

Wokingham Borough Council

Annual Monitoring Report

1/4/2015 – 31/3/2016

Published February 2017



WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Summary

This is the Local Planning Authority's Monitoring Report, which covers the period from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016. 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:

- Consultation on the draft Shinfield Neighbourhood Development Plan for Shinfield Parish ran from 15 June 2015 to 31 July 2015
- The consultation for the Gypsy and Traveller Local Plan Preferred Options closed on 30 July 2015
- Wokingham Borough Council Local Development Scheme (LDS) was updated in September 2015
- Consultation on Scoping Report for Sustainability Appraisal for Local Plan closed on 23rd December 2015
- The Berkshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was published in February 2016
- The Berkshire Functional Economic Market Area Study (FEMA) was published in February 2016

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|--|--------|
| Executive summary | Page 1 |
| Contents | 2 |
| 1 Background | 3 |
| 2 Introduction to the Borough and issues facing the area | 3 |
| 3 Progress towards achieving the Local Development Scheme | 5 |
| 4 Policies and monitoring | 7 |
| 5 Housing | 7 |
| 6 Employment | 20 |
| 7 Countryside and open spaces | 23 |
| 8 Biodiversity | 25 |
| 9 Transport | 29 |
| 10 Sustainable development | 30 |
| Appendices | 35 |
| Glossary | 39 |
| References | 43 |
| List of figures: | |
| Figure 1 - Context map for Wokingham Borough | 4 |
| Figure 2 - Affordable Housing Completions 2009-2015 | 8 |
| Figure 3 - Area of sites designated for the intrinsic environmental value | 26 |
| List of tables: | |
| Table 1 - Plan period and housing targets | 9 |
| Table 2 - Berkshire SHMA Objectively Assessed Need | 9 |
| Table 3 - Net Dwellings in AWE Burghfield Consultation Zones | 16 |
| Table 4 - Completed B Uses in the Borough by year | 19 |
| Table 5 - Information on committed SANG use in Wokingham Borough at 31/3/15 | 24 |
| Table 6 - Information on SAMM contributions received or anticipated at 31/3/15 | 25 |

1 Background

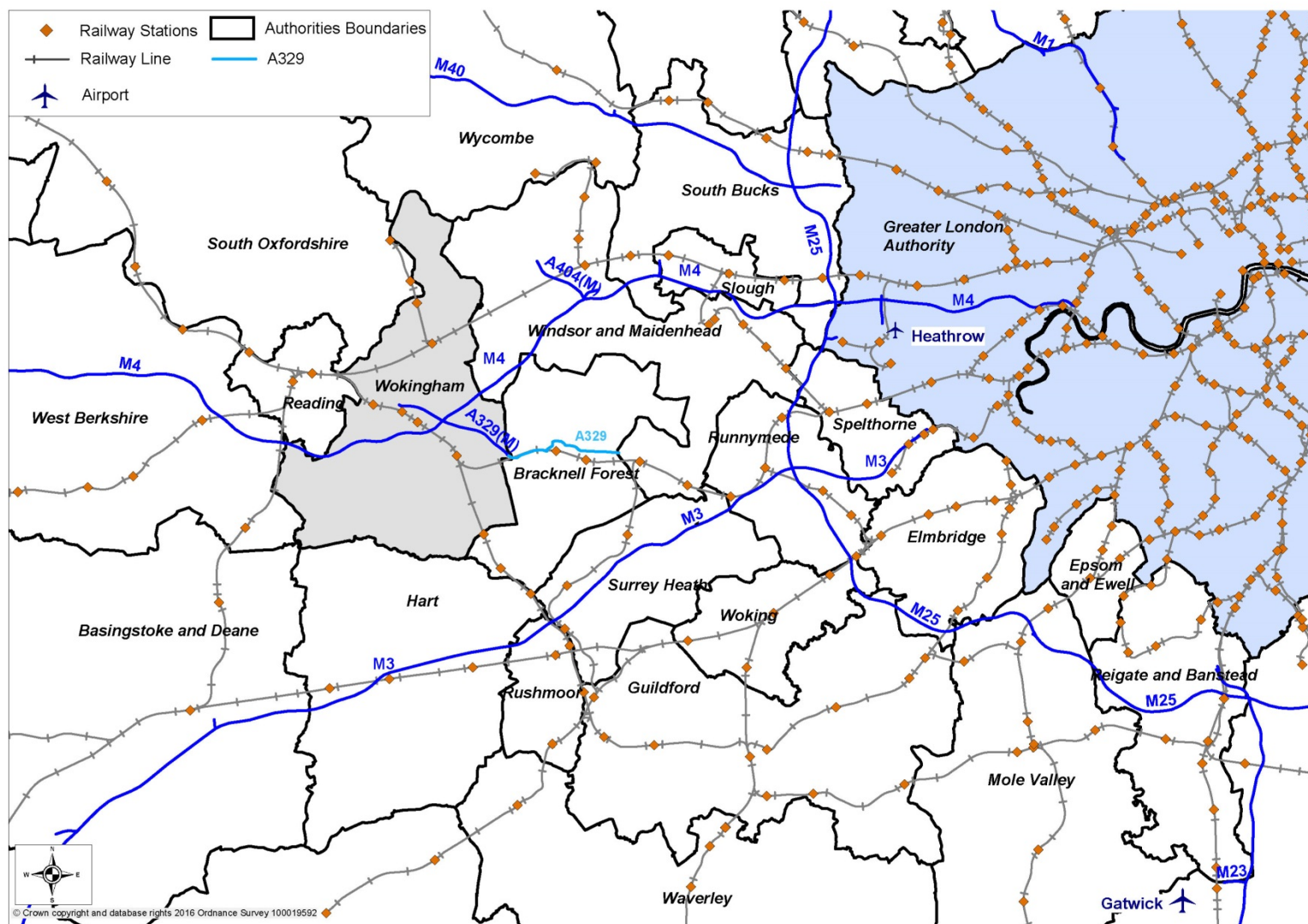
The *Monitoring Report* is produced to demonstrate how well an authority is complying with the progress outlined in its Local Development Scheme (LDS) for producing planning policy documents.

