

2013

*Local Planning Authority's
Monitoring Report for
1/4/12 – 31/3/13
December 2013*



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Executive Summary

This is the Local Planning Authority's Monitoring Report, which covers the period from 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013. The aim is to demonstrate progress against the programme outlined in the Local Development Scheme (LDS) and examine the effectiveness of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy. Policies are measured against various indicators but there is no requirement to use national core output indicators previously prescribed by Central Government. The report looks at changes in performance and any progress with actions proposed in earlier Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs). Due to changes introduced through the Localism Act 2011, the monitoring requirements prescribed for local planning authorities have altered.

Progress this year includes:

A public consultation on the Proposed Submission Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (MDD) and submission of the MDD Local Plan to the Secretary of State on 19 December 2012.

The formal designation of Shinfield Parish as a neighbourhood area.

The production of the Wokingham CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) Viability Report and a CIL Draft Charging Schedule.

Consultation on Wokingham Town Centre Regeneration.

Production of the Wokingham PPG17 Open space, Sport and Recreation Standards Study Paper.

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1 BACKGROUND

The Monitoring Report is produced to demonstrate how well an authority is complying with the progress outlined in its Local Development Scheme (LDS) for producing planning policy documents.

The Monitoring Report also explains how well the policies in these planning policy documents are being implemented and whether any changes are needed. The Monitoring Report covers the period 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013. The policies that have been monitored for this year are from the Wokingham Borough Council Core Strategy Development Plan Document (CSDPD), adopted 29 January 2010. The Core Strategy is the key planning policy document for the Borough, which will be used to guide development. It sets out the long-term vision and overarching policies for the Borough. Some policies from the Submitted Managing Development Delivery (MDD) Development Plan Document (incorporating Proposed Modifications) are included. This was submitted in December 2012 although the Examination in Public and consultation on the Main Modifications occurred outside of the monitoring period covered by this document. The MDD will provide a greater level of detail for the delivery of the Core Strategy.

2 INTRODUCTION TO THE BOROUGH AND ISSUES FACING THE AREA

The area covered by Wokingham Borough lies within the former administrative county of Berkshire in the area known as the Thames Valley and is within the 'Western Corridor & Blackwater Valley' sub-region in the South East Plan. In many ways Wokingham borough is a federation of 3 towns and 14 parishes. The area is diverse; to the north the area is part of the Metropolitan Green Belt; Wokingham, the administrative centre, is an old market town which retains its character but only houses one-fifth of the borough's population; two-fifths of the borough's population live in the towns of Woodley and Earley which adjoin the borough of Reading; the remainder of the population live in smaller settlements which are separated by areas of countryside that include extensive flood plains. The Landscape Character

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Assessment confirms the borough's diversity. It shows it contains three separate national landscape areas. The borough includes a range of employment including modern business parks at Winnersh IQ and Thames Valley Business Park.

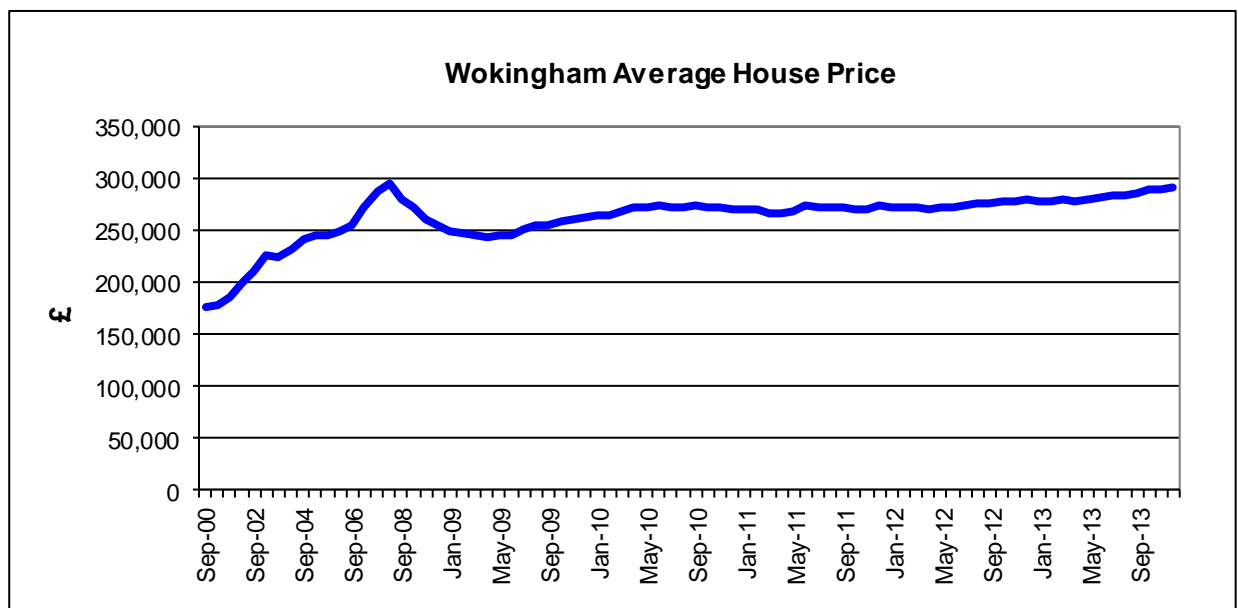
The 2011 census found that the borough had a population of 154,380. This is a rise of approximately 2.8% per since 2001. The current mid year estimate (mid 2012) is 156,663. The 2011 census figures show a smaller increase than expected given that the mid year estimate for 2010 was 163,200.

According to NOMIS, the official labour market statistics service, unemployment had remained consistently low at less than 1% for several years but it rose sharply from 0.8% in August 2008 to a peak of 2% in August 2009 (NOMIS October 2012, ONS). Numbers have fallen since then and were back down to 0.9% by October 2013. Most other Berkshire authorities have followed a similar pattern. A recent economic report (Centre for Cities, 2014) has shown that Wokingham together with Reading and Bracknell Forest local authority areas is the top rated place in the UK for employment. The Centre for Cities report found the area had an overall employment rate of 78.1. The area also came second for highest average weekly earnings. A UK Vitality Index produced by Lambert Smith Hampton (December, 2013) found Wokingham to be joint top in the index of "most economically productive" towns and cities. It was also joint top in the "most entrepreneurial" index which assesses which towns and cities provide the best environment for new business.

Census data for 2011 has shown that 16.4% of the Borough's population are from Black and Minority Ethnic communities (including "white Irish" and "white other" categories). This is an increase from 10.19% in the 2001 census and in line with the estimate of 16% in the Mid 2009 experimental statistics (ONS). The census data also showed that compared to the national average (England and Wales) Wokingham Borough has fewer people aged 20 to 30 and fewer males aged 30 to 35. Wokingham has a higher than average proportion of people in the age group 35 to 55.



House prices are higher than average for the South East. Although they fell from their March 2008 peak of £293,054 to £244,719 in June 2009 they have since recovered almost completely. Latest figures (December 2013) give an average house price of £292,403.



Source: (Land Registry House Price Index for December 2013).

The Council's Core Strategy requires the delivery of 13,230 dwellings between 2006 and 2026; The Council has been very proactive in assisting with the delivery on the ground of development, in particular the delivery of the four Strategic Development Locations. Wokingham Borough Council has made a clear commitment to growth and to ensure that the new development is carefully planned, well designed and includes the appropriate infrastructure to deliver good quality places for people to live.

3 PROGRESS TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Council produces a timetable setting out when different planning policy documents will be produced and what issues these will cover. This is called

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the Local Development Scheme (LDS). It is a three year timetable for the Council's planning policies and strategies.

