F	Annualised requirement 1/4/13-31/3/17	305	D ÷ E
G	Requirement for next 5 years (2014 to 2018)	1,525	F x 5
H	Requirement for next 5 years including 5% buffer	1,601	
I	Revised annualised requirement	320	
J	Deliverable homes on allocated sites with planning permission from 1/4/2014	279	See Appendix 1
K	Deliverable homes on exception sites with planning permission from 1/4/2014	42	See Appendix 1
L	Deliverable homes on sites with permission which were previously unidentified – from 1/4/2014	756	Those sites which have not yet started are discounted by 9% to allow for possible lapses ² . See Appendix 4 (available as separate download)
M	Deliverable homes on sites subject to legal agreement	846	See Appendix 2
N	Deliverable homes on sites allocated in the Local Plan but without planning permission	250	See Appendix 3
	Total deliverable dwellings	2,173	J + K + L + M + N

Table 5b Summary of supply of deliverable sites (Draft Local Plan)

The formula for calculating the proportion of dwellings that are deliverable (NI 159) is:-

$$\frac{\text{The number of dwellings that can be built on deliverable housing sites}}{\text{The housing supply requirement}} \times 100$$

i.e. $2,173 \div 1,601 \times 100 = \underline{136\%}$ (the equivalent of nearly 7 years provision)

All sites with development of 10 or more units and not completed before 1 st April 2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	Total
BURFORD-CHARLBURY – With permission											
Adj to Frethern Close, Burford (RES) – 11/0772/P/FP	15										15
Adj Little Lees, Charlbury (RES) – 11/1771/P/FP	8										8
r/o Shipton Road, Milton-u-Wychwood – 10/0950/P/FP			44								44
Estimate of completions on non-allocated small (less than 10 units) sites with permission	31	33	13	8							85
Sub-total	54	33	57	8							152
CARTERTON – With permission											
63 Burford Road, Carterton – 11/1765/P/FP			12								12
Car Park, Black Bourton Road – 12/1217/P/F			10								10
Carterton Petrol Station, Upavon Way – 10/1287/P/OP				42							42
REEMA North, Carterton – 13/0399/P/RM		50	100	50							200
Milestone Road, Carterton – 12/1019/P/FP		25	50	18							93
Milestone Road, Carterton – 12/1020/P/FP			30	40	35						105
Allocated											
Swinbrook Road – LP Proposal 15		30	50	50	50	20					200
Estimate of completions on non-allocated small (less than 10 units) sites with permission	15	20	14	1							50
Sub-total	15	125	266	201	85	20					712
CHIPPING NORTON – With permission											
The Mill, Station Road, Chipping Norton – 07/0127/P/FP			24								24
Land at Cox's Lane, Enstone – 12/0494/P/FP	32										32
Allocated											
Local Plan Proposal 1	30	50									80
Estimate of completions on non-allocated small (less than 10 units) sites with permission	24	31	26	3	5						89
Sub-total	86	81	50	3	5						225
EYNSHAM-WOODSTOCK – With permission											
Land at Spareacre Lane, Eynsham – 11/1291/P/OP				12							12
Youngs Garage, 10 Oxford Street, Woodstock – 11/0153/P/FP	7										7
Land adj Riely Close, Long Hanborough – 11/0936/P/FP		15									15
Eynsham East (remaining commitment) – 08/1341/P/FP	10										10
Estimate of completions on non-allocated small (less than 10 units) sites with permission	20	25	25	5	12						87
Sub-total	37	40	25	17	12						131
WITNEY – With permission											
1a Crawley Road, Witney – 07/1355/P/FP		14									14
102b Woodstock Road, Witney – 11/0048/P/FP	21										21
Moorland Centre, 24 Dark Lane, Witney – 11/1531/P/OP				11							11
Buttercross Works, Witney – 11/1198/P/FP	30	50	55	49							184
10 Newland, Witney – 12/1123/P/FP			11								11
Springfield Nurseries, Curbridge Road – 13/0345/P/FP		36									36
North Curbridge SDA, West Witney – 12/0084/P/OP		50	100	150	150	150	150	150	100		1000
Coral Springs, Thorney Leys – 12/1037/P/FP			49	76							125
Estimate of completions on non-allocated small (less than 10 units) sites with permission	43	46	15	2	5						111
Sub-total	94	196	230	288	155	150	150	150	100		1,513
TOTAL	286	475	628	517	257	170	150	150	100		2,733
Units on previously developed land	152	241	270	172	14						849
Units on greenfield land	134	234	358	345	243	170	150	150	100		1,884
Percentage on previously developed land	53%	51%	43%	33%	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%		
Percentage on greenfield land	47%	49%	57%	67%	95%	100%	100%	100%	100%		

* Small sites that have not yet commenced have been discounted by 9% to allow for possible non-implementation

	Previously developed		Greenfield
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Table 6- Estimated year of completion of residential units on identified sites in West Oxfordshire

Traveller Sites

- 3.22 The Gypsy and Traveller Housing Needs Assessment 2012/13, carried out for West Oxfordshire, Cherwell and South Northamptonshire districts by arc⁴ (<http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/files/download/9394-5030.pdf>) and published in January 2013 identified 10 authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites within West Oxfordshire, containing 83 pitches. There are also around 20-22 plots on existing Travelling Showpeople sites. Apart from the County Council owned site at The Furlong in Standlake, all of the existing sites have resulted from applications on previously-unidentified land (windfall sites).
- 3.23 The studies carried out to assess the needs of the travelling communities have identified a requirement of 18 additional pitches for gypsies and travellers (for the period 2012-2027) and 12.86 plots for travelling showpeople (2008-2018). Applying the same methodologies used to ascertain these needs, we have increased the number of years to coincide with the Draft Local Plan period, i.e. to 2028/29.
- 3.24 *Tables 7a and 7b* show the provisions required to meet the accommodation requirements over a five year period. As can be seen, there exists a deliverable 5-year supply for Travelling Showpeople but a little less than 5 years for Gypsies and Travellers.

Gypsies and Travellers

	Requirement/Supply	Pitches	Notes
A	Pitches required 1/4/2012-31/3/2029	20	arc ⁴ report (+ 2 additional years pro-rata)
B	Additional annual requirement	1.2	arc ⁴ report
C	Requirement for period 1/4/2012 – 31/3/2017	6	B x 5
D	Deliverable pitches on sites with planning permission	4	Barnard Gate – 2010 approval being implemented Autumn 2013
E	Number of years' supply	3	D ÷ B
F	Outstanding provision to be made by 31/03/2029	16	A - D

Table 7a - Summary of deliverable Gypsy and Traveller sites over 5 years

Travelling Showpeople

	Requirement/Supply	Plots	Notes
A	Plots required 1/4/2008-31/3/2029	27	Tribal report (+ 11 additional years)
B	Additional annual requirement	1.28	Tribal report
C	Requirement for period 1/4/2012 – 31/3/2017	6	B x 5
D	Deliverable plots on sites with planning permission	6	Cuckoo Wood Farm – 2009 approval began being implemented 2012/13
E	Number of years' supply	5	D ÷ B
F	Outstanding provision to be made by 31/03/2029	21	A - D

Table 7b- Summary of deliverable Travelling Showpeople sites over 5 years

4. EMPLOYMENT

- 4.1 West Oxfordshire has a relatively strong and healthy local economy with a wide and diverse range of businesses. The Local Plan employment policies seek to support and contribute to this prosperity by ensuring that a wide range of land, sites and premises, together with supporting infrastructure, is available to meet the needs of businesses.
- 4.2 The most recent data indicates that there were 52,000 jobs in total in West Oxfordshire, a jobs density of 0.78³ (i.e. number of jobs per working age resident). The composition of jobs is dominated by the service sector with 78.5% of employee jobs. Manufacturing retains an above average presence in the local economy (13.6% of employee jobs) remaining steady against a national picture of decline in this sector. The District has notable specialisms in motorsport and high performance engineering, medical and optical equipment, technical consultancy and biotechnology.
- 4.3 In the rural area⁴ whilst employment in agriculture has declined it is still an important sector economically and for landscape management. Otherwise in rural areas the types of businesses are similar to those in urban areas, with a high proportion of service based activities⁵. Completions of employment development floor space during the monitoring period totalled 8,395m² in the rural areas, the majority of which was in mixed business uses. Businesses in rural areas tend to be smaller and there is more home-working and self employment. Recent business demography data indicates that the survival rates of enterprises in West Oxfordshire are generally above average⁶.