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 2015 to 31 March 2016. 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, and the *Managing Development Delivery Local Plan (MDD)*, adopted 21 February 2014. 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. The *MDD* provides a greater level of detail about 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. 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 Assessment](#) confirms the borough's diversity. It shows it contains three separate national landscape areas. There are many high profile businesses with headquarters in Borough, such as Microsoft, as well as strong digital technology, life sciences and healthcare sectors. The borough includes a range of employment space including modern business parks at Winnersh Triangle Business Park and Thames Valley Business Park. Figure 1 shows a map of the Borough alongside the surrounding local authorities.

Figure 1 - Context map for Wokingham Borough



The borough between 1971 and 2013 saw a 58% increase in population from 99,664 to 157,866, associated with a 99% increase in households from 30,855 to 63,150. The average household size fell 22.5% from 3.23 to 2.5 in this period. Between July 1976 and March 2013, 27,172 dwellings were completed in the borough, representing about 43% of the borough's housing stock in 2001. This demonstrates that the borough has seen significant growth in population and has a relatively modern housing stock. This development over the last 30 years has reduced the separation of settlements within the borough. The Berkshire SHMA projects that the population of the borough will increase to 184,858 in 2036, with 76,796 households. This represents a 17.1% and 24.5% increase respectively.

Wokingham Borough is a prosperous area with a thriving economy and relatively low rate of unemployment. The Borough is home to leading information technology companies (Microsoft and Oracle) who have chosen this part of the Thames Valley for European or UK Headquarters. According to Thames Valley Enterprise, the highest rate of business growth in the UK has occurred partly in the Wokingham area over the past 15 years. A large proportion (49.2%) of the Borough's population is engaged in full-time employment, compared to the South East (43.2%) and England and Wales (40.5%).

Whilst house prices in Wokingham are above the national average they have not increased as much as the average price for the South East region. The trend can be seen in the graph in Appendix 4.

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.

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.

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 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/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/planning-policy-supporting-information/>

The *MDD* underwent an Examination in Public from 14 to 24 May 2013. The Council published the Inspectors Interim Conclusions on 26 June 2013. This was followed by a consultation on the Proposed Main Modifications from 31 July until 25 September 2013. The Inspector's final report was published on 27 January 2014 and the *MDD* was adopted on 21 February 2014. Further information about the *MDD* can be found via

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/how-planning-policy-works/>

The LDS also indicated that in April 2016, the authority would commence initial work on a Minerals and Waste Local Plan for the Borough to replace the saved policies of the Berkshire Minerals and Waste Local Plans. In contributing towards the updating of the Local Aggregate Assessments for Berkshire (alongside the other Berkshire Unitary Authorities) and reviewing the information on waste movements provided by the Environment Agency's Waste Data Interrogator, the authority is reviewing information to inform the evidence base of the plan as envisaged in the LDS. Further, the LDS notes that the authority could work collaboratively with other authorities on a joint plan and the potential for undertaking a joint plan is being considered.

4 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

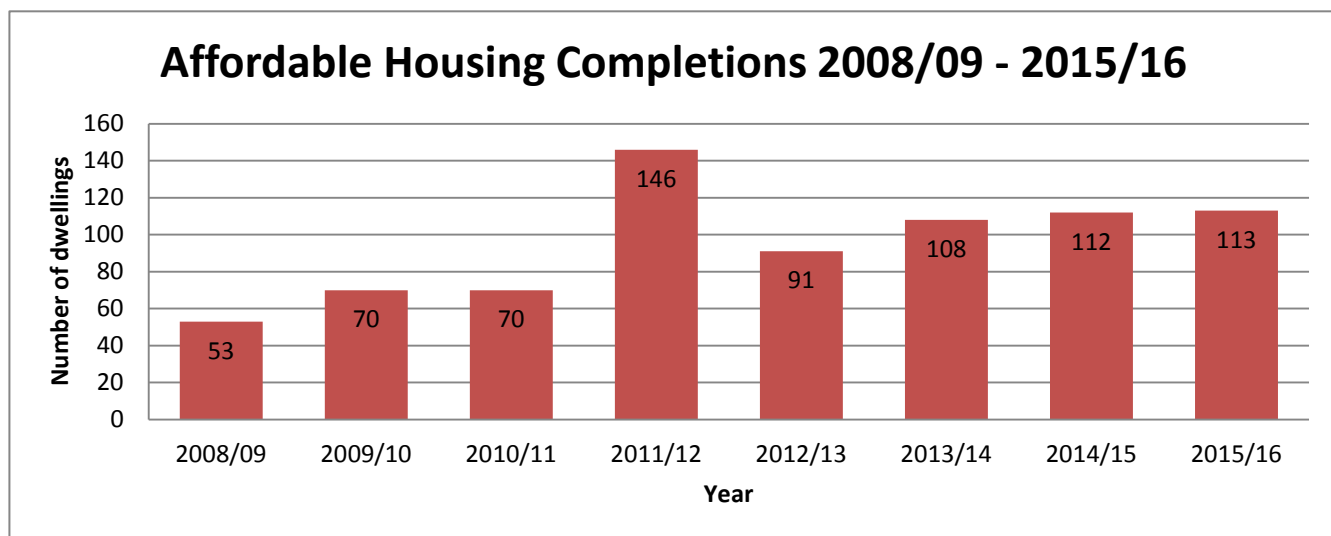
MDD Policies

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.