The LDS contains dates of when consultation will take place and also when a public examination will take place for certain planning policy documents. This can be seen at

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planningcontrol/planning/planningpolicies/ldf/ldftimetable/>

A public consultation on the Proposed Submission Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (MDD) was held from 27 June to 22 August 2012. The main issues raised during the consultation on the MDD were considered by the Executive on 29th November 2012. The Council submitted the MDD Local Plan to the Secretary of State on 19 December 2012. Further information about the MDD can be found via

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/policy/ldf/managingdevelopmentdelivery/>

The Wokingham Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment Final Report was published in March 2013. Reports and further information can be found at <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/policy/ldf/gypsy-and-traveller-local-plan/>

4 POLICIES AND MONITORING

The Council's planning policy documents cover a wide range of topics, such as how much housing has already been provided and how much housing needs to be provided in the future. Other policies are for employment development and the health of our local town centres, for example, the number of vacant retail units is monitored regularly. There are also planning policies that seek to protect and enhance the Borough's countryside, open spaces and biodiversity and to ensure that development is sustainable.



Monitoring information is collected and made available as soon as possible. The following sections of the Monitoring Report set out how these policies are being implemented and signpost where the relevant information can be found.

New Homes Residents Survey

A survey of new homes was carried out to gather and assess resident opinion of new developments completed in the monitoring year. As it is almost ten years since a survey of new home occupiers was last carried out it was thought timely to do so. The survey included questions on amount and use of space in the home which was particularly relevant as the MDD contains policies focused on the quality of new homes. Questions were based on policies in the Borough Design Guide, Core Strategy and MDD DPD, Sustainable Design and Construction SPD and Community Strategy. It is intended that the survey be repeated every 2 years to show whether our policies are being implemented and whether or not they are working satisfactorily. The information will be helpful for formulating our policies and in working with developers. The questionnaire was distributed in February 2014 to 388 new homes and 108 were completed and returned. Results and analysis are included in the Housing Section of this Monitoring Report.

5 HOUSING

Core Strategy policies aim to ensure residential development provides a mix and balance of densities, dwelling types, tenures and sizes. This includes affordable housing that must meet the proven needs of people unable to compete in the general housing market.

Core Strategy Policies

CP2 Inclusive communities
CP5 Housing mix, density and affordability
CP17 Housing Delivery
CP18 Arborfield Garrison SDL
CP19 South of the M4 SDL
CP20 North Wokingham SDL
CP21 South Wokingham SDL

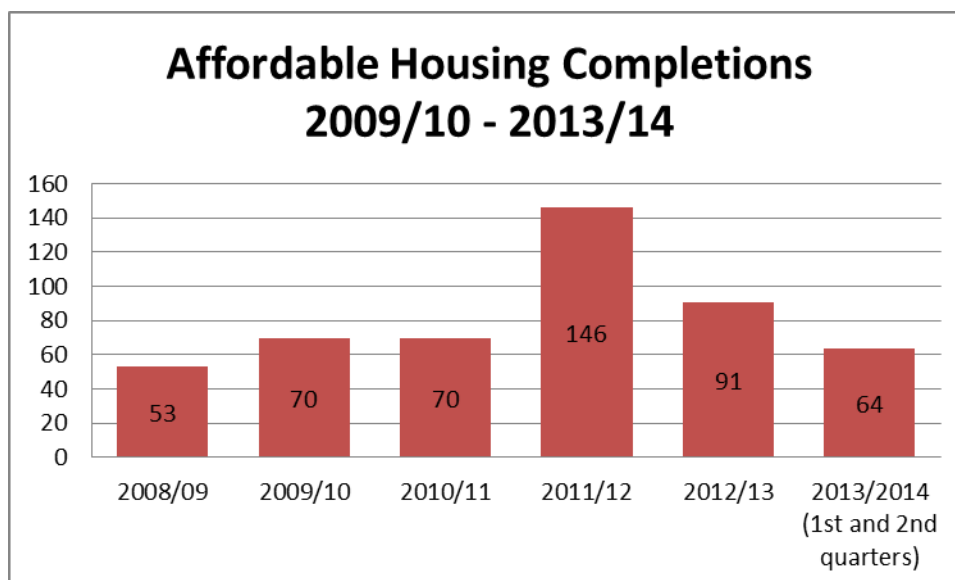
MDD Policies



TB05 Housing mix
TB09 Residential accommodation for vulnerable groups
TB10 Traveller sites
SAL01 Allocated housing development sites (Sites identified through Wokingham District Local Plan)
SAL02 Allocated housing development sites
SAL03 Allocated reserve housing sites

Affordable Housing Supply

The chart below shows how many affordable homes were completed since 2008. These are completed through partnership with Registered Providers (i.e. housing associations). Most new supply is secured through Section 106 negotiations with developers, and is therefore dependent on sites getting planning consent, and developers then building them out. Figures for 2012/13 dropped markedly from the previous year but that is largely due to 2011/12 having an exceptional number of affordable dwellings completed at extra care developments such as Alexandra Place and Beeches Manor.



Source: Wokingham BC Housing Facts and Figures, Dec 2013

Housing Delivery

Information about housing supply, completion rates and SDL allocation can be found in the Wokingham Borough Strategic Housing Land Availability



Assessment (SHLAA) April 2013. The SHLAA was carried out to assess the amount of land available for residential development and to consider sites with potential for new housing. This includes information updated to reflect housing monitoring at 31 March 2013. It has since been updated by mid-year housing monitoring at 30 September 2013 in the WBC53 Updated SHLAA October 2013 and the most recent update relates to the monitoring year up to 31 March 2014. For full details see <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/policy/housing/shlaa/>

Plan period and housing targets

Following adoption of the Core Strategy on 29th January 2010, policy CP17 sets the borough's housing requirements from April 2006 to March 2026. The phased requirements are set out below.

| Time Period | Housing Target for period (Housing target per annum) |
|----------------|--|
| 1/4/06-31/3/11 | 3,000 dwellings (600 per annum) |
| 1/4/11-31/3/16 | 3,500 dwellings (700 per annum) |
| 1/4/16-31/3/21 | 3,615 dwellings (723 per annum) |
| 1/4/21-31/3/26 | 3,115 dwellings (623 per annum) |
| <i>Total</i> | |
| 1/4/06-31/3/26 | 13,230 dwellings (661.5 per annum) |

Net additional dwellings and managed delivery target

Net additional dwellings

Details of completions since April 2001 are set out below

| | |
|----------------|-------|
| 1/4/01-31/3/02 | 237 |
| 1/4/02-31/3/03 | 418 |
| 1/4/03-31/3/04 | 492 |
| 1/4/04-31/3/05 | 376 |
| 1/4/05-31/3/06 | 655 |
| 1/4/06-31/3/07 | 1,018 |
| 1/4/07-31/3/08 | 488 |
| 1/4/08-31/3/09 | 368 |
| 1/4/09-31/3/10 | 226 |
| 1/4/10-31/3/11 | 220 |
| 1/4/11-31/3/12 | 273 |
| 1/4/12-31/3/13 | 401 |



Site allocation

The housing delivery requirements identified above have been addressed by the allocation of sites in the Submitted MDD DPD. Policy SAL01 Allocated Housing Development Sites (Sites identified through Wokingham District Local Plan) would provide around 999 dwellings). They would contribute towards the overall housing requirement and the maintenance of a rolling 5 year supply of housing land. The sites allocated for residential development are:

- Land at Hatch Farm Dairies, Winnersh (431 dwellings)
- Land at Sandford Farm, Woodley (468 dwellings)
- Land at junction of Hatch Ride and Old Wokingham Rd, Crowthorne (100 dwellings)

Policy SAL02 Allocated Housing Development Sites would provide around 840 dwellings across the Borough. These include 725 at major development locations and 115 at modest development locations.