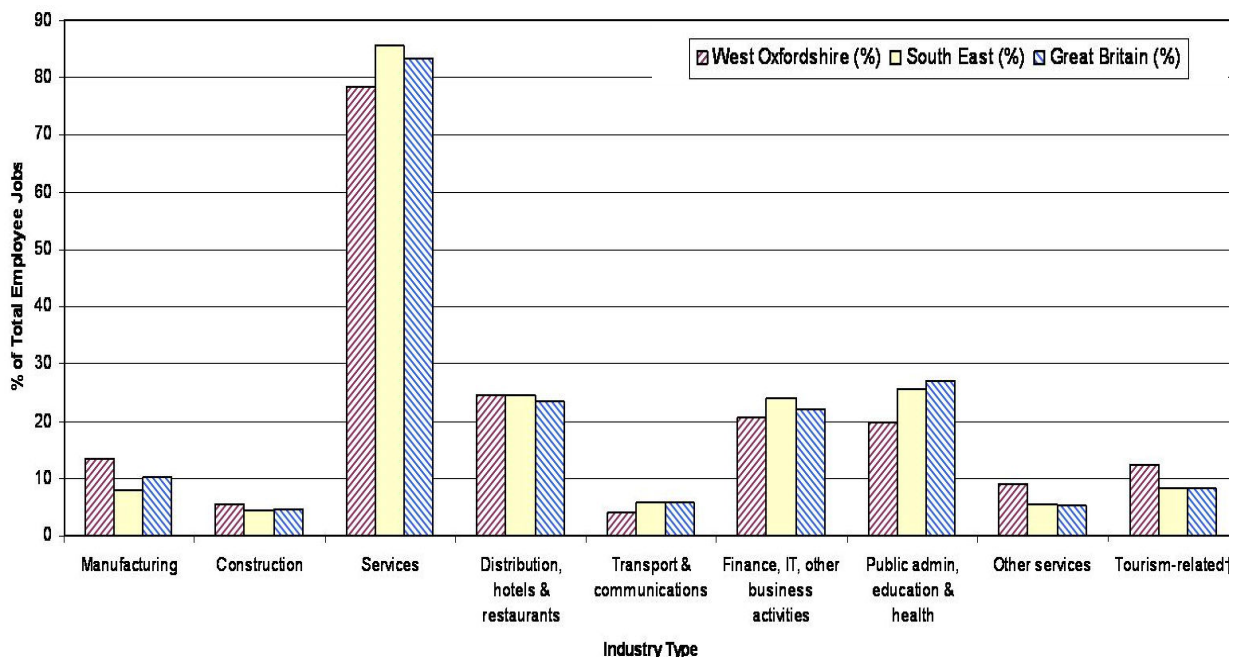


Chart 4 - Sectors of employment in West Oxfordshire

³ Jobs Density (2011) www.nomisweb.co.uk

⁴ Using standard rural-urban definitions the rural area includes all of the District excluding Witney and Carterton

⁵ Understanding Rural Oxfordshire –The Rural economy, Oxfordshire Economic Observatory 2007

⁶ ONS, <http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk>

- 4.4 Tourism and the visitor economy remains an important sector, with total local business turnover from tourist activity estimated at over £260m in 2011, a marginal rise of 2% over 2010⁷. Tourism related jobs continued to grow between 2009 and 2010 and accounted for 12.4% of total jobs, much higher than the rest of the region at 8.2%.
- 4.5 Indications are that the retail sector is fairing relatively well. The District's town centres are vibrant with low vacancy rates. Further information on town centre development follows in the town centres section.

The local labour market

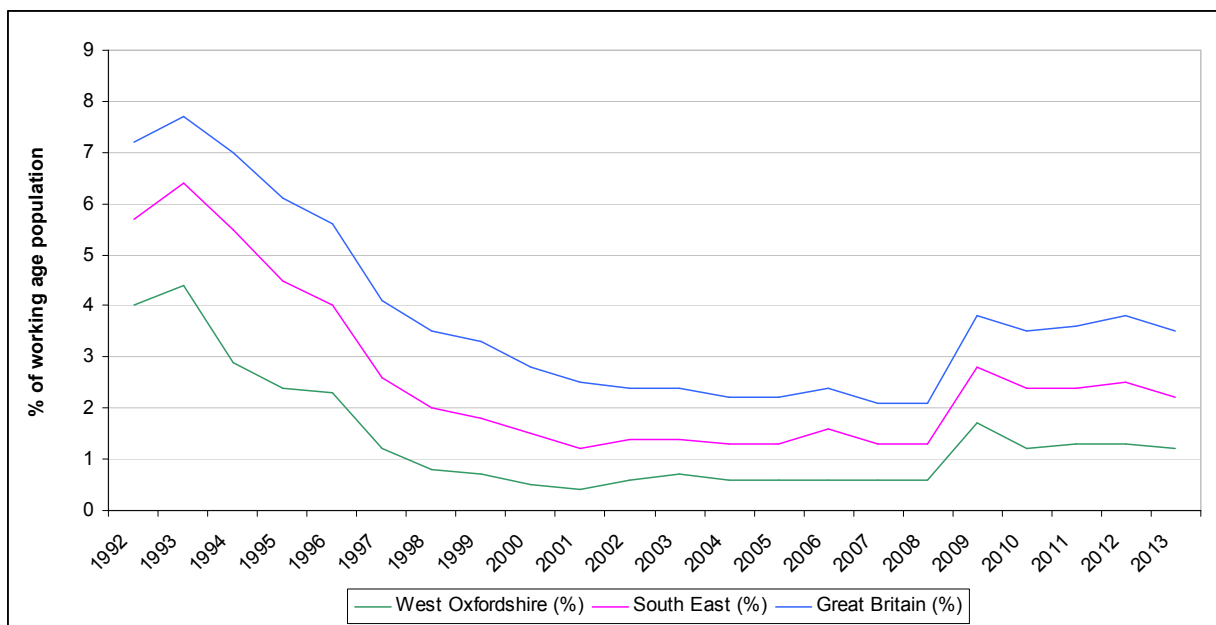


Chart 5 - Unemployment JSA claimants since 1992

- 4.6 Historically there have been fewer jobs in West Oxfordshire than workers with significant levels of out-commuting to Oxford and other employment centres. The 2001 Census highlighted the fact that 64% of people lived and worked in the District while around 18,000 people commuted out of the District and 10,000 workers commuted in to the District to work. New commuting data from the 2011 Census is expected in 2014.
- 4.7 Unemployment claimant counts⁸ in March 2013 stood at 1.2%, a decrease of 0.2% over March 2012. The rate remains higher than 2008 when the proportion of the working age population claiming JSA fell to 0.6%. However it remains much lower than the regional and national averages (2.2% and 3.5% respectively). Modelled unemployment rates stand at 4.3% of the economically active working age population which is significantly lower than the south east (5.8%) and Great Britain (7.9%). Economic activity (proportion of working age

⁷ Tourism South East Research Services (November 2011) The economic impact of tourism, West Oxfordshire 2011

⁸ Defined as the proportion of working age people claiming Job Seekers Allowance

available for work) at 82.9%⁹, and the employment rate (the proportion of the workforce in employment) at 76.2% are above regional and national averages. This is an indication that the economy in West Oxfordshire has functioned well during the recent economic downturn.