Figure 2 - Affordable Housing Completions 2009-2016



Housing Delivery

Information about housing supply, completion rates and SDL allocation can be found in the *Wokingham Borough Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) October 2015*. 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 September 2015. For full details see

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/evidence-topics>

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 in table 1 below.

Table 1 - Plan period and housing targets

| 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) |

Berkshire (inc. South Bucks) Strategic Housing Market Assessment

The six Berkshire authorities and the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) commissioned consultants to undertake a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). The first stage of this study defines the housing market area (HMA) based on functional linkages between the areas. Wokingham Borough is within the Western Berkshire Housing Market Area (HMA) along with Reading Borough, West Berkshire and Bracknell Forest. The Objectively Assessed Housing Need for the Western Berkshire HMA is 2,855 dwellings per annum 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2036. Table 2 below shows the breakdown for each authority within the housing market area.

Table 2 - Berkshire SHMA Objectively Assessed Need

| Local Authority | OAN – dwellings per annum, 2013-36 |
|------------------|------------------------------------|
| Bracknell Forest | 635 |
| Reading | 699 |
| West Berkshire | 665 |
| Wokingham | 856 |
| Western HMA | 2,855 |

Site allocation

The housing delivery requirements identified above have been addressed by the allocation of sites in the *MDD*. Policy SAL01 Allocated Housing Development Sites (Sites identified through former 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 2014 and taking account of the allocation of sites within the Adopted *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 2014 to at least April 2021. This has been achieved by taking account of the allocation of sites in the *MDD*). The *Summary SHLAA* (October 2015) 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 October 2015 indicated supplies of 5.6 years against the *Core Strategy* figures and 6 years against the Berkshire SHMA's figures respectively (taking account of the 20% buffer to address persistent under delivery of housing).

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*.

Further information is available on each SDL at

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/major-developments/>

The New Homes Resident's Survey

The New Homes Survey is carried out annually to gather and assess resident's opinions of new developments. It is used to find the level of satisfaction residents have with their new homes and the community in which they live. It is also used to measure the effectiveness of the Council's planning policies. This year 80% of residents agreed that they were satisfied with their new home.

The questions in the New Homes Survey included: the amount and use of space in the home; parking; transport; appeal of the neighbourhood and access to facilities. These questions are based on policies in the Borough Design Code, Core Strategy and MDD DPD, Sustainable Design and Construction SPD and the Community Strategy.

It is intended that the survey will be repeated every year 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 15/16 survey was sent to 517 addresses in February 2016 and received 152 responses; a 29% response rate; below shows a summary of this year's results.

Design of Homes

The majority of residents (91%) strongly agreed or agreed that all rooms have enough space to move around and undertake various living activities.

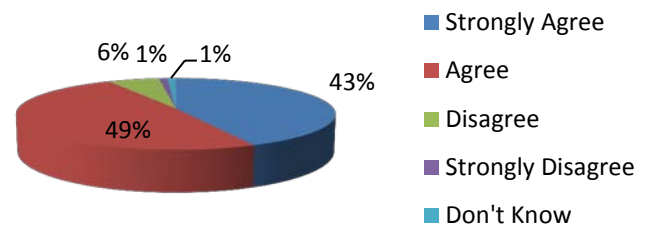
78% of respondents also strongly agreed or agreed that the layout of their home provides enough privacy.

79% strongly agreed or agreed that their home is well insulated and retains heat well.

The Borough Design Guide (Principle R17) intends development proposals to provide high quality, functional, accessible, secure and adaptable buildings.

Results suggest that it is working quite well in terms of general living space, but less so in storage space shown below.

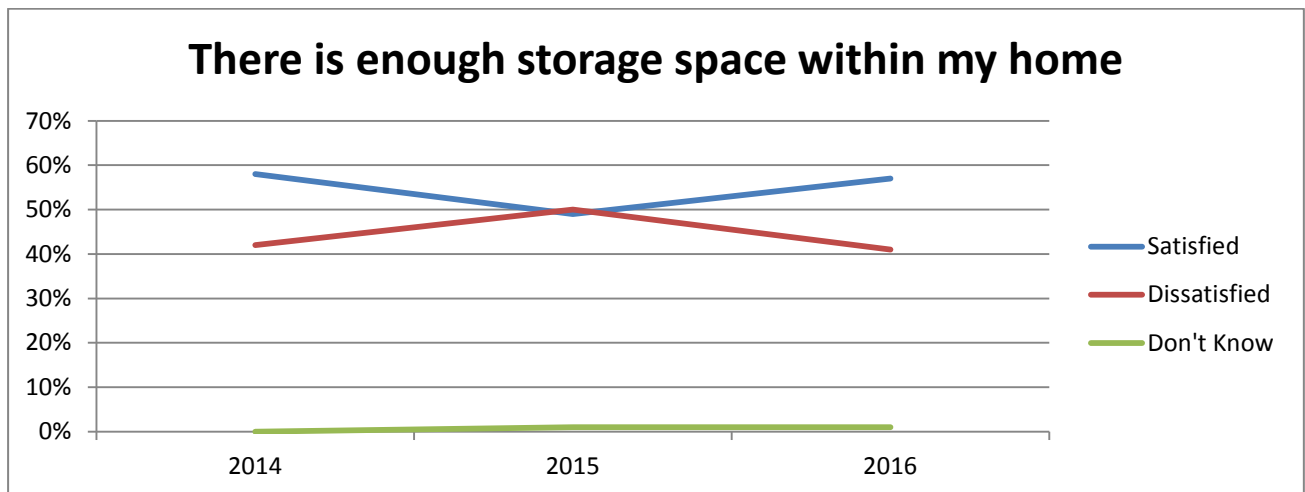
All rooms have enough space to move around and undertake normal living activities