Policy SAL03 Allocated Reserve Housing Sites would provide around 135 dwellings. These sites are allocated for development after 1 April 2026 unless one of the following applies:

- The Council accepts that the overall dwelling requirement for 13,230 net dwellings between 1 April 2006 and 31 March 2026 is unlikely to be achieved
- The Council accepts there is a deficit in the rolling 5 year supply of housing land
- An approved Neighbourhood Plan confirms that residential development of an allocated reserve site can occur before 1 April 2026

Housing trajectory

The Council has also produced a housing trajectory associated with the Core Strategy (updated to April 2013 and taking account of the allocation of sites within the Submitted MDD). **The housing trajectory in Appendix 1 shows past and estimated future housing completions on an annual basis.**



The information in appendix 1 demonstrates that sufficient land has been identified to meet both the overall housing requirements of Core Strategy policy CP17 and to maintain a rolling 5 year supply of housing from April 2013 to at least April 2021. This has been achieved by taking account of the allocation of sites in the Submitted Managing Development Delivery Development Plan Document (DPD). The Summary SHLAA (March 2013) indicates that taking account of the identification of sites for these dwellings, the Council's assessment of rolling 5 year supplies of housing land at both April 2013 and 2014 indicated supplies of 6.1 years and 6.5 years respectively.

Within the area where residents may visit the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area there is a need to provide land as an alternative visitor destination (mitigation land) in association with any residential development. The provision of such land has been agreed. Whilst the supply of housing from the affected area has been constrained, this constraint was removed from May 2010 as planning applications could be permitted.

SDLs for Arborfield Garrison, South of the M4 and, North Wokingham and South Wokingham

Within the Core Strategy, a significant proportion of the borough's housing (around 10,000 dwellings out of the 13,230 required in the borough) will be delivered from the four Strategic Development Locations (SDL) allocated in policies CP18-21.

Development of all the allocated Strategic Development Locations in the Borough will be guided by individual Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) for each SDL and an over-arching Infrastructure Delivery and Contributions SPD.

The diagram in Appendix 2 illustrates the role of each SDL for housing delivery within the borough, and the comparison between them and other sources.

Further information is available at

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/development/locations/>



Results of the New Homes Resident's Survey – Homes

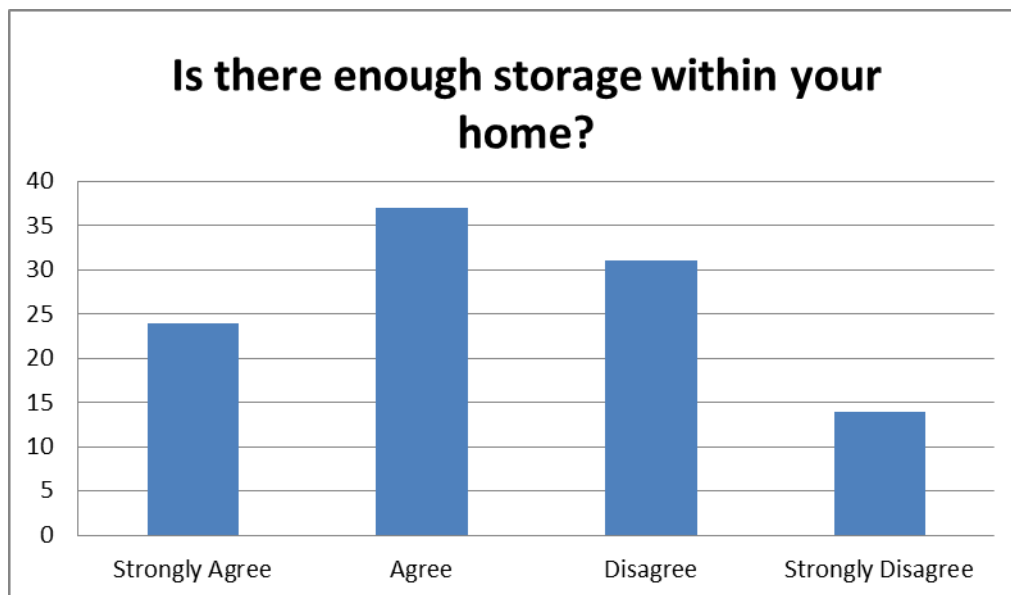
General

Most of the respondents lived in detached houses (36.8%) or flats (24.5%). 18.9% of respondents lived in semi-detached houses and 16% lived in terraced houses. The smallest category was for maisonettes at 3.8%. 75.5% of new homes were owner occupied with the remainder quite evenly split between private rented (9.4%), shared ownership (8.5%) and rented through a housing association (6.6%). These percentages reflect Core Strategy policy (CP5) to have residential development providing a mix and balance of densities, dwelling types, tenures and sizes.

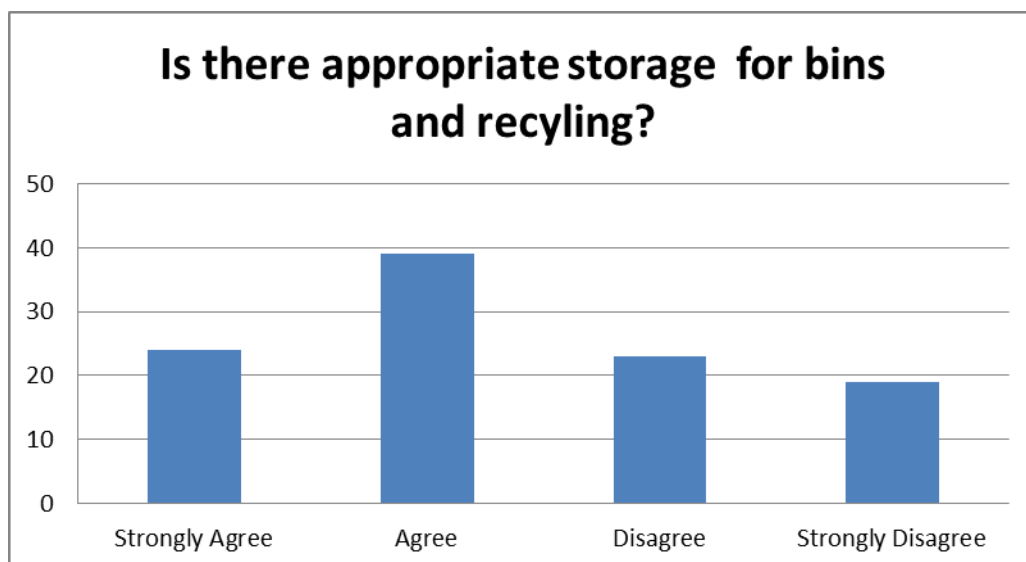
49% of respondents had moved from another address within Wokingham Borough. Over half worked outside of the Borough with London and Bracknell the most common places of work.

Space and Storage

The majority of respondents felt they had enough space in their home to move around and carry out normal living activities with 94.4% agreeing or strongly agreeing with this. Most also felt they had enough space in the corridors or stairs to move around and that they could move furniture around to try different layouts. There was less satisfaction with the amount of storage space within the home where 57% agreed or strongly agreed there was enough storage space whilst 42% disagreed or strongly disagreed.



There were similar results for a question about storage for bins and recycling though slightly more people strongly disagreed that this was adequate.



Borough Design Guide (Principle R17) intends Development proposals to provide high quality, functional, accessible, secure and adaptable buildings. Results suggest that it is working well in terms of general living space but not quite so well for provision of storage space.



Most respondents were satisfied that rooms in their home were sufficiently lit by natural light (93.4%) and that their home was well insulated and retained heat well (84.9). Satisfaction levels were not quite so high for sound proofing (76.4%). 75.5% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that their home did not feel overlooked by others whilst 23.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed. This is in line with the Borough Design Guide SPD (G6 and R18) and the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD.