- 4.8 The median earnings of those working in West Oxfordshire, at £499 per week¹⁰, is lower than for those living in the District, at £546 per week – a consequence of commuting to higher paid jobs outside of the District. The house price to earnings ratio (also known as an affordability ratio) in 2011 was 8.95¹¹ – indicating that lower quartile house prices were almost 9 times higher than lower quartile earnings. The disparity between earnings and house prices has decreased slightly since the last monitoring period, indicating that house prices have decreased in the district although they remain unaffordable to many. High house prices combined with lower wages can make staff recruitment and retention difficult.
- 4.9 However, according to the Oxfordshire Employer Skills Survey (2010) 90% of West Oxfordshire employers were satisfied with Oxfordshire as a business base and the labour market was reported as stable. This is despite the fact that 21% of employers in the District report skills gaps compared with 12% in 2008. This may be the result of softer ‘impact skills’ taking on a greater importance than technical skills during the recession.

The local property market

- 4.10 The Local Plan strategy has been to focus employment growth in the main towns to meet the economic needs of the area whilst encouraging small scale employment development in the rural areas.
- 4.11 The completion rate for this monitoring period is higher than the previous year with a total of 8,901m² compared to 1772m² in 2011/12. The figures are slightly misleading however as a significant proportion of this (7,608m²) is attributed to a change of use at Leafield Technical Centre. This particular permission enabled greater flexibility of the units by de-restricting business uses on the site.

	B1(a)	B1(b)	B1(c)	B1 unable to split	Total B1	B2	B8	Mixed B	Total Net
Witney	245	0	0	0	245	0	0	0	245
Larger Settlements					0	0	0	0	0
Carterton	0	252	0	0	252	0	0	0	252
Chipping Norton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Charlbury	9	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	9
Rural Areas	787	0	0	7608	8395	0	0	0	8395
Total	1041	252	0	7608	8901	0	0	0	8901

Table 8 - Net employment floorspace completed (m²) -1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013

⁹ Defined as proportion of those people of working age (16-64)

¹⁰ Earnings by workplace (2012) www.nomis.co.uk

¹¹ Table 576 Ratio of lower quartile house price to lower quartile earnings by district. www.communities.gov.uk

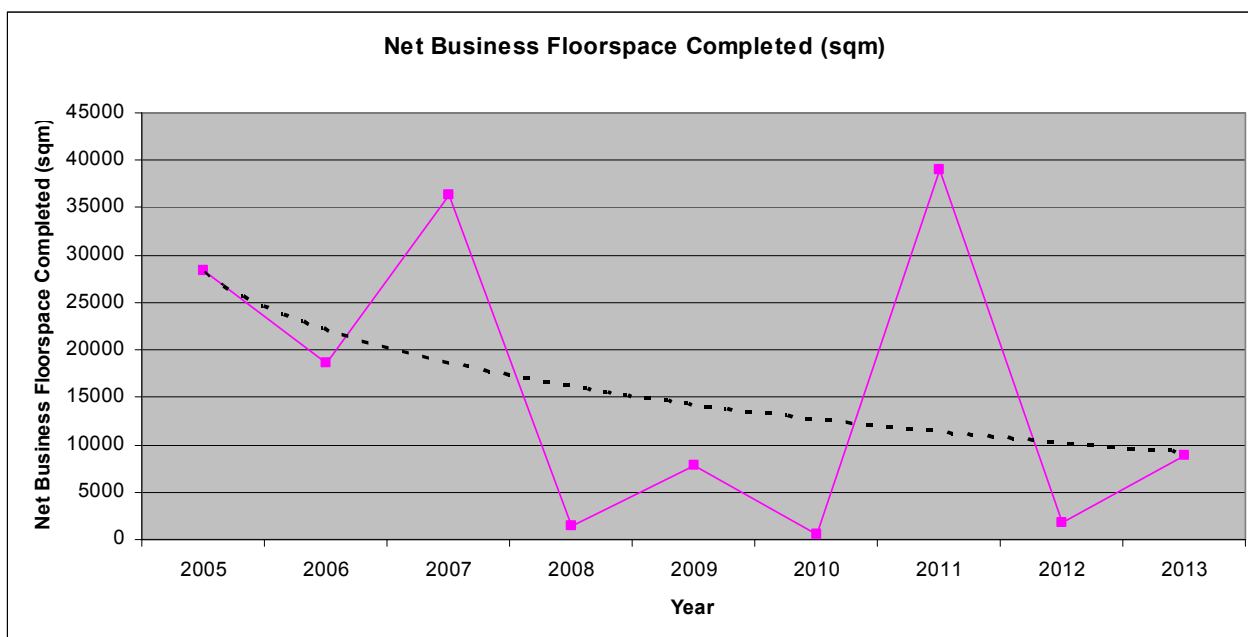


Chart 6 - Net business floorspace completed 1st April 2012 - 31st March 2013

- 4.12 *Chart 6* shows how widely business floor space completions have fluctuated since 2005 with peaks in 2007 and 2011. The average completion rate over the whole of the time period is 15,863m² with peaks attributable to the development allocated land and significant developments such as those at RAF Brize Norton in 2010/11.
- 4.13 The completion rate during the reporting year (2012/13) shows a return to more normal levels of business development. The overall trend for business land completions since 2005 however is one of decline.
- 4.14 There has been a sharp decline in the amount of employment floorspace completed over the last year in comparison with the previous monitoring period. A total of 1,772 m² of business development was completed over the whole of the district down from 39,029m² the previous year. The completion of new development at RAF Brize Norton during last years monitoring period (24,200m²) accounts for the significant difference in overall employment completions between monitoring phases.
- 4.15 A small proportion of employment land has been changed to other uses. Local Plan policy seeks to resist the loss of existing employment sites in urban and rural areas where there is some prospect for their continuing use. This policy helps to maintain a flexible supply of employment sites in the main towns and rural areas. In the current economic climate, when commercial property vacancy rates are higher, there is pressure for the redevelopment of employment sites, mainly to residential use. The retention of existing employment sites is critical to ensuring that the local economy is prepared for the eventual upturn in economic performance.
- 4.16 Changes to the general permitted development order (GPDO) however, have made it easier to change the use of premises in certain circumstances. Amendments to the GPDO in May 2013 enable the change of use from offices (B1(a)) to residential use (C3) without requiring planning permission. Other permitted changes include business uses to retail and vice versa as well as agricultural uses to business and retail. These permitted changes are designed to encourage economic growth and to enable businesses to establish themselves more easily. Any effect of these changes however will not be recorded until the next monitoring period.