Storage Space

Inadequate storage was an issue highlighted by a number of respondents in this year's survey, as well as the two surveys prior. This year 57% of residents agreed or strongly agreed that their new home provided them with enough storage space. It is apparent that the lack of storage can also be attributed to parking problems with 34% of residents stating that they currently use their garage for storage.

Nevertheless, from the graph overleaf it can be shown that the in the 2016 survey the amount satisfied (57%) was greater than in the 2015 survey (49%).



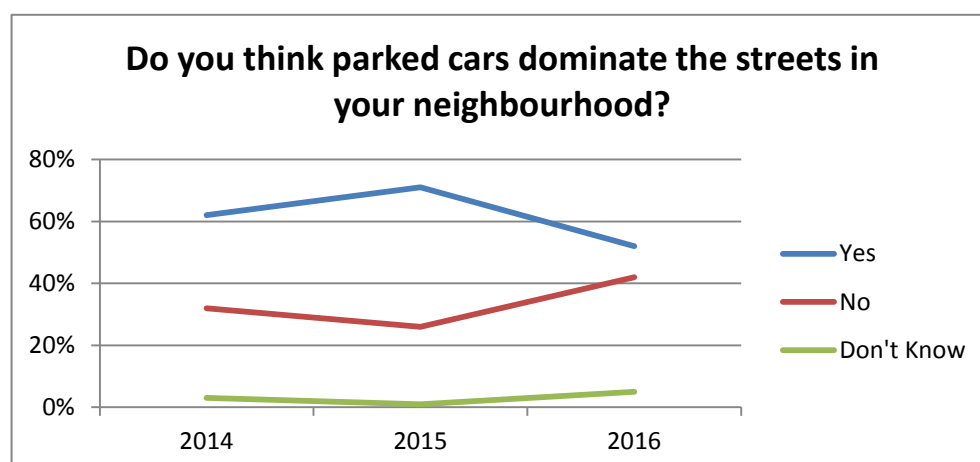
With regards to storage for bins and recycling 63% of residents agreed or strongly agreed that there was adequate space.

Car Parking

Car ownership is particularly high in the 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 91% of residents said they had at least one motor vehicle.

Lack of parking was a key issue featured among survey responses; similarly this was the case for the 2014 and 2015 survey.

This year 52% of residents believed that parked cars did dominate the streets in their neighbourhood, compared to 2014 and 2015 where 62% and 71% of residents answered 'Yes' respectively, shown from the graph below. This demonstrates that this year's results have improved from the previous surveys.



The majority of the developments surveyed this year had been approved under revised parking standards – published in October 2011. This can be seen as a reason to the improvement in answers related to parking.

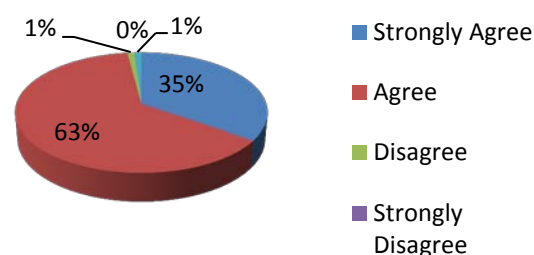
Neighbourhood

89% of residents felt that their new home fit in well with its surroundings.

Furthermore, 86% of residents found the building and streets attractive, which 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”.

There were also positive results relating to safety in the neighbourhood; 96% of residents felt safe during the day and 90% felt safe during the night.

I feel safe in my neighbourhood during the day

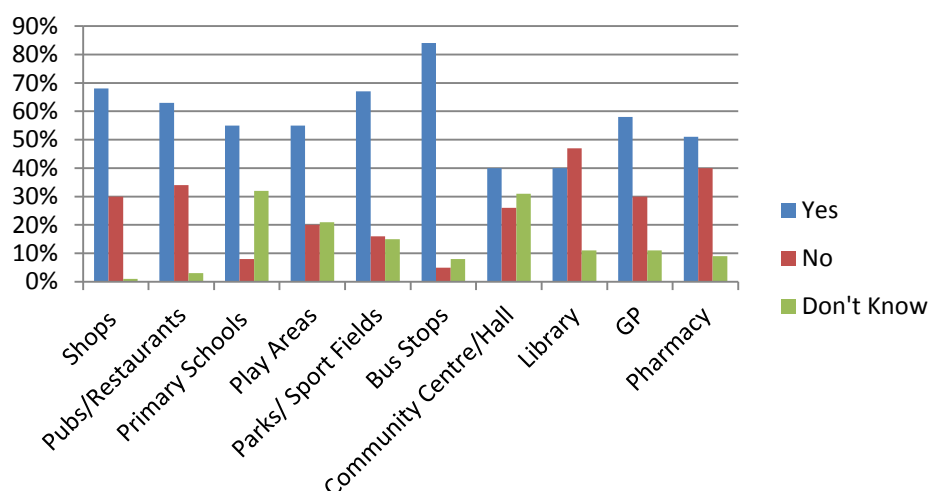


Access to public transport and facilities

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. Furthermore, the council’s travel planning measures such as ‘My Journey’ are designed to advocate sustainable choices which can lead to the promotion of walking routes. This can encourage people to walk rather than drive to facilities if they realise that they are closer than they initially thought.