62.3% of respondents felt their private outdoor space was the right size for their needs but only 45.3% agreed it allowed sufficient privacy. 7.5% had no private outdoor space. The Borough Design Guide (R16) says new housing must provide easy access to some form of amenity space. It also provides guidance on size of garden and separation distances to maintain privacy.

The Neighbourhood

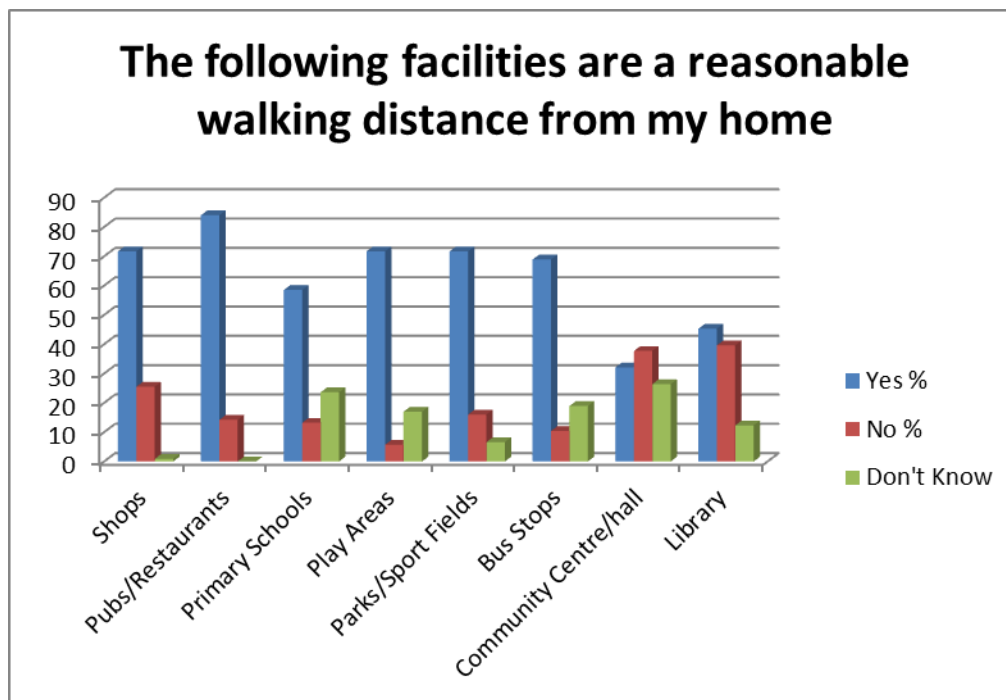
The majority of respondents agreed that the buildings and streets around their new home were attractive and the new homes fitted in well with their surroundings. This is one of the aims of the Core Strategy to ensure proposals will have “built upon the attractiveness and features of the area thereby ensuring the sense of place is retained”. Over 97% agreed or strongly agreed that they felt safe in their neighbourhood during the day. This percentage reduced to 88% for those that felt safe in their neighbourhood at night with 7.5% disagreeing and 0.95% strongly disagreeing. Outside lighting may be the cause for some residents feeling unsafe at night. A recurring theme in general comments was the lack of outside lighting which was thought to be potentially dangerous especially around parking areas.

The Core Strategy and Borough Design Guide include policies to encourage accessibility and sustainable patterns of living with “connected networks with a choice of routes” to encourage pedestrian and cycle use but also to apply to vehicular movement where possible.

Most residents felt it was easy to find their way around their neighbourhood by foot, bicycle and car. There were fewer residents who found it easy by public transport (21.7% disagreed this was easy).

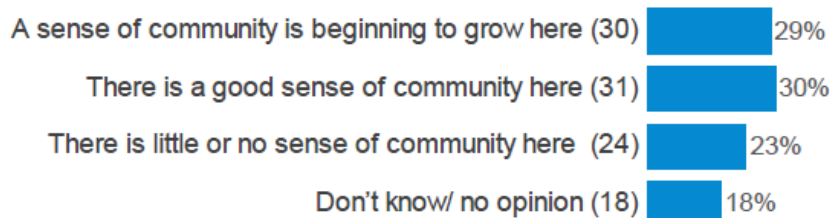


Facilities such as shops, pubs/restaurants, play areas and parks were mostly thought to be within a reasonable walking distance from home. Fewer residents agreed that community centres and libraries were within easy reach.



Opinions were quite evenly spread on the sense of community.

Which of the following best describes your feelings about the sense of community in the place that you live?



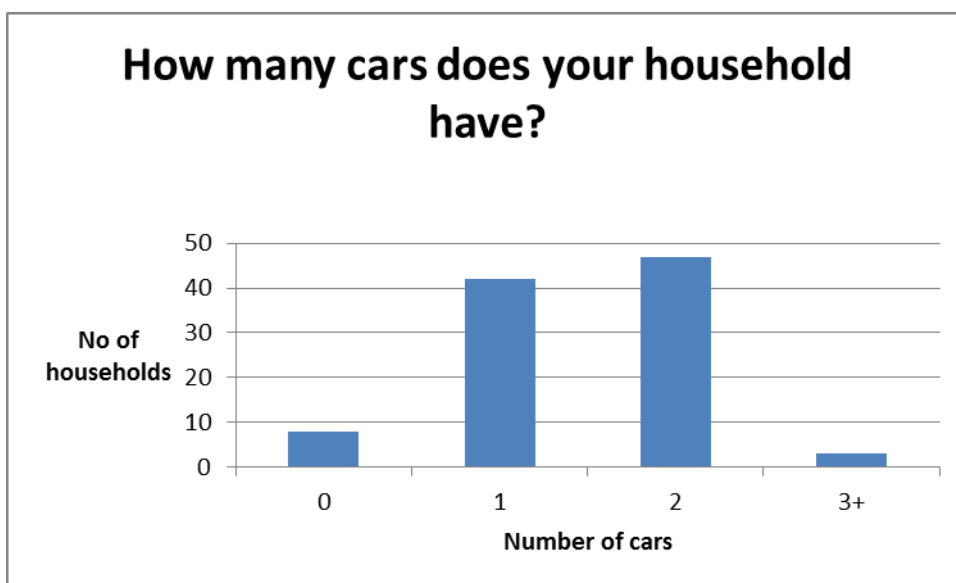
Parking

Lack of parking space was by far the biggest concern for residents. The survey included specific questions on parking but many respondents also



returned to this subject in the general comments section to elaborate on their dissatisfaction.

Car ownership is particularly high in Wokingham Borough. In the 2011 Census Wokingham had the second highest level of car ownership behind Hart District Council. This was reflected in the New Homes Resident Survey where the majority of respondents had two cars in their household.

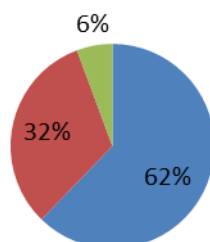


A majority of respondents (66%) thought there was insufficient car parking available for visitors. A similar percentage (62%) felt that parked cars dominate their streets and there were comments about the narrowness of the roads and the problems this caused.



Do parked cars dominate your street?

■ Yes ■ No ■ Don't Know



“There is increasing car parking on pavements on the estate leaving narrow or non-existent access for pedestrians”

“Due to lack of parking provided for smaller homes, all pavements are blocked by residents/visitor cars. Pedestrian and cyclist safety are further compromised by narrowness of the roads”

“Apartments and some houses do not have sufficient off street parking resulting in visitor parking and occupants leaving cars regularly outside other peoples property”

“...I can rarely get parked outside my house due to other people parking there”

It is possible that lack of storage within the home has some impact on parking as 55% of respondents agreed that they used their garage for storage rather than to park their car. The findings suggest that the Borough Design Guide principles for parking (P2 and P3) and our parking standards may not be currently achieving their objectives to successfully accommodate car ownership and avoid car domination on new development.