Potential supply of employment premises and land

	B1a	B1b	B1c	B1 unable to split	Total B1	B2	B8	Mixed B	Total Net (M ²)
Witney	627	0	0	0	627	0	3818	186	4631
Carterton	0	0	0	0	0	388	0	0	388
Chipping Norton	0	0	0	0	0	2655	0	288	2943
Charlbury	0	0	56	0	56	0	0	0	56
Rural Areas	158	128	0	270	556	0	0	0	556
Total	785	128	56	270	1239	3043	3818	474	8574

Table 9 - Location and type of permitted employment floorspace (m²) at 1st April 2013

- 4.17 The monitoring data indicates that the local economy is stable and that policies to resist the loss of employment land have been effective. Although the number of permissions granted for new employment floorspace has decreased since last year, there have not been significant losses of employment land to other uses.
- 4.18 A number of the permissions for this period can be accounted for by a change of use between categories of business. Some of the B2 expansion at Chipping Norton for instance is a result of a change of use from light industry to a recycling centre at Greystones
- 4.19 *Table 9*, above, sets out the number of permissions granted for non-residential development in West Oxfordshire during the monitoring period. The figures show that there has been a dramatic decline in the number of non-residential permissions compared to the previous year from 27,129m² in 2011/12 to 8,574m² in 2012/13.
- 4.20 The trend over the past 4 years has been for a decline in the number of non residential applications approved, and this is likely to be a reflection of the challenging economic environment in recent years as a result of the recession.

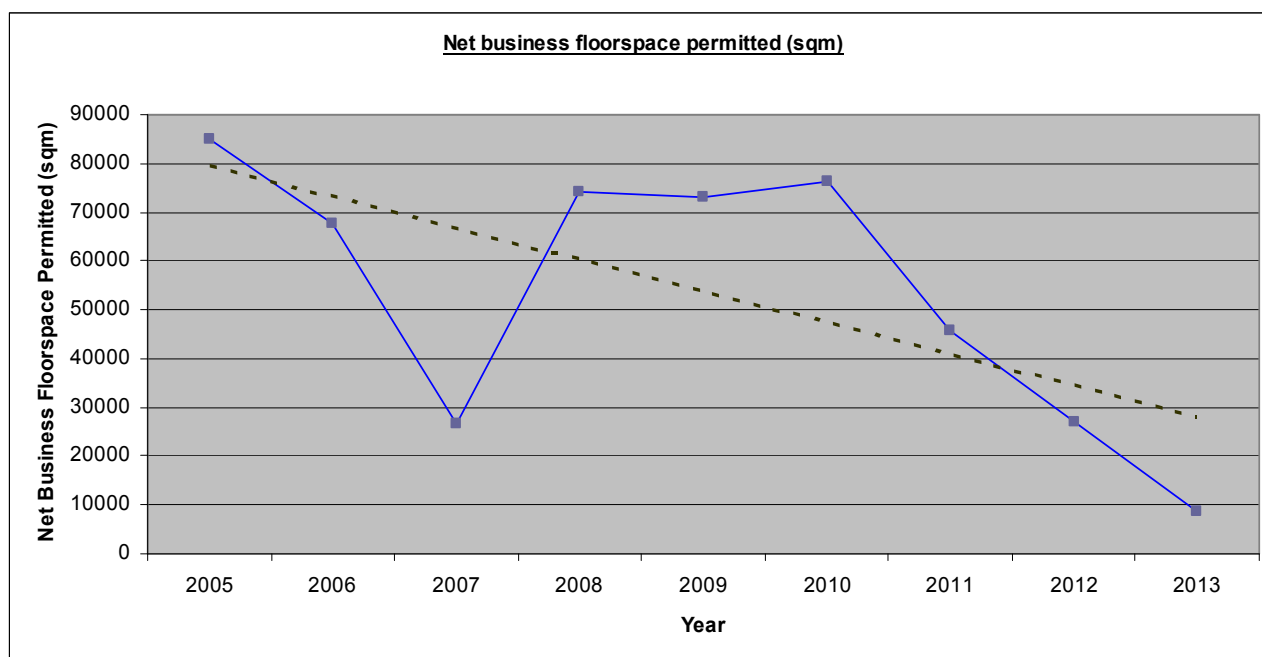


Chart 7 - Permitted employment floorspace (m²) 2005 - 2013

- 4.21 A significant proportion of the approved business land during the monitoring period was accounted for by a medical manufacturing unit at the Primsdown Industrial Estate in Chipping Norton, for Owen Mumford. This illustrates how important such businesses are to the economic fortunes of the District.
- 4.22 Although this year has shown a dramatic decline in the number of non-residential permissions, there have already been applications approved for significant amounts of business floorspace for next year. 9,000m² has been approved for example at Viscount Industrial Estate in Brize Norton, comprising 5 new industrial units (mixed B uses)
- 4.23 In addition to this, there has been a resolution to grant permission for a further 10 hectares of employment land to the west of Witney as part of the North Curbridge Strategic Development Area. This comprehensive development will provide space for businesses to expand and locate in West Oxfordshire and will accommodate a mixture of B1, B2 and B8 uses.
- 4.24 *Table 10* indicates how much floorspace remains throughout the District with permission for new business development.

	B1a	B1b	B1c	B1 unable to split	Total B1	B2	B8	mixed B use	Total
Main Settlement									
Witney	-810		-3358	5873	1705	-803	124	26856	27882
Smaller Settlements									
Carterton	-184		-238	18	-404	306	-134	-346	-578
Brize Norton			1908		1908				1908
Chipping Norton	1940		-622	335	1653	2466	-140		3979
Eynsham	198				198	-1364	-1660	288	-2538
Total	1954		1048	353	3355	1408	-1934	-58	2771
Rural Areas									
	-40	821	3851	1437	6069	3351	12064	-550	20934
Total	1104	821	1541	7663	11129	3956	10254	26248	51587

Table 10 - Outstanding permissions for employment land in West Oxfordshire

- 4.25 In addition to schemes with planning permission, land remains allocated in the Local Plan without planning permission and currently there are significant amounts of vacant commercial property. The following paragraphs provide a summary of available employment land for the main towns and the rural area, bringing together the data on planning permissions, remaining local plan allocations, and information from the Council's updated Economy Study

Witney

- 4.26 The majority of the stock of employment premises are industrial and are concentrated in two main areas: Station Lane on the southern edge of Witney and Downs Road / Range Road area to the west of the town. These areas provide units of a range of sizes and quality as well as development opportunities.
- 4.27 The Downs Road area incorporates some ageing industrial premises associated with the area's long history in manufacturing. Some of these larger manufacturing units have been subdivided and refurbished and most are in good use.
- 4.28 Station Lane is a large employment area immediately to the south of the town adjoining the A40 the majority of which was developed in the 1970s. The estate offers mostly industrial/warehouse premises of varying sizes including several estates of small leasehold premises. Although there are a number of vacant premises in the Station Lane area that are either for sale or to let, the estate remains well occupied.
- 4.29 The West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 was adopted in June 2006. The following table identifies sites specifically allocated in the adopted Local Plan 2011 for employment uses and provides an update as to their uptake.

Local Plan Employment Allocation	Total Area Allocated in Local Plan 2011	2012 Status
East of Downs Road, East Witney	10ha	7ha of Downs Road East allocation undeveloped although approximately 5.7ha has developer interest.
West of Downs Road West, Witney	2.3ha	2.3ha remains allocated without permission
North Curbridge Development Area (Proposal 8) reserve site.	-	Planning application submitted for development of the land to the west of Witney including 10ha of employment land. Resolution to grant permission subject to Section 106.