There was a positive response about whether residents knew which transport options are available to them, with 84% of residents believing they did. Continuing, the majority of residents felt that bus stops, shops and park/sport fields were a reasonable walking distance from their home. However, a large proportion of residents felt that libraries and pharmacies were not close by; this can be shown from the graph overleaf.

The following facilities are a reasonable walking distance from my home



Development within the vicinity of the AWE facility at Burghfield

Policy TBO4 of the *MDD* outlines how the authority will consult the Office for Nuclear Regulation on proposals which could result in a change in the number of people living, working or visiting the area around the site. The monitoring section of the *MDD* indicates that the authority will provide West Berkshire Council with relevant information on development approved or completed around the site, taking account of the baseline situation considered as part of the work they undertook on their *Core Strategy* (see paragraph 3.15 of the *MDD*).

The table below details dwelling completions annually since April 2010 together with a summary of the level of planning permissions/allocations within each of the consultation zones (although not all of the proposals summarised exceeded the thresholds in the policy).

Table 3 Net Dwellings in AWE Burghfield Consultation Zones

| Period | Net dwellings in AWE Burghfield consultation zones | | |
|----------------------------|--|--------------------|----------------|
| | DEPZ (0 - 1.5km) | Middle (1.5 - 3km) | Outer (3-5 km) |
| Completed 1/4/10 - 31/3/11 | 0 | 0 | 8 |
| Completed 1/4/11 - | 0 | 0 | 5 |

| | | | |
|----------------------------|----------|------------|--------------|
| 31/3/12 | | | |
| Completed 1/4/12 - 31/3/13 | 3 | 36 | 4 |
| Completed 1/4/13 - 31/3/14 | -1 | 186 | 4 |
| Completed 1/4/14 - 31/3/15 | 1 | 68 | 21 |
| Completed 1/4/15 - 31/3/16 | 0 | 30 | 38 |
| Outstanding at 1/4/16 | 0 | 80 | 3,297 |
| Total | 3 | 400 | 3,377 |

Neighbourhood Planning

The Localism Act of 2011 introduced Neighbourhood Planning. This is intended to involve communities in the production of a Neighbourhood Plan. Remenham Parish was designated as a neighbourhood area in July 2013. Arborfield and Barkham was designated as a neighbourhood area in July 2014. Shinfield Parish continue to work on their neighbourhood plan. Further information about neighbourhood planning can be found at

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/>

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. We approved our Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule on 19 February 2015. More information regarding CIL can be found at;

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/development/community-infrastructure-levy/>

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.

Table 4 Completed B Uses in the Borough by year

| | Use Class | | | | |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|--|--|
| Year (1 st April to 31 st March) | B1 (m ²) | B2 (m ²) | B8 (m ²) | Annual total change of all B use classes combined (m ²) | Cumulative total change of all B use classes combined (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 |
| 2014- 2015 | -1,488 | 0 | 0 | -1,488 | 2,161 |
| 2015 - 2016 | -4,173 | 283 | 939 | -2,951 | -790 |
| Total | 2,906 | -17,538 | 13,842 | | |

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 chart in appendix 3 shows the trend in retail vacancies in local town centres since 1999 (except for Winnersh which only has data since 2011).

Further information about retail can be found at

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/evidence-topics/>

Wokingham Town Centre

The first phase of the town centre regeneration has been completed at Peach Place Corner (the corner of Market Street and Rose St with the replacement of building facades and refurbishment of the flats above the retail units. Further applications have come through for the Town Centre regeneration and more information can be found at

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/major-developments/wokingham-town-centre-regeneration/>

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, although there are no SPAs in the Borough, around 30% of the Borough lies within the 5km protection area for the Thames Basin Heath. There are also 117 Local Wildlife Sites and three Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS).

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 *Wokingham Borough Council Open Space, Sports and Recreation Strategy* was published in November 2013. The strategy can be found at <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/environment-evidence/>

8 Biodiversity

Core Strategy Policies

CP7 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.

Delivery of avoidance measures to address impacts of residential development upon the Thames Basin Heaths SPA

In line with the approach of Core Strategy policy CP8, in order to address the impacts of residential development upon the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (the SPA), the authority needs to ensure that proposals deliver appropriate avoidance measures. These measures typically include delivery of Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANG) together with a contributions towards pan-SPA wide Strategic Access Management & Monitoring (SAMM).

The information below details how developments within the borough have or will address their impacts upon the SPA through the delivery of these two measures.

Table 5 Information on committed SANG use in Wokingham Borough at 31/3/15

| SANG identified | | | SANG allocated | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|--|--|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| Name of SANG site | Total discounted SANG area (ha) | Total SANG capacity (dw) (based on dwellings within 5km) | Dwellings allocated to SANG to date* ¹ (dw) (inc dwellings 5-7km) | Amount of SANG allocated (ha) | Remaining unallocated SANG area (ha) | Remaining unallocated capacity (dw) (Based on dwellings within 5km) |
| Extension to Keephatch Woods, Binfield Road, Wokingham | 3.19 | 166 | 150 | 3.19 | 0 | 0 |
| Rooks Nest Woods, Barkham Ride, Barkham | 18.3 | 963 | 735 | 6.45 | 11.85 | 228 |
| Kentwood Farm SANG, Warren House Rd, Wokingham | 2.7 | 140 | 510 | 2.7 | 0 | 0 |
| Buckhurst Meadows SANG, London Road, Wokingham | 12.48 | 650 | 650 | 12.48 | 0 | 0 |
| Loddon SANG, Hyde End Road, Shinfield | 18.31 | 953 | 1,097 | 18.31 | 0 | 0 |
| Ridge SANG, Hyde End Lane/ Church Lane, Three Mile Cross | 11.71 | 609 | 701 | 11.71 | 0 | 0 |
| Stanbury House SANG, Basingstoke Rd, Spencers Wood | 12.53 | 652 | 0 | 0 | 12.53 | 652 |
| Total | 79.22 | 4133 | 3,843 | 54.84 | 24.38 | 880 |