Open Space

The requirements for high quality open space are set out in the Borough Design Guide (R13) and MDD (TB08). The majority of respondents (79%) agreed or strongly agreed that there was enough public/open space in their area and a similar percentage (77%) agreed it was of good quality and well maintained. This was a subject that drew both positive and negative comments showing the value attached to open space and concern that it might be lost.

“The access to green spaces is a huge benefit of living here”

“It’s great to have wildlife and open spaces”

“Lovely property, we thought lots of open space no it is all getting built on, or a road going through it. Very upset. Wildlife will suffer and open space will be under max pressure”

Some of the Core Strategy and MDD policies are quite new so it is difficult to draw any conclusive evidence from the results of the survey. However, as the first New Homes Survey to be carried out in ten years it will provide a useful baseline to monitor from in future surveys.

Neighbourhood Planning

The Localism Act of 2011 introduced Neighbourhood Planning. This is intended to involve communities in the production of a Neighbourhood Plan. On 22 November 2012 Shinfield Parish was formally designated as a neighbourhood area. The parish council has set up a steering group to lead and monitor the creation of a neighbourhood plan. Consultation was completed for a Remenham neighbourhood area on 11 March 2013. Further information about neighbourhood planning can be found at



<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planningcontrol/planning/planningpolicies/ldf/neighbourhood/neighbourhoodplansgeneralinformation/>

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Community infrastructure Levy is a new charge for development which may be imposed by local authorities. The charge will be for certain types and size of development and will contribute to the local infrastructure needed as a result of the new development. G L Hearn Ltd was commissioned to produce a viability report. The Wokingham CIL Viability Report was produced in February 2013. A CIL Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule was considered by the Executive on 28th March 2013. Details of the timetable for introducing CIL can be seen at <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/developers/cil/>

EMPLOYMENT

Objectives include: Allow limited new business, industrial, distribution and storage development to meet local needs, retain the range of employment and provide job opportunities for the local population in locations that have regard to environmental issues and limiting the need to travel.

Core Strategy Policies

CP9 Scale and location of development proposals
CP13 Town Centres and Shopping
CP14 Growth and Renaissance of Wokingham town centre
CP15 Employment Development
CP16 Science Park

MDD Policies

TB11 Core Employment Areas and Defined Bad Neighbour Uses
TB13 Science and Innovation Park
TB14 Whiteknights Campus
TB15 Major Town and Small Town/District Centre development
TB16 Development for Town Centre Uses
TB17 Local Centres and Neighbourhood and Village Shops
TB18 Garden Centres and other small rural units outside Development Limits
SAL07 Sites within Development Limits allocated for employment/commercial development



The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as use classes. The table below shows B1 Business uses; B2 general industrial and B8 Storage or Distribution. B1 Business uses are broken down further into B1 (a) Offices; B1 (b) Research and development, studios, laboratories, high technology and B1(c) Light industry. See Glossary for full details.

The table below shows the amount of employment floorspace developed in Wokingham Borough in the last six years. It shows the amount for the various business use classes, annual total change and cumulative total change.

Completed B Uses in the Borough by year

| Year (1 st April to 31 st March) | Use Class | | | Annual total change of all B use classes combined (m ²) | Cumulative total change of all B use classes combined (m ²) |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| | B1 (m ²) | B2 (m ²) | B8 (m ²) | | |
| 2006 - 2007 | 10,123 | -5,263 | -11,042 | -6,182 | -6,182 |
| 2007 - 2008 | 4,173 | -10,208 | 4,970 | -1,065 | -7,247 |
| 2008 - 2009 | -1,032 | 131 | 1,740 | 839 | -6,408 |
| 2009 - 2010 | 26,763 | -455 | -104 | 26,204 | 19,796 |
| 2010 - 2011 | -1,422 | 475 | -3,235 | -4,182 | 15,614 |
| 2011 - 2012 | -7,383 | -7,034 | 970 | -13,447 | 2,167 |
| 2012 - 2013 | -594 | 2,618 | 17,231 | 19,255 | 21,422 |
| 2013- 2014 | -22,061 | 1,915 | 2,373 | -17,773 | 3,649 |
| Total | 8,567 | -17,821 | 12,903 | | |

Source: WBC Employment Land Monitoring Report 2013-2014



Please note the WBC Employment Land Monitoring Report 2013-2014 supersedes the 2012-2013 report and includes revised data for earlier years. For full details please see

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/policy/planningforemployment/>

In the monitoring year 2012-13 the largest developments completed were:

- Willow Tree Works Swallowfield Street Swallowfield, RG7 1QX - 1663m² of B2 floor space
- Unit 8 Heron Industrial estate, Basingstoke Road, Spencers Wood, RG7 1PJ - 759m² of B2 floor space
- Unit 34 Suttons Business Park Sutton Park Avenue Earley, RG6 1AZ - 705m² of B1 floor space
- Denmark House, Old Bath Road, Charvil, RG10 9QJ – 706m² of B8 floor space

The change in the total B class use since 2013 was mainly due to the loss of 21,390m² at the former Linpac Metal Packaging Site, Headley Road East, Woodley as this site has been cleared and is in the process of being re-developed.

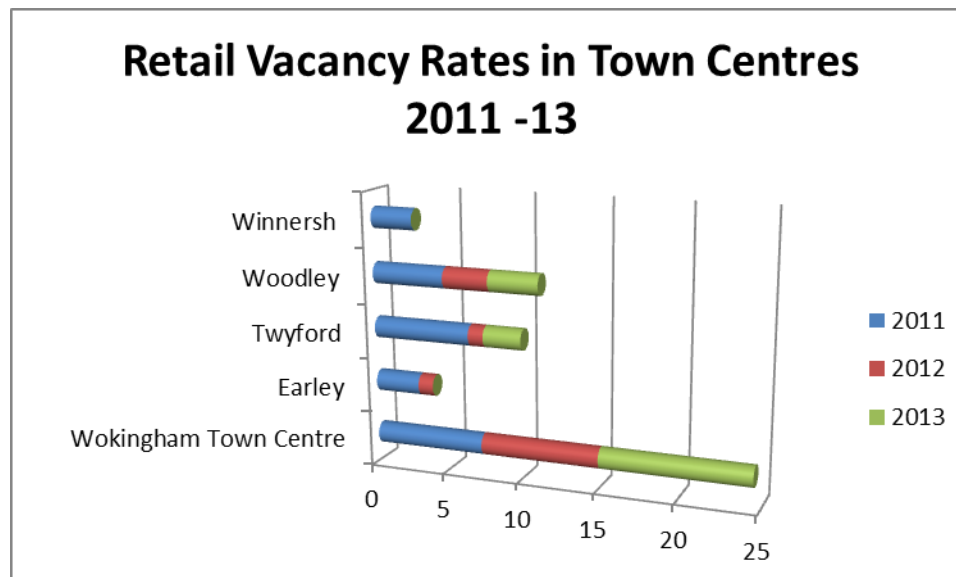
Town centres and shopping

Wokingham Borough Council has defined certain areas within local town centres as primary shopping areas. These are defined areas where retail development is concentrated. For monitoring purposes, the Council considers that land within the following uses is regarded as retail development:

- A1 Shops
- A2 Financial and professional services
- A3 Restaurants and cafes
- A4 Drinking establishments
- A5 Hot food takeaways



Retail Vacancies



The above chart shows the trend in retail vacancies in local town centres for the last three years. As with last year there are no vacancies for Winnersh and Earley has also dropped to zero. Woodley remains about the same and the rate for Twyford has risen slightly. The number of vacant retail outlets in Wokingham has risen by almost two per cent. The comparatively larger percentage in vacancies in Wokingham may be due to current town centre regeneration works.