Table 11 - Local Plan employment land allocations update 2013

Carterton

- 4.30 Carterton's employment land supply remains concentrated into two main areas south and east of the town. Both areas remain good quality employment sites well located to continue to meet employment land needs. In total there remains approximately 5ha of development land although there is approximately a further 2.5ha of land with vacant premises.
- 4.31 Land at Carterton was allocated for employment development through previous Local Plans and as such, benefits from a degree of protection for ongoing employment use in the current plan.
- 4.32 The availability of land on key sites in Carterton is illustrated in *Table 12* below.

Local Plan Employment Allocation	Total Area Allocated in Local Plan 2011	2012 Status
West Oxfordshire Business Park	n/a	3.6 ha of land available either with no or lapsed permissions.
Ventura Park	n/a	0.7ha vacant land
South Carterton	n/a	0.5ha lapsed permission.

Table 12 - Employment land availability in Carterton 2013

- 4.33 The market for premises in Carterton has been noted recently by agents as generally slow and to some extent related to the availability of premises at Witney which is considered a more attractive location. Carterton is typically seen as more of an industrial market although modern small offices at Ventura Park have seen reasonable demand/take up.
- 4.34 It has been noted that the take up of freehold plots had been successful but the take up of speculative industrial units less so with indications that units built (3000- 5000sqft) did not quite meet market demand which is for smaller units in this location (1500-2500sqft). There were suggestions that the lack of take up at West Oxon Business Park reflects tenure and pricing issues.

Chipping Norton

- 4.35 Chipping Norton has a range of employment sites offering a variety of types and quality of premises at Cromwell Park, larger industrial units at Station Road to small modern light industrial units at the Worcester Road estate.
- 4.36 Development opportunities remain at Cromwell Park where one plot is still undeveloped. The former highways depot adjacent to Cromwell Park is yet to be developed but part of this site has outstanding outline permission. Land at London Road adjoining Cromwell Park is allocated for mixed use and approximately 2ha of this site remains with potential for employment uses.
- 4.37 Permission for development of land adjacent to the former Parker Knoll factory has now lapsed leaving 2ha available for employment uses.

Local Plan Employment Allocation	Total Area Allocated in Local Plan 2011	2012 Status
Former Highways Depot, Banbury Road	0.9 ha	Currently vacant. 0.5ha has permission for BI development
Land to north of London Road	3.6 ha	0.7 ha currently with permission for health centre and pharmacy.
Land Adjacent to Parker Knoll Factory	N/a	1.9 ha of land cleared and vacant. Recent permission has now expired.

Table 13 - Employment land availability in Chipping Norton 2013

- 4.38 The property register indicates a good supply of small serviced starter units in Chipping Norton both within the town centre and elsewhere. There is a much more limited supply of small industrial / warehouse premises to rent in the area.
- 4.39 Local agents have identified a limited market for premises in Chipping Norton with most demand being generated locally

Remainder of West Oxfordshire

- 4.40 Land at Lakeside Industrial Estate, Standlake (1.9ha) is allocated in the Local Plan for industrial or storage/distribution uses but is not currently subject to any planning application. Cotswold Farm in Standlake has been granted permission for conversion to storage use during this monitoring period.
- 4.41 Records indicate that 556m² of business development has been granted permission throughout the rest of the district during this monitoring period, which is significantly less than previous years. This may be a reflection of local economic conditions resulting from the recession.
- 4.42 The property register identifies a limited supply of office space available throughout the district although there is some being marketed at Eynsham and Long Hanborough and a range of smaller units at Bampton, Kingham and the Wychwoods.

Town Centres

- 4.43 National Policy defines 'town centre uses' as retail, financial and professional services, offices and leisure facilities. Existing national policy places great importance on strengthening town centres whilst providing for consumer choice. A key objective of the Local Plan is to maintain and improve the range and quality of shopping facilities within the town centres, whilst resisting proposals that would damage the vitality and viability of existing centres.
- 4.44 Within West Oxfordshire the main retail centres are Witney, Carterton and Chipping Norton. These centres are generally vibrant and throughout the economic recession have remained healthy with continued investment.
- 4.45 There is very little out of centre shopping in West Oxfordshire, and this has helped to strengthen the vitality and viability of the town centres, although there have been some permissions granted for out of centre retail use this year, notably for the Pound stretcher store on Station Lane in Witney. One of the strengths of the centres is the mix of town centre uses with residential accommodation.
- 4.46 There has been a notable decrease in floorspace completions for town centre uses during 2012/13 compared to the previous monitoring period although last year, a large proportion of the total was attributed to D2 uses at Witney Rugby Club. Completions for A1 units increased to 5,576m² due to the completion of the Aldi supermarket in Carterton town centre, as well as the development of new units at the West Oxfordshire Business Park.
- 4.47 37% of completions for town centre uses in this monitoring period were located within the designated town centres of Witney and Carterton. There has been very little recorded loss of such uses as well which indicates that the policies for resisting loss and directing town centre uses to particular locations has been effective.

Location	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	CI	DI	D2	BI (a)	Net Gain Total (M ²)
Witney	1104	0	183	946	0	0	0	427	245	2905
<i>Witney Town Centre</i>	<i>1104</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>183</i>	<i>946</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>245</i>	2478
Carterton	4472	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4472
<i>Carterton Town Centre</i>	<i>1310</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	1310
Chipping Norton	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Chipping Norton Town Centre</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	0
Remaining areas of the District	0	0	0	0	850	540	15	102	940	2447
Total	5,576	0	183	946	850	540	15	529	1,185	9,824

Table 14 - Locations of additional floorspace (m²) completed for town centre uses 2012/13

4.48 The above *Table 14* highlights the broad areas in which town centre uses were developed. The largest proportion of town centre uses within a town centre was A1 retail use at the Woolgate shopping centre.

Location	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	CI	DI	D2	BI (a)	Net Gain Total (m ²)
Witney	2380	0	0	0	0	2396	0	4174	627	9577
<i>Witney Town Centre</i>	<i>1018</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	1018
Carterton	0	0	0	0	0	0	292	316	0	608
<i>Carterton Town Centre</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	0
Chipping Norton	1955	0	0	0	0	0	529	618	0	3102
<i>Chipping Norton Town Centre</i>	<i>1955</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>72</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	2027
Remaining areas of the District	58	0	0	0	55	155	0	1015	158	1441
Total	4,393	0	0	0	55	2,551	821	6,123	785	14,728

Table 15 - Locations of additional floorspace (m²) Permissions for town centre uses 2012 / 13

4.49 The figures in *Table 15* illustrate that the permission rate for town centre uses has increased during this monitoring period from 12,417m² to 14,728m², with an increase in the volume of permissions for A1 uses accounting for a significant proportion of this.

- 4.50 The majority of permissions during this period were for D2 uses and include a substantial area of land for recreational use at Cogges Farm in Witney.
- 4.51 There was a significant increase this year in the amount of A1 floorspace permitted within the town centres. Last years figures recorded a net loss in A1 floorspace while this year there have been permissions for 4,393m² throughout the District. Much of this has been focussed within the town centres of Witney and Chipping Norton and can be attributed to developments at Welch Way in Witney and an extension to the Co-op store in Chipping Norton.
- 4.52 In addition to this, planning permission granted for a Premier Inn hotel on Ducklington Lane in Witney has pushed permission rates in the District up by approximately 20%.
- 4.53 There are 19,141m² of town centre uses with outstanding planning permissions (at 31st March 2013). Only a small proportion of this falls within defined town centres however, with a large area of recreation land permitted at Chadlington comprising the bulk of the permitted land.