The information in the above table indicates that having regard to the SANG's approved and the residential proposals assigned to them, there are only 2 sites with remaining capacity to avoid impacts of additional dwellings upon the SPA. Of the two sites, Rooks Nest Woods is operated by the Council and can contribute towards the avoidance solution of relevant proposals.

¹ Taking account of planning permissions or allocations in the borough's development plan

Table 6 Information on SAMM contributions received or anticipated at 31/3/15

| SAMM payments | Net additional dwellings | Amount received/ expected |
|---|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Received 1/4/10 - 31/3/11 | 4 | £3,058.11 |
| Received 1/4/11 - 31/3/12 | 15 | £19,561.89 |
| Received 1/4/12 - 31/3/13 | 421 | £224,459.36 |
| Received 1/4/13 - 31/3/14 | 47 | £33,083.45 |
| Received 1/4/14 - 31/3/15 | 987 | £130,242.04 |
| Received 1/4/15 - 31/3/16 | 110 | £57,798.82 |
| Payment pending assuming development commences after 1/4/16 | 2,015 | £ 1,381,327.71 |
| Total | 3,599 | £1,849,531.38 |

The above table summarises SAMM contributions which the authority has received to date (and forwarded to Hampshire County Council who co- ordinate this on behalf of the Thames Basin Heaths Joint Strategic Partnership Board). Once development commences on those schemes which also requires a contribution towards SAMM, the income received by the authority will also be forwarded to Hampshire County Council. The above table indicates that Wokingham BC by 31 March 2015 had collected £468,203.67 in SAMM payments.

Biodiversity data from TVERC (Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre is received every three years. No update has been received this year. The following data is repeated from last year.

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.

Figure 3 - 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.

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).

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.

The *Parking Standards Study Report* (2011) and other related transport plans and policies can be seen at <http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/evidence-topics/>

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 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 (25 September 2015 to 24 September 2018) includes an indicative timetable for a new Minerals and Waste Local Plan, although this noted that the authority could work collaboratively with other authorities on a joint plan. The potential for undertaking a joint plan is still be considered.

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.

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:

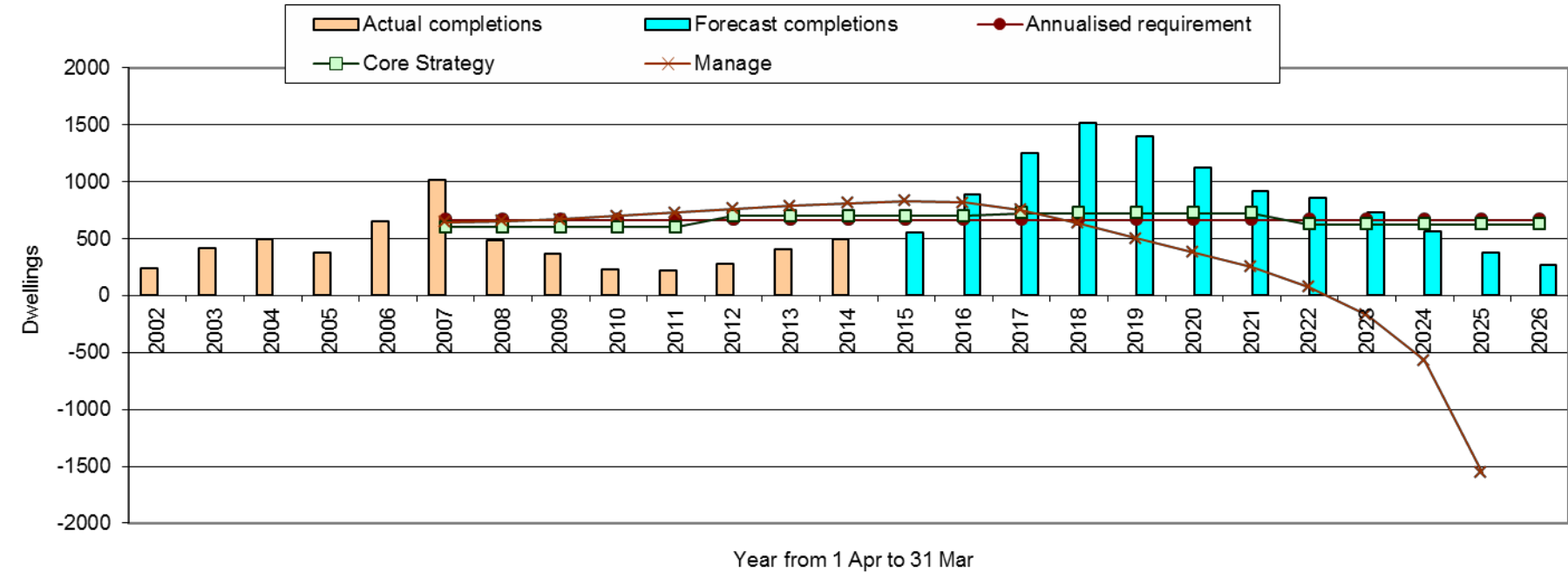
<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning/policy/flood/sfra/>