Wokingham Town Centre

Consultation on the Wokingham Town Centre Regeneration was carried out in July 2012. A review of the consultation feedback can be found at <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/development/towncentre/consult/>

7 COUNTRYSIDE AND OPEN SPACES

Core Strategy Policies

CP3 General principles for development
CP12 Green belt
CP13 Gaps

**MDD Policies**

TB01-3 Development within and adjoining the Green Belt

TB08 Open space, sport and recreational facilities standards for residential development

SAL04 New Public Open Space

SAL06 Allocated Country Parks

One of the principles set out in CP3 of the Core Strategy is to ensure planning proposals can provide a framework of open space together with recreational/sporting facilities and private amenity space.

Country Parks and Open Spaces

The Borough has four Sites of Special Scientific Interest, but no Special Areas of Conservation or Special Protection Areas (SPAs). There are also 117 Local Wildlife Sites and three Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS). Although, there are no SPAs in the Borough, around 30% of the Borough lies within the 5km protection area for the Thames Basin Heath.

The Council's Countryside Service manages 3 country parks totalling 233 hectares (ha), 11 Nature reserves totalling 110ha (although we are about to increase this figure with a 3.19ha extension to Keephatch and a new site at Shinfield Park of 8.2ha).

Hurst Golf Course and the water-based Multi Activity Centre are set within Dinton Pastures Country Park.

The service also manages one SANG (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace) of 18.5ha in Barkham.

The borough also contains 238 hectares of parks and open spaces which include:

- Local parks
- 35 outdoor sports pitches
- Tennis courts
- 4 pavilions



- 18.1 hectares of highway grass verges
- Sponsorship sites (e.g. roundabouts)
- Leisure centre grounds
- Over 95 play areas.

Open space

The Managing Development Delivery Development Plan Document (MDD DPD) includes standards for open space and recreation facilities which new residential development proposals must adhere to. This includes parks and public gardens; natural and semi natural open space; play areas for children; burial grounds and cemeteries; indoor and outdoor sports facilities and activity halls. New development can bring opportunities to provide new areas of open space or enhance existing ones by onsite measures or contributions to offsite areas. The standards reflect the evidence and approach described in the Wokingham PPG17 Open space, Sport and Recreation Standards Study Paper which was produced in May 2012. For further information please see the standards study paper and sports and open space assessments at <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/policy/countryside-and-open-space/openspace/>

Building in the Countryside

The Council seeks to control development in the countryside. Annual housing monitoring shows that the number of dwellings completed in the countryside has been consistently low over the last decade. Full details of completions and percentages can be seen in the Planning Commitments for Housing March 2013. Please see tables 2.12, 2.13 and 2.14 at the weblink:

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/policy/housing/housingmonitoring/>



8 BIODIVERSITY

Core Strategy Policies

C P7 Biodiversity

CP8 Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area

MDD Policies

TB23 Biodiversity and Development

SAL05 Delivery of avoidance measures for Thames

Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

CP7 seeks to conserve and enhance sites that are important for nature conservation and to resist inappropriate development. Development may require mitigation measures to prevent harmful impacts or appropriate compensation measures. CP8 specifies that all proposals must have regard to the cumulative impact of schemes around the Thames Basin Heath Special Protection Area.

Changes in areas of biodiversity importance (SPA, SAC, SSSI, LWS, LGS, LNR)

The only change in area was for the Local Wildlife Sites where the deselection of Southlake Park saw a reduction from 1293 hectares in 2012 to 1246 in 2013.

Area of sites designated for the intrinsic environmental value

| Designated site | Area in hectares (2012) | Area in hectares (2013) | As % of Wokingham | Berkshire Area in hectares (2013) | As % of Berkshire |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) | 27 | 27 | <1% | 4848 | 4% |
| Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1817 | 1% |
| Special Protection Areas (SPAs) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1455 | 1% |
| Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) | 1293 | 1246 | 7% | 9394 | 8% |
| Local Geological Sites (LGS) | 35 | 35 | <1% | 221 | <1% |
| Local Nature Reserves | 93 | 93 | <1% | 487 | <1% |

Source: TVERC Biodiversity Annual Monitoring Report 2012/13 Wokingham



National Indicator 197 (The Single Data List 160) proportion of local sites where positive conservation management has been or is being implemented.

This indicator calculates the number of Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and Local Geological Sites (LGS) that can be said to be in or have been in positive conservation management in the five year period to 31st March.

In Berkshire, a site was considered to be in positive management if at least 50% of the site was being managed in a way that protected or enhanced the biological or geological interest of that site.

In Wokingham there was a decrease from 42% to 41% in the proportion of sites in positive conservation management due to a decrease in the total number of Local Wildlife Sites.

There are four Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within or partly within Wokingham Borough but their condition was not monitored in 2012.

Changes in number of UKBAP Priority Species

The number of UK Biodiversity Action Plan Species in Wokingham has increased by three species since last year. This includes records of hazel dormouse, western barbastelle and red-tipped cudweed.

9 TRANSPORT

Core Strategy Policies

CP3 General Principles of Development

CP6 Managing Travel Demand

CP10 Improvements to the Strategic Transport Network

MDD Policies

CC07 Parking

CC08 Safeguarding alignments of the Strategic Transport Network & Road Infrastructure

CC08 Transport site allocations



Car parking standards

Car parking standards can be found in the MDD DPD and the Parking Standards Study Report (2011).

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/policy/parking-standards/>

Further guidance on parking provision is available in the Borough Design Guide SPD (2012). Planning proposals must demonstrate how the standards are met and that the appropriate level of off street parking is retained.

Transport plans and policies can be seen at

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/transport/travel/policies/>

10 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Core Strategy Policies

CP1 Sustainable Development

CP9 Scale and location of development proposals

CP4 Infrastructure requirements

CP11 Proposals outside development limits

MDD Policies

CC04 Sustainable Design and Construction

CC09 Development and Flood Risk

CC10 Sustainable Drainage

TB06 Development of Private Residential Gardens

Duty to co-operate

The Localism Act 2011 inserted a “Duty to co-operate” clause into the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This is a duty to co-operate in relation to planning of sustainable development. Local authorities and other relevant bodies are required to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries in a continuous and constructive process of engagement. This includes the homes and jobs needed in the area together with the provision of infrastructure for transport, water supply and wastewater and flood risk and health, community and cultural facilities.



To satisfy this requirement for ongoing collaboration, Wokingham Borough County Council is engaged in a range of sub-regional groups on matters such as delivering strategic transport improvements within Berkshire; work with the Local Enterprise Partnership and around the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area. Although joint Berkshire plans are no longer produced for minerals and waste the Council continues to collaborate with other local authorities for these areas. The Council is actively engaged in the sub-regional working group SEWPAG (South East Waste Planning Advisory Group) which includes 16 member authorities. SEWPAG has adopted a 'manifesto' which includes the following statement to define the purpose of the group:

"To help waste planning authorities in the area to fulfil the Duty to Cooperate on strategic issues enshrined in the Localism Bill, and specifically to give effect to the Government's stated intention to place the responsibilities of the former Regional Technical Advisory Bodies with local authority groupings".

The Council is a member of SEEAWP (South East England Aggregates Working Party), a technical group with the role of advising government, Mineral Planning Authorities and industry on aggregates."

The Council attends regular Berkshire Minerals and Waste Officer working group meetings and the Berkshire authorities are currently undertaking a Berkshire Annual Aggregates Survey.

The authority also collaborates with other neighbouring authorities on other cross boundary issues on matters such as education, flood risk/water supply and considering implications of proposals around the AWE (Atomic Weapons Establishment) sites.