Town Centre Surveys

- 4.54 Surveys of the main town centres have been completed throughout 2011/12 to determine the different types and patterns of uses currently found within the centres. The survey analysis focuses on ground floor level uses, within the town centres as defined in the Local Plan.

Witney

- 4.55 The survey identified 295 properties within the town centre, with the largest proportion of these (60%) occupied by shops (A1 uses). Professional Services (A2) the next most dominant use class occupy 12% of ground floor space. Witney has a thriving town centre and as such experiences low vacancy rates. In 2012, there were 18 vacant units representing 6.1% of the total ground floor space within the town centre. This is an increase compared to the last monitoring period although vacancy rates remain significantly lower than the UK average (12.12%). A new series of units is nearing completion in the former Merlins building and will be occupied within the next monitoring period.

Carterton

- 4.56 There are a total of 60 units in Carterton town centre, of which 37 are classified as shops (28%). Vacancy rates remain steady compared to last year's monitoring report at 2 units. There has been interest in developing further food retail provision in the area to strengthen the role of the town centre

Chipping Norton

- 4.57 The 2011 survey identified 102 properties within the town centre. Just under half of these (49%) are retail units (A1) and 12% are professional services (A2). There has been an increase in the number of restaurants and cafes in the town from 5 to 7. There has been virtually no change in provision across use classes between 2007 and 2009 although vacancy rates have increased from 2 to 5 units, possibly as a result of the economic downturn.

5. ENVIRONMENT

- 5.1 The high quality of both the built and the natural environments, within West Oxfordshire, provides a unique and special character. Although there are several Local Plan policies designed to ensure that development respects and enhances the local environment, many of them, such as those concerning renewable energy, air quality, the water environment and tourism can have significant influence outside of the District.

Water Resources

- 5.2 Water management is a serious issue in West Oxfordshire. The District's main rivers (Thames, Windrush and Evenlode) form extensive floodplains and can pose a significant risk of flooding, such as occurred in the summer of 2007. In contrast, there are parts of West Oxfordshire, with a relatively high water requirement, which have a much more limited supply with which to meet that demand.
- 5.3 In 2009 the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) was published <http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/files/download/6706-3603.pdf>. As well as assessing the longer term impact of climate change on the District's water resources, the document also identifies the main sources of potential flooding, allowing the Council to make informed decisions on planning proposals, within such areas, and to implement recommended mitigation measures.
- 5.4 Since 2007, along with the Environment Agency, Oxfordshire County Council and Thames Water, the Council has been carrying out work to try to reduce the flood risk in the parts of the District which are under threat. One element of this partnership working has been the updating of local flood maps. The Council is able to use these, in conjunction with expert advice from the Environment Agency (EA), to assess the suitability and the impact of planning proposals in sensitive or high risk areas.

Biodiversity

- 5.5 The many and varied habitats that contribute to West Oxfordshire's special landscape character sustain an abundance of diverse species of plants and animals. Many of these are relatively hardy and can coexist quite comfortably with the District's human residents. However, some of the habitats are more fragile and national and local policies have been designed to try to offer these areas extra protection. Some of this protection is afforded through the use of particular habitat designations and management plans. An important tool that West Oxfordshire and many other local authorities use, to monitor the success of these policies and plans, is the national network of Local Environmental Records Centres. The Thames Valley Environmental Record Centre (TVERC) is our local member of this network and, through their work with local recorders and partner organisations, they maintain datasets relating to the boundaries and conditions of designated areas along with the health of various species of flora and fauna. They provide West Oxfordshire with an update report each year and the detail of the most recent report follows.

Changes in areas of biodiversity importance




- 5.6 *Table 16* provides details of changes in the amount of sites which are recognised for their intrinsic environmental value, specifically those sites designated for their international, national, regional and local significance.
- 5.7 There has been no change in area of these sites between the monitoring figures produced in 2012 and this year's report. Changes to such designations are infrequent.

Designated site	Area in hectares (2012)	West Oxon area in hectares (2013)	As % of West Oxon	Oxon Area in hectares (2013)	As % of Oxon
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	1119	1119	2	4465	2
Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)	7	7	<1	577	<1
Local Wildlife Sites	1426	1423	2	5410	2
Local Nature Reserves	3	3	<1	50	<1
Local Geological Sites	332	332	1	583	<1

Table 16 - Areas of sites designated for their intrinsic environmental value

Changes in areas of UK BAP priority habitat

- 5.8 *Table 17* identifies the UK BAP habitat resource within West Oxfordshire, as maintained on the TVERC digital mapping system. It provides details of the UK BAP priority habitats which have been identified within West Oxfordshire. The changes in the UK BAP priority habitats are attributable to new information provided by a review of previous Local Wildlife Site survey habitat mapping and recent updates in habitat inventories.
- 5.9 The changes to BAP habitat have mainly been down to improvements made to the accuracy of mapping boundaries and the use of more recent aerial photographs, as well as reclassification following survey, rather than an actual loss or creation of habitat. The reduction in mapped habitat of lowland meadows was due to boundary changes following survey.

	>5% reduction in the mapped habitat resource
	<5% or no change in the mapped habitat resource
	A greater than 5% increase in the mapped habitat resource

Site	Area (hectares) 2011/12	Area (hectares) 2012/13	% Oxfordshire 2012/13
Arable field margins	Not known	Not known	Not known
Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh	1561	1447	36%
Eutrophic standing water	367	383	55%
Hedgerows	Not known	Not known	Not known
Lowland beech and yew woodland	14	14	2%
Lowland calcareous grassland	181	186	25%
Lowland dry acid grassland	14	15	33%
Lowland fens	29	33	23%
Lowland heathland	0	0	0%
Lowland meadows	196	184	18%
Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	1528	1505	34%
Mesotrophic lakes	117	119	100%
Oligotrophic and dystrophic lakes	Not known	Not known	Not known
Open mosaic habitats on previously developed land	Not known	Not known	Not known
Ponds	2	2	35%
Purple moor grass and rush pastures	7	7	46%
Reedbeds	2	2	9%
Rivers	Not known	Not known	Not known
Traditional orchards	48	50	15%
Wet woodland	32	31	23%
Wood pasture and parkland	638	465	31%
Total area of BAP priority habitat	4735	4475	

Table 17 – UK BAP priority habitat resource in West Oxfordshire

Change in number of UKBAP priority species

- 5.10 This indicator uses records of UK BAP priority species which have been reported in West Oxfordshire during the period 1992 – 2012. The list was derived from the national list of species provided on the UK BAP website. Local recorders are responsible for the provision and verification of many of the records held on the TVERC database.
- 5.11 There was an overall increase in the number of UK BAP priority species listed for Oxfordshire since the last monitoring period.
- 5.12 There were 2 new BAP priority species added to the list for West Oxfordshire between 1992 and 2012; a rare rust fungus and a black tailed godwit.

	West Oxon 1991-2011	Oxfordshire 1991-2011	West Oxon 1992-2012	Oxfordshire 1992-2012
Numbers of BAP priority species	133	234	135	232

Table 18 - Change in numbers of UKBAP Species

Distribution and status of water voles

- 5.13 Information for this indicator is entirely from survey work carried out by trained volunteer surveyors and co-ordinated by the Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) as part of a wider water vole project. The survey results are recorded in *Table 19*.
- 5.14 There are 268 stretches of watercourse within West Oxfordshire, identified by the BBOWT project officer.
- 5.15 22 sections of the middle River Windrush were surveyed in 2012. There was an increase in water vole activity particularly at Worsham and Minster Lovell compared to 2010 surveys.
- 5.16 Less water vole activity was recorded at Widford compared to the 2011 surveys. Overall it appears that this extensive water vole population is remaining stable.
- 5.17 52% of the sites surveyed this year had positive signs for water vole in West Oxfordshire.
- 5.18 The recovery of water voles in Oxfordshire and Berkshire can be attributed to different factors in different areas - in some parts a habitat enhancement project has resulted in increased vole activity. On many other watercourses the monitoring and control of mink has been the most important factor in the recovery of water vole populations.