Brownfield Development

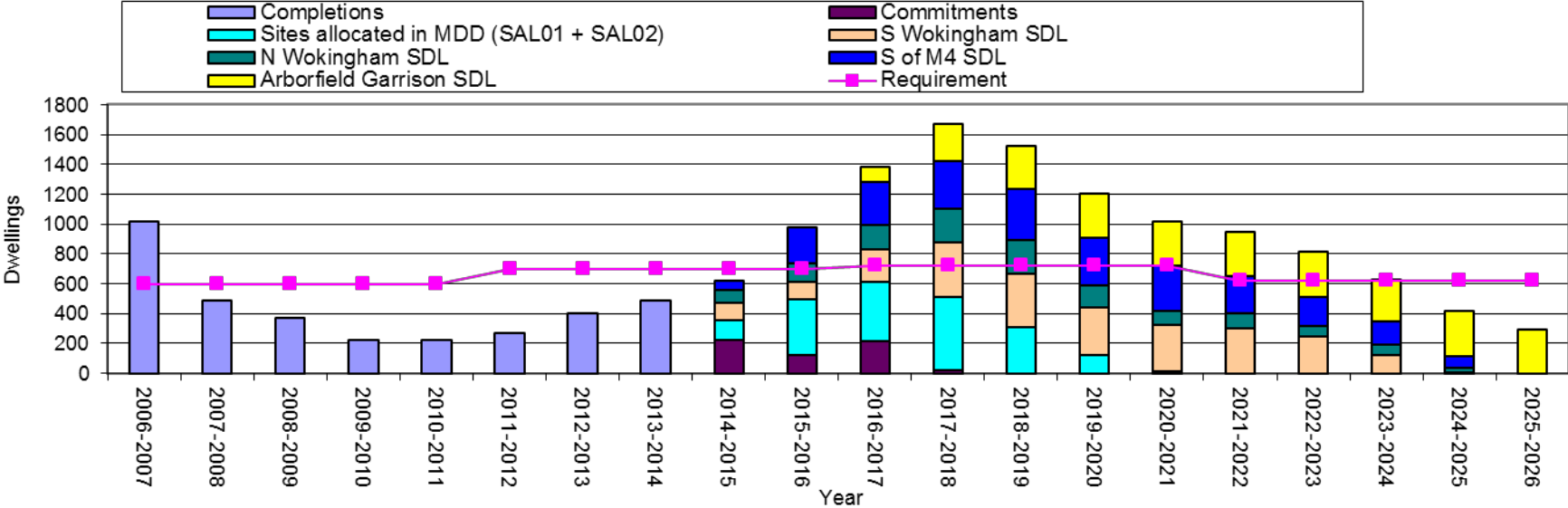
Policy CP9 states that the scale of development proposals in the Borough must reflect existing or proposed levels of facilities and services at or in the location together with their accessibility. National planning guidance contained in Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3) had a target for 60% of new 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 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 were 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 (72%) of housing development is still on brownfield land despite the change in PPS3/NPPF. This is an increase from 56% in the previous monitoring year.

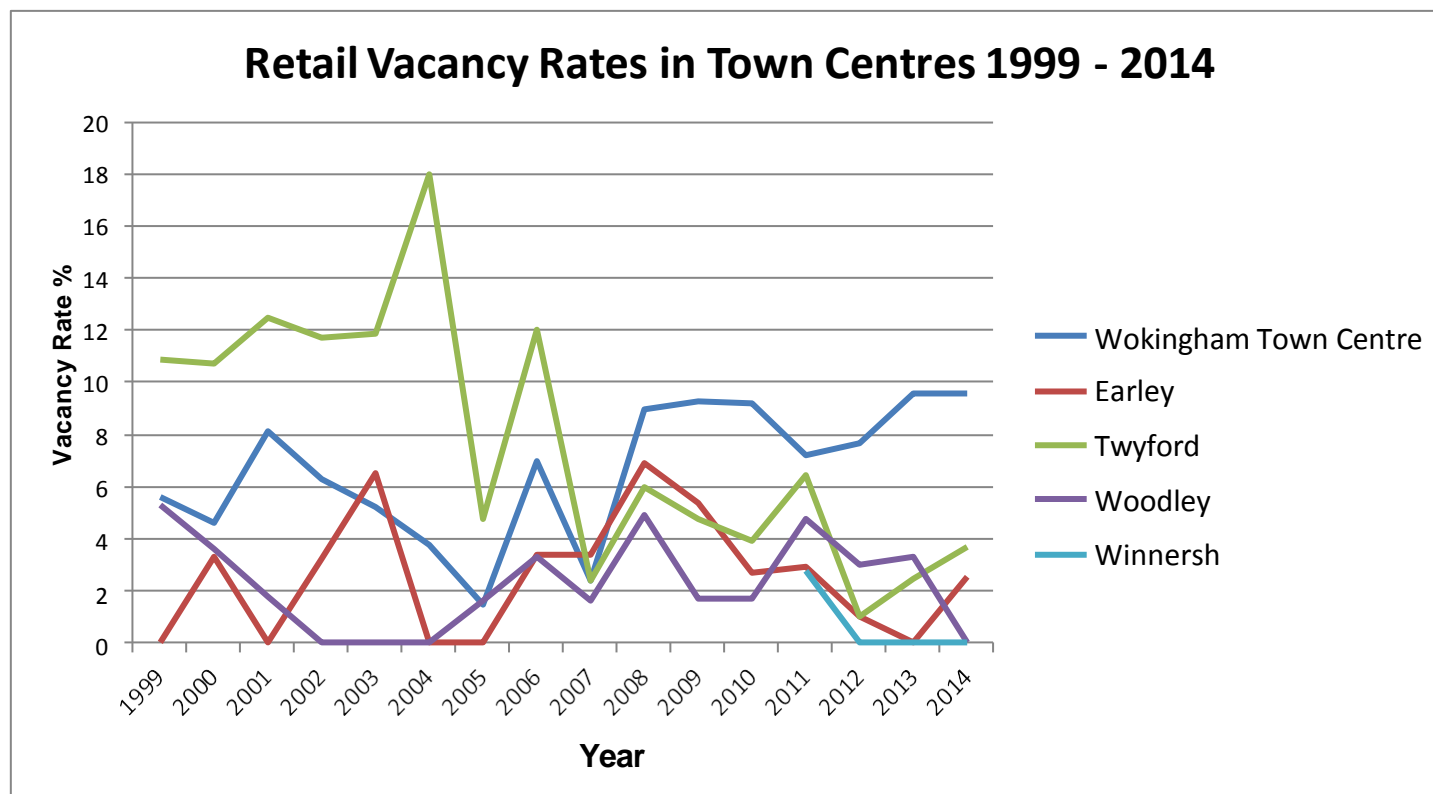
Appendix 1 - Housing Trajectory of Core Strategy updated to take account of the Adopted Managing Development Delivery Local Plan