Minerals and waste

The six unitary authorities in Berkshire were preparing a Joint Minerals and Waste Core Strategy Development Plan Document (CSDPD). However this plan was withdrawn in 2010. The work on a Joint Minerals and Waste CSDPD was suspended in March 2011. Each unitary authority in Berkshire is now responsible for minerals and waste planning in its own area. The future approach for minerals and waste planning is under review. The Council's



revised Local Development Scheme (13 May 2013 to 12 May 2016) includes an indicative timetable for a new Minerals and Waste Local Plan. The Council works with other local authorities through SEWPAG and the Berkshire Minerals and Waste Officer working group as described in the previous section.

Flood risk and water quality

Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy aims to enhance sustainability through minimising impact on the environment. This includes limiting any adverse effects on water quality, ensuring adequate drainage, avoiding any increased risk in flooding (and where possible reducing it). From the information supplied below it can be seen that this policy is achieving its goals.

Planning applications approved following objections from the Environment Agency

The Environment Agency produces a list of planning applications that it has made initial objections to. There were twelve planning applications which received objections in the monitoring year. Only five of these were approved. These are:

F/2012/0945 Weir Pool House, Mill Lane, Sindlesham. Proposed new vehicular access off Mill Lane. This was approved following consultation with the Environment Agency. The access road was provided with a permeable surface.

F/2012/1499 The Riverside Barns, Remenham Church Lane, Remenham. Proposed alterations to site access including provision of metal railed gates and building up of the lower level brick walls (by less than 200m) The applicant submitted information relating to flooding in the Design and Access Statement and on the basis that the width of the access had been increased the Environment Agency had no objection.

F/2012/1846 Secondus, Wargrave Rd, Remenham. Change of use of existing leisure mooring to residential use. (Retrospective). The Environment



Agency requested a more detailed Flood Risk Assessment specifically about a safe evacuation route away from the address. Additional information was supplied and following confirmation of a safe evacuation route from the Council's Emergency Planning Team the EA withdrew their objection.

F/2013/0063 Upper Thames Rowing Club, Remenham Lane, Remenham.

Proposed relocation of existing pontoon and installation of new pontoon and tethering posts. The EA withdrew their objection upon receipt of additional information about the securing of the pontoons.

O/2012/0320 Former Linpac Metal Packaging Site Headley Road East Woodley. Outline application for the redevelopment of the site with mixed use scheme comprising residential development of up to 79 dwellings and floor space for use class B1(a b & c) means of access to be considered.

Demolition of existing buildings. The EA removed their objection following the inclusion of certain planning conditions relating to drainage and avoidance of contamination.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)

The Council completed a review of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment in February 2012. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment assesses the risks of all forms of flooding in a local authority area. Please see this link for further information: <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/policy/flood/sfra/>

Brownfield Development

Policy CP9 states that the scale of development proposals in the Borough must reflect existing or proposed levels of facilities and services at or in the location together with their accessibility. National planning guidance contained in Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) had a target for 60% of new housing to be provided on previously developed land (brownfield) but this has since been superseded by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which does not have a target. In June 2010 a new PPS3 was released with an amended definition of of previously developed land which now excludes private residential gardens and this definition has been carried forward into the NPPF. Therefore all housing applications granted since 9 June 2010 that

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are developed on residential gardens are classed as Greenfield land. Annual Monitoring Report figures for building on previously developed land have been consistently high. Housing data for the monitoring year shows that a high proportion of housing development is still on brownfield land despite the change in PPS3/NPPF and the Council is exceeding the national target of 60% of additional housing on brownfield sites. See Planning Commitments for Housing March 2013 for further data and analysis.

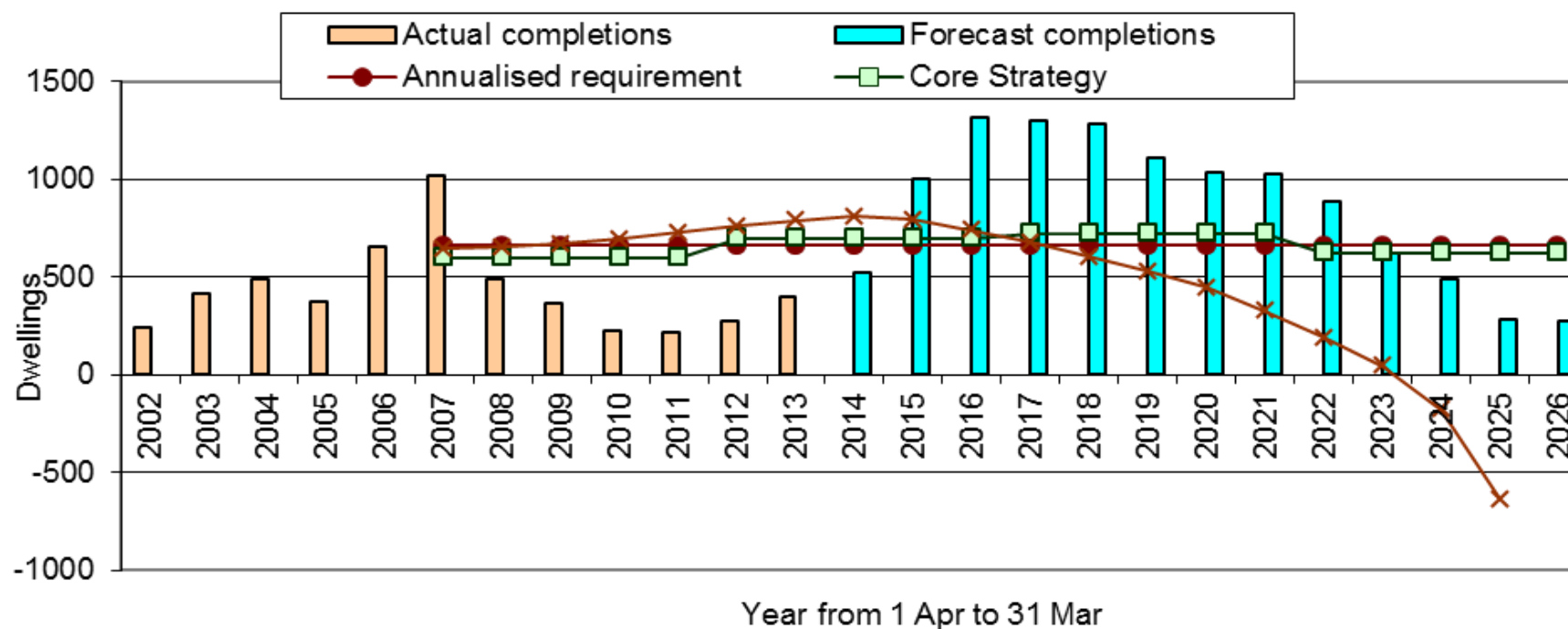
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Appendix 1. Housing Trajectory of Core Strategy updated to take account of the Submitted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan



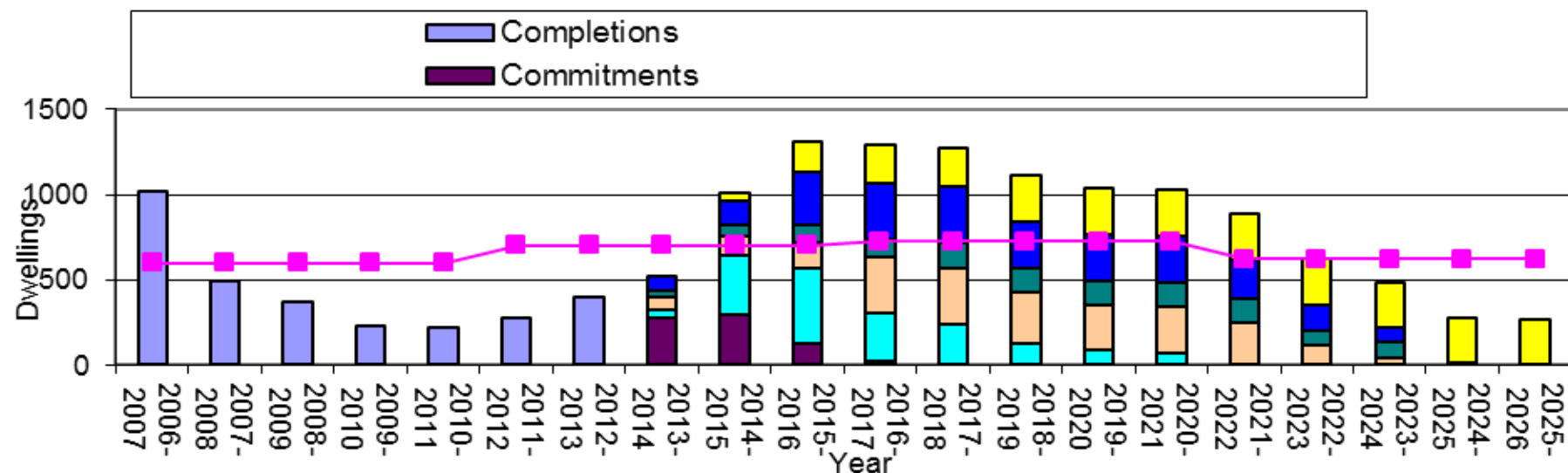
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Appendix 2. Housing Trajectory for SDLS and other sources of housing supply





GLOSSARY

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)

See “Monitoring Report”.

Berkshire Structure Plan

The old-style development plan setting out strategic planning policies for Berkshire. It was approved by the Secretary of State on 15 July 2005.

Biodiversity

Or biological diversity is a term given to the variety of life on Earth, and the natural patterns it forms.

Community Strategy

A strategy prepared by a local authority to improve the local quality of life and aspirations, under the Local Government Act 2000.

Core Strategy

A Development Plan Document (DPD) (as well as now being known as a Local Plan) setting out the spatial vision and strategic objectives of the planning framework for an area, having regard to the Community Strategy. The Wokingham Borough Core Strategy was adopted on 29th January 2010. (See also DPDs).

Development Plan

A document setting out the local planning authority's policies and proposals for the development and use of land and buildings in the authority's area. The Development Plan for Wokingham Borough currently comprises the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy, the Managing Development Delivery DPD, Neighbourhood Development Plans, Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plans and the South East Plan (The Regional Spatial Strategy). The South East Plan remains part of the Development Plan until it is abolished by Order using powers taken in the Localism Act 2011.

The Managing Development Delivery Development Plan Document (Local Plan) is one of the Development Plan documents prepared by Wokingham Borough Council

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that make up the Development Plan for the Borough. The other Development Plan document produced by the Council is the Core Strategy, adopted on 29th January 2010, which sets out the strategic planning policy to guide development in the Borough to 2026.

Under the Localism Act 2011, there is the ability for Parish and Town Councils to produce Neighbourhood Development Plans, which would also form part of the Development Plan.

Regional strategies remain part of the Development Plan until they are abolished by Order using powers taken in the Localism Act. It is the government's clear policy intention to revoke the regional strategies outside of London, subject to the environmental assessments that are currently being undertaken. The South East Plan is the Regional Strategy for the Borough.

Development Plan Documents (DPD)

DPD are prepared by local planning authorities and outline the key development goals of the Development Plan.

The first DPD prepared by Wokingham Borough Council is the Core Strategy. The Managing Development Delivery document is also a DPD. There will also be an adopted proposals map which illustrates the spatial extent of policies that must be prepared and maintained to accompany all DPDS.

All DPDs must be subject to rigorous procedures of community involvement, consultation and independent examination, and adopted after receipt of the inspector's binding report. Once adopted, development control decisions must be made in accordance with them unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Together, the Core Strategy and Managing Development Delivery Plan Document are also known as the Local Plan.

Inclusive Communities

Communities that promote integration and aim to tackle the exclusion of marginalised groups. This is primarily achieved through suitable housing provision,

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the co-ordination of appropriate services and addressing the requirements of the population.

Local Development Documents (LDD)

These include DPDs (part of the statutory development plan) and Supplementary Planning Documents or SPDs (which do not form part of the statutory development plan). LDDs collectively deliver the spatial planning strategy for the local planning authority's area.

Local Geological Sites (LGS)

Local Geological Sites (LGS) are sites within the county that are considered worthy of protection for their Earth Science or landscape importance, but are not already protected as SSSIs. Previously called Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS).

Local Nature Reserves (LNR)

Non statutory habitats of local significance designated by local authorities where protection and public understanding of nature conservation is encouraged.

Local Wildlife Sites (LWS)

Local Wildlife Sites are non statutory sites of significant value for the conservation of wildlife. These sites represent local character and distinctiveness and have an important role to play in meeting local and national targets for biodiversity conservation.

Monitoring Report

A report prepared at least annually by the Local Authority which assesses progress with and the effectiveness of planning policy. Previously referred to as the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

National Planning Policy Framework, which has replaced Planning Policy Statements (PPS) and Planning Policy Guidance Notes, with the exception of PPS10: Planning for Sustainable Waste Management.



Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

South East Plan (SEP)

The Regional Spatial Strategy for South East England covering the period 2006-2026. It was approved by the Secretary of State in May 2009. Regional strategies remain part of the Development Plan until they are abolished by Order using powers taken in the Localism Act. It is the government's clear policy intention to revoke the regional strategies outside of London, subject to the environmental assessments that are currently being undertaken.

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)

Sites classified under the European Community Directive on Habitats to protect internationally important habitats.

Special Protection Areas (SPA)

Sites classified under the European Community Directive on Wild Birds to protect internationally important bird species.

Strategic Development Location (SDL)

These are the key sites identified through Core Strategy policies CP18-21 to take a significant proportion of the Borough's development.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)

A SHLAA assists in the identification of sufficient deliverable sites for residential development and the assessment of whether a rolling five year supply of housing land is available. It should be undertaken as part of the evidence base for the Local Plan. Undertaking a SHLAA is a key requirement of National Planning Policy Framework.

Sui generis

Certain uses do not fall within any use class and are considered 'sui generis'. Such uses include: theatres, houses in multiple occupation, hostels providing no significant element of care, scrap yards. Petrol filling stations and shops selling and/or displaying motor vehicles. Retail warehouse clubs, nightclubs,



laundrettes, taxi businesses, amusement centres and casinos. E.g. theatres, night clubs). Also see 'use class'.

Suitable Alternative Natural Green Spaces (SANG)

Suitable Alternative Natural Green Spaces or 'SANGS' are new or existing open spaces designed to attract visitors away from the Special Protection Area by providing an enjoyable natural environment or recreation.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the Development Plan.

Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBH SPA)

A collection of sites on the borders of Berkshire, Hampshire, and Surrey covering an area of 8,274 hectares. It was classified under the European Community Directive on Wild Birds to protect the internationally important bird species on 9 March 2005 for the populations of three Annex 1 bird species – Nightjar, Woodlark and Dartford Warbler.

Use Class

The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) puts uses of land and buildings into various categories known as 'Use Classes' and include:

- A1 shops
- A2 financial and professional services
- A3 restaurants and cafes
- A4 drinking establishments
- A5 takeaways
- B1a business: offices, not within A2
- B1b business: research and development, high technology etc.
- B1c business: light industry
- B2 general industrial
- B8 storage or distribution

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- C1 hotels
- C2 residential institutions
- C2A secure residential institutions
- C3 dwelling houses
- C4 houses in multiple occupation.
- D1 non residential institutions
- D2 assembly and leisure

Also see 'sui generis'

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