Year	Number of sites surveyed in Oxfordshire	Number of sites surveyed in West Oxfordshire
1998 – 2001 inclusive	136	21
2002	87	38
2003	149	65
2004	170	30
2005	330	22
2006	Not known	Not known
2007	Not known	Not known
2008	206	37
2009	271	39
2010	272	105
2011	282	79
2012	131 (37 positive)	23 (12 positive)

Table 19 - Water Vole survey data, 1998 – 2012

Condition of SSSIs

- 5.19 Natural England undertakes periodic visits to Sites of Special Scientific Interest to determine the ecological condition of the individual units associated with those sites. Natural England's focus is on liaising with landowners and site managers to achieve the aim of all units in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition.
- 5.20 Not all SSSI units are visited in any one year. The sites which are visited are part of a programme of monitoring surveys throughout the county. The amounts of SSSI units in the various ecological conditions as at March 2013 (i.e. the condition at the end of the monitoring report year of analysis) are as follows:

Condition	No. of units or part units 2012/13	Sum of hectares 2012/13	% of West Oxfordshire resource 2012/13	% of Oxfordshire resource 2012/13
Favourable	29	322	29	16
Unfavourable declining	1	52	5	81
Unfavourable no change	0	0	0	0
Unfavourable recovering	22	745	67	32
Destroyed	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	52	1119		

Table 20 - SSSI unit ecological condition data, 2012-13

5.21 There has been little change in the condition of SSSI units in West Oxfordshire district during the 2012-13 study period, however Little Tew Meadows was recorded as changing from favourable in 2007 to unfavourable recovering in 2012.

Distribution and status of farmland birds

5.22 This indicator uses an established list of 19 species, identifiable as farmland birds, compiled by RSPB. Records associated with these species generated through British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) breeding bird surveys in specific 1km x 1km squares are then used to determine a farmland bird index. TVERC has obtained these records and followed the RSPB methodology to plot the trend in changes in the index over time. To establish a timeframe from which any kind of meaningful trend can be identified, a shifting baseline has been used and changes in bird populations in subsequent years (over a 10 year window) are then relative to that baseline year. This latest assessment of the farmland bird index trend uses a baseline of 2003.

5.23 *Chart 8* (below) provides an indication of plotted changes over time in the county.

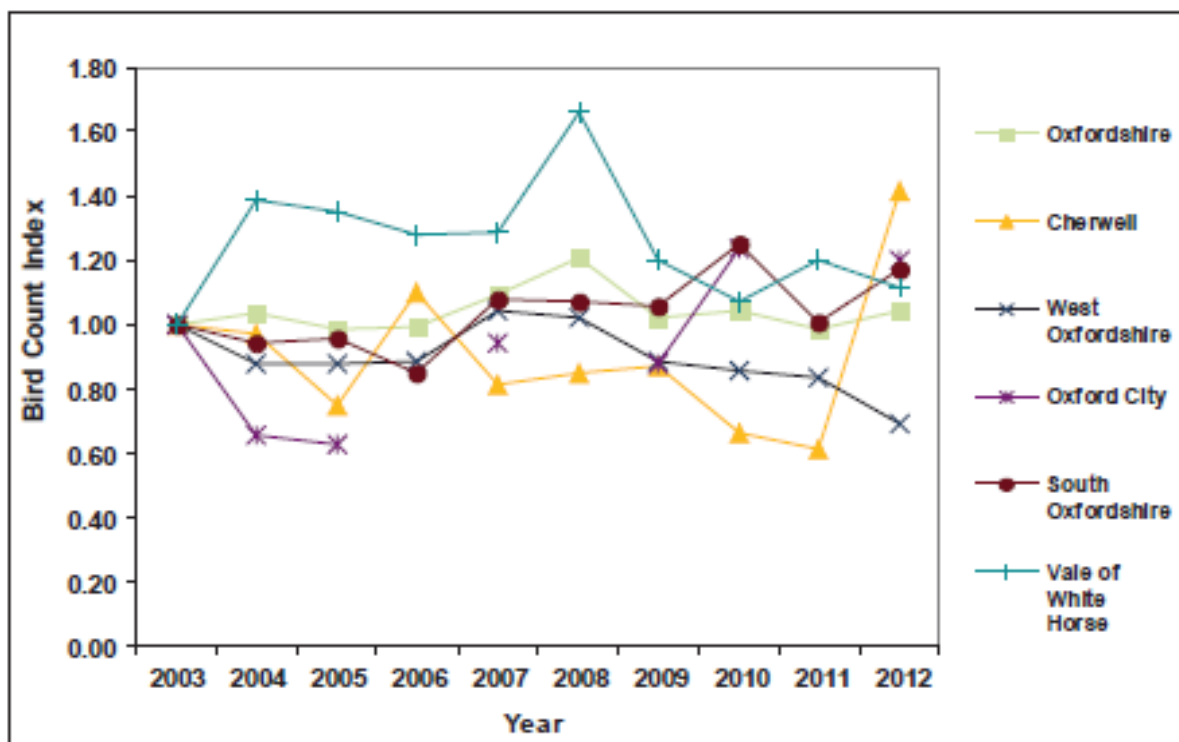


Chart 8 - Changes in Oxfordshire farmland bird species index 2002-11

- 5.24 There has been a continued decline in the bird index for West Oxfordshire which does not reflect the general increase in the rest of Oxfordshire. Survey effort has been similar over the last 5 years so does not account for the drop in survey numbers.
- 5.25 However, grey partridge have greatly increased this year and linnet and skylark also continue to increase. Numbers of lapwing and yellowhammer are still falling, as well as yellow wagtail, reed bunting and whitethroat.

Sustainable Design and Construction

- 5.26 Although one significant element of sustainable development is its location, another, equally important, factor is the actual design of the building(s), along with the materials and components used and where they are sourced from. There is a wealth of advice available, relating to sustainable construction, and the Council’s website provides access to a number of documents that offer guidance to users, from householders to large developers. The ‘West Oxfordshire Design Guide’ <http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning/DesignGuide.cfm> is supported by more detailed advice in a number of leaflets such as West Oxfordshire’s ‘Sustainable construction interim planning advice’, and various renewable energy generation guides at <http://www.westoxon.gov.uk/planning/MicroRenewableEnergy.cfm>
- 5.27 There have been a large number of properties during the monitoring period that have installed renewable energy generators. Records derived from the Renewable Energy

Foundation¹² indicate that there have been 538 installations with a total capacity of 1,504kw in West Oxfordshire in 2012/13 that have applied for feed in tariffs, to generate income from the energy generated. This is a decrease in the level recorded for the 2011/12 period which is likely to be a reflection of the changing cost and viability of installing such technology when measured against falling tariffs.

- 5.28 The vast majority of these installations are domestic photovoltaic systems, although there is some incidence of larger scale, commercial installations in the District. Permission was granted in June 2012 for the installation of a solar array at Kencot with the capacity to generate up to 27MW of energy.
- 5.29 In addition to the photovoltaic installations, ground and air source heat pumps have also seen a dramatic decline during the monitoring period from 140 permissions last year to 7 this year. This substantial decline is likely to result from local RSLs having now completed installing such technology across their property stock.

6. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

- 6.1 There is one Neighbourhood Development Plan underway at Chipping Norton. In accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012), Chipping Norton Town Council applied for area designation to West Oxfordshire District Council in April 2012.
- 6.2 A Public Notice announced the application of the area designation, the boundary of which follows the Chipping Norton Parish Boundary, giving a consultation period on the area designation for 6 weeks until 28 May 2012. One comment was received from the Cotswold Conservation Board which was in support of the Area Designation.
- 6.3 Chipping Norton Town Council's Area Designation was formally determined by West Oxfordshire District Council's Cabinet on 12 December 2012. Neighbourhood Development Orders (NDOs) allow certain types of development to come forward without the need for planning permission. No qualifying bodies have initiated the process for introducing any such order within the District.
- 6.4 In August 2013, building on several stages of earlier consultation, the Town Council published for comment a document entitled 'Chipping Norton: Looking Back Stepping Forward'. The consultation closed on 22nd September 2013 and a summary of the comments received has been prepared.
- 6.5 The summary and a range of other information relating to the Chipping Norton Neighbourhood Plan is available on the Town Council's website via the following link:
<http://www.chippingnortontown.info/NEIGHBOURHOODPLAN/tabid/1216/Default.aspx>

7. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL)

- 7.1 In November 2013 Cabinet agreed to publish the West Oxfordshire CIL Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule (PDCS) for consultation. The consultation runs from 11th December 2013 until 5th February 2014.

¹² <http://www.ref.org.uk/fits>

- 7.2 The comments received will be taken into account in preparing a draft charging schedule for publication and submission later in 2014.

8. DUTY TO COOPERATE

- 8.1 Section 110 of the Localism Act sets out a new 'duty to co-operate' which essentially means that local planning authorities and other 'prescribed bodies' must engage constructively, actively and on an on-going basis to address cross-boundary issues of strategic importance such as housing and transport.
- 8.2 The duty to co-operate is intended to fill the strategic planning gap created by the abolition of regional spatial strategies.
- 8.3 Importantly the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 require each local authority to report on any activities undertaken through the duty to co-operate during the period covered by the monitoring report.
- 8.4 West Oxfordshire District Council has actively engaged with a broad range of parties throughout the preparation of the Local Plan and supporting evidence base. The intention is to produce a statement setting out in detail how the Council has fulfilled the duty to co-operate prior to formal publication of the proposed submission draft local plan.
- 8.5 In the interim, in this section of the monitoring report we provide a brief overview of the activities undertaken in accordance with the duty to co-operate. These fall into two broad areas; engagement on the content and structure of the local plan and engagement on the supporting evidence base.

Engagement on the Content and Structure of the Local Plan

- 8.6 The Council has continued to engage in discussions regarding the content and structure of the emerging Local Plan. This has included discussions with the Environment Agency regarding the emerging approach to drainage and flood risk as well as specific issues regarding the proposed strategic sites at Witney and Carterton. Discussions have also taken place with English Heritage in regard to the District's heritage assets and the approach to be taken in the plan.
- 8.7 Extensive discussions have taken place with Oxfordshire County Council as highway authority in relation to the transport related content of the Local Plan both at a general strategic level and with specific regard to the transport implications of the emerging strategic development areas identified in the local plan.
- 8.8 In addition, regular, ongoing discussions have taken place with other Oxfordshire authorities through the Oxfordshire Planning Officers Group and also through the Oxfordshire Spatial Planning and Infrastructure Partnership (SPIP).

Engagement on the Supporting Evidence Base

- 8.9 The Draft Local Plan is underpinned by an extensive evidence base, the compilation of which has involved ongoing discussions with a range of prescribed bodies in accordance with the duty to co-operate.
- 8.10 A key piece of evidence is the Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) which identifies the physical, social and environmental infrastructure needed to support future growth in the District in the period up to 2029.

- 8.11 Preparation of the IDP has required input from a number of prescribed bodies including the County Council as highway authority and also in relation to other relevant services such as education and fire and rescue. The advice of the PCT (now OCCG) has been sought as well as the involvement of the Environment Agency and a range of other bodies not covered by the duty including utility companies and other infrastructure providers.
- 8.12 In addition to the IDP, the Council has worked closely with Natural England in relation to the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) needed to support the Local Plan and the Environment Agency in relation to a range of different matters including the evidence base underpinning the proposed strategic development areas identified in the draft local plan.
- 8.13 Joint working has also been undertaken in relation to a study for Cherwell District, West Oxfordshire District and South Northamptonshire which identifies the future accommodation requirements for gypsies and travellers.
- 8.14 Most recently the Council has been working closely with the other Oxfordshire local authorities in relation to a new Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for Oxfordshire.
- 8.15 As part of this process each authority has signed up to a statement of co-operation.
- 8.16 The Council will continue to work closely with relevant bodies in taking forward the local plan, other development plan documents and the supporting evidence base.
- 8.17 The proposed submission draft local plan will be supported by a detailed statement of compliance and future monitoring reports will continue to highlight the activities undertaken by West Oxfordshire District Council in accordance with the duty to co-operate.

Appendix 1

Expected numbers of homes on sites with extant permission from 1st April 2014 on:

Allocated sites

12/1037/P/FP – Coral Springs, Witney	125	Permission granted April 2013
11/1198/P/FP – Buttercross Works, Station Lane, Witney	154	Commenced on site February 2013. 30 completions expected in 2013
	279	

Rural Exception Sites

13/0116/P/FP – Heath Lane, Bladon	6	Permission granted September 2013
11/0737/P/OP – Adjacent Frethern Close, Burford	5	Permission granted December 2011
11/0936/P/FP – Riely Close, Long Hanborough	15	Permission granted October 2012
08/1729/P/OP – Adjacent Blackditch, Stanton Harcourt	8	Permission granted March 2010
13/0277/P/FP – Manor Farm, Middle Barton	8	Permission granted August 2013
	42	

Appendix 2

Expected numbers of homes on sites subject to legal agreement from 1st April 2014

12/1019/P/FP – Milestone Road, Carterton	93	Granted September 2012
12/1020/P/OP – Milestone Road, Carterton	105	Granted September 2012
12/1024/P/FP – Ham Lane, Aston	4	Granted September 2012
12/1851/P/FP – Priory Mill Lane, Witney	1	Granted January 2013
13/0015/P/OP – Park Road, North Leigh	4	Granted March 2013
13/0191/P/FP – Main Road, Long Hanborough	3	Granted March 2013
12/0084/P/OP – North Curbridge SDA	600	Although scheme will provide 1,000 homes, 600 are expected to be completed in the 5-year period
13/0345/P/FP – Springfield Nurseries, Witney	36	Granted September 2013
	846	

Appendix 3

Schedule of sites allocated in the West Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011

Site	Number of dwellings	Site status	5 year land supply?
NE Carterton Development Area (remaining) (Proposal 15)	200	A planning application, which the Council has resolved to approve subject to a legal agreement, has been submitted for this area. Given this developer interest, there is a reasonable prospect of housing being delivered within 5 years.	200
Cromwell Park, Chipping Norton (Proposal 1)	80	Part of this site has recently been developed to provide a care home and primary care centre. This development now provides access to the remainder of the land, which is also owned by OCC. It is expected that 30 of the dwellings on this site will be completed in the current year. The remainder will follow in the 5-year period.	50
Total	280		250

Appendix 4 – Housing sites with planning permission at 1st October 2013

available/download separately