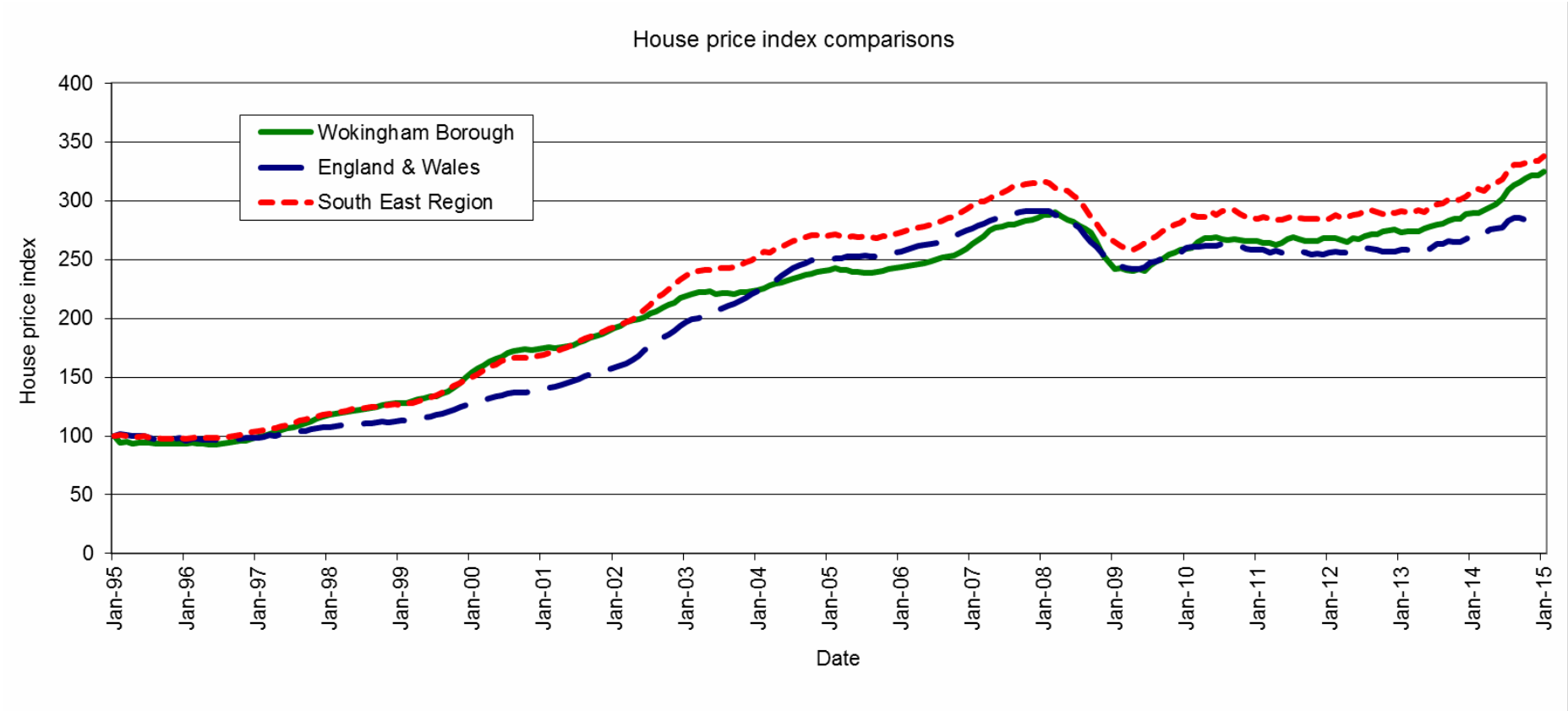
Appendix 2 - Housing Trajectory for SDLS and other sources of housing supply



Appendix 3 – Retail Vacancy Rates in Town Centres 1999-2014



Appendix 4 - House Price Data from the Land Registry



Glossary

A generalised glossary is available on the Wokingham Borough Council Local Plan Update webpage;

<http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/local-plan-update/>

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